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St Marks College

"The agricultural depression of the early 20th century only exacerbated the general decline in population as more and more villagers moved away from the land, produce prices crashed and life became increasingly difficult for the owners of large estates.

The house and parkland were requisitioned by the army for most of the war and in 1948 Audley End was put up for sale. It was eventually purchased for the nation and passed into the care of the Ministry of Works.

At the same time the almshouses at Abbey Farm were given to the Diocese of Chelmsford by Lord Braybrooke to become a home for retired clergy.

In 1993 this building underwent a major refurbishment to be set up as a youth and conference centre under the name of St Mark's College"

Conservation Area Appraisal and draft management proposal, 2015, pages 26-28

1951 College of St Mark

1907 Inner court of Abbey Farm

"The inner court of Abbey Farm in 1907 when a farmhouse and almshouses."

Potted History Timeline

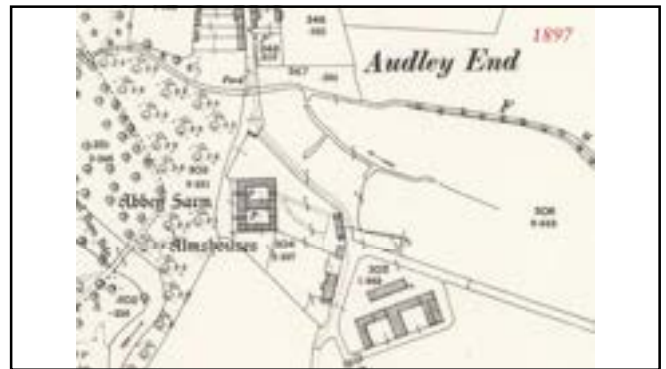
