

Document 1 of 2: Heritage Proof of Evidence

Land to the North and West of School Road, Elmswell, Suffolk



Client
Mid Suffolk District Council

Date:
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Contents

1. Introduction	4
Qualifications and Experience	4
Applicant's Proposal	4
Involvement and Scope of Evidence	4
Structure of my Evidence	5
2. Methodological approach used in this proof of evidence	6
3. Assessment of Heritage Assets Affected	7
Relevant Policy and Guidance	7
Identifying the heritage assets affected and their significance	7
The Significance of The Church of St John (Grade II* Listed)	8
The Significance of Almshouses (Grade II Listed)	9
The Significance of Elmswell Hall (Grade II Listed)	10
4. Assessing whether, how and to what degree their settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage assets	16
Church of St Johns (Grade II* Listed)	16
The Almshouses (Grade II Listed)	19
Elmswell Hall (Grade II Listed)	21
5. Assessing the effect of the proposed development on the setting and significance of the assets	24
Church of St Johns (Grade II* Listed)	24
The Almshouses (Grade II Listed)	26
Elmswell Hall (Grade II Listed)	28
Overall Summary of Effect	30
6. Summary and Conclusions	33
7. Statement of Truth	34
8. Appendices	35
A. Designation Descriptions	35
B. Policy, Legislation and Guidance	38
C. Church Guide: St John the Divine, Elmswell	43
D. Figures, Maps and Viewpoints (Document 2 of 2)	44

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Land to the North and West of School Road, Elmswell, Suffolk

Heritage Proof of Evidence
Document 1 of 2

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July 2025

PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE:
APP/W3520/W/25/3364061
Mid Suffolk District Council Reference:
DC/23/05651

1. Introduction

Qualifications and Experience

- 1.1. I am the Historic Environment Manager at Place Services, Essex County Council. I hold a Bachelors (Hons) degree in Archaeological Practice (University of Winchester), a Post Graduate Certificate in the Archaeology of Standing Buildings (University of Leicester), a Post Graduate Certificate in Heritage Management (Ironbridge Institute, University of Birmingham) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Building Conservation and Repair (Trinity College, Dublin). I am a full member of the both the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (MCIfA).
- 1.2. For over 20 years I have worked as a heritage consultant for the private and public sectors, working across the UK. I have extensive experience of heritage issues arising from development in both urban and rural settings, and in particular development on the periphery of existing settlements.
- 1.3. The evidence set out in this statement is provided on behalf of Mid Suffolk District Council and includes my opinions based on my experience. I visited the appeal site in preparation of this statement.

Applicant's Proposal

- 1.4. This inquiry pertains to a proposal (Planning Ref: DC/21/05621):

Outline Planning Application (Access to be considered, all other matters reserved) - Erection of Care Village comprising 66 bedroom care home (C2 Use), 37 No. Extra Care Bungalows (C2 Use), 3 No. Almshouses (C3), Management Office (E(g)(I) Use), Club House, Community Growing Area, Orchard, Community Bee hives and Open Space Provision.

Involvement and Scope of Evidence

- 1.5. Place Services was approached by Mid Suffolk District Council to act as expert witness in heritage matters for this inquiry. I had no involvement with the application when it was submitted to the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.6. My assessment specifically considers the effect of the proposed development on the significance of heritage assets. This assessment will not perform any balancing exercises of harm against benefit; this is addressed by Daniel Cameron.
- 1.7. I have visited the site and its surroundings for the purpose of undertaking my assessment, the results of which are described in this proof of evidence.
- 1.8. My evidence relates to Mid Suffolk District Council's Reason for Refusal 3 which states:

Development of the site would result in the loss of an area of open countryside and the change in character of the land from agriculture this is considered to erode the historic setting of the Church of St. John which is listed at Grade II as well as the associated Grade II listed almshouses and Grade II listed Elmswell Hall. This harm extends to both the built form proposed within the site as*

well as the open space. Harm would also accrue as a result of the coalescence of the historic buildings with the built-up core of the village of Elmswell. A level of less than substantial harm to the heritage assets has been identified and the required balancing exercise has not been successful. As a result the development is contrary to policy LP19 of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan together with paragraphs 205, 206 and 208 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 1.9. The evidence I have prepared relates to the effect the proposed development will have on the significance of heritage assets including the contribution to significance made by their settings. This proof has assessed and considered harm to the following heritage assets:
- Grade II* Listed: Church of St John (List Entry ID: 1032468);
 - Grade II Listed The Amshouses (List Entry ID: 1181926); and
 - Grade II Listed Elmswell Hall (List Entry ID: 1032472).
- 1.10. As part of my evidence, I have provided a set of photographs (**Appendix D**) to illustrate some of the key points made in relation to setting, views and potential impacts, in order to give a visual indication of the views to and from heritage assets referred to in my proof of evidence. In doing so I recognise that these do not purport to fulfil the same role of photomontages, the standards for which are set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment published by the Landscape Institute.

Structure of my Evidence

- 1.11. My evidence is structured as follows:
- 1.12. **Appendix B** identifies the relevant legislation, heritage policy, and guidance in the context of which a decision on this appeal must be made.
- 1.13. Section 2 sets out the methodology used in this evidence. My methodology follows steps 1 to 3 of the Historic England Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017).
- 1.14. Section 3 assesses the heritage assets affected and their significance.
- 1.15. Section 4 identifies the contribution made by the settings of the heritage assets to their significance.
- 1.16. Section 5 considers the impact of the proposed development on the significance of affected heritage assets.
- 1.17. Section 6 provides conclusions and a summary.
-

2. Methodological approach used in this proof of evidence

- 2.1. The Historic England guidance document *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)* sets out a methodology for assessing harm to the setting of heritage assets as part of the planning process, comprising a five step process that applies proportionally to complex or more straightforward cases as follows:
- **Step One:** identifies which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
 - **Step Two:** assesses whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage assets;
 - **Step Three:** assesses the effects of the proposed development on that significance;
 - **Step Four:** explores ways to minimise harm;
 - **Step Five:** is the making and documenting of the decision.
- 2.2. Steps One-Three of this assessment process have been used to determine the impact of the proposed development on the setting and significance of designated heritage assets which will result from the proposed development.
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3. Assessment of Heritage Assets Affected

Relevant Policy and Guidance

- 3.1. Relevant policy, legislation and guidance is summarised in **Appendix B**.
- 3.2. As an aid to decision-making, it is important to assess each of the heritage assets' significance, and in the case of the proposed development, particularly the contribution that setting makes to their significance, in line with National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (paragraphs 207-208), which is the purpose of this section of my proof.
- 3.3. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary as "the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Such interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic and it may derive not only from a heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting". These interests are detailed further in Historic England's Advice Note 12 *Statements of Heritage Significance*.
- 3.4. The setting of a heritage asset is defined in the NPPF Glossary as "the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral".
- 3.5. Paragraph 9 of GPA3 notes that the importance of setting "lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance".
- 3.6. As set out in GPA3, the setting of a heritage asset is likely to include a variety of views that can be important contributors to understanding and appreciating an asset's significance. Important views can include those from, towards, through, across and including an asset. Some views which contribute to an appreciation of an asset's significance have been identified below.
- 3.7. Planning Practice Guidance also recognises that, "Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places."
- 3.8. GPA3 indicates that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which the asset is experienced. "Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset" (para. 20). It also identifies the fact that heritage assets can include overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own.

Identifying the heritage assets affected and their significance

- 3.9. In order to determine which heritage assets and their settings and significance are affected by the proposed development, desk-based research and a site inspection was undertaken. From this appraisal, the designated heritage assets identified as being affected by the proposed development are:
 - Grade II* Listed: Church of St John (List Entry ID: 1032468);
 - Grade II Listed The Amshouses (List Entry ID: 1181926); and
-

- Grade II Listed Elmswell Hall (List Entry ID: 1032472).
- 3.10. These designated heritage assets have been considered further below. The list descriptions are reproduced in **Appendix A**. A guide to the Church of St John is reproduced in **Appendix C**. Figures, maps and viewpoints, which are referenced in the text, are located in the document which accompanies this proof (**Appendix D**).
- 3.11. A map showing the location of the proposed development site and key heritage assets is located in **Map 1, Appendix D**.

The Significance of The Church of St John (Grade II* Listed)

- 3.12. In statutory terms, the significance of this building has been recognised by its designation as a Grade II* Listed Building (**Figure 1 and 2**) which considers the structure to be of 'more than special interest'. The National Heritage List Description is provided in **Appendix A**. The principal significance of the church is found in its architectural interest as a good, multi-phased, example of regional ecclesiastical architecture.
- 3.13. Pevsner described the church¹:
- ST JOHN BAPTIST. W tower with 'probably the finest flint and stone devices' of Suffolk (Cautley). They include two chalices and a lily in a vase. Many emblems and initials in the battlements and also panelling. S aisle (much renewed) and S porch also with flushwork emblems; N aisle of 1872; chancel of 1864. Perp five-bay arcade. The clerestory not with double the number of windows. Inside below the windows a fleuron frieze. On this wall-shafts for the former roof. – FONT. Base with Ox, two Eagles, Pelican. Bowl with shields in foiled shapes. On the shields the letters of the name I. Hedge. Retooled. – PARCLOSE SCREEN. Good, with two-light divisions. – BENCH ENDS. Some, with poppy-heads and blank tracery. – MONUMENT. Sir Robert Gardener † 1619. Standing monument with stiff semi-reclining figure. By his feet a rhinoceros, his crest. To the l. his son, kneeling. At the foot of the monument lie Sir Robert's robes and part of his armour. Two columns carry a large coffered arch. – (CHURCHYARD CROSS. The base is old and has good carvings. LG)*
- 3.14. A concise history of the Church is provided in the guidebook reproduced in **Appendix C**. This notes that the earliest mention of a church in Elmswell was in the Domesday Survey (1086). The existing church was constructed in the fourteenth century with additions in the fifteenth century. The existing church tower is of fifteenth century construction, this rebuilt a fourteenth century tower. The building remained largely structurally unchanged until it was restored in 1872.
- 3.15. The building is well documented on historic cartography. The building has continuously been the ecclesiastical centre of the parish and maps demonstrate its situation in an isolated agrarian situation has been subject to little change. One of the earliest maps to note the church is Hodkinson's map of Suffolk in 1783 (**Map 3**) which depicts the church in an isolated position within an agrarian setting, detached from the settlement.
- 3.16. The c.1840 Tithe Map (**Map 4**) is the first cartographic source to accurately depict the settlement and the church's location isolated to the south west and in an isolated setting.
- 3.17. The Tithe Apportionment notes the owners, occupiers and use of the plots of land noted on the map. The apportionment records Reverend Joseph Thomas Lawton for the church yard of St Johns and also Church Cottages to the east in Plot 182. The apportionment confirms the fields to the

¹ Pevsner, N (1998) *Buildings of England: Suffolk*, Penguin Group

north were under pasture with exception of Plot 178 (located in the appeal site), adjacent to the church, which was arable and providing a link in the name of 'Church Field'.

Plot	Owner	Occupier	Land Use
171	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Horse Pasture
172	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Horse Pasture
173	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Plantation
174	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Slades Bottom - Pasture
175	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Allotment
176	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Pond Field
178	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Church Field - Arable
179	Trustee for Alms Houses	Six Poor Widows	Cottage and Garden
180	Reverend Joseph Thomas Lawton (Glebe)	Reverend Joseph Thomas Lawton	Churchyard
182	Reverend Joseph Thomas Lawton	James Barrell	Two Cottages and Gardens

- 3.18. The later Ordnance Survey maps (**Maps 5-10**) show that the land immediately adjacent to the church has been largely sterile of major development and the church's situation is very similar today to that in the nineteenth century. The main development in the nineteenth century was the construction of the rectory to the southwest of the church. Post war development extended the settlement of Elmswell closer to the church but the agrarian and isolated situation was fundamentally unchanged.
- 3.19. The special architectural and historic interest, and significance, of the Church of St John lies in its considerable historic and architectural importance as a well-preserved example of a medieval church in the vernacular style. Archaeological and architectural interest is drawn from the fourteenth century church and fifteenth century additions and alterations to the composition as well as the nineteenth century restoration. The church has historical, architectural and archaeological interest for the development of medieval religious architecture, and for the understanding of the historic development of Elmswell. The fabric of the building holds significance as archaeological evidence for its construction, including materials and design. It also has considerable symbolic and communal significance for the local people within the village and its surrounding parish. The church has been a prominent building for a period of over 600 years. As a place of worship for many centuries, it holds considerable spiritual significance for the local and wider community.
- 3.20. The interests above contribute towards a building which is of High Significance.

The Significance of Almshouses (Grade II Listed)

- 3.21. In statutory terms, the significance of the Almshouses (**Figure 3**) is recognised by its designation as a Grade II Listed Building which considers it to be of 'special interest'. The National Heritage List Description is provided in **Appendix A**.
- 3.22. Pevsner described the building²:

² Pevsner, N (1998) *Buildings of England: Suffolk*, Penguin Group

ALMSHOUSES. Founded by Sir Robert Gardener. Dated 1614. Red brick, one-storeyed, with a steep central gable. Five doorways, four groups of chimneys. The windows are of two lights with an architrave over.

- 3.23. The listing description records they were constructed in c.1614 by Sir Robert Gardener. The building comprises three cottages, constructed of brick with a slate roof. A plaque (**Figure 11**), on the front elevation of the Almshouses, notes 'Gardener' and that he was the Lord of Elmswell and Woolpit. Sir Robert Gardener (c.1540-1620) was the son of a 'substantial yeoman' of Hartest in West Suffolk. He was a prominent figure in the sixteenth century and was appointed Chief Justice of Ireland in 1586. He purchased the manors of Elmswell in 1590, Woolpit in 1587 and Breckles in Norfolk in 1599. Gardener was buried in the Church of St John where there is a prominent tomb in the interior of the church (**Figure 12**).
- 3.24. Hodskinson's map of Suffolk (**Map 3**) is the earliest to show the plan of the Almshouse's adjacent to the church. The c.1840 Tithe Map (**Map 4**) shows the footprint of the Almshouses in detail adjacent to the Appeal Site. The Tithe Apportionment recorded them as cottage and garden, owned by the Trustee for Almshouses and occupied by 'six poor widows'.
- 3.25. Historic Ordnance Survey maps (**Maps 5-10**) illustrate the Almshouses, and their environs, have been subject to little change since the nineteenth century.
- 3.26. Significance is drawn from the architectural interest of the Almshouses. Constructed over 400 years ago, they are a good example of seventeenth century architecture, particularly Almshouses. Historical interest is also drawn from their association with a prominent figure in the late sixteenth century who owned the manors of Elmswell and adjacent Woolpit.
- 3.27. The connection with the rural landscape, positively contributes towards the building's significance and the understanding that this structure was constructed in an open agricultural landscape.

