



The Castle, Hertford, Hertfordshire, SG14 IHR

Telephone: 01992 504331

E-mail: conservation@beamsltd.org

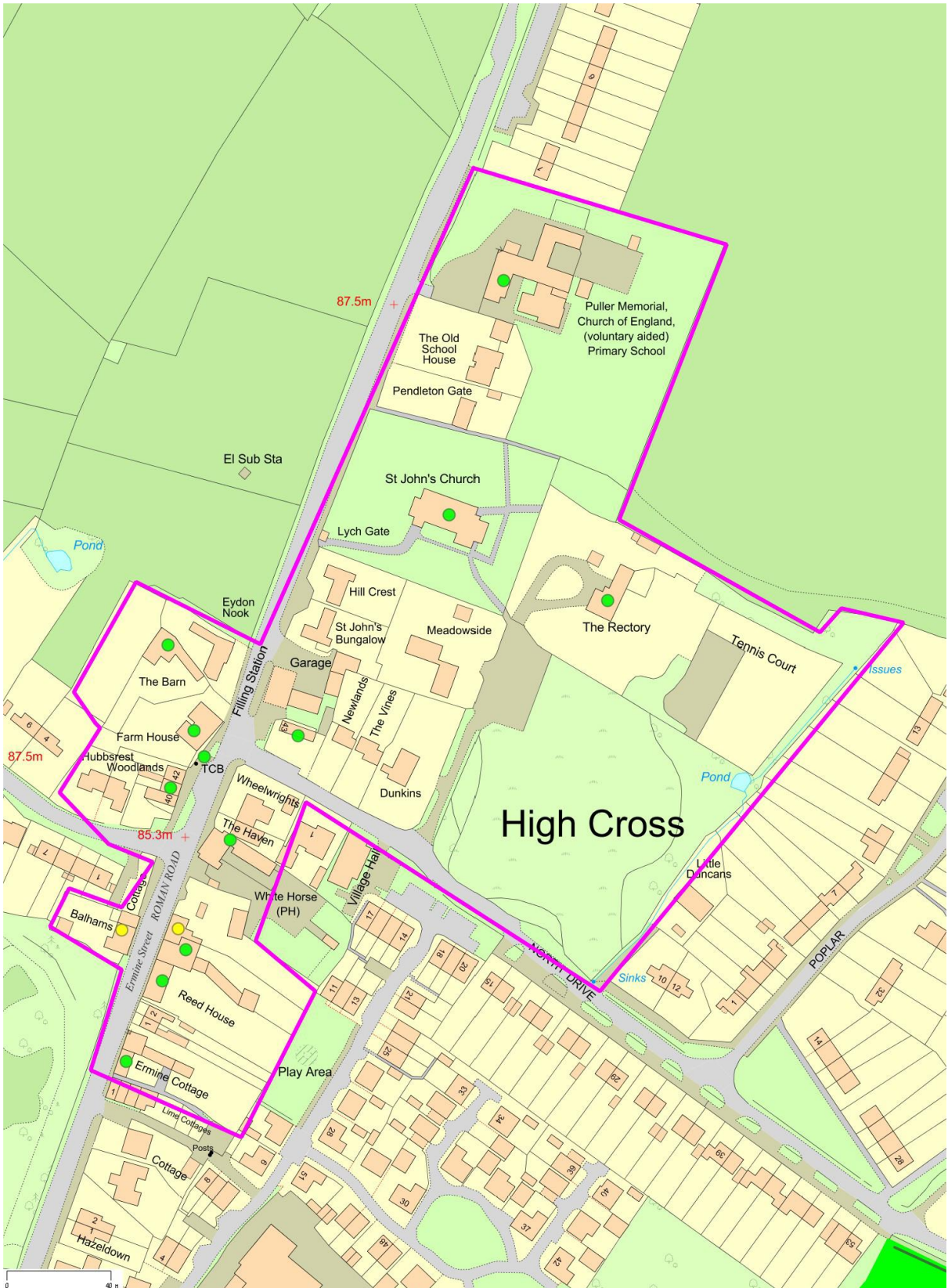
Website: www.beamsltd.org

High Cross
Thundridge
Hertfordshire

Assessment as a Conservation Area

31 August 2018





High Cross with proposed conservation area boundary



grade II listed buildings



grade II* listed buildings

INTRODUCTION

BEAMS was commissioned to produce this report by Thundridge Parish Council in August 2018. Its purpose is to consider the merits of High Cross as a possible conservation area, with a view to securing designation by the local planning authority, East Herts District Council.