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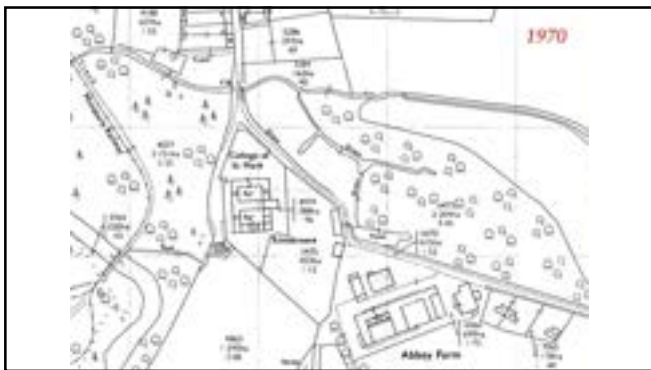
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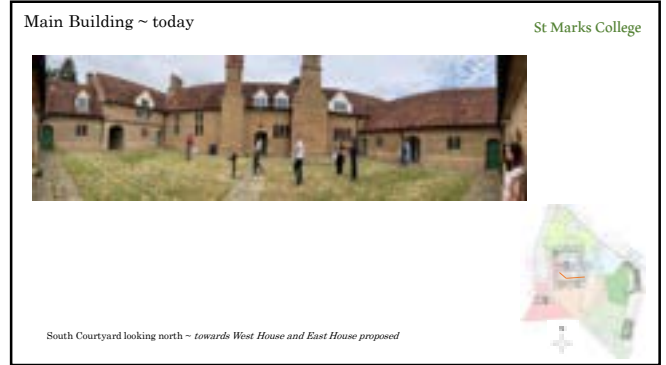
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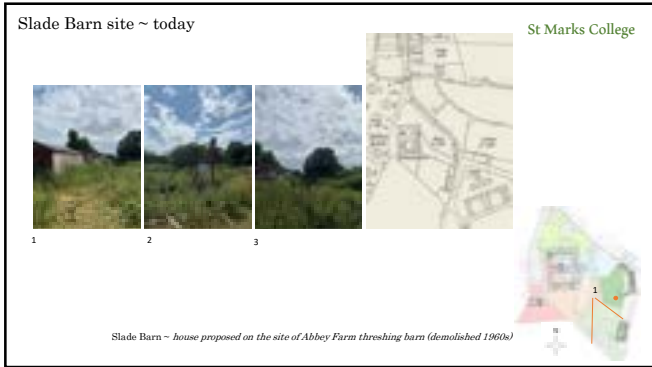
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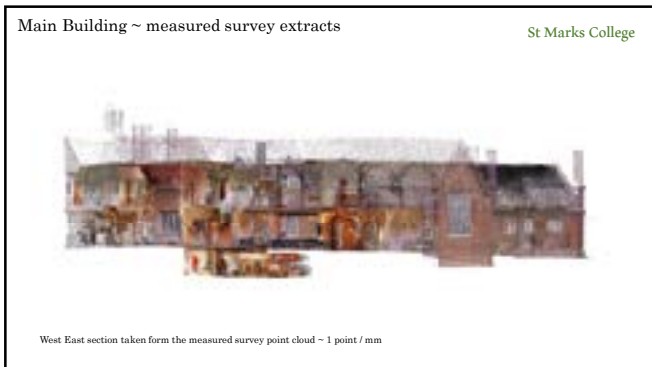
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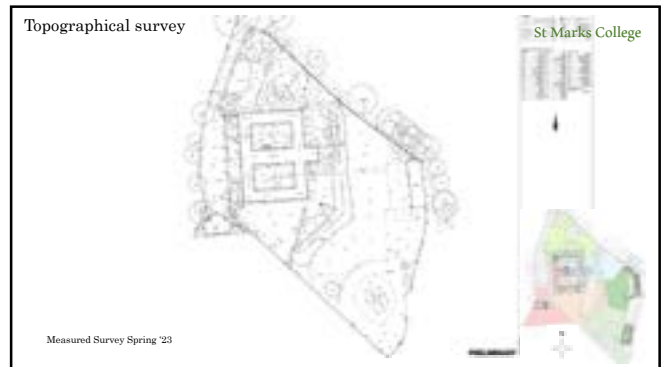
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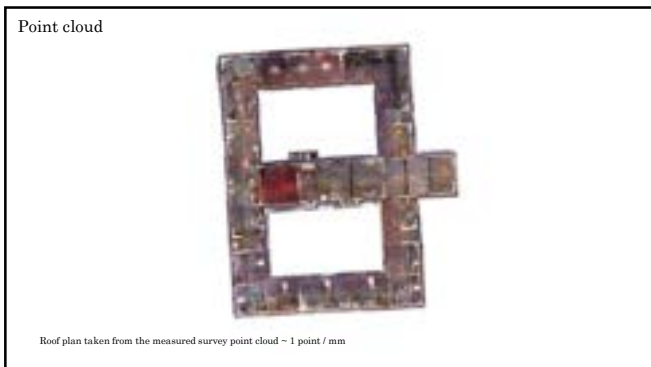
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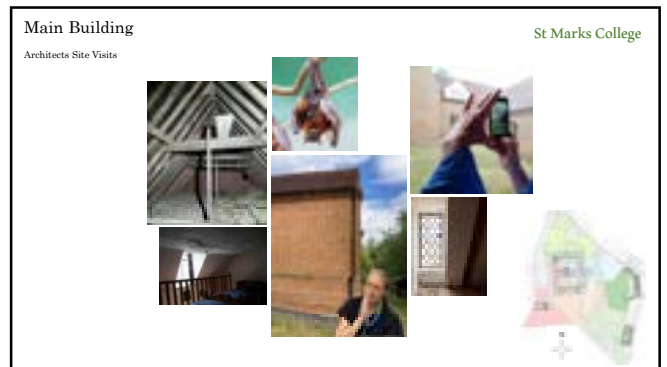
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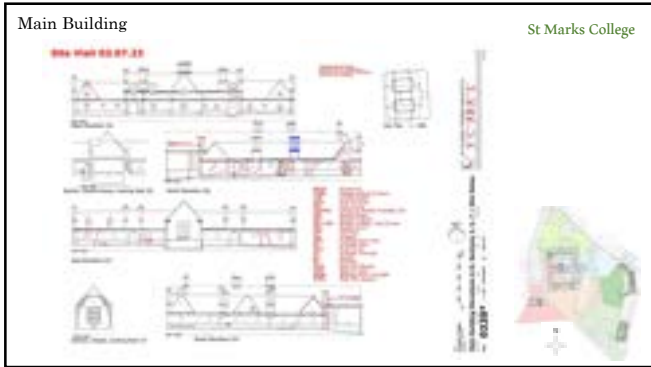
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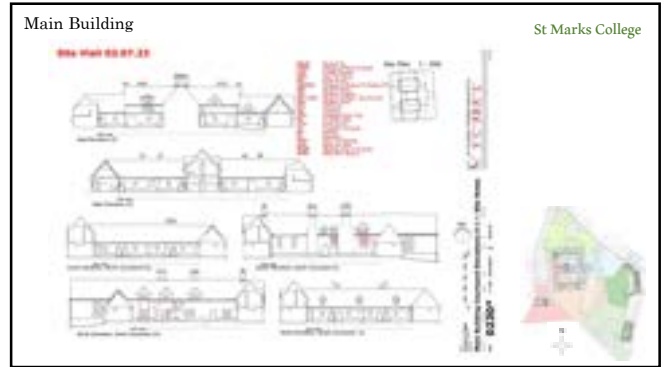
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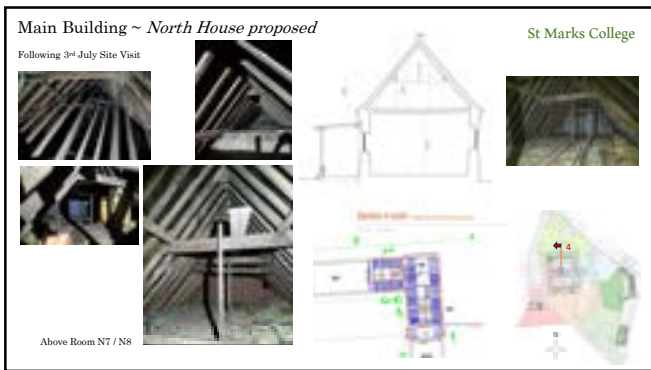
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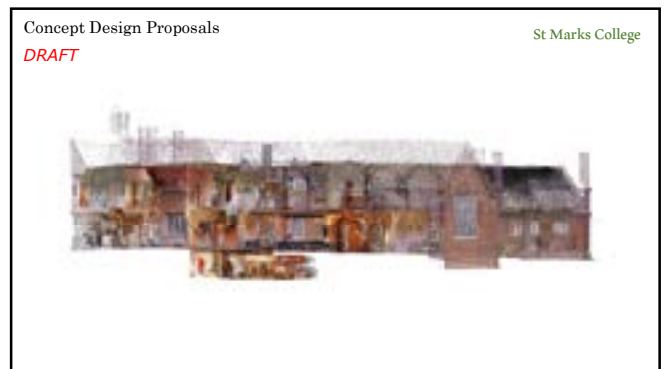
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Concept Design Proposals ~ Overview