The Significance of Elmswell Hall (Grade II Listed)

- 3.28. In statutory terms, the significance of Elmswell Hall (**Figure 4**) is recognised by its designation as a Grade II Listed Building which considers it to be of 'special interest'. The National Heritage List Description is provided in **Appendix A**.
- 3.29. The listing description notes the building as a farmhouse and formerly a manor. The existing building is believed to have been built c.1550-1580 and was significantly remodelled in the nineteenth century; the timber frame building was encased in a gault brick structure.
- 3.30. An article in the *East Anglian Miscellany* in October-December, 1911, provided an overview history of the property³:

It is no easy matter under present conditions to give a proportionate description of the shape and size of the moats that once encompassed the site of this manor of Elmswell Hall. A portion, 73 yards in extent, lies eastward of the present garden, and a little more adjoins this on the southern side. It is wide, deep, and said to be full of golden tench. It probably extended very much more northward, along a piece of ground now covered with fruit trees and strawberries, and so included the spot on which now stand the farm premises, and if the house was placed anywhere in the middle of it the northern and southern portions must have been equally large. So much of it has been in course of time filled in, one cannot state with any degree of certainty where the entrance was, but in all probability on the south also.

³ <https://www.elmswell-history.org.uk/buildings/elmswell-hall/>

Of the ancient house not much remains, and what is left has been recased and looks thoroughly modern; however on the north side of the remnant are two large protruding Elizabethan chimneys, which denote the back of the original house. From the lines in the grass of the garden lawn (always very apparent in a dry time) it was very evident to me that the old house stretched 20 yards further westward than the present building, and the kindly lady who now presides as hostess told me that southward of the present residence lines were also apparent, and that foundations had been unearthed; these might well be portions of slightly projecting wings, or possibly the porch of the old mansion. In the lower rooms there is not much to be seen of their ancient appearance. That at the north-west corner (now the dining-room) has plain oak beams; those in the opposite room at the south-west corner, have been cased. However, in the upper chamber running the whole length of the house from east to west we find a small moulded oak beam with still smaller ones crossing here and there, and solid oak supports by the walls. This series of chambers formed originally three rooms, the one on the western side being quite large, while that on the east has a doorway, from which, by a ladder, one can descend into the yard below. Concerning this, I was told that an old lady who formerly resided here caused her man-servant to sleep in this chamber, so that easily in the early morning he could reach his work without disturbing anybody. It is intended that the beams and supports in these chambers shall be scraped and coloured, which will add to the ancient appearance of the interior of the Hall. The portion at the east end still retains that appearance, having a gable and an overhanging storey.

And now we come to the history of the place, the site, estate, and mansion. The very first statement concerning it, published in Page's "History of Suffolk," and quoted elsewhere, is this: "King Edwin granted this lordship and demesne to the Abbot of St. Edmund; and the manor has become one of the country seats belonging to the heads of that house." I do not doubt it; in fact, it is recorded that one of the Henry's paid a visit to it when sojourning at the Abbey. However, this will not account for any graves found in the garden, as an Abbot would hardly be likely to bury near his lodge. At the time of the Dissolution, about 1536, the lease of it passed into the hands of the family Darcy, one Sir Thomas Darcy being appointed keeper of the chief messuage about 1542. In this family it remained two generations, being sold by Thomas Lord Darcy to Sir Robert Gardiner in 1590. This is about the date of the present building.

Sir Robert Gardiner was certainly the most important person ever connected with Elmswell. That he was a Suffolk man I gather from the inscription on his monument, which tells of his "retiring to his native home". The coat-of-arms on his tomb; "Gules, a chevron between three tiger heads erased or," was ascribed by Glover to "Robert Gardner of Chardacre Surrey," which in the Blois MSS. is given "Chardacre, Suffolk," meaning doubtless Chadacre in Shimpling. However, the pedigree which follows has nothing to do with him, I think, for it deals with the Gardiners of Wrentham and Walberswick, who bore quite a different coat of arms. He was born about 1540. From 1597 to 1599 he was Chief Justice and Viceroy of Ireland, and according to the inscription on the monument was later on "sent by King James into ye Iles of Jernsey and Guernsey, where, having settled their estate in peace and Good Government he retir'd to his Native home." He married three times, his first wife being described as "Anne Cordeil." However, the shield above, which represents this marriage, bears the arms of Cordell, of Long Melford. His second wife was Thomasine, daughter of John Barker, Burgess of Ipswich, and the third Anne, the daughter of Sir John Trelawny, Kt., and widow of John Spring, the son of Sir William Spring, Kt., of Pakenham, all three wives being East Anglians.

It seems to me more than probable that Sir Robert Gardiner built the house. The chimneys behind so thoroughly point to the latter end of the 16th century. Anyhow he built the almshouses, which the owner of the mansion house of the manor was to keep in good repair. The inscription on a stone under a sundial in the centre is this; "Sir Robert Gardiner, Kt. , some time Lord of these manors of

Elmswell and Wolpit, founded this Almshouse in ye time of his life, Ao., 1614, and gave unto it sufficient maintenance for six poore women widows. To continue for ever." It is recorded of him that after his third marriage he retired to Pakenham and resided in the house of his wife. This is probable, as the execution of the settlement concerning that almshouse was made at Pakenham, and signed there.

But he had another property in East Anglia, in the adjoining county of Norfolk, called Breccles Hall, which he purchased about 1600. Here he died, and the entry in the register book there is curious. "Sr. Robert Gardiner, Kt., the Phavorite of his family, the Oracle of his acquaintance, the Glory of his friends, the staye of his Countrye, died at Breccles Hall on the twelfth day of February, 1619, and was buried at Elmswell, in Suffolk, the 19 of the same month. This looks to me like a prior residence in that parish, at any rate as being regarded his chief residence. His only son, William, had pre-deceased him "at ye age of 24 years." The fine monument at the east end of the south aisle in Elmswell Church is known far and wide, with the reclining effigy of the father, and the kneeling effigy of the son, with seven shields of arms thereon, and above all the crest of the family, a rhinoceros. The tradition still lingers in the parish, and was told to me, only a few months ago in good faith, that the animal represented the wild boar, which had killed the young man in the woods around. Dr. Copinger also records the legend in his "Manors of Suffolk, vol.1, 288. At Sir Robert Gardiner's death his estates were divided, and I can with certainty state what the division was. From a short and unique pedigree among the Blois MSS there was at Ixworth "an Atturnye" called William Webb; he was the son of "Richard Webb de Le Pickerell, Ikesworth, Inne-holder," and for his first wife he married the sister and co-heiress of Sir Robert Gardiner. Thus to Gardiner Webb, his nephew, was this Elmswell estate given. He married Mary, the daughter of Sir Martin Stuteville, of Dalham, and in 1627 an original description of his possessions here was made by Thomas Waterman. He subscribed 12s.9d. to the ship money in 1640, and he died 15th March, 1674, and was buried at Elmswell. In this same year we find Mistress Webb (no doubt his widow) declared as residing in a house of 14 hearths, which would well describe Elmswell Hall before any part of it was pulled down. About this period (1674) there seems to have been another division of the property in which part of the estate, including the Hall, became separated from the manor; this latter passing through an Anthony Webb to the Woods of Loudham Park, then to the Onebys, and in 1821 the possession of Miss Euphemia Gifford, who in that year held a court for the same, in 1885, it was vested in Rev. W.A.C. Macfarlane, who now holds it as Mr.W.A.Macfarlane Grieve, of Impington Park, Co.Cambs.

It is, however, not so much with the manor, as with the Hall and estate that I would treat here. It was bequeathed to Gardiner Kettleburgh of Elmswell, and became his residence. What relation he was to Gardiner Webbe I have been unable to find out, but the family had been "of Elmswell" for some while. In 1568 John Kettlebrowe was assessed "£5 in moveables," paying 4s.2d. In 1640 "Thos.Kittilborow,Gent." subscribed 11s.4d. and "Benjm Kittleborowe" £1. 0s. 6d, to the Ship Money, and in 1674 "Mrs.Kettleborowe" occupied a house with 8 hearths, only second in size to the Hall with its 14. Elizabeth Kettleburgh, one of the daughters and Christopher Calthorpe, younger brother of James Calthorpe of Ampton Hall, (were married?) On the death of the brother in 1702, he inherited that estate, and went there to reside. However, till that period he resided here, where in 1699 his eldest son James was born. In the earlier year of the 18th century the estate was purchased by Sir Robert Smyth.Bart. of Isfield in Sussex, who had married Lady Louisa Hervey, daughter of John, first Earl of Bristol. He was also at one time a tenant of Ampton, and there in 1734, his son and successor, Hervey Smyth was born. Sir Robert Smyth died in 1773, and his son, Sir Hervey Smyth, at Elmswell Hall in 1811 , "being possessed of large landed estates in Suffolk, among them one at Elmswell, which he bequeathed to his sister, Miss Smyth, who disposed of it to Mrs. Brand." "Ipswich Journal," Feb.21st.1829. From the issues of this same paper in 1829 and

1832, we gather that a lawsuit occupied the time of the courts, in which the then tenant, Mrs. Bridges was concerned. It was "to recover certain premises there of very considerable value," and "a distress was put on the goods of Mrs. Bridges for £3,000." What the result of the lawsuit was on the goods of that lady in Elmswell Hall I cannot say, but with regard to the place itself we find in the same paper, Jan. 9th, 1832, "The very fine freehold estate, part tithe free, called Elmswell Hall, will be offered for sale early in February, if not sooner disposed of, by private contract. It contains 235 acres of superior arable, meadow and pasture land. For Particulars apply to Mr. Pattle, the proprietor." In the "Suffolk Poll Book" of 1830, he is styled Zachariah Pattle. In 1847 it became, by purchase the property of Admiral Sir George Francis Seymour, father of the fourth Marquess of Hertford, and in 1864 he founded here a school. For a long time it was occupied by the family of Graham. Mr. Ireland Graham lived there in 1855, and Mr. J.W. Graham in 1885. It is now the residence of Mr. John Coleby Leatherdale.

- 3.31. The history notes the existing building was likely constructed by Sir Robert Gardener linking the hall to both the Church of St John and the Almshouses. Gardener's works to the site are considered to have resulted in a high-status residence and the 1674 Hearth Tax assessment records the most in the parish. The moated site has much earlier origins than the existing building and is likely medieval in origin with important historical associations. King Henry VI is recorded as staying at Elmswell Hall in the winter of 1433⁴.
- 3.32. The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment provides an overview of moated sites in the county⁵:

A moat is a broad water-filled ditch that surrounds a central platform or 'island' where a house usually placed. Although inspired by castles, the defensive banks and walls of true castles are characteristically absent on moated sites. The possession of a defended residence was closely linked in the medieval mind with concepts of lordship and social status: great lords had their castles, lesser members of the free classes (knights, esquires, clergy and freehold farmers) had, where conditions were suitable, moated houses.

A social hierarchy is apparent in the size of moats: those that are an acre or more in extent tend to be manorial (e.g. Brockley Hall) or monastic (e.g. Flixton Priory). Moats of about half an acre in size are much more likely to be associated with parsonages (e.g. The Old Rectory, Whatfield) or farms that are ancient free tenements (e.g. Oak Tree Farm, Hitcham).

The majority of moats function like ponds, relying on an impervious base or lining, though some are connected to water-courses. Suffolk has over 850 moats and vies with Essex for the distinction of having the largest number in England. They occur in a broad diagonal band across Suffolk in a distribution pattern that is closely related to the natural occurrence of water-retentive clay soils.

The earliest moated sites date from between about 1150 and 1200. They continued to be built until about 1550, but the majority seem to belong to the period 1200-1325.

Barns and other agricultural buildings are rarely sited on the same moated platform as the house, they are usually situated just outside, flanking the approach to the entrance. Sometimes they are contained within their own moated or ditched enclosure. Moats can also surround banqueting houses or 'glorietts' (Letheringham Lodge), deer park lodges (Rishangles Lodge, Thorndon), gardens (Shelley Hall), fishponds (Balsdon Hall, Acton) and dovecotes (Otley Hall).

⁴ Elmswell: A Marker for the Milenium: <https://www.elmswell-history.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/1Bof32-EHG-MllnmBk-merged-1-1.pdf>

⁵ [Moat - Suffolk Landscapes](#)

- 3.33. The status of Elmswell Hall is clear on Hodskinson's map of Suffolk (**Map 3**) which depicts the large residence at the site. The c.1840 Tithe Map (**Map 4**) is the first to show the plan of the site in detail and also the hall in plan before the extensive nineteenth century works to the building. The large-moated enclosure is depicted with buildings in the east enclosure, the west enclosure was likely gardens.
- 3.34. The Tithe Apportionment records that in 1840 Elmswell Hall (Plot 488) was owned by Sir George Seymour and occupied by John Stedman. The same owner/occupier arrangement is recorded for the surrounding farmland including that of the Appeal Site confirming Elmswell Hall was directly farming this land at the time. Sir George Seymour (1787-1870) was a prominent Admiral in the nineteenth century British Navy, it is likely he leased the property to Stedman who was likely a farmer.

Plot	Owner	Occupier	Land Use
170	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Allotment
171	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Horse Pasture
172	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Horse Pasture
173	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Plantation
174	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Slades Bottom - Pasture
175	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Allotment
176	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Pond Field
177	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Allotment
178	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Church Field - Arable
179	Trustee for Alms Houses	Six Poor Widows	Cottage and Garden
480	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Little Waits Woods – Arable
484	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Great Back Field
485	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Drift
486	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Little Back Field
487	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Cartshed Meadow - Pasture
488	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	House Yard, Premises, Croft - Pasture
489	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Dovehouse, Pightle - Pasture
491	Sir George Seymour	John Stedman	Cow Pasture
494	Sir George Seymour	Ireland Gregham	Oxers Field - Arable
495	Sir George Seymour	Ireland Gregham	Pasture in Field

- 3.35. Historic Ordnance Survey maps (**Maps 5-10**) illustrate the changes at the site since the nineteenth century. This has included the gradual loss of the moat in sections and the reconfiguration of the farm complex. The most apparent change, in the environs, is the construction of the railway in the second half of the nineteenth century.
- 3.36. Significance is drawn from the architectural, historical and archaeological interest of Elmswell Hall. The site has, since the medieval period, been the principal residence of the parish and historically the seat of local governance. It has many historical associations with important people of significance, both as owners and guests of the property and manor. Archaeologically the moated site is of interest and the sixteenth century building will be of a vernacular style that furthers

understanding of the past. Many moated sites are Scheduled Monuments, one example is found in adjacent Woolpit, Lady's Well (List Entry ID: 10555992)⁶.