Conservation Areas are made under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69 (1) of the Act lays down that:

“Every local planning authority

(a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and

(b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.”

Section 69 (2) provides that:

“It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.”

Location

High Cross is a village in the parish of Thundridge, in Hertfordshire. It lies about four-and-a-half miles to the north-east of Hertford, in the East Herts District.

ASSESSMENT

General Character

High Cross has a linear layout on a north-south axis, following the line of the main thoroughfare, the Roman road of Ermine Street. It is named after the staggered cross road formed by Marshall’s Lane to the west, and North Drive to the east, which once gave access to the manorial estate of Youngsbury.

The village has about thirty buildings in area proposed for designation, principally listed and historic structures, with limited modern infill. It is well preserved, although blighted by road and traffic. There are significant new housing developments to the east on North Drive, and to the south-east on Arthur Martin-Leake Way, and a commercial premises (Oakley Horseboxes) further south-east, replacing an earlier farm.

Its setting comprises rolling agricultural land, especially arable fields, which are most readily visible immediately to the north of the settlement.

Special Historic Interest

There are three themes in the historic development of High Cross: its position on a major historic thoroughfare, its location at the gates of the country estate of Youngsbury, and the Victorian patronage of the Puller family.

High Cross was originally a hamlet in the large, ancient parish of Standon. It was given special prominence by the Roman road of Ermine Street, which for centuries after the end of the Roman occupation remained the main North Road from London to Cambridge and East Anglia, becoming a turnpike road in the 18th century (1726). High Cross flourished as a consequence of the number of travellers, and several inns lined the road. It declined with the introduction of railways, but still had three inns in the late 19th century: The White Horse, The Waggon and Horses, and The Greyhound. Their buildings survive, although only the White Horse is still a pub.

The country estate of Youngsbury, named after the medieval manor of Young, lies to the south-east of High Cross, and the village grew partly as a satellite of the estate. Youngsbury house (grade II listed) is about a mile away. In 1796 Youngsbury was sold to David Giles, Governor of the Bank of England, and it remained in his family in the 19th century. It was inherited in 1840 by Louisa Giles, widow of Sir Christopher Puller, kt., Chief Justice of Bengal in 1823, and known as Lady Giles-Puller (d.1857). The patronage of her family was responsible for the nineteenth-century evolution of High Cross. At her instigation, High Cross became an ecclesiastical district in 1845, and she and her son Christopher William Puller (d. 1864) built the church of St John the Evangelist, High Cross, in 1847, and the rectory in 1846. High Cross elementary school was built to his memory in 1866 by his son Arthur Giles Giles-Puller (d. 1885). These buildings illustrate the Victorian ideal of recreating the medieval world, with the Christian church and the philanthropic Lord of the Manor at its heart.

Special Architectural Interest

The village has a high degree of special architectural interest, with fourteen listed buildings within the proposed conservation area boundary. Two buildings are late medieval hall houses and grade II* listed. This grade means that they belong to the top 8% of the country's historic buildings, and are "particularly important buildings of more than special interest" (DCMS, Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings). They are the fifteenth century Balhams, an H-plan house, and the Old Waggon, with a jettied cross-wing and a hall floor introduced in the seventeenth century.

Twelve buildings are grade II listed, including the church, rectory, school, farmhouse and barn, public houses, several dwelling houses and cottages, and a phone box. They represent a good cross-section of the characteristic buildings of an English village. Most

are vernacular structures of the 17th and 18th centuries, timber-framed but refaced in red brick or rendered. Particularly noteworthy are Farm House, with its jettied wings, the White Horse Inn, on a lobby-entry plan, and the Coach House, which retains its carriage entrance marking its history as an inn. The school, church and rectory are early Victorian work, the church and rectory designed by Anthony Salvin (1779-1881), a well-known country house architect and restorer of historic buildings. The church tower (1906) and the telephone kiosk (1935) both belong to the early 20th century.

