

# Village Design Statements

## The Parish of South Hanningfield



Downham



Ramsden Heath



South Hanningfield

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 OBJECTIVES OF VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT (V.D.S.)

“A V.D.S. gives a detailed description of the existing character and main features of design in the villages of the Parish and guidelines for how this should be respected in any new development. It identifies the physical qualities and characteristics of the village and its surroundings that are valued by local people.”

The V.D.S. is intended to:

- Express the views of the villagers on managing change
- Give positive guidance to designers and developers on acceptable design from the community point of view
- Help protect visually important buildings and open spaces
- Assist the local planning authority in their determination of planning applications



Workshop day



Workshop day

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## 1.2 PREPARATION OF THE V.D.S.

The Parish of South Hanningfield Village Design Statement Association Steering Group was formed by a nucleus of villagers from the three villages of Downham, Ramsden Heath and South Hanningfield. This followed a public meeting in February 2003 sponsored by the Parish Council.

The steering group's objectives were to formulate a V.D.S. with full consultation with the members of the three villages and produce a combined document reflecting their individual views.

This process has involved:

- Workshop Day when villagers were invited in groups to extensively photograph the villages and comment on their findings
- Production of a Village Character Statement circulated in newsletters
- Exhibition of photographs for villagers to view and comment
- A comprehensive questionnaire delivered to every home in the respective villages which produced a response of 42-49%
- Exhibition of the questionnaire results
- Consultation with South Hanningfield Parish Council and Chelmsford Borough Council

The V.D.S. builds upon objectives, and built and rural environmental policies of the Development Plan for the Borough. It also takes account of the Essex Design Guide, revised in 1977, and adopted by Local Authorities as Supplementary Planning Guidance, which should be followed to promote good design using traditional styles and materials within the village context.



Exhibition day



Steering Group committee meeting

# 1. INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)

## 1.3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### V.D.S.

The purpose of carrying out the V.D.S. is to obtain adoption by the Borough Council and planning guidance.

### Development Plan

Planning policy affecting the parish is contained in the Chelmsford Borough Local Plan 1997, Essex County Structure Plan and Government Planning Policy Guidance (PPG).

The Local Plan advocates against infilling in Green Belt and its basic strategy is to prevent further intrusion into the countryside.

The Local Plan intends to protect those characteristics that contribute to the sense of identity of the villages. Features such as quality, scale and materials of buildings, open spaces, gardens and views are considered important in maintaining the character of the village and should be protected in any development and this is reflected in the following Village Design Statements.

The Government has introduced a new plan-making regime and the Borough Council is working towards this new development plan system. The Local Development Framework will effectively replace the Local Plan and the Structure Plan but at the time of writing the LDF is at its very early stages.

### Green Belt

The purposes of the Green Belt are stated in the Government guidance PPG2 (Planning Policy Guidance) Green Belts. The outline principals of the Green Belt are as follows:-

- To prevent unrestricted sprawl of built-up areas
- To prevent neighbouring settlements from merging into one another
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns and villages
- To promote the process of urban regeneration in settlements, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

### Ramsden Heath

Ramsden Heath is designated in the Local Plan as a Defined Settlement (enclosed by Metropolitan Green Belt) where policies are more supportive of limited development, including infilling, compared to areas outside the defined settlement boundary.

Where there are gaps in the pattern of development these have been specifically excluded from the Defined Settlement to prevent consolidation into a continuous ribbon and to protect the open aspect.

Any future development should make provision for the retention of the village hall facility and the shops at the centre of the village.

### Downham and South Hanningfield

The planning policy context for Downham and South Hanningfield is primarily that they are within the Green Belt.

The Local Plan notes that Downham mainly consists of a long stretch sporadic development to the east of Ramsden Heath within which pressures for consolidation are resisted.

Outside the village areas the land is recognised by planning policy for its nature conservation and landscape values.

At Windsor Road there is an area of industrial and storage uses mainly composed of scrap yards/car breakers which is in the Green Belt where policies seek to control inappropriate development such as vast expansion of these activities.

# DOWNHAM

## 2. THE VILLAGE

### 2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

**Downham** is a small village situated on rising ground to the north of the River Crouch and Thames estuarial plain. Bordered by the villages of South Hanningfield to the east and Ramsden Heath to the west, the three villages together form the parish of South Hanningfield.

Downham is not mentioned in the Domesday Book but there is evidence of an extensive Roman settlement in the area around St Margaret's church, where it is known that a Saxon church stood on the site before the Norman Conquest.

Historic legacies left by the DeBeauvoir family and the interesting structures dotted around the village are reflected in the recent village identity shield situated in Jubilee Gardens.

In the 1950s Hanningfield reservoir was created, requiring the demolition of an earlier country house landmark, named Fremnells.



Thatched Cottage, Downham Road



The DeBeauvoir Arms Public House

### 2.2 SETTLEMENT DESCRIPTION

The village is not a 'Defined Village Settlement' but is within the Metropolitan Green Belt which provides an important buffer with neighbouring villages and towns, and its character should be preserved by retaining the existing village scale as defined in the current Local Plan. The village is relatively small in respect of the overall parish boundary and new developments, alterations and extensions are confined, as required, by the designated Green Belt.

Downham is mainly ribbon development that, with Downham Road, now links seamlessly to Ramsden Heath in the west. It is separated from South Hanningfield village by the reservoir, nature reserve, extensive woodlands and farmland to the east. Hawkswood and Sudbury Roads form that part of Downham with several detached houses within the wooded and open field aspects.

The centre of the village is School Road with Jubilee Gardens opposite the village hall, although St Margaret's church with its outstanding views in Castledon Road is the location of the war memorial, dovecote and church room. Lower down this road are the plotland areas of Vera Road and Cumming Road. Quiet cul-de-sacs and lanes lead off the main roads and give way to open countryside.



St. Margaret's Church



The Reservoir



The Ware Memorial at St Margaret's Church



Jubilee Gardens



Allen's Farm, Downham Road

This rural village has many fine detached family houses, interspersed with a cluster of bungalows and some older style semi-detached cottages. Some very old properties of great character such as Allen's Farm, Kites Cottage and Downham Hall, show radically different use of building materials from different ages.

The village is quiet and tranquil and is a much sought after area in which to live.

It is considered that any new development which is proposed within the village should be carried out in a manner to reflect the character of the surroundings in both design and scale.

### 3. LANDSCAPE

#### 3.1 OPEN SPACES

The village is fortunate in having open and recreational spaces together with the Hanningfield reservoir and nature reserve and its active visitor centre offering access to the wildlife habitat of many types of birds and giving defined walking routes through the area. The vast expanse of water gives outstanding long distance views to be enjoyed by all, as well as providing a major supply of water to nearby towns.

These areas are important to retain as part of the village providing visual separation between areas of development. They are essential recreation and communal facilities and have the potential to be enhanced as community features.

The open aspect and well-kept front gardens of the village are enhanced by mature trees which must be maintained together with existing hedgerows. They are considered by the community to be an important feature which should not be sacrificed. A community survey will be undertaken and the results will be shared with the Borough Council with a view to applying TPOs in the appropriate cases.