⁶ [Lady's Well \(holy well and moat\), Woolpit - 1005992 | Historic England](#)

4. Assessing whether, how and to what degree their settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage assets

- 4.1. As an aid to decision-making it is important to assess each of the heritage assets' significance (see Section 3), and in the case of the proposed development, particularly the contribution that setting makes to their significance, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework), which is the purpose of this section of my proof.
- 4.2. Historic England's GPA3 advice note on includes a:
"(non-exhaustive) check-list of potential attributes of a setting that may help to elucidate its contribution to significance'. As the advice note states, 'only a limited selection of the attributes listed will be of a particular relevance to an asset.'"
- 4.3. The Historic England advice note identifies the fact that heritage assets can include overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own.
- 4.4. The views noted in this section are located in **Appendix D** of this document.

Church of St Johns (Grade II* Listed)

- 4.5. With regard to the non-exhaustive 'Step 2 Checklist', included in Historic England's guidance, I consider the following broad headings to be relevant in assessing this heritage asset:

The asset's physical surroundings:

- Topography;
- Aspect;
- Other heritage assets;
- Definition, scale and 'grain' of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces;
- Orientations and aspect;
- Openness enclosure and boundaries;
- Functional relationships and communications; and
- History and degree of change over time.

Experience the asset:

- Surrounding landscape and townscape character;
 - Views from towards, though, across and including the asset;
 - Intentional invisibility with other historical and natural features;
 - Visual dominance, prominence or role as focal point;
-

- Tranquillity and remoteness;
 - Diurnal Changes;
 - Land use; and
 - Rarity of Comparable survivals of setting.
- 4.6. Many of the aspects included above overlap and can be considered in conjunction. To save repetition I have further detailed the elements above under the headings below relating to the physical surroundings and experience of the asset.

The Asset's Physical Surroundings

- 4.7. The Church of St John is located on a topographic high point which affords views across the wider landscape, particularly to the north, as would have been the intention for this landmark building. The immediate setting of the church is formed of the churchyard and this contributes to its significance. Beyond the immediate curtilage, the setting of the church differs on the north and the south sides. To the south the views of the building are available in the more immediate environs and constrained by the road and topography, whilst to the north and the north west there is a clear aspect towards and away from the church, due to openness, where it serves as a focal point.
- 4.8. The definition, scale and grain of the surrounding landscape, and its openness, makes an important contribution to the church's significance. Historic maps (**Appendix D**) illustrate there has been very little fundamental change to this situation since the church's construction. The main change has been altering field patterns but the area has always remained fundamentally agrarian. The church's position in an agrarian setting is captured in an 1836 engraving (**Figure 5**) and an early twentieth century postcard (**Figure 6**).
- 4.9. There are also important functional relationships and communications which contribute to significance. The sound of the church bells in the countryside around the parish is a long-standing and familiar part of the environment, as the 'call to prayer' summons residents to divine worship; they ring out in celebration and in sadness. Historically, the sound of the bells from the church tower would have called workers in the fields surrounding the village to their religious obligations. People's ability to experience the sound of the church bells, particularly when combined with views of the church, including in its rural, agricultural setting, makes a positive contribution to the ability to appreciate the significance of the heritage asset. The church tower also has an important functional relationship with the dispersed farms, dwellings, and rights of way within the surrounding parish, historically serving to provide a key visual reference to the location of the church and in the landscape; a function which survives today.
- 4.10. The church's position and appreciation in its setting also has important associations with other heritage assets, many of which are best viewed across the Appeal Site. The adjacent Almshouses have been the only adjacent building to the church for over 400 years and as a composition these are best viewed, in their agrarian setting, from the north across the Appeal Site. Church Cottages, which are also listed, were historically owned by the church, this ownership is recorded on the 1840 Tithe Apportionment. The best place these two sites can be viewed together is from the northern extent of the Appeal Site (**View 9 and 10**). The relationships with the Church of St Mary in Woolpit is also a contributor to setting, which is discussed further below.

Experience of the Asset

- 4.11. Due to its size and position, the Church of St John is a prominent local landmark in views from within the wider countryside, in which its tower acts as a focal point. This is particularly in views from the north and the appeal site. The height and size of the church is such that its importance
-

was something that everyone was intended to see from a variety of viewing places. Its prominence was intended to proclaim the power and spirituality of the church, and it was intended to be a landmark building. These aspects of its setting are fundamental and make an important positive contribution to the significance of the church, and to the appreciation of its significance, which has retained its pre-eminence in the landscape. The church tower acted as an ecclesiastical way marker which serviced both the village and the wider rural community. One of the key views of this functional aspect of the church tower is shown in **Views 9 and 10** where the church tower of the Church of St John can also be seen in conjunction with Grade I Listed (List Entry ID: 1181376) Church of St Mary in Woolpit. The two towers are also appreciable from Elmswell Hall (**View 11**) and in wider views from the PRowS to the north (**Figure 12**) Whilst the existing church tower (in Woolpit) dates to c.1852 the building has always had a tower since its medieval construction. The view across the appeal site affords the best place to view the two towers together in a centuries old experience. This view has previously been appreciated by artist Christopher Penny (1947-2001) who captured the two towers, in the agrarian landscape, in a painting (**Figure 7**). The view of the two towers provides an experience of the architectural function of the church towers and their designed prominence in the wider landscape.

- 4.12. The agrarian land use of the land around the church is an important part of its setting and how the church's significance is experienced. Since its construction in the fourteenth century, the parish church has served a rural community. The field adjacent to the church was named 'Church Field' since at least 1840 and the building has always been experienced in this character. The character of the field is also dynamic and presents an annual cyclical change in experience as the images in **Figure 9 and 10** demonstrate; this enhances the experience as the setting changes. This similar view across Church Field, called 'a pretty spot', is also captured on the historic postcard in **Figure 6**.
- 4.13. The church has always been set in an isolated and tranquil location, away from the settlement core of Elmswell and this is still appreciated today. The tranquillity of its location, with lack of existing development in the immediate environs, will also be apparent in diurnal changes with little light spill or other adverse environmental effects.
- 4.14. As set out in the Historic England guidance *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017), the setting of a heritage asset is likely to include a variety of views that can be important contributors to understanding and appreciating an asset's significance. Important views can include those from, towards, through, across and including an asset.
- 4.15. Significant identifiable views will be affected by the proposed development. **Map 2** notes the location of viewpoints which are included in **Appendix D**. The views are included to demonstrate the importance of the Church of St John in the wider landscape and the contribution setting and the appeal site makes to the ability to appreciate its significance.
- 4.16. The viewpoints show that views of the landmark church are experienced from a variety of locations and are best appreciated from the north across the appeal site.
- 4.17. **Viewpoint 1** shows the church from the south side of the A14. Whilst modern development has detracted from the view, the church's topographical position above the agrarian Appeal Site is still appreciable.
- 4.18. **Viewpoint 2** shows the church in views from the west. The structure is clearly prominent on a high point in the topography. The Appeal Site makes a positive continuation to this view. Modern development can be seen in Elmswell; this is intrusive to the view which would have until recent years been fundamentally unchanged for centuries. **Viewpoint 3** shows an additional view on Church Lane which demonstrates the kinetic experience as other heritage assets come into view,

such as Elmswell Hall in this location; a good place to experience both the historic manorial and ecclesiastical buildings.

- 4.19. **Viewpoints 4 and 5** show views from the top of the church tower and the north side of the churchyard respectively. These illustrate the character of the setting which is overwhelmingly rural and the prominence of the appeal site in the view. Elmswell Hall can be seen in both views, the connection between the historic manor and church being an important visual link.
- 4.20. **Viewpoints 7-10** present a kinetic experience around the edge of the appeal site. **Viewpoints 9 and 10** are also taken from a public footpath which was once Parnell Lane and a historic route. In these views the church is viewed with many other heritage assets of note including Church Cottages, the Almshouses and the tower of St Mary's in neighbouring Woolpit. The experience of these assets in a view enhances how we appreciate the Church of St John with associated historic buildings which have long been prominent or visible in its setting.
- 4.21. **Viewpoint 11** shows a view of the church from Elmswell Hall. The view shows the prominence of the church from this location and the contribution the appeal site makes in the view.
- 4.22. **Viewpoint 12** shows a wider view from the north on a PRow. This view demonstrates the topographical highpoint and prominence of the church, the importance of the existing agrarian landscape and the significant contribution the appeal site makes to this experience.
- 4.23. The views around the site demonstrate several key aspects of setting which contribute to significance of the heritage asset:
 - The church of St John is a prominent ecclesiastical landmark which was constructed to serve a rural community.
 - The experience of the church is a kinetic experience as one traverses its agrarian environs and not from any singular viewpoint.
 - The best views of the church in its agrarian setting are experienced from the north and include the appeal site.
 - The ability to experience the Church of St John with other heritage assets such as Church Cottages, the Almshouses and St Marys Church in Woolpit contributes to the experience of and appreciation of the heritage asset.
 - The agrarian land use in the landscape around the church contributes to its significance.
 - Views towards and from the church have been subject to little change in the immediate environs for hundreds of years.
 - Modern development has detracted from some views.
 - The church is experienced as a building isolated from the settlement of Elmswell.
 - The ability to view Elmswell Hall from the church contributes to its significance.
- 4.24. Assessment confirms that setting makes a contribution to the significance of the Church of St John and the Appeal Site forms part of the setting.

The Almshouses (Grade II Listed)

- 4.25. With regard to the non-exhaustive 'Step 2 Checklist', included in Historic England's guidance, I consider the following broad headings to be relevant in assessing this heritage asset:
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The asset's physical surroundings:

- Topography;
- Aspect;
- Other heritage assets;
- Definition, scale and 'grain' of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces;
- Orientations and aspect;
- Openness enclosure and boundaries; and
- History and degree of change over time.

Experience the asset:

- Surrounding landscape and townscape character;
- Views from towards, though, across and including the asset;
- Tranquillity and remoteness;
- Diurnal Changes; and
- Land use.

4.26. Many of the aspects included above overlap and can be considered in conjunction. To save repetition I have further detailed the elements above under the headings below relating to the physical surroundings and experience of the asset.

The Asset's Physical Surroundings

- 4.27. The main façade of the Almshouses fronts onto Church Road. The setting here is confined to the domestic curtilage and the immediate streetscape and the adjacent church. This aspect is captured in a 1935 postcard (**Figure 8**). The Almshouses are located on a topographic high point which affords views from the rear of the building across the wider landscape.
- 4.28. The definition, scale and grain of the surrounding landscape (which includes the Appeal Site), and its openness, makes a contribution to the Almshouses significance. Historic maps (**Appendix D**) illustrate there has been very little fundamental change to this situation since the building's construction. The main changes will be an altered field pattern, development of a rectory to the south and plots along School Road.
- 4.29. There are also important historical relationships which contribute to significance. The Almshouses are in proximity to Elmswell Hall, once owned by Sir Robert Gardener who built the Almshouses and is buried in the adjacent church. This ability to appreciate historic links of ownership and patronage enhances the appreciation of the heritage asset.

Experience of the Asset

- 4.30. Due to its position, the Almshouses are very visible in views from the north and the appeal site. The Almshouses have always been set in an isolated and tranquil location, away from the settlement core of Elmswell in a composition with the adjacent church, which is still appreciated today. The tranquillity of its location, with a lack of development in the immediate environs is also apparent in diurnal changes. Consultation of historic maps show little has fundamentally changed in the experience of the Almshouses and their rural setting. The configuration of the building and adjacent church set within a rural character is very much appreciable at the site today. The Appeal Site makes an important contribution to this aspect of the setting.
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- 4.31. As set out in the Historic England guidance *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017), the setting of a heritage asset is likely to include a variety of views that can be important contributors to understanding and appreciating an asset's significance. Important views can include those from, towards, through, across and including an asset.
- 4.32. Significant identifiable views will be affected by the proposed development. **Map 2** notes the location of viewpoints which are included in **Appendix D**.
- 4.33. **Viewpoint 6** shows a view from the rear garden of the Almshouses looking north. The view look immediately over 'Church Field'. The Appeal Site is prominently in the view forming the rural agrarian character within which these Almshouses are set. Elmswell Hall is visible providing an important visual link with the original benefactor of the Almshouses. Recent modern development can be seen in the view which is considered to be intrusive.
- 4.34. **Viewpoints 7-10** present a kinetic experience around the edge of the appeal site. **Viewpoints 9 and 10** are also taken from a public footpath which was once Parnell Lane and a historic route. In these views the Almshouses are visible with the neighbouring church, a configuration in a rural setting which has not been subject to any fundamental change since they were constructed. The experience of these assets in a view enhances how we appreciate and understand the Almshouses.
- 4.35. The views around the Appeal Site demonstrate several key aspects of setting which contribute to significance of the heritage asset:
- The rural setting of the Almshouses has been subject to little fundamental change and today we can experience them in a rural, tranquil setting adjacent to the church as they were constructed over 400 years ago.
 - The best views of the Almshouses, in their agrarian setting, are experienced from the north and include the appeal site.
 - Views from the rear gardens of the Almshouses over the fields of the appeal site contribute to the experience of their setting and significance.
 - The ability to experience the Almshouses with Elmswell Hall contributes to the experience of and appreciation of the heritage asset.
 - The Almshouses are experienced isolated from the settlement of Elmswell.
 - The agrarian land use in the landscape contributes to its significance.
 - Modern development has detracted from some views.
- 4.36. Assessment confirms that setting makes a contribution to the significance of the Almshouses and the Appeal Site forms part of the setting.

Elmswell Hall (Grade II Listed)

- 4.37. With regard to the non-exhaustive 'Step 2 Checklist', included in Historic England's guidance, I consider the following broad headings to be relevant in assessing this heritage asset:

The asset's physical surroundings:

- Topography;
 - Aspect;
-

- Other heritage assets;
- Definition, scale and 'grain' of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces;
- Orientations and aspect;
- Openness enclosure and boundaries;
- Functional relationships and communications; and
- History and degree of change over time.

Experience the asset:

- Surrounding landscape and townscape character;
- Views from towards, though, across and including the asset;
- Tranquillity and remoteness;
- Diurnal Changes; and
- Land use.

4.38. Many of the aspects included above overlap and can be considered in conjunction. To save repetition I have further detailed the elements above under the headings below relating to the physical surroundings and experience of the asset.