There are also unlisted and curtilage listed buildings of special interest in the village. They include the churchyard wall and Lych Gate, and the Old School House which was once the infants' school. A prominent feature to the south of the village, on the west side of Ermine Street, is the perimeter wall of Marshalls, a medieval manor and the seat of the Martin-Leake family.

The history of village is emphasised by its memorials. The church wall has a plaque to Lt Arthur Martin-Leake of the Royal Army Medical Corps, the Lych Gate has a memorial beam to a verger, and the School bears a memorial plaque to the founder's father, Christopher William Giles-Puller. The church yard has a fine group of Giles-Puller tombs before the east tower.

Open land within the proposed boundary consists of the churchyard and the school grounds. It also includes the Glebe Field (see plan page 1, location marked 'High Cross'). This land was part of the Youngsbury estate, until given by the Giles-Pullers to the Rectory in the 1846. It was then landscaped, forming a feature opposite the north-west entrance to Youngsbury park (grade II* registered), and still retains some of the original perimeter tree belt on the east flank. The entrance has since been replaced by late 20th century housing, but is recorded on the Ordnance Survey map of 1880. This land therefore marks the important relation between the Lords of the Manor of Youngsbury, and the village of High Cross, with the church and rectory which they founded.

Conclusion

This review indicates that High Cross amply justifies designation as a conservation area. It does so through the number and quality of its listed buildings, reflecting its long history on a principal national thoroughfare, and the patronage of the lord of the manor

Sources

Victoria County History of Hertfordshire, 1912, Vol. 3, pp. 347-366, Manor of Youngs.
Architectural History Practice, Heritage Impact Assessment: Land at North Drive, High Cross, Hertfordshire, March 2017.

LISTED BUILDINGS WITHIN PROPOSED HIGH CROSS CONSERVATION AREA

There are 14 listed buildings within the proposed High Cross conservation area, mostly listed in 1967 and 1983. They are:-

The Old Waggon (grade II*)
Balhams Hall and The Cottage (grade II*)
High Cross Puller Memorial Church of England Primary School
Church of St John the Evangelist
Rectory
Farm House
Barn
K6 Telephone Box
Wynchloes
43 High Road
The White Horse Inn
The Coach House
Reed House
Ermine Cottage

LIST DESCRIPTIONS

The Old Waggon (grade II*)

House. Late medieval hall-house with N crosswing. Timber frame plastered with weatherboarded apron and jettied upper floor to wing. Steep old red tile roofs. Short one and a half storeys hall range with flat topped dormer and door to left of lower window. Higher 2-storeys cross wing with one window to each floor and 2 external chimney stacks on its N side. C20 flush windows with glazing bars and horizontal proportion. Boarded door. Inserted floor in hall early C17 with axial chamfered beam with bar and hollow stop and exposed square joists. Contemporary inserted chimney has wall paintings over fireplace of flowers and fruit in foliage coloured, outlined in black on ochre ground (RCHM Typescript).

Balhams Hall and The Cottage (grade II*)

House, now 2 houses. C15, altered in late C16 and C18. Timber frame roughcast with old red tile roofs, now hipped at front. H- plan open-hall house with 2 crosswings, parlour wing at N (The Cottage), and C18 stair in rear angle of hall and service wing at S. Late C16 inserted floor with provision for smoke hood in lower bay of hall. C17 large central chimney inserted at upper end of hall. House sub-divided in early C18 when front jettied projections and gables removed and part of ground floor rebuilt in brick at S end. E front has 4 windows irregularly spaced on each floor. Flush sash windows with 6/6 panes above and 8/8 below. 6-panel door up 2 steps on N end next corner with flat hood on shaped brackets. Gabled wings of different projection at rear with panelled pargetting. Large central chimney and C18 external end chimney at S. Entrance from rear into site of cross passage with blocked doorwing to stair and twin doorways to buttery and pantry with hollow chamfer and 4-centred heads. Partition between removed. Heavy square joists in both crosswings. Heavy roll-moulded beams