Side roads from the through routes reveal country lanes and bridleways, affording walkers and horse riders peaceful access to the surrounding countryside.



Open land between properties in Downham Road



Nature Reserve



Landscape feature with pond in School Road adding to character of village



Open aspect in Castledon Road

#### Guidelines

- Borough planning policies should be followed to ensure the Green Belt is not eroded
- Any new development should reflect the character of the surroundings
- Existing open spaces and open land between properties should be retained as these are an important characteristic of the village
- The removal of existing hedgerows should be resisted
- Trees and open spaces are an important feature of the village and their retention should be given full consideration in any proposed development or physical change

## 3.2 RURAL ENVIRONMENT

Extensive views from the elevated position of Grange Lane and St Margaret's church in Castledon Road include those across the Thames estuarial plain towards Kent and westwards towards Crays Hill. The area is heavily wooded and includes the Hanningfield basin which is predominately arable farm land. Around Hanningfield water there is extensive conifer planting which could be enhanced by the addition of more native species.

Within the village is a nature conservation area connected to the footpath network.

Countryside ecology is important for the retention of the wildlife and should be retained and enhanced where practicable. These rural features form an integral part of the character of the area.

## 3.3 SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE

The village has the advantage of close proximity to ancient woodlands and ponds which contribute to the landscape of the village and their conservation is of great importance for the benefit of the wildlife and the recreational pursuits of the local community and visitors.



Grange Lane bridleway



Pond in Grange Lane

## 3.4 FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS

Our network of public footpaths and bridleways link local areas and those of neighbouring villages and are frequently used by residents and rambling associations.

The bridleways fulfil a vital role for the equestrian activities in the area, with stabling facilities which are enjoyed by local residents and inhabitants of adjoining villages and towns, and as such are a vital part of village life.

Existing footways are generally considered appropriate for the locality with a requirement for trimming overhanging hedges, which unfortunately is lacking in some locations.

Footpaths and bridleways are the responsibility of the highways authority who should be encouraged to protect and maintain them in partnership with the community.

### Guidelines

- Woodlands, open landscape, ponds and hedgerows should be preserved
- Ensure the preservation of the character of the footpaths and bridleways



View across fields to St Margaret's church



Open fields off Hawkswood Road



Footpath sign in Downham Road



Bridleway

# 7. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

## 4.1 GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The village has varied architectural styles brought about by the enlargement of the village during the twentieth century and more recent developments.

New developments have mainly been extensions or rebuild on existing sites replacing existing properties. Most housing is set back from the roads with wide grass verges and discreetly shaded by established trees. There are older developments on plotlands off Castledon Road on the southern edge of the village below St Margaret's church.

Styles vary from the seventeenth and eighteenth century cottages, some with thatched roofs, to modern twenty-first century houses. Some of these differing architectural styles have been in conflict with a typical village style especially when flat roofs and large picture windows have been incorporated.

It is desirable that the street scene reflects the rural nature of the village i.e. a mixture of old and modern buildings blending together.



Older property in School Road



More recent property in School Road



New development School Road



New development School Road

School Road has examples of re-development incorporating good features such as:-

- Pitched clay roof tiles
- Timber casement windows
- Brick corbelling
- Chimneys
- Rendered walls
- Traditional timber windows and doors styles
- Brick arches
- Gravel and block paved Drives

## 4.2 PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND

When considering new development the local planning authority should follow the Government's sequential approach with regard to re-use of previously developed land. Careful consideration must be given to relationships with neighbouring properties and boundaries in respect of privacy from overlooking and daylight requirements.

Recent developments have blended well with the village street scene with traditional pitched tiled roofs, wall finishes and features.

The community consider the settlement to be primarily a rural environment and that development should maintain a domestic scale by respecting the context of the site and its immediate area. All existing properties are one or two storeys and consideration must be given to maintaining this essential character when Road new development is proposed.



Roof and chimney detail in Downham

### Guidelines

- Government guidance should be followed regarding the use of previously developed land
- In order to protect the village character it is important that new development maintains a domestic scale and respect the context of the site and its immediate area
- Traditional materials should be used to match neighbouring properties
- New buildings should use a variety of traditional materials to blend with adjacent properties



### 4.3 EXTENSIONS AND CONVERSIONS

Extensions are common place and, with care and good design, can be acceptable. The selection of materials for walls and roofs should be carefully considered and should enhance the property and not affect the street scene. Householders and applicants are encouraged to make use of the Design Guidance given by Chelmsford Borough Council.

- The type of extension should relate well to the original building
- The roof form should sit well with the original building
- The fenestration, external materials and detailed design should be sympathetic to the existing building
- Extensions should be in context with the street, preserving gaps between dwellings
- The extension should not unduly affect the amenities of residents of adjoining dwellings
- Extensions should preserve the open-fronted garden street scene and respect the building line

### 4.4 MATERIALS AND FEATURES

Materials within the village at present are many and varied. They include red facing brickwork, tile and slate roofs, render and traditional boarding. In many cases a mix of these materials is quite acceptable.

Although the village has mixed architectural styles, future developments should reflect a village character by the use of traditional materials. The village has houses with chimneys and plain tile or slate roofs with varying pitches, depending on their period, and this should be reflected in new development. Roofscapes with varying materials are an important factor in retaining the village character.

Small porches fixed on brackets over front doors, arch detail over windows and brick detailing, where possible, should be considered in new development to maintain variety and help enhance the built environment.



Conversion of village shop to private dwelling in Downham Road



Extension in progress on cottage in Downham Road



Pargetting detail in School Road



Roof detail to new property in School Road



Essex boarding in School Road



Traditional roofscape and chimney in School Road

### Guidelines

- Extensions should preserve the open-fronted garden street scene
- Alterations and extensions should be in keeping with existing properties with pitched tiled roofs and in accordance with guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough Council
- Dead frontages facing the street and public spaces should be avoided through the application of features designed as part of the building. Appropriately located windows and doors should be accommodated to help provide surveillance of spaces
- Chimneys should be incorporated in new developments, where possible, to add variety and interest to the skyline

## 4.5 ROOF CONVERSIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Extensions and conversions of loft spaces in existing properties are acceptable so long as the guidelines set by the Design Guide, issued by Chelmsford Borough Council, are taken into consideration. Rooms within the roof on properties of two storeys may affect the character of the building and be out of context with the surrounding properties.

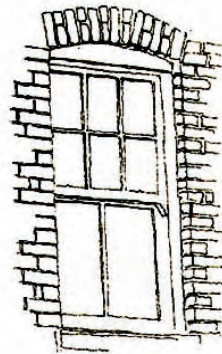
Where they are proposed on single storey properties careful consideration should be given to the type, size and location of dormer windows. These are used increasingly in loft conversions and should conform to the guidelines with regard to scale and materials. Well-proportioned dormers with pitched roofs have maintained the character of the dwelling and reflect the overall scale. Materials of plain clay tiles with rendered or vertical tile cheeks enhance the appearance. Roof windows (Velux type) should not be encouraged on front elevations as they may have a detrimental effect on the building's character.