St Marks College

St Mark's College, built as almshouses contemporary with Audley End House (1605-1614), used in combination with farm buildings into the 19C when the east Chapel was demolished, a home for retired clergymen from 1951 when the Chapel was rebuilt, to a youth residential centre in 1993, the site and buildings have been unused since 2020.

Grade I Listed, the red brick and peg-tiled building has a symmetrical, double rectangular courtyard plan, single-storey rooms in the outer wings, higher principal rooms in line between the courts. Two opposing arched internal porches lead centrally to each court.

These proposals for houses are made with respect to the historic fabric and nature of the buildings in the walled site.

In the main college building, the north and south houses are in the outer wings, divided by the arched internal porches. The west and east houses occupy the higher central range, divided by the primary stair at its centre.

Internally, the old walls, openings, stairs, ceilings, plan and section proportions are retained, with all the living rooms, utility rooms and bedrooms made within the idiosyncrasy of the old building. On a few occasions, where necessary to support this new use as private homes, a new opening in an old wall is proposed, or the closing of an old doorway. In the south house in the south wing, the partitions, mezzanine floors and hit-and-miss stairs added in the 1990s will be removed.

To support this conservation strategy, a proposed cloister along the south court elevation of the north house and another along the north court elevation of the south house, provides access alongside and into each of the ground floor living rooms and bedrooms.

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Concept Design Proposals ~ Overview

St Marks College

Externally, the old walls, windows, roofs, chimneys etc are conserved. In the east elevation, where late C20 brickwork and windows are found, three new doorways are proposed to provide direct access into the gardens of the south house, east house and north house.

In the courtyards and around the site, the gardens and edge treatments aim to provide discreet levels of privacy.

At the west point of the site, the existing River Barn converts simply into a single two-storey house, with the roof ridge raised by 0.300m.

At the east point of the site, the existing Abbey Barn against the boundary wall converts simply into a single-storey house, with low additions linked to the north and south ends.

At the southernmost point of the site, furthest away from the main building, a new house is proposed on the site of the old Abbey Farm threshing barn, demolished in the 1960s. Like Abbey Barn, the proposed Slade Barn would be built against the boundary wall, screening the historic site from the late C20 barns close to the southeast corner of the boundary.

The proposed strategy for car parking is for small separate groups for each house tucked along the site boundary wall, uncovered at the west (front) side, in cartlidges along the east (rear) boundary.