and chamfered and stopped joists to C16 inserted floor in hall. Wave moulded supporting ledge pegged to side walls. Floor designed to support a smoke hood in the lower bay and roof collars cut away above, shutter grooves and mullion mortice for diamond mullioned windows in front and rear walls. Surviving 3-light window in N wall of S wing looking over rear slope of hall roof. Large C17 red brick fireplace and stack at upper end of hall. Crown-post roofs. Cambered tie-beams over centre of hall with chamfered and stopped crown-post and 4-way curved bracing. Tension bracing in framing of S wing. Early C18 2-panel doors with H-hinges and heavy moulded mantle shelves to 1st floor fireplaces.

School

School. '1866' in relief on stone tablet on N wing gable. Built for Puller family of Youngsbury in memory of C W Giles-Puller MP - Red brick with polychrome banding and arches. Steep red tile roofs banded with scalloped tiles. Large faceted stone gable kneelers. Tall single storey T-shaped small Gothic school facing W. Higher main range has toothed eaves and verge courses, 4 high 3-light sash windows with buttresses between and large central projecting chimney stack with a large square limestone tablet with a hatchment-shaped panel and carved foliage in the corners. In relief lettering IN MEMORIAM W M GILES PULLER and a crest. Steeply roofed pyramid timber bellcote on ridge near S end. Large 4-light traceried pointed window in W gable of lower crosswing on N. Gablet of main roof has trefoil cusped vent. Low pitched-roof buttressed porch or narthex across S end with high gable window over with paired voussoirs alternately grey chamfered bricks and square-cornered black bricks. Pointed doorway and windows to porch. Wrought iron gable finials. C20 extension to rear not of special interest.

Church

Church. 1846. By Anothony Salvin (1799 -1881) for Dame Lousia Giles Puller of Youngsbury. Tower added 1906. Ragstone with freestone limestone dressing and ashlar battlemented tower parapet. Steep slate roof carried down in flatter pitched catslide over N aisle. Small copper spike to tower. In Decorated style a square ended chancel, wider nave with 4-bay arcade to N aisle, gabled S porch, NE gabled vestry, and SE 3- stage tower with clock. Diagonal corner buttresses, gable parapets and apex crosses. Single-light pointed and cusped windows to aisle. 2 2-light and one single-light window to S wall of nave. 4-light Dec. E window and similar 3-light W windows. Interior austere with arch-braced open roofs on stone corbels. Arcade with equilateral arches in 2 chamfered orders and octagonal piers with C14 moulded caps and bases. Unusual octagonal stone font with deep band of cusped panel work around bowl. Stained glass: E window 1876 an early work by Kempe; W window c1893 by Selwyn Image of Christ with Mary and John most extraordinary for that date in its design according to Pevsner; pre-Raphaelite 2-light SE window in nave C1893 by Helen Coombe (Mrs Roger Fry). (Pevsner (1977) 195).

Rectory

Vicarage, now a house. Circa 1846 probably by Anthony Salvin (1799-1881), later rear extension. Built for Dame Louisa Giles Puller of Youngsbury, with church and school in the new ecclesiastical district formed in 1845. Red brick and red tile roof hipped at E. 2 storeys, 3 windows house facing S with gabled wing on left and entrance on W. Red brick-work in English bond with black diaper patterns. Chamfered plinth, floor band, and bargeboards with pendants. 2-light casement upper windows with flat gauged arches and chamfered cornices. Similar heads to tall lower openings with windows each side of French doors, all with decorative patterns of glazing bars in

squares and octagons in mullioned and transomed 3-light windows. Projecting chimneys at each end and at rear all with tall separate square shafts joined at the tops. Stone chamfered Tudor arched doorway on W with triple sunk panels over and narrow stone window to left. 2 storeys brick and tile rear extension not of special interest. Included for group value. (Pevsner (1977) 195)

Farm House

House. C17 or earlier. Timber frame plastered, ground floor at front in C19 red brick, rear weatherboarded. Steep old red tile roofs. 2 storeys H-plan house with higher centre, 2 gabled crosswings, and continuous front jetty. Large external rear chimney with 2 diagonal square shafts, and side chimney to N wing. 2-light and 3-light flush casement windows. Canted bay window under jetty to right of door which leads into a passage through the S end of the hall. 6-panel part glazed door in plain surround. '1677' said to be carved in brick on large fireplace.