Dormer conversion Downham Road



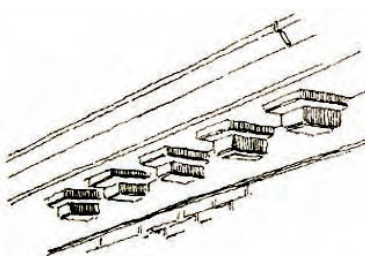
Porch addition in Downham Road



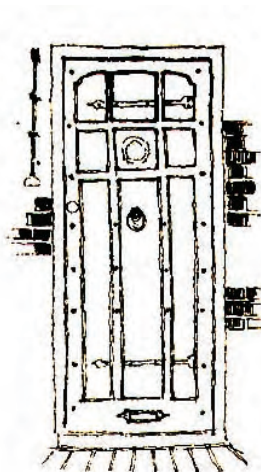
Sash window and brick arch



Traditional porch in School Road



Eaves dentil detail



Traditional panelled door

## 4.6 WINDOWS AND DOORS

The character of a building is determined by the scale and proportion of the windows and doors together with selected materials. Traditional sash and casement windows maintain character and should be encouraged. However, with the exception of listed buildings, changes to windows and doors are not controlled by legislation.

The trend in recent years has been for U.P.V.C. double glazed replacement windows with their varying styles of plain glass or leaded lights, which need not have a detrimental effect the street scene.

Recent developments have, however, used more traditional timber casements and "look-a-like" sash windows which should be encouraged.

### Guidelines

- Roof extensions should conform to the guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough council
- Any roof extension should respect the character of the building and not undermine the domestic scale of the buildings in the area
- Windows should be in traditional materials with brick arch lintels
- Traditional features and materials should be used

## 4.7 RESIDENTIAL GARDENS AND BOUNDARIES

The village street scene is dominated by properties set back from the boundary with either open front gardens or a mixture of boundary details. These range from open plan lawns in School Road to hedges, timber fences and brick walls in other parts of the village.

High walls and fences should be discouraged as they do not reflect the village scene. In areas of the street where front boundary features such as walls and fences are part of the character of the area, traditional materials should be used. Front boundaries and gates should use traditional materials such as hedges, timber or brickwork. Brick walls should be in soft red or orangey-red bricks to reflect the existing street scene with hedges of hawthorn or blackthorn and timber fences of picket or hazel-weave style. When considering boundary treatments such as hedges and gates, ensure they respect the landscape and character of the village in terms of height and density.

The existing character of the village is enhanced by generous-sized open-fronted gardens and this should be encouraged in any new development. Attention should be given to the retention of existing trees and landscape features. Space should be designed into any forthcoming developments for storage of refuse bins to ensure they are disguised from the street scene.



Timber picket fence in School Road



Low brick boundary wall in School Road



Open fronted garden in Downham Road



Boundary hedge in Downham Road

## 4.8 DRIVES AND PARKING

There are a variety of materials used for driveways including tarmac, concrete, block paving and gravel. The village setting would be enhanced by the use of more traditional materials such as brick or stone paving and gravel. New developments should be discouraged from incorporating large areas of tarmac.

Parking within the boundaries of the site can present a problem. In swellings with small front gardens, vehicles parked on front drives or in front of the property can visually dominate the street scene and be at variance with the policy in the adopted Local Plan. Householders are encouraged to consider the effect that their gardens have on the appearance of the street. When proposing changes to their grounds, residents should consider parking of cars to the side or the rear of their properties.



Timber five bar gate



Natural stone drive in Downham Road

### Guidelines

- High front boundary walls and gates should not be used as they do not reflect the character of the village
- Fences and gates should be in traditional materials
- Hedges should be retained
- Driveways should use traditional materials

## 5. HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### 5.1 TRAFFIC CALMING

There is concern about the amount of speeding traffic through the village, especially Downham Road into School Road and Castledon Road as they are used by commuting traffic passing through the village.

Existing speed limits are only deemed appropriate if observed and enforced. Any traffic calming measures should be carefully considered so as not to be intrusive to the character of the village although they would improve the environment by making it a safer place to live.

The introduction of effective measures could increase the safety of pedestrians throughout the village, reduce the risk of accidents and improve the environment of the village.

### 5.2 PARKING

Parked cars in the road are considered not to enhance the appearance of the village and the general view of the residents is that they increase the risk of accident. However, by working in partnership with the relevant authorities, safety measures could be incorporated without affecting the character of the village.

### 5.3 STREET FURNITURE

Rural features within the village should be retained; examples of these being rustic timber bus shelters, original finger post direction signs, green litter bins, dark stained wooden seats, wooden kissing gates to public footpaths and rural pattern street lighting columns using white rather than harsh yellow light. Of course, all these items need regular maintenance to keep them in good condition.

Overhead telephone and power cables are considered a detrimental feature to the existing street scene. There are existing mechanisms for dealing with signs in highways. Indiscriminate publicity signs, such as illuminated commercial signs and permanent banner signs, detract from the visual aspect of the village and whilst it is recognised publicity is necessary at times, it is felt that consideration should be given to the size, design and duration of the signs being appropriate to their location.



Timber bus shelter, seat and pillar box in Downham Road



Directional sign in Castledon Road

## 6. COMMERCE

Light industry and commerce within the village should be retained. However, its appearance should not be allowed to deteriorate and associated traffic and parking should not be allowed to affect the village environment. Any further appropriate expansion should have regard to the context of the street scene.

The local Public House is centrally placed in the village and also attracts custom from outside Downham.

Encouragement should be given to the introduction of shop facilities which would enhance the village character.

### Guidelines

- Traffic calming measures should be designed to respect the context of the village character
- Street lighting and bus shelters should be of rural pattern
- Power lines should be sited underground
- Illuminated commercial and permanent banner signs are not acceptable in a village environment
- Publicity signs should have a limited lifespan
- The appearance of light industry should not have a detrimental effect on the appearance of the village
- Encouragement should be given to shop facilities



Windsor Road industry site

## LANDSCAPE

- Borough planning policies should be followed to ensure the Green Belt is not eroded
- Any new development should reflect the character of the surroundings
- Existing open spaces and open land between properties should be retained as these are an important characteristic of the village
- The removal of existing hedgerows should be resisted
- Trees and open spaces are an important feature of the village and their retention should be given full consideration in any proposed development or other physical change
- Woodlands, open landscape, ponds and hedgerows should be preserved
- Ensure the preservation of the character of the footpaths and bridleways

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Government guidance should be followed regarding the use of previously developed land
- In order to protect the village character it is important that new development maintains a domestic scale and respects the context of the site and its immediate area
- Traditional materials should be used to match neighbouring properties
- New buildings should use a variety of traditional materials to blend with adjacent properties
- Extensions should preserve the open-fronted garden street scene
- Alterations and extensions should be in keeping with existing properties with pitched tiled roofs and in accordance with guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough Council
- Dead frontages facing the street and public spaces should be avoided through the application of features designed as part of the building. Appropriately located windows and doors should be accommodated to help provide surveillance of spaces
- Chimneys should be incorporated in new developments, where possible, to add variety and interest to the skyline
- Roof extensions should conform to the guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough council
- Any roof extension should respect the character of the building and not undermine the domestic scale of the buildings in the area
- Windows should be in traditional materials with brick arch lintels
- Traditional features and materials should be used
- High front boundary walls and gates should not be used as they do not reflect the character of the village
- Fences and gates should be in traditional materials
- Hedges should be retained
- Driveways should use traditional materials

## HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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- Publicity signs should have a limited lifespan

## COMMERCE

- The appearance of light industry should not have a detrimental effect on the appearance of the village
- Encouragement should be given to shop facilities

572000

572500

573000

195500

196500

196000

196000

195500

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195000

195000

### Downham

-  De Beauvoir Public House
-  Allen's Farm
-  Village Hall
-  Jubilee Gardens
-  St Margaret's Church
-  Downham Hall
-  Vera Road Plotlands
-  Listed Building
-  South Hanningfield Parish Boundary



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572000

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# RAMSDEN HEATH

## 7. THE VILLAGE

### 7.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

**Ramsden Heath** is the largest of the three villages within the Parish of South Hanningfield.

Records indicate the settlement is on the line of an old Roman road and lies on the high ground overlooking the Thames estuarial plain. With a population of about 1700 Ramsden Heath is the largest of the three villages. Although recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as having a mill, manor house and a small settlement, associated with these, on the Heath nothing from that era and little from the intervening ones has survived, with the majority of the oldest dwellings now to be found in the village dating from the 1800's.

The village is surrounded by Metropolitan Green Belt, acting as a green buffer, with the designated aim of preserving its identity, maintaining the openness and preventing the spread of development and the merging of surrounding settlements. Other than the estate development of Allen's Farm in the early 1970's, there has not been any significantly large-scale development within the village envelope. As a consequence, the growth of the village from the 1800's to its present size has been slow, giving rise to the use of varied single and two storey architectural styles but in traditional materials.



Cottage in Downham Road



Barn Farm in Heath Road



Victorian Villas Downham Road



Thatched Cottage Dowsetts Lane



Manor Close



Dovedale Close

## 7.2 SETTLEMENT DESCRIPTION

Ramsden Heath is a “Defined Village Settlement” as defined in the local Plan. The settlement pattern is fairly compact and well defined with the developed area and village envelope extending for about a half-mile radius around this centre, which also encompasses the small amount of linear development joining Ramsden Heath to its neighbouring village of Downham. Outside this defined area housing is thinly scattered

The compact nature of the settlement, which is an important feature of the village, follows the traditional pattern having, within a short walking distance of the centre, the village hall, which incorporates St John’s Chapel; the allotment gardens, which were given to the poor of the Parish in 1858 and which are still fully worked today; the Free Church, two public houses and the village school.

The North of the village consists mainly of the Allen’s Farm development with semi-detached dwellings and open-fronted gardens. This contrasts with the South, having cull-de-sacs and back lanes with detached and semi-detached bungalows and houses, many backing onto open farmland.

The properties to the East and West of the village contain a mix of mainly detached bungalows and houses most of which again back onto open farmland.

This variety, combined with well tended front gardens, provides a pleasant “open” appearance on the approaches to the village centre.

As would be expected with such an extended development period, the density of housing to land area varies significantly, with some recent in-fill and previously developed land sites being built at a high density than the earlier ones.



View of houses in Allen’s Farm off Dowsetts Lane



A view along Church Road

### Guideline

- Borough planning policy should be followed to ensure the Green Belt is not eroded



Some of these new buildings have continued the format of the older dwellings, having been constructed in traditional architectural styles and materials and, therefore, blend acceptably with the overall settlement pattern and appearance.

Where extensions to houses have been carried out these are generally merging well with the existing and neighbouring properties.

The varied ages and styles of the housing to be seen in the village sit well together and provide an important and attractive feature of Ramsden Heath.



Village centre showing war memorial

## 7.3 THE VILLAGE CENTRE

A distinctive and important aspect, compared to the neighbouring villages, is the well defined centre lying at the junction of the spine roads, broadly running North/South and East/West, approaching from the nearby towns of Chelmsford, Basildon, Wickford and Billericay. A prominent Grade II listed building is its core feature, which is also one of the three local public houses. The war memorial, village sign and a small parade of shop premises completes the scene.



Church at junction of Heath Road and Park Lane



Village Hall Dowsetts Lane



Village school in Church Road



Playing fields Downham Road

# 8. LANDSCAPE

## 8.1 OPEN SPACES

Within the village, public open space exists with land connecting from the village hall on Dowsetts Lane to the nursery sports field on Downham Road. This green space has special significance for the community not only for its pleasing appearance but it is also where football and tennis are played. Some of the footpaths, that abound around the village, cross the area and lead the walker into the local countryside and to the nature reserve at Hanningfield reservoir.

The recreation ground, lying a short distance along Dowsetts Lane, abuts the allotment gardens and contains swings and slides for the younger members of the community.



Allotments Heath Road

These areas are important to retain as part of the village providing visual separation between areas of development. They are essential recreation and communal facilities and have the potential to be enhanced as community features.

### Guidelines

- Compact nature of the village should be retained
- Separation between the village and surrounding settlements should be maintained to preserve its individual character
- The open aspect of the village should be retained
- Existing open spaces, such as the recreation ground and allotments, should be retained and enhanced as community features

## 8.2 RURAL ENVIRONMENT

Countryside featuring farmland, meadow and woodland surrounds the village. The approaches to Ramsden Heath from more urban areas, lie within this environment on hedged, winding roads which emphasise the space and rural nature of the village's location.

The open aspect of the settlement, particularly on the approach roads, is an important element of the village character and allows the village to harmonise with the surrounding landscape. High density housing on the edges of the village envelope has been avoided and would be detrimental to this important aspect.



The approach from Chelmsford along Dowsetts Lane



The approach from Wickford along Church Road



The approach from Billericay along Heath Road



Grazing at Kent Hill fields

## 8.3 SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE

The countryside surrounding the village is a significant feature of the area containing an abundance of mature trees and woodland, open landscapes with preserved ponds and ancient hedgerows, providing habitats for wildlife, all within easy access from the village centre.

Meepshole Wood and the extensive wooded area of Cox Green are examples of such areas together with Kent Hill fields, with its elevated position, giving extensive views over rolling open countryside towards Ramsden Bellhouse and beyond. This ecological

environment not only provides an important green buffer between the Parish and the towns of Billericay and Wickford but contributes considerably to the rural aspect of the village and enables the opportunity for leisure time activity for both residents and visitors to walk the network of footpaths.

## 8.4 FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS

The lanes, bridleways and footpaths spreading out from the spine roads into the surrounding countryside are of great importance and should be maintained and their character preserved as they provide walkers with the opportunity to explore far beyond the village boundary and also allow the strong equestrian presence, arising from the two riding stables, to exercise their mounts.