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Main Building ~ Compass

St Marks College



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Main Building ~ North House

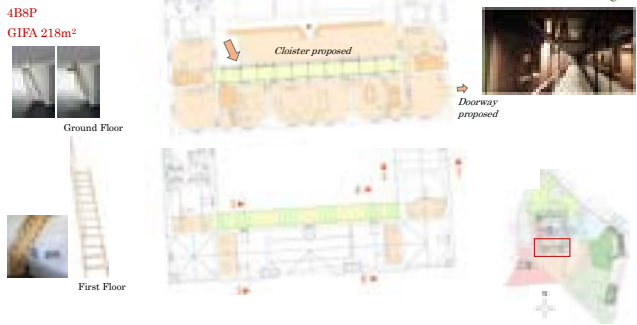
St Marks College



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Main Building ~ South House

St Marks College



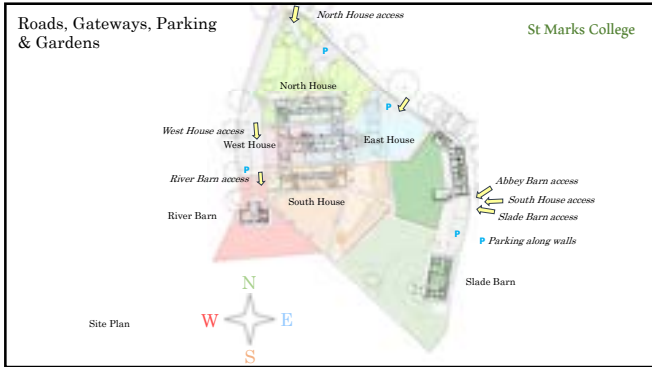
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Main Building ~ West House & East House