The Asset's Physical Surroundings

- 4.39. Elmswell Hall is located to the north of the Appeal Site and on the north side of the railway line.
- 4.40. The definition scale and grain of the agrarian landscape contribute to the setting and significance of the hall. This is a situation which has been fundamentally unchanged since both the building's and the moat's construction. The main changes in the environs of the hall have been the reordering of buildings within the site, the construction of the railway line in the nineteenth century and recent housing development which has had a negative effect on the appreciation of the hall. Whilst the railway line is of antiquity, the passing of trains does have some limited effect on the tranquillity of the asset and the train embankment has changed the character of the landscape here to some extent.
- 4.41. The topography permits views from Elmswell Hall of the Church of St John and the Almshouses. These links are important for two reasons:
- The moat around Elmswell Hall very likely predates the existing building. Visibility between the two centres of power and governance (the seat of the manor and the ecclesiastical centre) is not incidental. This has been a case since the fourteenth century and is very much appreciated today (**Viewpoint 11**).
 - Sir Robert Gardener constructed the earliest form of the existing building. Gardener also built the Almshouses; the intervisibility between owner and patronage contributes to the significance of both heritage assets.

Experience of the Asset

- 4.42. Typologically these types of moated sites were constructed outside of urban locations and in the rural landscape. Whilst there has been change over time, the fundamental agrarian land use has remained. It is very likely that the Appeal Site has been owned by Elmswell Hall since at least the fourteenth century. The Appeal Site formed part of the manor of which Elmswell Hall was the seat, the ownership is recorded on the 1840 Tithe Apportionment, and it is understood this ownership

arrangement remains today. As such there was a historic functional relationship between the hall and the fields it owned and farmed. The ability to be able to experience Elmswell Hall in the agrarian landscape and these fields contributes to how we appreciate, experience and understand the asset. The agrarian land use also contributes to the character and tranquillity of the setting of the hall although this is intermittently compromised by passing trains and also the recent housing development adjacent to the appeal site.

- 4.43. As set out in the Historic England guidance *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017), the setting of a heritage asset is likely to include a variety of views that can be important contributors to understanding and appreciating an asset's significance. Important views can include those from, towards, through, across and including an asset.
- 4.44. Significant identifiable views will be affected by the proposed development. **Map 2** notes the location of viewpoints which are included in **Appendix D**.
- 4.45. **Viewpoint 3** shows a view of both the Church of St John and Elmswell Hall. The view contributes to significance as it shows the two historically important seats of influence in the manor over the agrarian landscape with which they are associated.
- 4.46. **Viewpoints 4, 5 and 6** show the visibility of Elmswell Hall from both the Church of St John and the Almshouses. These views are directly across the Appeal Site and their agricultural character is an important part of this view.
- 4.47. **Viewpoint 11** shows the church's prominence in views from Elmswell Hall.
- 4.48. Assessment and the views around the site demonstrate several key aspects of setting which contribute to significance of the heritage asset:
 - The rural setting of Elmswell Hall is an important part of its setting and the appeal site forms a prominent part of this.
 - The Appeal Site has been owned and farmed by Elmswell Hall for hundreds of years and the ability to appreciate this link from the Appeal Site contributes to significance.
 - The ability to appreciate views between Elmswell Hall and the Almshouses and Church of St John contributes to the significance of all three heritage assets.
 - Appreciation of Elmswell Hall separate from the settlement of Elmswell contributes to its significance.
 - The recent housing development adjacent to the Appeal Site has had an urbanising and adverse effect upon the significance of Elmswell Hall.
 - The trainline, although of some antiquity, provides an intermittent (by passing trains) adverse effect on the tranquillity of the hall.
 - The agrarian land use in the landscape contributes to its significance.
- 4.49. Assessment confirms that setting makes a contribution to the significance of the Elmswell Hall and the appeal site forms part of the setting.

5. Assessing the effect of the proposed development on the setting and significance of the assets

- 5.1. In the previous section of my proof, I identified and described those attributes of setting that contribute to the significance of the designated heritage assets. In this section of my proof, I now summarise my assessment of specific effects of the proposed development on attributes of setting and significance to establish the degree of harm caused. This approach broadly equates to Step 3 of the advice on assessing impacts on setting provided in the guidance from Historic England, *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017).
- 5.2. The impacts I have identified are either visual impacts on the setting of the heritage asset, impacts removing an important historic landscape/topographical connection or impacts that affect people's experience of the asset and the ability to appreciate its significance. In arriving at my conclusions about the impact that the proposed development would have on the setting of the heritage assets, on their significance, and the ability to appreciate that significance, I have had regard to the relevant legal provisions, statutory duties, and local and national heritage policy and guidance.

Church of St Johns (Grade II* Listed)

- 5.3. With regard to the non-exhaustive 'Step 3 checklist' of potential attributes a development affecting setting, included in Historic England's guidance, I consider the following broad headings to be relevant in assessing this heritage asset:

Location and siting of development:

- Proximity to asset;
- Position in relation to relevant topography; and
- Position in relation to key views to, from and across.

Form and appearance of development:

- Prominence, dominance, or conspicuousness;
- Competition with or distraction from the asset; and
- Diurnal or seasonal change.

Wider effects of development:

- Change to built surroundings and spaces;
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc;
- Lighting effects and light spill;
- Change to general character (urbanising or industrialising); and
- Changes to land use, and cover, tree cover.

Permanence of development:

- Reversibility.

5.4. Many of the aspects included above overlap and can be considered in conjunction. To save repetition I have further detailed the elements above under the headings below.

Location and Siting

- 5.5. The proposed development will be located on the north side of the church on a site which would have been agricultural land since at least the fourteenth century when the church was built. The agricultural land in its undeveloped state contributes to the setting and significance of the church, and the ability to appreciate its significance. The removal of this long standing prominent agrarian landscape and its replacement with built development and landscaping will cause harm to the setting and significance of the Grade II* listed church. The Appeal Site is located in a prominent topographical situation which in the case of this proposal has remained fundamentally unchanged for hundreds of years. As such the extent, siting and layout of the proposed development can only be considered harmful given this will adversely impact upon how the church is experienced and appreciated in its wider setting. The development would completely remove the agrarian aspect of the church and there would be no remaining adjacent agrarian land as a result of the development.
- 5.6. The development will also coalesce the church into the settlement of Elmswell by removing intervening agrarian landscape. This will be harmful to the setting of the church as it will fundamentally compromise the understanding that the church was constructed separate and isolated to the settlement, a situation unchanged since the church's construction in the fourteenth century.
- 5.7. The proposed development will negatively impact upon the views identified in the assessment both towards and from the church. The proposal will remove the ability to best appreciate the church in its isolated agrarian setting as well as the ability to appreciate the best views of the church in combination with Church Cottages, the Almshouses and the Church of St Mary in Woolpit. The development will also affect the ability to appreciate the visual link between Elmswell Hall, the seat of the historic manor and the church which has been intentionally visible since the fourteenth century.
- 5.8. Whilst the built form has been located to the north, furthest away from the church, the loss of the agricultural land and replacement with landscaping will fundamentally change the character of this area in an adverse way. The built form will detract from longer views and the landscaping will change how the church is appreciated in this prominent location.

Form and Appearance of Development

- 5.9. The development will appear prominent in views towards and from the asset and have an urbanising effect on the church and its setting. The development will remove all adjacent agrarian land severing its prominent link to this land use which makes an important contribution to its setting. This type of impact, considering the existing modern development in the environs and this development which would sever the link of the agrarian landscape and cumulatively coalesce the church with Elmswell, is noted in GPA 3:

Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset. Negative change could include severing the last link between an asset and its original setting.

- 5.10. The undeveloped character of the Appeal Site will be fundamentally changed by buildings and landscaped areas which will bear no relation to the existing situation which makes such a positive contribution to significance. Whilst the experience of this prominent landmark building is a kinetic one, the viewpoints are useful to show the extent of the impact. **Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12** will be adversely impacted in the context of the church. These viewpoints show the Appeal Site forms the most prominent agricultural land in its setting from all views. The scheme will remove the use and fundamentally change the character of this land, adversely changing how we appreciated, experience and understand this building.
- 5.11. The adverse impact of the proposal is easily understood when viewing the existing modern development adjacent to the Appeal Site which has had some harm and the exacerbation of this, replacing the existing fields, is considered to be adverse.
- 5.12. It is further important to consider the diurnal and seasonal variances which will result in this change in use. During autumn and winter months the existing aesthetic relationships identified in this assessment will be enhanced as trees lose leaf and there is more visual permeability, especially with increased prominence of the church. Should the proposed development be constructed this will be more prominent and harmful in the views north from the church, and views south towards the church from the PRow will be obscured by development. Diurnal changes are also an important consideration in terms of the extensive lighting which will result from the proposed development and again how this will adversely change the experience of the Church of the St John. At present one can traverse the historic agrarian landscape, in the immediate and wider environs, appreciating the heritage asset within its setting. Once the development is constructed, the routes experienced in this area from PRows will be fundamentally and adversely altered. The experience of walking through an undeveloped agrarian landscape cannot be likened in experience to walking either through, or adjacent to, a housing development in terms of not only the built form but also the lighting, noise and other environmental conditions which result. This will change the way in which we experience, understand and appreciate the heritage asset.
- 5.13. With regards to mitigation this will be difficult. Screen planting or 'buffers' are commonly used to reduce harm. However, in this situation buffering of built form or screen planting is removing openness and views of the (removed) agrarian landscape, which make a positive contribution to setting and significance and as such this would be considered harmful.

Permanence of the development

- 5.14. The proposed development has been conceived as a permanent addition to the setting of the Church of the St John. The identified impacts on the setting and significance of the heritage asset, and on the ability to appreciate that significance, would be permanent and irreversible.

The Almshouses (Grade II Listed)

- 5.15. With regard to the non-exhaustive 'Step 3 checklist' of potential attributes a development affecting setting, included in Historic England's guidance, I consider the following broad headings to be relevant in assessing this heritage asset:

Location and siting of development:

- Proximity to asset;
 - Position in relation to relevant topography; and
 - Position in relation to key views to, from and across.
-

Form and appearance of development:

- Competition with or distraction from the asset; and
- Diurnal or seasonal change.

Wider effects of development:

- Change to built surroundings and spaces;
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc;
- Lighting effects and light spill;
- Change to general character (urbanising or industrialising); and
- Changes to land use, and cover, tree cover.

Permanence of development:

- Reversibility.

5.16. Many of the aspects included above overlap and can be considered in conjunction. To save repetition I have further detailed the elements above under the headings below.

Location and Siting

5.17. The proposed development will be located on the north side of the Almshouses on a site which would have been agricultural land since they were constructed. The agricultural land in its undeveloped state contributes to the setting and significance of the Almshouses, and the ability to appreciate their significance. The removal of this long standing prominent agrarian landscape and its replacement with built development and landscaping will cause harm to the setting of the Grade II listed building. The Appeal Site is located in a prominent topographical situation which in the case of this proposal has remained fundamentally unchanged for hundreds of years. As such the extent, siting and layout of the proposed development can only be considered harmful given this will adversely impact upon how the Almshouses are experienced and appreciated in its wider setting.

5.18. The development will also coalesce the Almshouses into the settlement of Elmswell by removing intervening agrarian landscape. This will be harmful and compromise the understanding that the Almshouses were constructed separate and isolated to the settlement, a situation unchanged since the Almshouses' construction.

5.19. The proposed development will negatively impact upon the views identified in the assessment both towards and from the Almshouses. The proposal will remove the ability to best appreciate the building in its agrarian setting.

5.20. Whilst the proposed built form has been located to the north, furthest away from the Almshouses, the loss of the agricultural land and replacement with landscaping will fundamentally change the character of this area in an adverse way. The built form will detract from longer views and the landscaping will change how the building is appreciated.

Form and Appearance of Development

5.21. The development will appear prominent in views towards and from the asset and have an urbanising effect on its setting. The development is located immediately adjacent to the rear gardens of the Almshouses, and whilst built form is located to the north, the change of character in this space will be very apparent and adverse. The experience from places such as **Viewpoint 6** will

be intrusively changed. The undeveloped character of the Appeal Site will be changed by buildings and landscaped areas which will bear no relation to the existing situation which makes such a positive contribution to significance. The link of isolated Almshouses in an agrarian setting will be severed by the development.

- 5.22. The adverse impact of the proposal is easily understood when viewing the existing modern development adjacent to the appeal site which has caused some harm and the exacerbation of this will be adverse.
- 5.23. Diurnal changes are also an important consideration in terms of the extensive lighting which will result from the proposed development and again how this will adversely change the experience of the Almshouses, particularly views from them. The view of an undeveloped agrarian field, from the Almshouses, will be changed to one that will be very apparently urbanised in character. This will arise from the built development and the environmental conditions that arise. This change will be further apparent in winter months.
- 5.24. At present one can traverse the historic agrarian landscape appreciating the heritage asset within its setting. Once the development is constructed the routes experienced in this area from PRowS will be fundamentally and adversely altered. The experience of walking through an undeveloped agrarian landscape cannot be likened in experience to walking either through, or adjacent to, a housing development in terms of not only the built form but also the lighting, noise and other environmental conditions which result. This will change the manner in which we experience, understand and appreciate the heritage asset. Views from **Viewpoint 6** will be adversely altered.
- 5.25. With regards to mitigation this will be difficult. Screen planting or 'buffers' are commonly used to reduce harm. Open views to the north, across the agrarian landscape, are found to contribute to significance and therefore any adverse development or screening can only be considered harmful.

Permanence of the development

- 5.26. The proposed development has been conceived as a permanent addition to the setting of the Almshouses. The identified impacts on the setting and significance of the heritage asset, and on the ability to appreciate that significance, would be permanent and irreversible.

Elmswell Hall (Grade II Listed)

- 5.27. With regard to the non-exhaustive 'Step 3 checklist' of potential attributes a development affecting setting, included in Historic England's guidance, I consider the following broad headings to be relevant in assessing this heritage asset:

Location and siting of development:

- Proximity to asset;
- Position in relation to relevant topography; and
- Position in relation to key views to, from and across.

Form and appearance of development:

- Competition with or distraction from the asset; and
- Diurnal or seasonal change.

Wider effects of development:

- Change to built surroundings and spaces;
- Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc
- Lighting effects and light spill;
- Change to general character (urbanising or industrialising); and
- Changes to land use, and cover, tree cover.

Permanence of development:

- Reversibility.

5.28. Many of the aspects included above overlap and can be considered in conjunction. To save repetition I have further detailed the elements above under the headings below.

Location and Siting

5.29. The proposed development will be located to the south of Elmswell Hall on a site which would have been agricultural land since both the moat and hall were constructed. The removal of this long standing prominent agrarian landscape, which was historically owned and farmed by Elmswell Hall, and its replacement with built development and landscaping will cause harm to the setting of the Grade II listed building. The Appeal Site is located in a prominent topographical situation which in the case of this proposal has remained fundamentally unchanged for hundreds of years. As such the extent, siting and layout of the proposed development can only be considered harmful given this will adversely impact upon how Elmswell Hall is experienced and appreciated in its wider setting. The built form of the development is located in the closest part of the Appeal Site to Elmswell Hall and this will exacerbate the urbanising adverse effect of the adjacent housing development and coalescing the hall into the settlement.