Bridleway off Mill Lane



Ancient hedgerows to lanes entering the village



Kissing gate to footpath next to village hall

## Guidelines

- Footpaths and bridleways should be maintained and their character preserved
- Woodlands, open landscape and hedgerows should be preserved
- High density development at the edge of the village would be detrimental to the open aspect of the village
- The removal of mature trees and other important landscape features should be resisted

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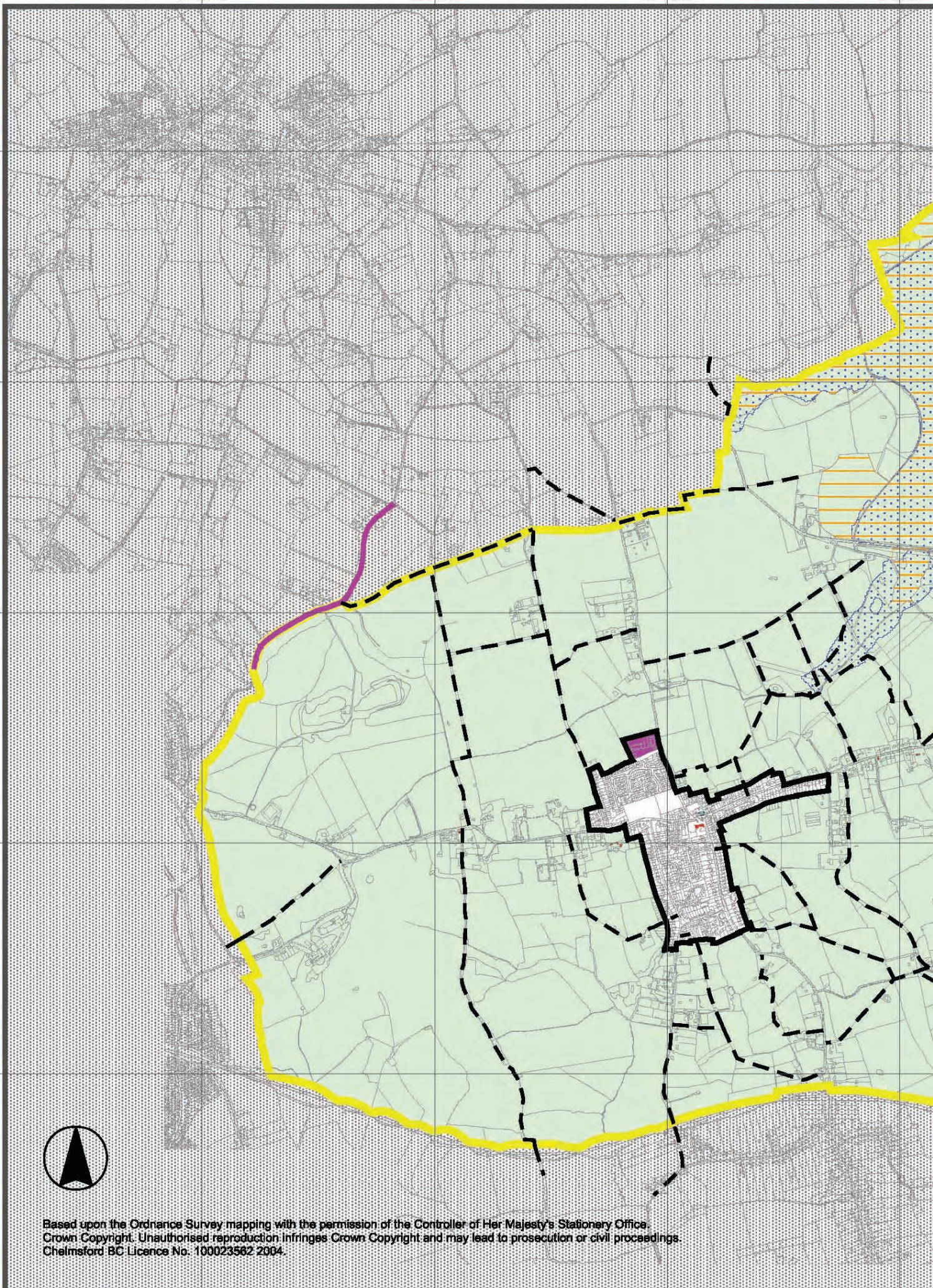
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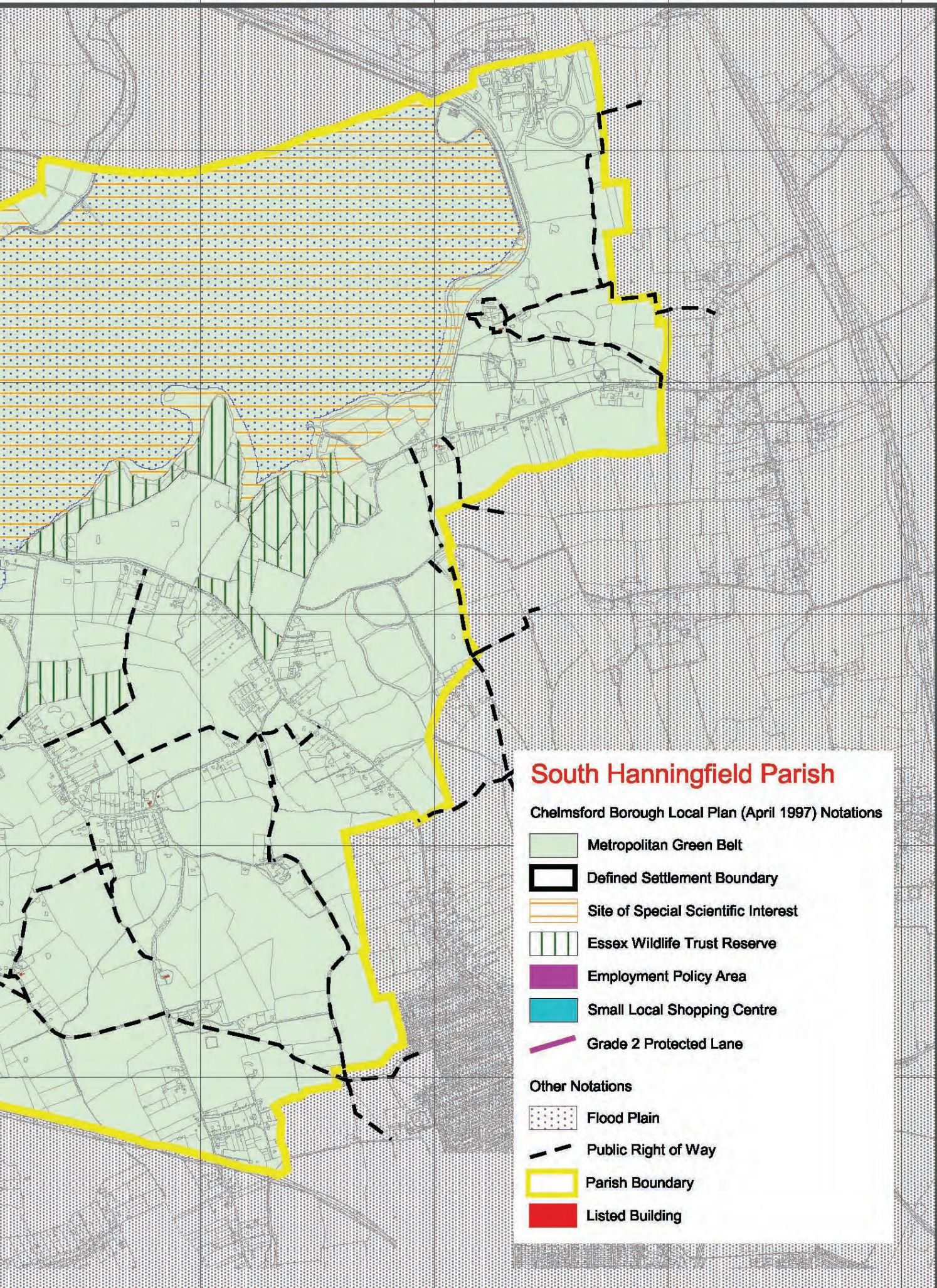
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## South Hanningfield Parish