St Marks College



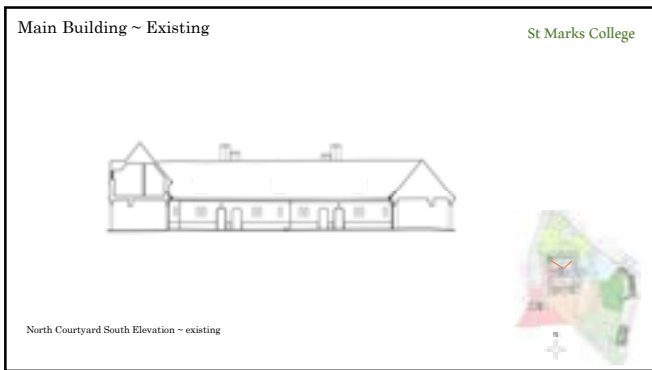
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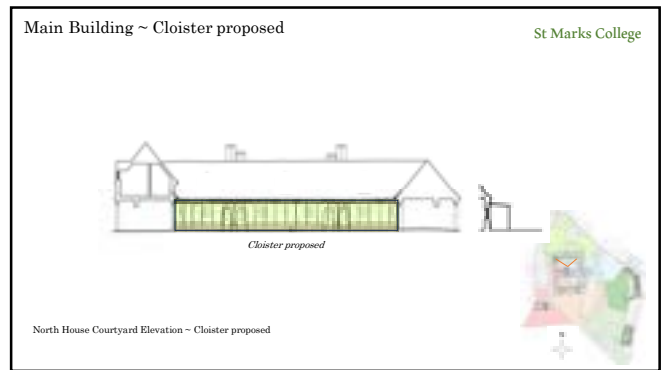
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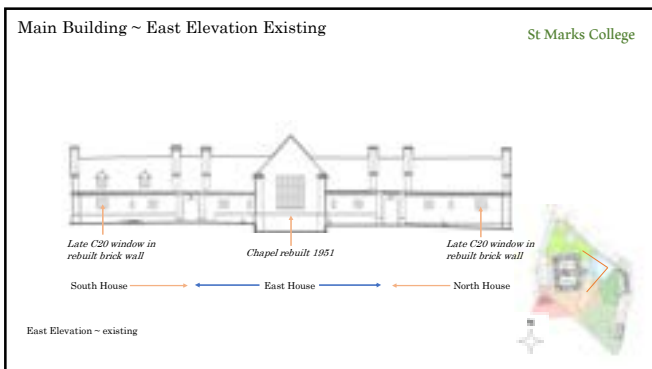
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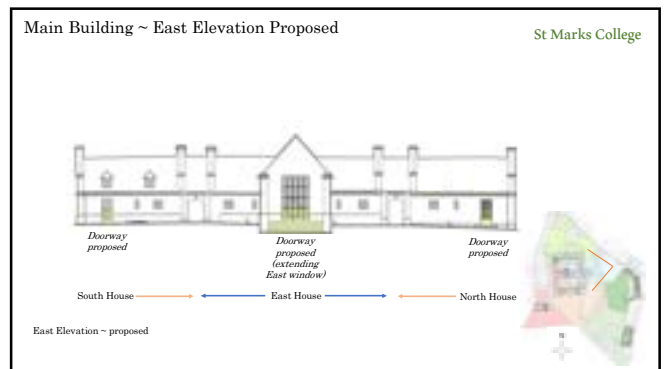
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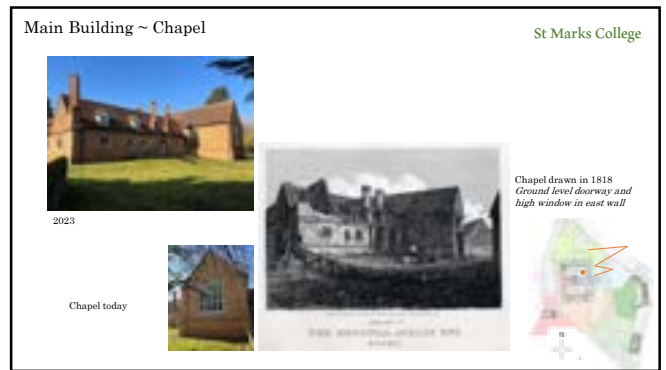
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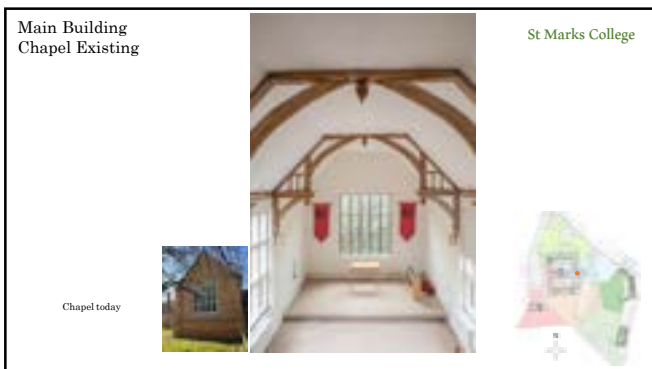
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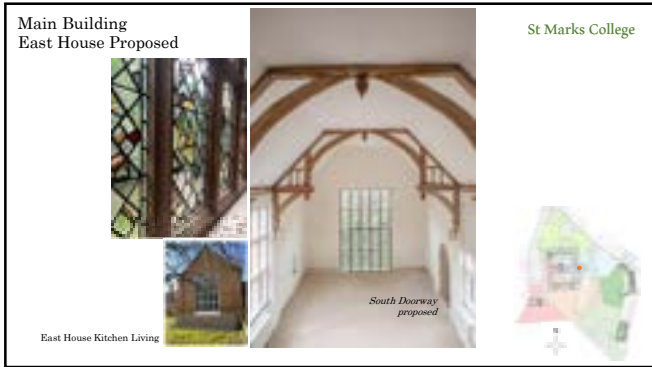
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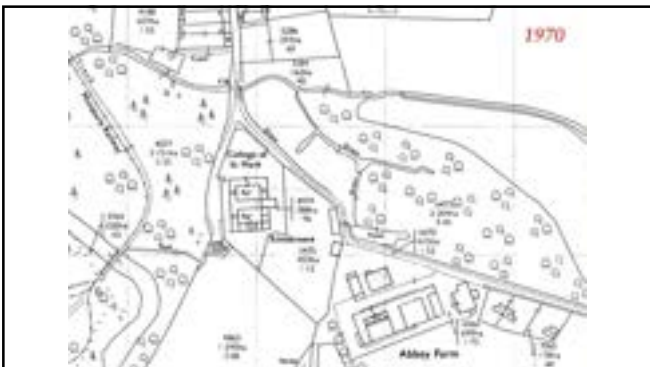
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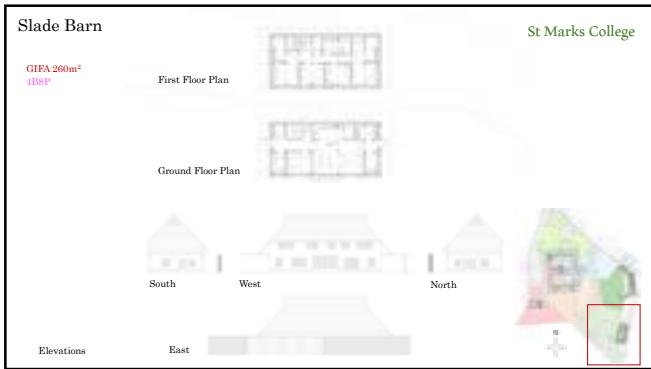
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