5.30. The proposed development will have a significant adverse effect on views from the south towards the hall from both the Church of St John and the Almhouses. Whilst the montages, produced by the appellant, suggest some visibility between the assets, the experience will be fundamentally changed as the Hall falls into the background of the building form of the development and views of the Church and Almhouses will be diminished in comparison to that shown in **Viewpoint 11**. The views towards Elmswell Hall will also be adversely altered and urbanised, as well as views identified from the other heritage assets and from Church Lane.

5.31. The loss of the agricultural land and replacement with urbanising built form and landscaping will fundamentally change the character of this area in an adverse way.

Form and Appearance of Development

5.32. The development will appear prominent in views towards and from the asset and have an urbanising effect on its setting. Whilst recent development has been intrusive, the undeveloped character of the appeal site will be fundamentally changed by buildings and landscaped areas which will bear no relation to the existing situation.

5.33. The adverse impact of the proposal is easily understood when viewing the existing modern development adjacent to the Appeal Site and the environs of, Elmswell Hall, which has had some harm and the exacerbation of this will be adverse. The cumulative change will further coalesce the historically isolated manor into the Elmswell settlement.

5.34. Diurnal changes are also an important consideration in terms of the extensive lighting which will result from the proposed development and again how this will adversely change the experience of

Elmswell Hall, particularly views from them. At present one can traverse the historic agrarian landscape appreciating the heritage asset within its settings. The experience of walking through an undeveloped agrarian landscape, which the hall has historically farmed, cannot be likened in experience to walking either through, or adjacent to, a housing development in terms of not only the built form but also the lighting, noise and other environmental conditions which result. This will change the manner in which we experience, understand and appreciate the heritage asset.

Permanence of the development

- 5.35. The proposed development has been conceived as a permanent addition to the setting of Elmswell Hall. The identified impacts on the setting and significance of the heritage asset, and on the ability to appreciate that significance, would be permanent and irreversible.

Overall Summary of Effect

- 5.36. The proposed development would cause harm to and fail to preserve the setting and significance of the Church of St John, the Almshouses and Elmswell Hall and to the ability of people to appreciate and enjoy their significance.
 - 5.37. In their current undeveloped state, the fields of the Appeal Site provide an appropriate rural setting to the three heritage assets, which contributes to the ability of people to appreciate and understand their significance. Consequently, the proposed development would damage the rural setting of the listed buildings and erode appreciation of the functional and historic relationship of the heritage assets with each other as well as their rural surroundings.
 - 5.38. The development of the Appeal Site will coalesce the three heritage assets into the settlement of Elmswell. This will have an adverse effect as all have been constructed and experienced in an isolated agrarian setting.
 - 5.39. The proposed development will have a negative effect on the setting of the Church of the St John, resulting in the alteration of the views towards and from it. This church is an ecclesiastical way-marker and as one would expect it can be experienced in its wider rural setting. The tower's position on a topographical highpoint was designed to be seen across the landscape to the north and the building's prominence in the landscape is very much discernible. The development will result in changes to the rural character of the church's surroundings, and its relationship with those surroundings when viewed from the north. This will reduce the ability to appreciate and understand the contribution the heritage asset's setting makes to its significance. The adjacent proposed landscaped area is not considered to meaningfully minimise the harm given the change of use will still be very aesthetically apparent. This change in use will also detract from views out from the church tower towards the rural landscape to the north, views which have been of this character for hundreds of years and reinforce the heritage asset's relationship with the agrarian landscape from where many of its parishioners would have travelled for service. The proposed development will adversely impact on many of the attributes of setting which contributes to the significance of the Church of St John.
 - 5.40. Similarly to the Church of St John, the Appeal Site forms part of the rural setting of the Almshouses and Elmswell Hall. The proposed development will detract from the rural landscape setting of the heritage assets and the way in which they are experienced, appreciated and understood both individually and together.
 - 5.41. In their current undeveloped state, the fields of the Appeal Site provide an appropriate rural setting for the Almshouses and Elmswell Hall and contribute to the ability of people to appreciate and enjoy
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their significance. The urbanising nature of the proposed development can only be considered to have an adverse impact on the heritage assets compromising some of the main elements of their setting which contribute to their significance.

- 5.42. Mitigation of harm is difficult in this specific development. Views across the open agrarian landscape, which the appeal site forms part, contribute to the significance of the heritage assets. Therefore, removal of the views with screen planting would also be harmful as noted in GPA3:

As screening can only mitigate negative impacts, rather than removing impacts or providing enhancement, it ought never to be regarded as a substitute for well-designed developments within the setting of heritage assets. Screening may have as intrusive an effect on the setting as the development it seeks to mitigate, so where it is necessary, it too merits careful design. This should take account of local landscape character and seasonal and diurnal effects, such as changes to foliage and lighting.

- 5.43. Where screen planting has been proposed this will be permeable in winter months and the site will still appear urbanised.
- 5.44. In my opinion the overall level of harm to the Church of St John, the Almshouses and Elmswell Hall would be and 'less than substantial harm' as referred to in the NPPF and therefore paragraph 215 of the NPPF would apply. In terms of the spectrum of less than substantial harm, the harm to the Church of St John is considered to be **medium**, harm to the Almshouses **low-medium** and the harm to Elmswell Hall **low-medium**.

- 5.45. Where the recent residential development has harmed the setting of heritage assets, it is important to note Historic England's *Setting of Heritage Assets* guidance (GPA3) that confirms:

Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset.

- 5.46. The harm identified should also be considered in the context of paragraph 212 of the NPPF which states that great weight should be given to a designated heritage assets conservation and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
- 5.47. It is important therefore to set out the starting point when considering the impact of the development upon the setting of the Church of St John, the Almshouses and Elmswell Hall. As determined by the Courts, S.66(1) of the Planning (LB&CA) Act 1990 is more than a material consideration. When it is considered that a proposed development would harm the setting of a listed building that harm must be given considerable importance and weight.
- 5.48. Case Law⁷ states that if the proposed development would cause harm to the setting of a listed building, there is a strong presumption against planning permission being granted. The presumption is a statutory one as set out in the LBA. The presumption to refuse permission can nonetheless be outweighed by material considerations, provided those considerations are powerful enough to do so. The presumption is not irrebuttable.
- 5.49. Accordingly, the starting point in considering the proposal in accordance with the Planning (LB&CA) Act 1990 is that planning permission should be refused unless there are any sufficiently significant material considerations (when balanced against the harm caused by the development upon the setting and significance of the Church of St John, the Almshouses and Elmswell Hall) to rebut that strong presumption. In other words, there is statutory presumption in favour of preserving

⁷ Lindblom J in R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks DC [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin)

the setting of the Listed Buildings and, notwithstanding other considerations, that presumption should be given considerable importance and weight.

- 5.50. However, the degree of harm still has to be assessed as part of the exercise of deciding whether there are sufficient 'overriding' factors to displace that harm.

6. Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1. I am the Historic Environment Manager at Place Services, Essex County Council. For over 20 years I have worked as a heritage consultant for the private and public sectors, working across the UK.
 - 6.2. The evidence I have prepared relates to the effect the proposed development will have on the significance of heritage assets including the contribution to significance made by their settings. This proof has assessed and considered harm to the following heritage assets:
 - Grade II* Listed: Church of St John (List Entry ID: 1032468);
 - Grade II Listed The Amshouses (List Entry ID: 1181926); and
 - Grade II Listed Elmswell Hall (List Entry ID: 1032472).
 - 6.3. In Section 3 of my proof, I outlined the significance of these heritage assets.
 - 6.4. Section 4 of my proof presents information that confirms the setting of the heritage assets contribute to their significance and that the Appeal Site makes a contribution to this setting. The undeveloped form of the appeal site positively contributes to the agrarian setting of all three heritage assets.
 - 6.5. Section 5 of my assessment has demonstrated that there would be harm to the setting and significance of the three heritage assets, and therefore their setting would not be preserved. The impacts I have identified are either visual impacts on the settings of the heritage assets or impacts that affect people's experience of the assets and the ability to appreciate their significance.
 - 6.6. In its current undeveloped state, the Appeal Site provides an appropriate setting for the designated heritage assets, which contributes to the ability of people to appreciate and understand their significance. Consequently, the proposed development would damage the setting of the listed buildings, eroding the appreciation of their rural landscape setting,
 - 6.7. The proposed development will have a negative effect on the setting of the designated heritage assets by fundamentally removing a large extent of agrarian landscape which contributes to their setting.
 - 6.8. In my opinion the overall level of harm to the Church of St John, the Almshouses and Elmswell Hall would be and 'less than substantial harm' as referred to in the NPPF and therefore paragraph 215 of the NPPF would apply. In terms of the spectrum of less than substantial harm, the harm to the Church of St John is considered to be medium, harm to the Almshouses low-medium and the harm to Elmswell Hall low-medium.
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7. Statement of Truth

- 7.1. I understand my duty to the Inquiry and I have complied, and will continue to comply, with that duty. I declare that the evidence which I have prepared and provide for this appeal is true. I confirm that this evidence identifies all facts which I regard as relevant to the opinion that I have expressed and that the Inquiry's attention has been drawn to any matter that would affect the validity of that opinion. I believe that the facts stated within this proof are true and confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.
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8. Appendices

A. Designation Descriptions

Church of St John⁸

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II*

List Entry Number: 1032468

Date first listed: 15-Nov-1954

Statutory Address: CHURCH OF ST JOHN, CHURCH ROAD

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Suffolk

District: Mid Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Elmswell

National Grid Reference: TL 98202 63599

Details

TL 96 SE ELMSWELL CHURCH ROAD

5/25 Church of St John 15.II.54

GV II*

Parish church, medieval. Restored 1862/64 by E.C. Hakewill and 1872 by J D. Wyatt. Nave, chancel, north and south aisles, west tower, south porch, north vestry and organ chamber. Flint and septaria rubble with freestone dressings (C19 work has knapped flint and rubble). Slated nave roof, plaintiled chancel roof. Flat aisle roofs behind parapets. Parapet gables. Mid and late C14 work in chancel: hoodmoulded south doorway, reticulated traceried east window and two south windows, ogee-headed piscina. Mid C14 south nave arcade of 5 bays, with fluted octagonal shafts and moulded capitals. Reset and restored late C14 aisle windows. Fine late C15 tower, with twin belfry windows on each face under a single hoodmould. Good flushwork tracery to parapets, and on buttress faces: at the head of each buttress is a canopied image niche. A frieze around the base has more panels with intricate tracery. West doorway with grotesque hoodmould corbels. Good C15 nave clerestory: 5 bays of traceried windows, between each is a pillar once supporting a figure, and beneath is a frieze moulded and with fleurons of a wide variety of designs. Tall C15 shafted tower arch. In 1872 the north aisle was added: the north doorway and several windows, all of late C13, were re-set in its walls: Y- traceried windows, and the doorway which has a heavy hoodmould with grotesque corbels. The C15 porch has 3 image niches over the entrance, whose jambs and shafts remain. Otherwise the porch was restored in 1862. Mid C14 inner south doorway. Interior fittings: The northern arm of a C15 parclose screen in the south aisle: 4 traceried panels with cresting above, the solid panels below have C20 painted figures. C15 octagonal limestone font: the sunk faces of the bowl have shields each bearing a letter, beneath it are angels, and birds support the stem. 5 good C15 poppyhead benches with traceried ends and buttresses in the north

⁸ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1032468?section=official-list-entry>

aisle, and 5 more in the south. A fine monument in the south aisle to Sir Robert Gardener (d.1619): a coloured reclining figure with his kneeling son beside him and an empty gown lying below. A coffered canopy on Corinthian columns and his Coat of Arms forming a crown. A C15 slab in the south aisle floor with large brass sinking: a figure within a large cross. The C19 work was as follows: Virtual rebuilding of south aisle by E.C. Hakewill in 1862, and remodelling of chancel in 1864. Addition of north aisle and rebuilding of main roof by J.D. Wyatt in 1872.

Listing NGR: TL9820263599

The Almshouses⁹

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1181926

Date first listed: 15-Nov-1954

Statutory Address: THE ALMSHOUSES, 1-3, CHURCH ROAD

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Suffolk

District: Mid Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Elmswell

National Grid Reference: TL 98262 63616

Details

TL 96 SE ELMSWELL CHURCH ROAD

5/28 Nos. 1 to 3 (consec) The 15.11.54 Almshouses (formerly listed as Elmswell Hill Almshouses)
GV II

Terrace of 3 cottages. Built as 6 almshouses, c.1614 for Sir Robert Gardener. Narrow red/buff bricks, with parapet gables. Slated roof: two internal chimneys of red/buff bricks with sawtooth shafts and a similar chimney rising from apex of each gable. One storey. 6 windows. Two-light mullioned windows with plastered surrounds in simulation of ashlar work. An ovolo-moulded label at the head: C20 steel casements with leaded lights. A central entrance doorway: plastered outer frame with cambered head and heavy wooden inner frame, and C18/C19 boarded door. A pair of doorways to each of the end cottages: plaster-work and label to match windows. Flat chamfered head supported by heavy wooden frame. The right-hand pair of doors are of battened plank form and may be original. The left-hand pair of boarded doors are unoriginal: one blocked, the other C18/C19. Over the central doorway is a gable, within which is a square sundial. Beneath the sundial is a square limestone panel inscribed: "SIR ROBERT GARDENER KT. SOMETIME LORD OF THESE MANORS OF ELMSWELL AND WOLPIT FOUNDED THIS ALMSHOUSE IN YE TIME OF HIS LIFE AN^o 1614 AND GAVE UNTO IT SUFFICIENT MAINTENANCE FOR SIX POORE WOMEN WIDOWS TO CONTINUE FOR EVER".

Listing NGR: TL9826263616

⁹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1181926?section=official-list-entry>

Elmswell Hall¹⁰

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1032472

Date first listed: 15-Nov-1954

Statutory Address: ELMSWELL HALL, SCHOOL ROAD

County: Suffolk

District: Mid Suffolk (District Authority)

Parish: Elmswell

National Grid Reference: TL 98416 64278

Details

TL 96 SE ELMSWELL SCHOOL ROAD

5/34 Elmswell Hall 15.11.54 (formerly listed as The Hall, Hall Lane)

-- II

Farmhouse, formerly manor house. Circa 1550-80 with major remodelling of early C19, and mid C20. Timber-framed, encased in early C19 gault brick with dentilled eaves cornice; some earlier plasterwork at rear. Concrete tiled hipped roof. Two external C16/C17 chimneys of orange/buff brick and an internal chimney of gault brick rebuilt in C20. 2 storeys. 3 windows. Early C19 window openings with flat arches of painted finely-gauged brick: mid C20 aluminium casements. C19 entrance doorway with C20 half-glazed panelled door: an open pediment of painted limestone on enriched console brackets: probably reset from an C18 building. Interior: a late C16 crosswing of about 4 bays to left has partially exposed framing: heavy principal posts and cambered tiebeams. Close studding with evidence for ogee-moulded and 4-centred arched doorways. Windbraced clasped purlin roof. To rear right is further C16 work, much altered. A little C17 wainscotting. A partially infilled medieval moat.