Chelmsford Borough Local Plan (April 1997) Notations

- Metropolitan Green Belt
- Defined Settlement Boundary
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Essex Wildlife Trust Reserve
- Employment Policy Area
- Small Local Shopping Centre
- Grade 2 Protected Lane

Other Notations

- Flood Plain
- Public Right of Way
- Parish Boundary
- Listed Building

# 9. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

## 9.1 GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The village has varied architectural styles which range from the seventeenth and eighteenth century cottages, some with thatched roofs, to modern twenty-first century houses. Some of these new, differing architectural styles have been in conflict with a typical village style especially when flat roofs and large picture windows have been incorporated.

A recent example of inappropriate development is the construction of the flats in the village centre at Bakers Court, where an opportunity for innovative design has been missed.

It is desirable that the street scene reflects the rural nature of the village i.e. a mixture of old and new buildings blending together. New development should be within the existing village envelope and follow Government guidance by making best use of previously developed land.



Residential development, Bakers Court



Houses created on infill site in Downham Road



St John's Place on the site of the old church and village hall

Recent developments at Farrier Square and St John's Place are examples of infill developments incorporating good features such as:-

- Pitched clay tile roofs
- Timber casement windows
- Brick corbelling
- Chimneys
- Rendered walls
- Traditional timber windows and door stiles
- Brick and stone arches
- Bay windows
- Gravel and block paved drives



Farrier Square at centre of village

## 9.2 INFILL SITES

Development of infill sites must take into account the context of the existing street scene and not dominate the adjacent properties. They should not be over-developed and special consideration must be given to relationships with neighbouring properties and boundaries in respect of privacy from overlooking and daylight requirements. Recent developments at Farrier Square and St John's Place are examples of infill developments blending well with the village street scene with traditional pitched tiled roofs and wall finishes. However, they could be criticised for their close proximity to neighbouring properties.

The community consider the settlement to be primarily a rural environment and that development should maintain a domestic scale by respecting the context of the site and its immediate area. All existing properties are one or two storeys and consideration must be given to maintaining this essential character when new development is proposed.



A view of Farrier Square, Downham Road

### Guidelines

- Infill developments should be in context with the existing street scene
- In order to protect the village character it is important that new developments maintain a domestic scale and respect the context of the site and its immediate area
- New developments should incorporate traditional features
- Government guidance should be followed regarding the use of previously developed land
- The street scene should reflect the rural nature of the village with a blend of building styles

## 9.3 EXTENSIONS AND CONVERSIONS

Extensions are commonplace and with care and good design can be acceptable. The selections of materials for walls and roofs should be carefully considered and should enhance the property and not affect the street scene. Householders and applicants are encouraged to make use of the Design Guidance given by Chelmsford Borough Council.

- The type of extension should relate well to the original building
- The roof form should sit well with the original building
- The fenestration, external materials and detailed design should be sympathetic to the existing building
- Extensions should be in context with the street, preserving gaps between dwellings
- The extension should not unduly affect the amenities of residents of adjoining dwellings
- Extensions should preserve the open-fronted garden street scene and respect the building line
- Extensions or conversions involving extensions should be strictly in scale and in keeping with the original building



Mill House conversion in Heath Road



Extension, Allen's Farm



Chimney and steep pitched tile roof at St John's Place



Weatherboarding at Farrier Square

## 9.4 MATERIALS AND FEATURES

Materials within the village at present are and varied. They include red facing brickwork, tile and slate roofs, render and traditional boarding. In many instances a mix of these materials is quite acceptable. Although the village has mixed architectural styles, future developments should reflect a village character by the use of traditional materials. The village centre has houses with chimneys and plain tile or slate roofs with varying pitches, depending on their period, and this should be reflected in new development. Roofscapes with varying materials are an important factor in retaining the village character.

Small porches fixed on brackets over front doors, arch detail over window and brick detailing, where possible, require careful attention to detail in new development to maintain variety and help enhance the built environment.



Plain tile roof and rendering at Farrier Square



Porch detail with plain clay tiles

### Guidelines

- Extensions or conversions involving extensions should be strictly in scale and in keeping with the original building
- Alterations and extensions should be in keeping with existing properties with pitched tiled roofs and in accordance with guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough Council
- Two storey side extensions should be restricted if affecting the street scene
- Extensions should preserve the open-fronted garden street scene
- Extensions and conversions should use traditional materials in order to blend with the original
- Chimneys should be incorporated in new developments, where possible, to add variety and interest to the skyline

## 9.5 ROOF CONVERSIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Extensions and conversions of loft spaces in existing properties are acceptable so long as the guidelines set by the Design Guide, issued by Chelmsford Borough Council, are taken into consideration.

Rooms within the roof on two storey properties may affect the character of the building and be out of context with the surrounding properties. Where they are proposed on single storey properties careful consideration should be given to the type, size and location of dormer windows. These are used increasingly in loft conversions and some

fine examples can be seen in Church Road and Park Lane, which conform to the guidelines with regard to scale and materials. Well-proportioned dormers with pitched roofs have maintained the character of the dwelling and reflect the overall scale. The chosen materials of plain clay tiles with rendered or vertical tile cheeks enhance the appearance.

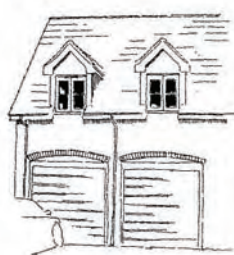
Roof windows (Velux type) should not be encouraged on front elevations as they may be detrimental to the character of the building.



Roof conversion, Park Lane



Roof conversion, Church Road



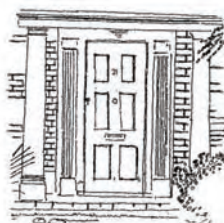
Double garage and dormer with brick arch



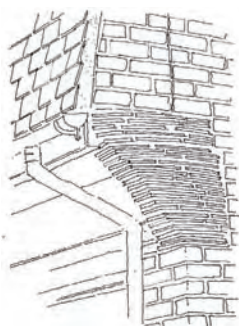
Brick arch and stone sill detail with timber casement window



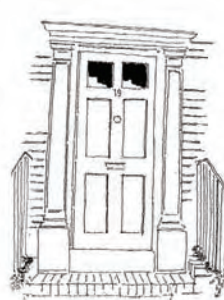
Cantilever and corbel detail



Portico detail



Tile creasing corbel



Door surround detail with panellled door

## 9.6 WINDOWS AND DOORS

The character of a building is determined by the scale and proportion of the windows and doors together with the selected materials

Traditional sash and casement windows maintain character and should be encouraged. However, with the exception of listed buildings, change to windows and doors is not controlled by legislation. The trend in recent years has been for U.P.V.C. double glazed replacement windows with their varying styles of plain glass or leaded lights, which need not have a detrimental effect and, in fact, may add individuality to the street scene.