Barn at Farm House

Barn. C17. Timber frame weatherboarded on brick sill with steep roof now covered in corrugated iron. A tall 5-bay barn facing E with central gabled porch.

Telephone Kiosk

Telephone kiosk. Type K6. Designed 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Made by various contractors. Cast iron. Square kiosk with domed roof. Unperforated George VI crows to top panels and margin glazing to windows and door.

Wynchloes

2 adjoining houses. C17. Timber frame weatherboarded with fronts faced in red brick. Steep old red tile roofs. 2 storeys and attics houses on roadfront with rear outshuts. No 42 on N end is smaller, later and its brick front is different with lower floor band and a black brick diaper motif below 1st floor window. Gabled dormer on roof, flush 2-light casement windows and door with bracketed hood on right. Larger house on left has floor band, low plinth, gabled dormers, similar flush casement windows and twin door surrounds (the left now a window) from the sub-division of the house in the C18 or C19. Flat hood on shaped brackets. External gable chimney to this house on S and gable chimney on N with chimney of No 42 built against it.

43 High Road

House. C18. Red brick with old red tile roof. 2-room gable chimney plan house facing S. 2 storeys, 3 windows symmetrical front with plinth and floor band. Flush 2-light casement windows with narrow window over door. Segmental arches with black headers to ground floor. Timber lintel to door under lean-to tiled bracketed canopy.

The White Horse Inn

Public house. Late C17, altered. Timber frame plastered with weatherboarded apron and rear wing. Steep old red tile roofs. 2-room central chimney lobby-entry plan with 2 storeys rear wing. 2 storeys and 2 windows. Moulded timber at 1st floor level (centre cut out for former signboard). Facing W. 1st floor flush sash windows with 8/8 panes. Twin doors central with simple surround. 2 2-light casement windows with small panes to right. Small canted bay window to left with sashes and brick painted base. Chamfered axial beams and exposed square joists.