Listing NGR: TL9841664278

¹⁰ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1181926?section=official-list-entry>

B. Policy, Legislation and Guidance

- 8.1. The relevant planning policy, national and local guidance, and background studies I have taken into account when preparing my proof of evidence include:
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Area) Act 1990;
 - National Planning Policy Framework 2024;
 - National Planning Practice Guidance: Historic Environment 2019;
 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Note 2: Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment 2015;
 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets 2017;
 - Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance; and
 - BS 7913:2013 Guide to the conservation of historic buildings.
- 8.2. Key policies and guidance from these documents, relating to the assessment of the appeal site, are set out below.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990

- 8.3. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the statutory duty for development that affects the setting of listed buildings:
- “In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possess.”*
- 8.4. Case law¹¹ has clarified how the statutory duty is to be exercised when considering development affecting a listed building or its setting. The Courts have confirmed that, a decision maker should give "considerable importance and weight" to any harm to the setting and significance of a listed building and to the desirability of preserving that setting. Because of this, where such harm exists it gives rise to a "strong presumption" that planning permission should be refused. The presumption to refuse permission can nonetheless be outweighed by material considerations, provided these considerations are powerful enough to do so.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan¹²

- 8.5. Part 1 of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan was adopted in November 2023, following the publication of the Appointed Inspectors' Examination report, and will guide development in the districts of Babergh and Mid Suffolk until 2037. Policy LP19 is referred to in the reason for refusal.

¹¹ Most notably East Northamptonshire DC v SSCLG [2014] EWCA Civ 137 (Barnwell Manor wind turbine case) as further explained by the High Court in R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks DC [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin) (Penshurst Place affordable housing case)

¹² [babergh-and-mid-suffolk-joint-local-plan-part-1-nov-2023](#)

National Planning Policy Framework, NPPF (2024)

- 8.6. The planning policy context for the assessment of impact on the setting of heritage assets is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Annex 2: Glossary of the NPPF defines the terms 'heritage asset', 'significance' and 'setting'.

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

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

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

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.”

- 8.7. Paragraph 202 of the NPPF sets out that heritage assets should be conserved 'in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations'.
- 8.8. The following paragraphs in the NPPF are of particular importance when considering the impact of development on the setting of heritage assets:
- 8.9. Paragraph 204 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 8.10. Paragraph 212 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 8.11. Paragraph 213 sets out that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.
- 8.12. Paragraph 215 sets out that where less than substantial harm is involved this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 8.13. Paragraph 219 states local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to
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enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

National Planning Practice Guidance 2019 (NPPG)

- 8.14. National Planning Practice Guidance reiterates that the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle. Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm to a heritage asset. In paragraph 09, the PPG advises that what matters in assessing if a proposal might cause harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset, and confirms that significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed and the guidance confirms that harm may arise from development within the setting of a heritage asset. Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the NPPF. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases.
- 8.15. Paragraph 006 explains that in legislation and designation criteria, the terms 'special architectural or historic interest' of a listed building and the 'national importance' of a scheduled monument are used to describe all or part of what, in planning terms, is referred to as the identified heritage asset's significance.
- 8.16. In paragraph 013, it is stated that all heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.
- 8.17. Paragraph 013 confirms that the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting. This will vary over time and according to circumstance.
- 8.18. Furthermore, paragraph 013 states that Local Planning Authorities should consider the implications of cumulative change when assessing the impact of a proposed development on the setting of a heritage asset.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Note 2: Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment, 2015

- 8.19. The Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Note 2 (2015) provides a useful summary of the approach that Historic England promotes in cases where development may affect the significance of heritage assets. Paragraph 4 explains the overarching purpose of the guidance:

"Development proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets they may affect"

- 8.20. This is expanded in paragraphs 8 to 10 which suggest that decision making should be guided by a sound understanding of the level, extent and nature of this identified significance.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets, 2017

- 8.21. The Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) provides the base framework for the assessment of proposed changes to the setting of a heritage asset. This Good Practice Advice Note was published on 25th March 2015, and updated December 2017, both superseding The Setting of Heritage Assets (2011).
- 8.22. Relevant extracts from the Advice Note include:

“Extensive heritage assets, such as historic parks and gardens, landscapes and townscapes, can include many heritage assets, historic associations between them and their nested and overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own. A conservation area is likely to include the settings of listed buildings and have its own setting, as will the hamlet, village or urban area in which it is situated (explicitly recognised in green belt designations).” (paragraph 8)

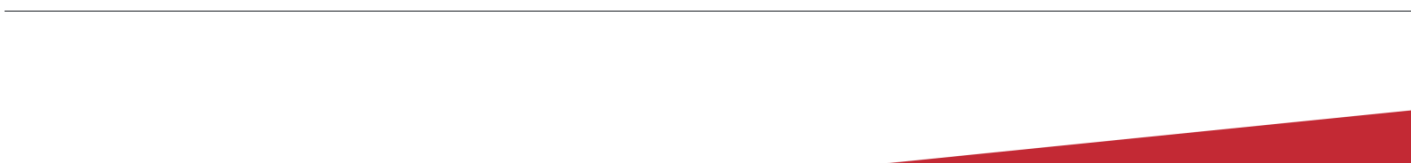
“Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance.” (paragraph 9).

Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance, 2019

- 8.1. To assess the heritage significance of the identified heritage assets, this assessment has drawn guidance from Historic England which recommends making assessments under the categories of: Archaeological interest, Architectural and artistic interest, and Historic interest. These interests together contribute to the overall significance of a place or site.
- 8.2. These attributes of significance are described as:
- Archaeological interest**
- 8.3. There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- Architectural and artistic interest**
- 8.4. These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.
- Historic Interest**
- 8.5. An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our

nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

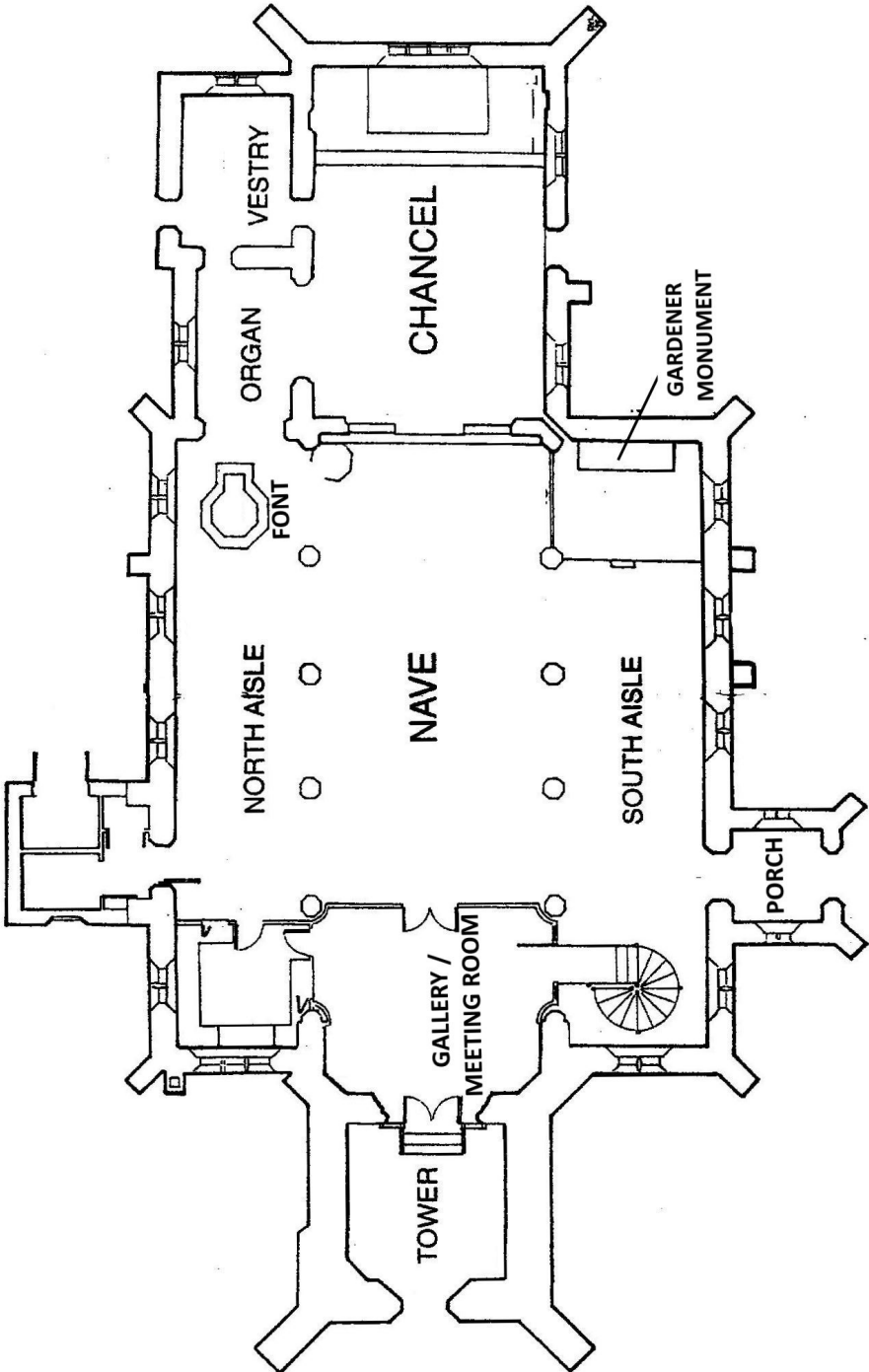
C. Church Guide: St John the Divine, Elmswell



St John the Divine, Elmswell



Church guide



CHURCHYARD
CROSS

WELCOME

Welcome to the church of St John the Divine, Elmswell. There has been a church on this site since before the Norman Conquest, set on high ground as a beacon of the Christian Faith. Here God has been worshipped and the Gospel of the Good News of Salvation and new life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ has been proclaimed over a thousand years.

The congregation welcome you to share in the beauty and serenity of this sacred place, and to explore the history of the building and its contents. After an Outline History the guide around the church begins on page 8 with the Chancel.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go to Jane Cummins who typed the text from my 'medieval' handwriting; to Howard Stephens for the Latin translations; to my wife Christine for help in interpreting various aspects of the furnishing and fabric; to Jean and Derek Folkard, for help with the more recent history of the church and who created the lay-out of this guide to the church they have loved and served for 40 years.

Clive Paine, August 2016



OUTLINE HISTORY

Elmswell and Bury Abbey

King Eadwig (955-59) gave the manor and probably the church of Elmswell, to support and maintain the chapel containing St Edmund's body at Bedericesworth (later Bury St Edmunds).

Since the early 12th-century until the Dissolution of Bury Abbey in 1539, the income from Elmswell manor was allocated for the use of the Abbot. The administration centre of the manor was Elmswell Hall to the north of the church. The Hall was also one of the country retreats of the Abbots of Bury. Abbot John Brinkley died here in 1378 and Abbot William Curtys entertained the young king Henry VI here in early 1434.

The Abbot was not only the Lord of the manor, but also Patron of the living, appointing the parish priests until 1539. The link between Elmswell church and the Abbey is emphasised by displaying the Arms of St Edmund on the north parapet of the tower, which faces the Hall, and on the south-east and south-west buttresses. The letters 'Ed'

occur on the north-west buttress, two panels on the east parapet have the capital letter 'E', for St Edmund, although both also combine the names of local benefactors.

The Norman Church

The earliest mention of a church in Elmswell is in the Domesday Book of 1086 when a church and 20 acres of glebe land, to support the priest, were recorded. Nothing visible remains from this Norman church, which would have had a shorter chancel and nave. Based on the size of surviving local Norman churches, the east end of the chancel would have been level with the south priest's door, and the west end of the nave just east of the north and south doors. The chancel would have been narrower than at present and the side walls of the nave would have been on the line of the arcades.

Chancel and Nave

The Norman chancel was rebuilt and enlarged in the 14th-century Decorated style. The chancel arch, (but not the Victorian carved capitals), the four-light east window with reticulated tracery, the south-east window

with lower window sill for a sedilia, the restored ogee-arched and cusped piscina and the south door all survive from this period. The south-west window was replaced in the 15th-century Perpendicular style. A plan of 1827 shows a north-west window, which was removed when the organ chamber was added in 1872. The nave was lengthened to the west in the 14th-century, at which time there were neither aisles, arcades or clerestory windows. When in 1872, the present nave roof was constructed the scar of an earlier lower gabled roof resting on the north and south walls at the present string-course level, was discovered over the tower arch. This also gives us evidence that there was a 14th-century tower contemporary with the nave. The 14th-century south and north doorways were reset in the aisle walls when they were added in the 15th and 19th-centuries.

South Aisle

In the early 15th-century a south aisle with a five-bay arcade was added to the nave. John Brumpton, Rector of Woolpit, requested in 1406 to be buried in Elmswell church, with his mother. He also gave the huge

sum of £3 6s 8d to ‘the fabric of an aisle in Elmswell church’. In 1472 William Hert, bequeathed £1 for the upkeep of ‘le Elee of St John the Baptist’. The aisle was designed to have a separate screened chapel at the east end. The arch between the nave and the chapel has more elaborate and delicate mouldings than the other four arches which have mouldings towards the nave and chamfers towards the aisle. The arcade piers have unusual concave sides and two different types of capitals. All the windows were originally in the Perpendicular style, similar to the south-west window of the chancel and the west window of the tower. The windows were all replaced in 1862 with copies of the earlier Decorated style.

Nave



Later in the 15th-century the nave walls were heightened to provide a clerestory stage with five

windows on each side, even though there was only an aisle to the south. The base of the new clerestory stage is marked by a horizontal string-course, carved with decorative panels, beneath the windows.

The new roof was supported by semi-circular shafts between the clerestory windows, resting on the string-course. In 1872 the scar of this was discovered above the tower arch. The roof had a very low camber, or pitch, similar to Lavenham, Long Melford, Bradfield St George and Hesselst. This style of roof dates from the late 15th or early 16th-centuries. The massive sum of £10 was bequeathed in 1496, by Edward Walter 'to the help and sustentation of the church' which was probably used for the clerestory and new roof.