Coach House

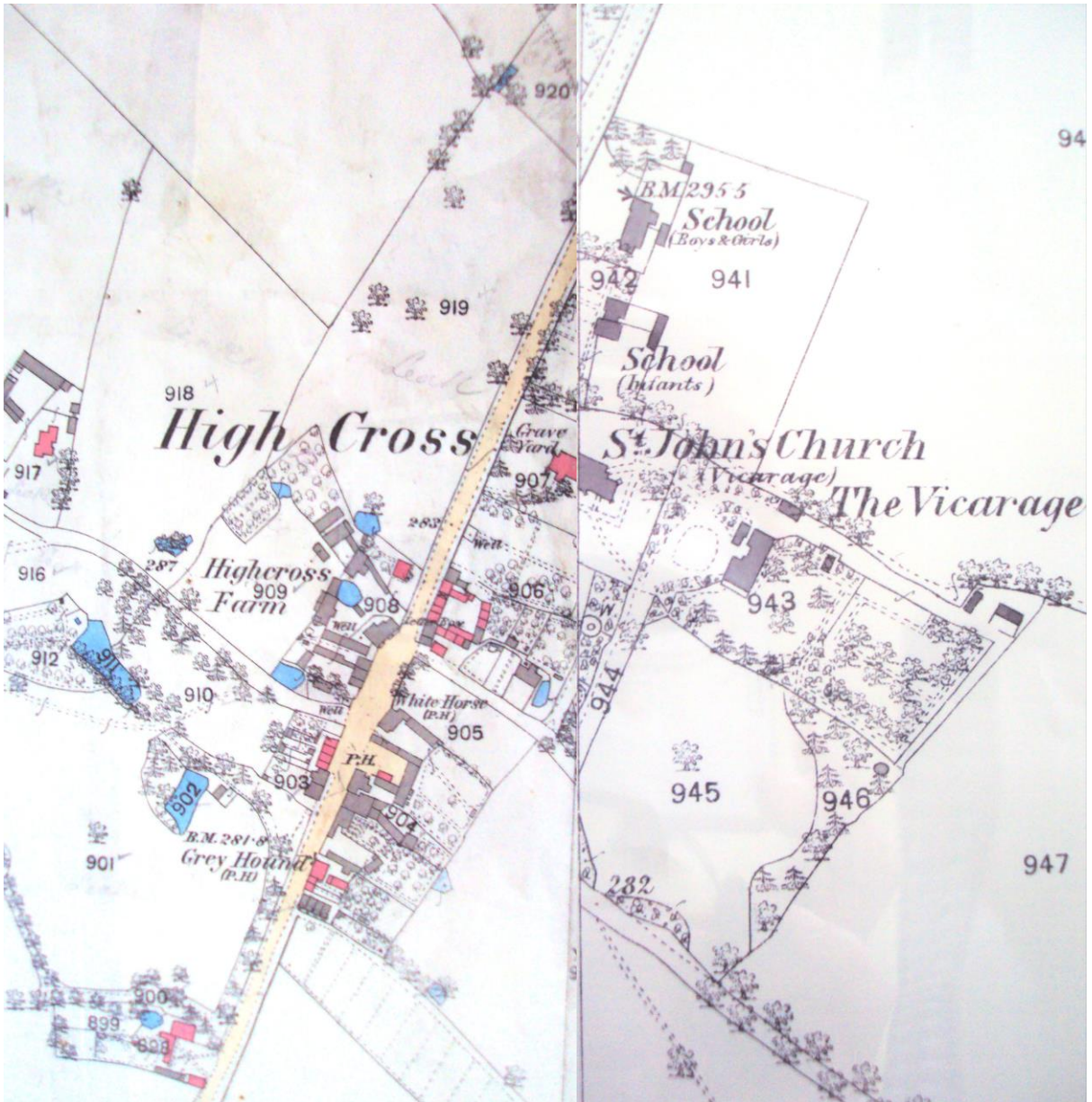
House. Late C18. Timber frame weatherboarded with low pitched slate roof. 2 storeys and cellar with wide carriageway on left through to yard taking a third of the narrow frontage. One window to upper floor, 2 to ground floor, half glazed double- doors over carriage entrance and house door up 2 steps next carriageway. Half-glazed flush panelled door with original flush panelled shutter-fixed in place. Flat hood on ogee brackets. Flush sash windows with 6/6 panes. Chimney in rear wing. Painting of horse's head behind rack of stored timber on late C18 brickwork (RCHM Typescript). Included for group value.

Reed House

House. Early C18. Timber frame plastered and lined as ashlar over a stucco plinth. S wing C19 red brick stuccoed with painted plinth and red brick end. Old red tile roofs. 2 storeys 3 windows house facing W with 2 2-storeys parallel rear wings with hipped roofs, and projecting S wing under a continuation of main roof. Symmetrical front with plinth, boxed eaves, flush box sash windows with 10/10 panes (6/6 small window over door). 6-panel flush beaded door (top panels glazed) with moulded surround and flat hood on ogee brackets. S wing has canted casement oriel to 1st floor with recessed sash window below with 3/3 panes.

Ermine Cottage

House. C17, brick front of C18. Timber frame weatherboarded with painted brick facing at front and S end. Steep old red tile roof. 2 storeys house with single-storey rear lean-to outshut. 2-rooms end chimneys plan house facing W. Internal gable chimneys that at S probably later. Asymmetrical brick front with dentilled eaves, 2 small 2-light casement windows to 1st floor: 3 similar windows with segmental arches to ground floor, 2 to left of door with broad frame and flat hood on shaped brackets.