Tower

The 14th-century tower was rebuilt in the late 15th-century starting in the 1470s. In 1476 Margaret Walter of Elmswell gave £2 'to the fabric of the new tower' and in the same year Margaret Jeffray of Woolpit bequeathed 6s.8d to 'the new tower of Elmswell'.



The 76 foot high tower was built by Thomas Aldryche of North Lopham, whose trademark of a circle within a circle appears on the south side of the base-course. An unusual feature is the pair of windows in the top of the fourth stage below the battlements. This pairing of windows is found here, and in 13 other Suffolk churches. The east wall of the earlier tower must have been incorporated into the new work, as it had scars of both the 14th-century and 15th-century roofs. This is also evidence that the clerestory and roof were not built until after the tower was completed.

Margaret Walter (d.1476) is not commemorated on the tower, but she and/or her executors, one of

whom was John Hedge (d.1504) of Bury, who may have been her brother, conceived the magnificent display of flushwork panels on the base-course, buttresses and battlements. These include, secular and religious initials, trade-marks, religious symbols and geometric designs, some no doubt from the Aldryche pattern-book.

The flushwork panels with names or initials include commemorations of Margaret Walter's, first husband William Hert (d.1472) and her second husband Edmund Walter (d.1497) on the lower stage. Richard Scott, a former Abbot of Bury (1469-74), Thomas Mandervill Rector of Elmswell (1488-1501) on the third stage; the Abbot of Bury, Thomas Rattlesden (1479-97) and Margaret Walter's son John, a monk at Bury known as John of Elmswell, on the parapet, Thomas Rattlesden (1479-97) and Margaret Walter's son John, a monk at Bury known as John of Elmswell, on the parapet.

All this dating evidence gives a period c1476-c1490 for the construction of the tower. Based on the Aldryche contract to build Helmingham tower in 1488 at 6

feet a year, The tower here would have taken 13 years to construct and decorate.

The flushwork decoration of the tower will be described in detail in the later section '*What to see Outside*'

Porch

A porch was added to the aisle in the late 15th-century as the final stage in the church's development. A Latin inscription over the outer door recorded c1650 translated as 'Pray for the souls of John Hedge and Agnes his wife'. They lived in St James' parish in Bury, John (d.1504) and Agnes (d.1505) were buried in the Great Churchyard there. Margaret Walters, mentioned above, lived in Elmswell but wanted to be buried in St James' cemetery (Great Churchyard) in Bury, although both her husbands were Elmswell men.

By 1827 only the first letter 'O' for 'Orate' (pray) remained of the Latin inscription. Either side of the outer door were the initials I (for J) and H (for John Hedge). When the porch was rebuilt in 1862 only the letter I survived.

Victorian Restorations

The church remained structurally unchanged until the Victorian Restorations between 1862 and 1872.

In 1862 Revd Joseph Lawton, Rector 1809-63, engaged 'Mr Hakewill', Architect of London (probably John Henry) to rebuild the south aisle and porch. As part of this rebuilding the three original Perpendicular windows were replaced with four in the earlier Decorated style.

In 1864 Revd William Colbeck Luke, Rector 1863-78, whose father was Patron of the living, employed Robert Withers of London to restore the chancel and add a vestry on the north side. Revd Luke and his relatives paid for the restoration of the tower, the removal of the western gallery, stained glass in the west window and a new organ in 1868. In 1872 Luke commissioned John Drayton Wyatt to restore the nave including a new roof, a north aisle, arcade and organ chamber. Thus within 10 years the church had undergone a complete 'make over' including structural alterations, new stained glass windows, furnishings, texts and

increasing the area of the church by 28%.

In the parish Revd Luke built and paid for a new Rectory, the National (Church of England) School, a Village Club and Refreshment Rooms. In 1865 he was described as 'a young clergyman (36), a good instance of the young and growing vitality now so observed in the established church'. Revd William Macfarlane, Rector 1878-93, also became the Patron of the living in 1879 and Lord of the Manor in 1885.

Both Luke and Macfarlane were followers of the High Church 'Oxford Movement'. Luke had introduced choral services by 1864, an organ in 1868, surpliced choir by 1872 and altered the dedication from St John to St John the Evangelist by 1872. His next parish was the 'extreme' ritualistic St Matthias, Kensington. Macfarlane had altered the dedication to St John the Divine by 1879, less than a year after his institution and, erected the metal screen in the chancel arch in 1884. If the stone mensa on top of the communion table is Victorian, one of these two clergy were responsible.



20th-century to present

The major alteration came in 1990-93 when Revd John Perrot, Rector 1978-2003, and the P.C.C. had the vision to re-order the tower and the west end of the nave and aisles.

Financed from the sale of the former church school, designed by the Whitworth-Co Partnership and constructed by Valiants of Barrow, the elegant gallery and sweeping staircase was erected in the western bay, almost in the position of the 18th-century Singers Gallery removed in 1868.

The area of the gallery created extra seating for the congregation which more than compensated for the removal of 15 benches. The gallery extends across the west end of the nave and north aisle. Below the gallery, in the nave is a meeting room and in the north aisle a kitchen. The ground and first floors of the tower became rooms for Sunday school and Youth work. In addition a north 'porch' was built to contain loos and the boiler.

In 1993/4 Valiants were awarded two trade certificates for the high

standard of their craftsmanship on this project. The reordering was dedicated 1st June 1993 by Bishop John Dennis.

In 2014, a removable stage platform was fitted at the front of the nave. This is carpeted in red to complement the chancel carpet and the red pew runners, which had been funded by the Ladies Lunch group a couple of years previously.

In November 2017, thieves stole the lead from the roof of the south aisle. Thanks to having a roof alarm installed a couple of years earlier, insurance covered most of the repair work. The roof is now stainless steel. Although lead is a preferable material, the current roof will still last for 100 years and is less likely to attract thieves.



CHANCEL

In the pre-Reformation period the high altar was flanked by a large statue of St. Mary on the right, to which money was left to paint the tabernacle and maintain a light burning before it in 1471. To the left was our patron saint St John, the earliest reference to which is 1461. On the south side (right) of the sanctuary were the piscina, an arched recessed drain where the priest could wash his hands during the Mass and the communion vessels afterwards. The lower windowsill provided a sedilia or seat for the servers assisting at Mass. On the north side was the Easter Sepulchre, to which wax for a light to burn on Easter Sunday was left in 1471. In 1500 £2 was bequeathed towards 'making a new sepulchre'. During the 1864 restoration, a recess was created to give the impression of either a sepulchre or aumbry. Also in 1471 'sufficient money' was left to make a canopy over the high altar.

Most of what we see today is a result of the 1864 restoration by the architect Robert Withers.

Sanctuary

The Caen stone reredos, with a central pediment and pierced openings, was erected in 1864 but painted in 1872 by Revd William Francis, curate of Gt Saxham. The central panel has the Pelican in Piety, symbolic of



the sacrifice of Jesus surrounded by ears of wheat, flanked by panels with vines and grapes, symbols of the Holy Communion. The four lozenge panels either side have fleur-de-lis. There are traces of similar painting on the piscina and aumbry. The marble credence shelf is supported by two columns of three quatrefoils. These used to flank the

communion table until the 1960s, when the table was moved away from the wall. The arches of the piscina, aumbry and vestry doors are outlined in red, as are some of the masonry joints.

The communion table and rails date from 1864, although the centre section was added in 1926, in memory of Mrs Head of St John's House. David Davy, in 1827, recorded that the communion table was raised two steps and that the rails were on three sides in 17th-century fashion. The table top is a stone mensa with five crosses (for the five wounds of Jesus) carved into the surface. A pre-Reformation mensa, with five crosses was recorded in the south-chapel in 1750. There is no evidence to show if this is the old mensa recarved in the Victorian period, or a Victorian replacement.

The Bishop's chair and desk were the gift of Revd William Macfarlane, in 1879. The eagle's head, the symbol of St John, carved on the chair back is similar to that on the metal screen of 1884.

The choir benches, with panelled backs and foliage on the arms; the two clergy stalls, with Stars

of David, which can also be seen on the tower flushwork; the Minton floor tiles; the arch-braced chancel roof and the vestry all date from 1864.

Stained Glass

The three windows show significant events in the life of Jesus, from His baptism to His Kingship in heaven.

The east window of 1864 was given by Harriet Connell (a cousin of Revd Luke) in memory of her parents and husband.



The four scenes have a verse from the litany underneath ending with ‘Good Lord deliver us’ The Baptism of Jesus has ‘By Thy Holy Baptism’; The Garden

of Gethsemane ‘By thy Agony and Bloody Sweat’; The Crucifixion, ‘By Thy Cross and Passion’ and the Burial of Jesus, ‘By Thy Precious Death and Burial’.

Above the four large panels are the four Evangelists, two of whom are also Apostles, all of whom are depicted in the tracery quatrefoils. One of the Apostles in the second level, second from right, has been placed back to front.

The south-east window dates from 1868 and is signed ‘Alexander Gibb, Bedford Square, London’. The two lights depict the Resurrection and the empty Tomb, under the text ‘He is not here, but is risen’.

The south-west window dates from 1878, by Lavers, Barrand and Westlake, and is in memory of Katherine (1856-61) and Francis (1860-75), two children of Revd Luke and his wife Julia. The scenes show the Ascension and Christ in Majesty.

Monuments

At the restoration of 1864 all the monuments were moved to the west wall, where they can go unnoticed. On the south side are

monuments to Revd Joseph Lawton (1774-1863), his mother Cecilia (1737-1813) and his wife Catherine (1775-1842). On the north are three identical monuments to their children, Charles (1811 -46), Frederick (1813-52), both of whom died in Jamaica, Edward (1800-54) and Elizabeth (1804-62). In 1828 Elizabeth married Charles Harsant, of Wickham Market, who died nine weeks later.

Organ



An organ, by Prosser of London, was placed on the south side of the chancel in 1868, which was moved into the new organ chamber, on the north side, in 1872. A new two-manual organ by Henry Jones of South Kensington was dedicated in 1901. The organ was restored in 1972 and again in 2010.

Portable Font

Given in memory of Dr Arthur Walford (Jack) Taylor 1898-1975.

NAVE

Only the chancel arch and the north and south doors survive from the 14th-century nave. The south wall was replaced with a five-bay arcade in the early 15th-century and the north in 1872. The north and south doors were moved to the new aisle outer walls.

The carved capitals of the chancel depicting a bishop and a king, and the low stone screen were added in 1864. The iron gates were made by William Syer of Gt Saxham in 1872. The metal screen, topped by the eagle of St John, was the gift of Revd William Macfarlane. Rector, Patron and Lord of the Manor, in 1884, as is recorded on a brass plaque to the south. In 1827 David Davy noted that the chancel arch was ‘a carved wooden screen’, the surviving dado of the medieval roodscreen, over which were the royal arms of George III. There is an early reference to the roodscreen and loft in 1447 when a cow and a wether sheep were left to provide

money to paint the image (? of Jesus) on the rood loft.

Benches

The box pews were removed in 1864 and rush-seated chairs and 15th-century benches afforded seating for the congregation. In 1872 the 15th-century benches were moved into the aisles. The chairs were replaced by the present oak benches, of a similar design to those at St James', now the Cathedral, and St John's Bury. The arms and high backs of the benches are decorated with ball flowers. The Incorporated Church Building Society gave a grant of £50 towards this work, as is recorded on a board in the tower. The floors of the aisles between the benches were laid with Godwin's tiles.

Pulpit

The oak pulpit, by Lot Jackaman of Westgate Street, Bury, was the gift of William Luke Esq, Patron and father of the Rector. The stone base has shafts of Cornish serpentine marble by Mrs Farrow of St Andrews Street, Bury.

The pulpit fall was made in 1998 by Patricia Catton (d.2014) who also coordinated the Millenium Kneelers, each of which has a

Lorraine Cross with a depiction of an Elmswell building, heraldry, religious symbol or village organisation.



Roof

The roof, clerestory windows and carved string-course are best seen from the gallery. The various scars of the earlier roof lines, mentioned earlier in the *Outline History* section, were all plastered over in 1872. However, the low-cambered 15th-century roof was replaced in 1814 with a gabled roof with a flat plaster ceiling. The carpenters' work was carried out by Messrs Pratt and Betts, and the ceiling by William Mulley of Elmswell. At the 1872 restoration the 1814 roof was in

turn replaced by the present roof of stained pine. The single hammer beam roof has embattled hammers, collars and cornice, the latter with quatrefoil decorations. Below the hammers are carved oak canopies, below which it was intended to have figures of saints standing on the stone columns of the 15th-century roof. This scheme, for reasons of finance, was never carried out.

Against each of the hammers are shields painted by Revd William Francis of Gt Saxham. The eastern pairs have the cross and instruments of the passion on the north and the crown of thorns on the south; intersecting triangles (Trinity) and Ihc (for Jesus); SI (for St John) and the virgin's lilies; crossed swords (St Paul)

and AM (Ave Maria) and at the west end three crowns (the diocese of Ely and also St Edmund) and crossed keys (St Peter).

The string course below the clerestory windows dates from the 15th-century, but many of the carvings were renewed or replaced in 1872. The carvings include leaves, flowers, crosses, lions' faces, human figures and faces, a pair of chalices and other devices copied from the flushwork on the tower.

Texts

The texts over the chancel arch, the organ chamber, north door, tower arch and west window all date from 1872.



SOUTH AISLE

The early 15th-century aisle, first mentioned in 1406, originally had Perpendicular three-light windows. The east window was blocked up by the Gardener monument c.1620. The external outline of the window shown on the drawing of 1836, was covered by flushwork decorations in 1864. There were two windows between the east end and the porch, one to the west of the porch and another in the west wall. These four were replaced with five two-light Decorated style windows in 1864.

The east end of the aisle was designed to be screened off as a separate chapel. The mouldings on the arch here are more elaborate than the rest of the arcade.

In the pre-Reformation period the altar of St John the Baptist stood against the east wall. In 1472 William Hert bequeathed £1 for the upkeep of the aisle of St John the Baptist. To the right of the altar was a piscina and a squint to the left. When the altar was removed at the Reformation in the 1540s the piscina, for washing the communion vessels, and the squint, to synchronize the

elevation of the host with the High Altar, no longer had any use and were subsequently blocked up. In 1864 the piscina was discovered, restored and reset at the west end and the squint opened up again.

Monuments

Sir Robert Gardener (1539-1620) of Breccles Hall, Norfolk, became Lord of the manor of Elmswell in 1590 and of Woolpit in 1610.