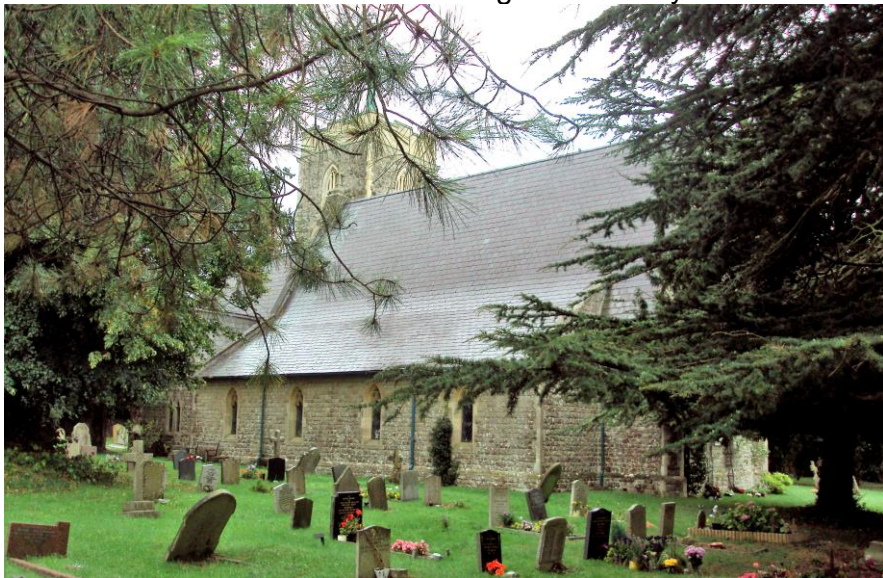


High Cross, 1880 Ordnance Survey map

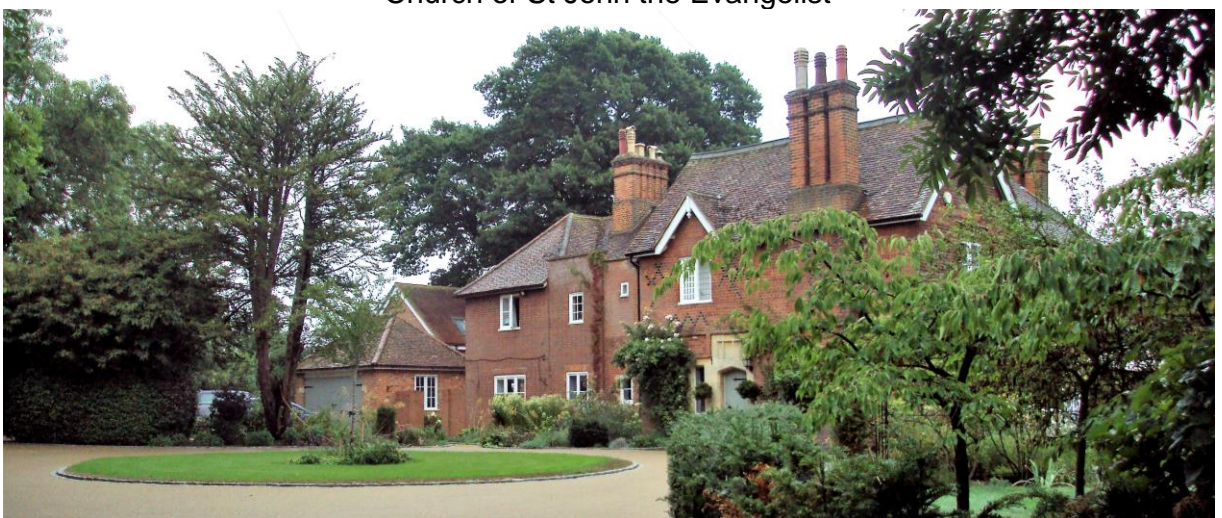
LISTED BUILDINGS



Puller Memorial Church of England Primary School



Church of St John the Evangelist



Rectory



High Cross Farm House and Barn



43 High Road



Wynchloes



White Horse Inn



The Old Waggon (grade II*), The Coach House, Reed House



K6 Telephone Box



Balhams (grade II*), above and below



Ermine Cottage

HISTORIC MONUMENT AND BUILDINGS



Giles-Puller tombs in the churchyard (above and below)



School Memorial plaque to Christopher William Giles-Puller



Lych gate, memorial beam with inscription to vergers



Glebe Field