He was Chief Justice of Ireland 1585-1604 and Lord Lieutenant 1597-99. He fought against the Irish leader Tyron and saw off a Spanish invasion at Kinsale in

1600. In 1607 King James sent him to the Channel Islands to make an 'extent' or definitive list of the Crown properties and income. He returned to England to 'live out his days in piety, justice and charity'. He died at Breccles Hall on 12th February and was buried here on 19th February 1620, 'the phavorite of his family, the oracle of his acquaintances, the glory of his friends, the stay of his country'.

Earlier in 1615 he had founded the Almshouses, to the east of the church, for six widows, three from Elmswell and three from Woolpit. In 2015 the 400th anniversary as commemorated by a thanksgiving service and the dedication of a bench in the Almshouse garden.

Sir Robert requested to be buried 'in the little Isle' and that a 'decent and convenient' monument be made to himself and his son William (d.1603), who was buried in the chancel of Ixworth church.

The original sketch, called 'the Plotte' by the sculptor William Wright survives, together with a description by Wright or Sir Robert's executor, of the

proposed monument. A copy of the description is displayed near the monument.

The coffered arch, supported by Corinthian columns, over the effigies is decorated with flower panels, the background with strapwork and the base with shields, weapons, masks, musical instruments and ribbons. Sir Robert wears his red and gold robes of office and his black judge's cap, and holds a book in one hand and gloves in the other. At his feet is a rhinoceros, his family crest, and the effigy of his son William. The faces and hands of both figures were to be in 'fleshly colours...like to (their) complexion, havor (bearing) and similie'.

On the floor are his judge's robes and pieces of armour, which may indicate that he has laid down his earthly office, or that the robes are crumpled as if just vacated by his body at the moment of resurrection.

The two Latin panels translate as 'He alone is wise, and dear to God, who in living is diligent, in his work measured. Who benefits posterity and how he lived bears witness to this'.

John Brumpton, Rector of Woolpit, 1390-98 and 1405-6, (d.1406). Under the matting is a large gravestone (1.13 x 2.60m) with indents for brasses. These show an eight-foil cross on a long shaft standing on a stepped base. In the centre of the cross was the image of a priest in a cope. The marginal inscription included symbols of the four evangelists in the corners. John Brumpton bequeathed £3 6s 8d to the fabric of the aisle in 1406.

Screen



The north side is early 15th-century, the west side is a combination of 15th-century with Victorian details and carvings. The north side has painted panels, of c.1904, applied to the nave side of the dado.

Bays one, three and four on the north have a cusped ogee arch with a central mullion, the whole

surmounted by tracery and quatrefoils. The second bay has a cusped ogee arch unlike the other three, with no central mullion and a face above the arch.

The spandrils or corners, of the lower panels on the nave side, have tiny carvings of lions, an eagle, a long billed bird and leaves. On the aisle side are carvings of a lion with a tight curly mane, a squirrel and leaves. Similar carvings were copied in the Victorian period on both sides of the western screen, which has a central entrance arch into the chapel.

Benches

There are four early 16th-century benches, one in the chapel and three in the aisle; which were in the nave until 1872. The seat backs and one poppy-headed end are original, the other ends and poppy-heads are Victorian. The original ends are carved with window tracery and quatrefoils. The front edges have buttresses, surmounted by a 'pad' where a carved figure has been removed, either at the Reformation or the Civil War. One end has a shield with a name carved in relief, which has been hacked off, of which the first letter is 'A',

followed by an abbreviation mark. The best 'reading' that can be obtained is A(rchangel) michael. The shape of the shields, with-concave sides, three swags at the top and four indents at the bottom, indicates a date of c.1500-20. This poppy-headed bench end was originally part of a reading desk (see the rebate for the reading slope on the inside). The back of this bench with three-tiers of high quality carved decoration was fixed to the end in 1872.

This is in the form of an oak triptych designed and made by Messrs A. R. Mowbray of Oxford, and dedicated as the Roll of Honour in August in 1917.

The outer panels had the names of the 109 Elmswell men on active service, the centre panel had the names of the 17 men who had made the supreme sacrifice to that date. It now records 118 men on active service and the sacrifice of 29 men 1914-18 and ten men 1939-46.

War Memorial





TOWER

Stained Glass

The west window of 1868 is in memory of Captain Tong of the 14th Light Dragoons, erected by his widow, a relation of Revd Luke. The glass was made by Powell of Whitefriars, using their patent pressed-glass process. The lights have tactile lozenges with ihc (Jesus) and cross-like leaves, the borders have cabochon-like beads.

Bells

In a national survey of 1553, Elmswell had 'three great bells'. Only one of the present five bells

was included in that survey. The earliest bell was made in Bury c.1480, by Reignold or Thomas Chirch, and has the inscription 'Sancte Edmundi Ora Pro Nobis' (St Edmund Pray for us). The other four were made by Steven Tonni of Bury, 1582, John Draper, Thetford, 1616, Robert Gurney, Bury, 1670 and John Darbie, Ipswich 1677.

Lead

In the meeting room is displayed a section of lead removed from the roof of the tower in 1980. The panel has the names of D. Pattle and J Bugg, churchwardens in 1805.

NORTH AISLE

The aisle and organ chamber were added in 1872. The arcades were copied from the south aisle.

Benches

These five early 16th-century benches, like those in the south aisle, were moved from the nave and restored in 1872. The front bench has a carved back with battlements and zig-zag carvings, the others have mouldings on the backs.

Font

The sides of the bowl have multi-cusped circles containing shields each with a large initial. Starting with the east face and moving anti-clockwise they read I (for J) H, E, D, G, E, a plain shield (added in 1872) and a shield with three scallop shells. Below the bowl are angels with their wings tucked in. The stem has lozenge patterns on four sides, the other four sides have eagles standing in nests and a bull. Before the 1872 restoration there were four eagles (representing St John) whose heads had been broken off. In 1872 Mrs Luke, wife of the Patron and mother of the Rector had the font restored. Three of

the eagle's heads were replaced in different attitudes, the fourth eagle was replaced by a bull representing St Luke (and the Luke family).



As mentioned earlier John and Alice Hedge who lived in St. James' parish in Bury and died 1504-5, were associated with the south porch, although neither of them mentioned Elmswell in their wills. However they had two sons, William, parson of Groton and John, a priest. In 1499 William Mandervill the Rector, whose name is on the south-east buttress of the tower, was found to 'lack sufficient knowledge for the administration of seven sacraments' and was

ordered to 'procure to services of a suitable chaplain'. Could John Hedge have come to Elmswell as that chaplain and as executor to his parents restored the porch and given the font in their memory? The three scallop shells on the font are obviously a reference to St James. There is also a reset corbel near the south door which has the head of a pilgrim with a scallop shell on top.

WHAT TO SEE OUTSIDE



In the porch note the 14th-century reused doorway into the church. When the porch was rebuilt in 1862 some of the graffiti on the columns of the outer door, were reset upside

down! On the right is RW 1632 IB and TC GTH 17--. The oak and glass outer door dates from 2012. Outside the porch has three ogee niches, the centre one with a shield. Over the entrance is the opening of Psalm 100. 'Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his court with praise and be thankful unto him and bless his name'. Stand by the churchyard gate in memory of James Mulley, Builder and Undertaker (d.1973), to see the south parapet and south-east buttress of the tower.

The 76 foot tall tower has a base course, four diminishing stages and battlements. The base, buttresses and battlements all have large areas of flushwork displays of religious symbols, geometric designs, initials and inscriptions. The buttresses, except where masked by the nave and south aisle, have four flushwork panels on the first stage, three on the second, four on the third and then an ogee topped panel and a statue niche. Finally the sides and buttresses are topped by a parapet with tall battlements.

South Parapet: The base of the parapet on all sides is a frieze of quatrefoils. Above are two rectangular panels with a large

lozenge in each, filled with quatrefoils. Higher on the 'steps' of the battlements are five circles with initials. From the west (left) is the MR for Mary (Maria or Maria Regina); AP for Alpha, a five-pointed star in the letter G, with a crown over, for Gabriel, the Annunciation and the star of nativity, an I bisecting a C for Jesus Christ, and letters that may be ID.

South-east buttress: The aisle covers the lower stages, then comes a star of David; a triangle for the Holy Trinity, a shield, concentric circles, flower for St Mary, panel with 'Syr Willya(m) Mandervyle' (Rector 1488-1503) above two chalices and hosts, flanking the crown and crossed arrows of Bury Abbey, a tall double ogee-headed panel with a pot of lilies for St Mary, both the pot and the stem are decorated with bands of dots, and a statue niche for St Mary. Although there are canopied niches with bases for statues at this position on the other three corners, this was the main display, with a stepped canopy extending up into the battlements. Above the canopy on the corner of the parapet is a heart-shaped symbol, with a human figure on either

side, which must be for the Hert family.

The inner spandrels of the tower window both have quatrefoils.

Churchyard Cross To the right of the porch is the churchyard cross, the base of which is late 15th or early 16th-century. The shaft and carving of the rood figures at the top date from 1898 when the whole was restored in memory of Revd William Luke (d.1895) by his widow Julia. The work was carried out by Hanchets, stonemasons, of Bury.



The four sides of the base have cusped quatrefoil panels, the west one of which is carved with the head of St John the Baptist on a charger, which the antiquarian Tom Martin drew in 1750. The base of the shaft has flowers and 'hanging' shields, very similar to the one on a south aisle bench.

The south aisle was rebuilt in 1862 and all the flushwork decorations on the porch and aisle were copied from the originals on the tower.

Move to the angle of the aisle and chancel. The east end of the aisle has linked crosses in flushwork. This extra thickness covered the arch of the former east window, blocked c.1620 by the Gardener

monument. Note how this thickening of the wall nearly overlaps the edge of the aisle window.

Chancel The priest's door, with a plain hoodmould and renewed side mouldings is 14th-century.

High up on the buttress to the left of the door is a mass-dial with the stump of the gnomon still in situ.

Turning the corner, the four-light east window was renewed in 1864 but copied from the 14th-century original. Opposite the window is the grave of Matthew Marsh (1643-95). The inscription is in a cartouche with an angel head above, flanked by skeletons holding spades, standing on sand-



clocks which are in turn supported by angel's heads.

Turning the corner to the north side, the vestry of 1864 is followed by an organ chamber and aisle of 1872, with a 'porch' added in 1993.

Look up to see the details of the east parapet and the north-east buttress of the tower.

East parapet: This has two large rectangular panels with a lozenge in each. In the centre surrounded by a twisted and dotted wreath, is the letter I bisecting an E, for John Elmswell, monk of Bury and son of Margery Hert/Walter (d.1476). The same letters are repeated at the four outer corners of each panel. The four inner corners, where the two panels abut each other have, I bisecting S for St John. This makes each panel look like a medieval altar mensa with five wounds or crosses. Above on the 'steps' of the battlements are four circles with initials, which from left to right are M for St Mary, ? , IB for St John the Baptist and SI for St John.

The inner spandrils of the tower windows have a shield and a five-pointed star.

North-east Buttress: The nave covers the two lower stages. Above the roof line is a rose for St Mary, the sacred heart of Jesus, with spurting blood and water on either side – which must also be a reference to the Hert family, four quatrefoils in a circle, the letter R on an oval with two circles both divided by a horizontal line. This is probably for Thomas Rattlesden, Abbot 1479-97, and the circles could be hosts. Then comes the ogee-headed panel and statue niche.

Move to the edge of the churchyard to see the north parapet of the tower. Be careful at this point as the land falls away beyond the hedge.

North parapet: This parapet overlooks the Abbot's retreat at Elmswell Hall to the north. In the centre of each of the lozenge panels is a large shield, with quatrefoils in the corners. On the central battlement are three crowns all pierced by two large arrows, for Bury Abbey, over a large capital T for Abbot Thomas Rattlesden.

The inner spandrils of the tower window have IB, for St John the Baptist, to the left and a quartrefoil to the right.

Now move round to the west of the tower to see the north-west buttress, the west parapet and base and the south-west buttress.

West Parapet: This has the same decoration as the south side. The inner spandrils of the window have a bell to the left and a curving four point star to the right, which may commemorate a donor to the bells.

North-west buttress: The base course has a shield. The first stage begins with Ed which combined with W on the south-west buttress stands for Edmund Walter (d.1497) second husband of Margery Hert/Walter. The Ed also stands for St Edmund, above is a geometric panel of lozenges, a twisted wreath around a cross, for the Crown of Thorns, then a shield. The second stage has a quatrefoil panel, a shield with three dots to form a triangle for the Holy Trinity and a geometric panel. The third stage has a rose for St Mary, a crowned MR, a geometric panel, then a panel with 'wh' above AJB, for William Hert (d.1472) Margery's first husband. The AJB is either 'Aisle (of) John Baptist' or 'Ave (praise) John Baptist' (Hert gave £1 to the aisle of St John Baptist in 1472) and finally the ogee-

headed panel and the statue niche.

South-west buttress: The base course has a shield. The first stage begins with a very worn two-line inscription, which may have commemorated Margery Hert her two husbands and her son. Then a panel with a W and an 'h' laid sideways for William Hert – perhaps the 'h' lying down to indicate he was dead. Then a geometric panel, and two panels with shields. The second stage has a circular design, a triangle for the Holy Trinity and then lozenges. The third stage has a shield, two geometric panels and then the crown and crossed arrows of Bury Abbey over the initials MRS for Master Robert Scott, Abbot 1469-74. The final stage has the ogee-headed panel and the statue niche.

West base-course: there are three large panels either side of the door. From left to right are a capital G for the Archangel Gabriel, a five-pointed star; a crowned MR decorated with groups of dots, the doorway, a combined S and I (the S reversed) for St John, a panel with quatrefoils and a Maltese cross. The G and MR panels would have been understood to

refer to the Annunciation, when Gabriel told Mary she was to be the mother of Jesus, the five-pointed star is the star of the Nativity. The images of Mary and John flanked the Crucifix on the pre-Reformation Rood Screen, to form the Rood figures. Could there have been a cross carved on the original west door, or standing nearby?



To the west of the tower is a grave protected by a spiked wrought-iron cage for Samuel (d.1850), Robert (d.1852) and George Jackson (d.1855) with raised iron letters showing them all to be 'Gent from Woolpit'. There is a similar grave cage at the western edge of the churchyard of Woolpit. Perhaps they all had a fear of grave robbers.

Now move to see the south base of the tower.

South base-course: From left to right the panels are first a five-pointed star, lozenges, a cross in a circle, geometric panel, the initials ihc (Jesus) combined with a flowing S (Holy), looking like a portcullis, in a twisted wreath decorated with dots. Then a ten spiked wheel for Catherine, a circle with four spokes, the Aldryche trade mark of a circle with three 'spokes', inside a larger circle, and finally another Maltese cross.



D. Figures, Maps and Viewpoints (Document 2 of 2)