Recent developments have, however, used more traditional timber casements and "look-a-like" sash windows, which should be encouraged.

### Guidelines

- Roof extensions should conform to the guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough Council
- Any roof extension should respect the existing character of the building and not undermine the domestic scale of buildings in the area
- Windows should be in traditional materials with brick arch lintels
- Traditional features and materials should be used

## 9.7 RESIDENTIAL GARDENS AND BOUNDARIES

The village street scene is dominated by properties set back from the boundary with either open front gardens or a mixture of boundary details. These range from open plan lawns in Allens Road to hedges, timber fences and brick walls in other parts of the village. Existing hedges should be retained.

High walls, fences and gates should be discouraged as they do not reflect the village scene. The existing front boundaries border well-maintained

front gardens and must be maintained, when upgrading existing dwellings, so that designs of gates, walls and fences blend in sympathetically with their surroundings. Timber fences and walls could be softened by landscaping. Front boundaries and gates should use traditional materials such as hedges, timber or brickwork. Brick walls should be in soft red or orange-red bricks to reflect the

existing street scene with hedges of hawthorn or blackthorn and timber fences of picket or hazel-weave style. When considering boundary treatments such as hedges and gates ensure they respect the landscape and character of the village with regard to height and density.

New residential development should respect the existing character of the village with regard to provision of gardens and open spaces. Attention should be given to the retention of existing trees and existing landscape features. Space should be designed into any forthcoming developments for storage of refuse bins to ensure they are disguised from the street scene.



Boundary hedging, Park Lane



Trees and hedges, Park Lane



Trees and open landscape feature, Park Lane



Post and rail fencing Church Road

## 9.8 DRIVES AND PARKING

There are a variety of materials used for driveways including tarmac, concrete, block paving and gravel. The village setting would be enhanced by the use of more traditional materials such as brick or stone paving and gravel. New developments should be discouraged from incorporating large areas of tarmac.



Gravel driveway in Park Lane



Typical parking scene

Parking within the boundaries of the site can present a problem. In dwellings with small front gardens, vehicles parked on front drives or in front of the property can visually dominate the street scene and be at variance with the policy in the adopted Local Plan. Where possible cars should be parked to the side or to the rear of the property. Householders are encouraged to consider the effect their gardens have on the appearance of the street. When proposing changes to their grounds residents should consider parking cars to the side or the rear of their properties.

### Guidelines

- High front boundary walls and fences should be discouraged as they do not reflect the character of the village
- Fences and gates should be in traditional materials
- Hedges should be retained
- Existing trees and open areas should be retained to keep the open character of the village
- Gardens of new developments should respect the existing open character of the village
- Driveways should use traditional materials



# 10. HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Parking at the village school



Overhead power lines



Rustic timber bus shelter

## 10.1 TRAFFIC CALMING

There is concern about the amount of speeding traffic through the village, especially Downham Road into Heath Road, as it is used by commuting traffic passing through the village. Recent initiatives such as “Safer Journeys to Schools” have been considered together with a new zebra crossing and improvements to the site of the old petrol filling station. The introduction of further effective measures could increase the safety of pedestrians and encourage parents not to use the car to transport children to school, thus further reducing congestion and the risk of accidents and improving the environment of the village.

Existing speed limits are deemed appropriate of observed and enforced. The introduction of traffic calming measures should not be detrimental to the character of the village and would improve the environment by making it a safer place to live. This could be achieved by road width restrictions with appropriate warning signs upon entering the village, designed in partnership with the highways authority.

## 10.2 PARKING

Parking restrictions in the centre of the village are deemed acceptable by 60% of villagers in the survey and would assist with road safety. This could be achieved by the use of varying road textures or appropriate road marking to designate acceptable parking areas. Parked cars in the street are considered not to enhance the appearance of the village and the general view is that they increase the risk of accident rather than effectively slowing down traffic.

## 10.3 STREET FURNITURE

Rural features within the village should be retained, examples of these being rustic timber bus shelters, original finger post direction signs, green litter bins, dark stained wooden seats, wooden kissing gates to public footpaths, black painted poles to road signs and rural pattern street lighting columns using white rather than harsh yellow light. Of course, all these items need regular maintenance to keep them in good condition.

Overhead telephone and power cables are considered a detrimental feature to the existing street scene. However, these are being superseded in newer developments by the more visually pleasing underground installations.

Existing footways are generally considered appropriate for the locality with a requirement for trimming overhanging hedges, which unfortunately is lacking in some locations.

## Guidelines

- Traffic calming measures should be designed to respect the context of the village character
- Parking restrictions in the centre of the village would be acceptable
- Street lighting and bus shelters should be of rural pattern

## 10.4 PUBLICITY SIGNS



Obsolete sign

Indiscriminate publicity signs detract from the visual aspect of the village and non-essential advertisements are to be discouraged. The position and size of the signs should be appropriate for their location and they should be of limited duration. Obsolete signs should be removed to reduce street clutter.

Greater attention should be paid to the requirements of the advertising regulations and their enforcement.

## 11. COMMERCE

Light industry and commerce within the village should be retained. However, its appearance should be maintained to a good standard.

Associated parking does present a problem in the centre of the village and should not be allowed to affect the environment.

Any further appropriate expansion should have regard to the context of the street scene.

Encouragement should be given to the retention and expansion of shop facilities which are essential to the village character.



Rug shop in Heath Road



Hairdressing salon in Downham Road where parking on the forecourt detracts from the street scene



Motor vehicle servicing in Downham Road where parking at the rear should be encouraged



Butcher's shop at centre of village



Beauty rooms at centre of village



Pool shop at centre of village

### Guidelines

- Publicity signs should be appropriate for their location
- Planning regulations regarding signs should be enforced
- Light industry and commerce should be retained and appearance maintained to a good standard

## THE VILLAGE

- Borough planning policy should be followed to ensure the Green belt is not eroded
- Compact nature of the village should be retained
- Separation between the village and surrounding settlements should be maintained to preserve its individual character

## LANDSCAPE

- The open aspect of the village should be retained
- Existing open spaces, such as the recreation ground and allotments, should be retained and enhanced as community features
- Footpaths and bridleways should be maintained and their character preserved
- Woodlands, open landscape and hedgerows should be preserved
- High density development at the edge of the village would be detrimental to the open aspect of the village
- The removal of mature trees and other important landscape features should be resisted

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Infill developments should be in context with the existing street scene
- In order to protect the village character it is important that new developments maintain a domestic scale and respect the context of the site and its immediate area
- New developments should incorporate traditional features
- Government guidance should be followed regarding the use of previously developed land
- The street scene should reflect the rural nature of the village with a blend of building styles
- Extensions or conversions involving extensions should be strictly in scale and in keeping with the original building
- Alterations and extensions should be in keeping with existing properties with pitched tiled roofs and in accordance with guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough Council
- Two storey side extensions should be restricted if affecting the street scene
- Extensions should preserve the open-fronted garden street scene
- Extensions and conversions should use traditional materials in order to blend with the original
- Chimneys should be incorporated in new developments, where possible, to add variety and interest to the skyline
- Roof extensions should conform to the guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough Council
- Any roof extension should respect the existing character of the building and not undermine the domestic scale of buildings in the area
- Windows should be in traditional materials with brick arch lintels
- Traditional features and materials should be used
- High front boundary walls and gates should be discouraged as they do not reflect the character of the village
- Fences and gates should be in traditional materials
- Hedges should be retained
- Existing trees and open areas should be retained to keep the open character of the village
- Gardens of new developments should respect the existing open character of the village
- Driveways should use traditional materials

## HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Traffic calming measures should be designed to respect the context of the village character
- Parking restrictions in the centre of the village would be acceptable
- Street lighting and bus shelters should be of rural pattern
- Publicity signs should be appropriate for their location
- Planning regulations regarding signs should be enforced

## COMMERCE

- Light industry and commerce should be retained and appearance maintained to a good standard

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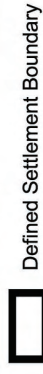
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# Ramsden Heath

Chelmsford Borough Local Plan (April 1997)

Notations



Other Notations



Tennis Club



Downham Primary School



St. John's Place



Allied Site (development land)



Recreation Ground



Allotments



Norton Fields



Allen's Farm Estate



Listed Buildings

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# SOUTH HANNINGFIELD

## 12. THE VILLAGE

### 12.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

**S**outh Hanningfield is the smallest of the three villages which form the parish of South Hanningfield. The village is joined to Downham on its western boundary.

The name of Hanningfield means a portion of cleared forest land which was once owned by the family Hann or Ham, who was thought to be a Saxon tribal leader. At the Norman conquest the lordship of the manor of Hanningfield was given to the Bishop of Bayeaux and later, in the 16th century, descended through the Montchesney family to John, the first baron Petre of Writtle, and has remained in the family to the present day.

The village was formerly a community where most of the inhabitants worked on the land and allied industries up to the 1940s when the war interrupted its lifestyle. The village still retains its original appearance but now most of the people commute to their workplace out of the area.

There was a major upheaval in the village in the 1950s when the reservoir was constructed. This provided some local employment but did reduce the area of the village by approximately 50%.

### 12.2 SETTLEMENT DESCRIPTION

The village is not a 'Defined Village Settlement' but is within the Metropolitan Green Belt, acting as a green buffer, with the designated aim of preserving its identity, maintaining the openness and preventing the spread of development and the merging of surrounding settlements. Fields surround the village and also intersperse between the houses. Most of its existing hedgerows are old boundaries and are, perhaps, over 100 years old.



Village Hall



Houses opposite the Tye

The centre of the village is situated around the Tye (village green) which is on the road junction of South Hanningfield Road, which runs from Downham to Rettendon Common, and Middlemead which leads to West Hanningfield. The Tye is bounded by the reservoir to its north and village church of St Peter's, a short distance away on higher ground, to the north-east. The village hall is to the east and a farmhouse, barn and the Old Windmill public house to the south. The Tye contains the children's play area, the village sign, a bus stop and post box.



St Peter's church



The Tye



The Old Windmill public house



The reservoir

The old village blacksmith's site has recently been developed with three substantial properties. There is also a new development of 11 dwellings on the site of Bearmans in Church Lane. This was a large old house which had been used as a nursing home. Most other changes have been extensions to properties which generally fit well into the village scene.

South Hanningfield is predominately a ribbon style development with a pleasant mix of property styles including the 1930s bungalows, substantial brick houses, old Essex-boarded farm houses, village hall, large old barn (now converted to a house) and the village public house.

Apart from the developments at the blacksmith's site and at Bearmans there has been no significant development in the village.



Centre of village near the Tye

## 13. LANDSCAPE



The Tye at the centre of the village



The reservoir



Play area on the Tye



Picnic area at the reservoir

### 13.1 OPEN SPACES

The most predominant feature of the landscape is the Hanningfield reservoir. This includes a large picnic area with public car parking, a trout fishing lodge with boats and a public waterside restaurant. Facilities for bird watching with three separate hides have proved a very popular attraction. The reservoir and its associated activities are an asset to the village and provide local employment.

The well-maintained Tye, in the village centre, is a pivotal feature of the village. This should be preserved for the enjoyment of the residents.

The village is of a very rural appearance, having a number of ancient trees and hedgerows, surrounded by large woods and fields. A community survey will be undertaken and results will be shared with the Borough Council with a view to applying TPOs in the appropriate cases.

It is important to retain these features within the village, to preserve the assets for future generations to enjoy. They also have the potential to be enhanced as community features.

### Guidelines

- Borough planning policies should be followed to ensure the Green Belt is not eroded
- Development should be restricted to prevent merging of villages in order to preserve their identities
- Trees and open spaces are an important feature of the village and their retention should be given full consideration in any proposed development or other physical change
- The Tye should be preserved

## 13.2 SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE

The countryside surrounding the village is a significant feature of the area containing an abundance of mature trees, woodlands and open landscape with ancient hedgerows.

There are extensive designated footpaths in the large wooded areas, surrounding the hanningfield reservoir, which link up with the educational centre at Downham. These, and other attractive footpaths, are popular with residents and dog-walkers and provide a link with neighbouring villages and are an integral part of the character of the area.



Entrance to reservoir and nature reserve



The approach from Rettendon along South Hanningfield Road



Open land near the Tye



Open space South Hanningfield Road



Open space in Church Lane

## 13.3 WOODLANDS AND FOOTPATHS

Our public footpaths and woodlands are important to the character of the village and in partnership with the Authority should be preserved for the benefit of our abundant wildlife and also for the recreation of the local inhabitants and the visitors.

Countryside ecology is important for our wildlife and should be maintained and, where possible, improved.



Kissing gate St Peter's churchyard



Trees in South Hanningfield Road



Footpath and sign opposite the Tye

### Guidelines

- Woodlands, open landscape and hedgerows are an intrinsic part of the character of the village
- The removal of mature trees and other important landscape features should be resisted
- Ensure the preservation of the character of the footpaths

# 14. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

## 14.1 GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The village is a typical ribbon development, which has evolved over many years. This has resulted in a varied, pleasing mix of styles, types and sizes of properties with their building line well back from the road. They are built with traditional materials of the era, with gardens and hedges interspersed with green open spaces.

This street scene should be retained especially the areas around the Tye, which is the picturesque centre piece of the whole village.

Any future development should reflect the existing character of the village and respect the building line, set back from the road, in order to preserve the open aspect.



House in Church Lane



South Hanningfield Road



South Hanningfield Road



South Hanningfield Road

## 14.2 PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND

When considering new developments the local planning authority should follow the Government's sequential approach with regard to the re-use of previously developed land. They should not be over developed and careful consideration must be given to relationships with neighbouring properties and boundaries in respect of privacy from overlooking and daylight requirements.

The recent development at the old blacksmith's site is an example of development blending well with the village street scene, with traditional pitched tiled roofs and wall finishes. The community consider the settlement to be a primarily rural environment and that development should maintain a domestic scale. In achieving this, consideration must be given to circumstances where buildings are proposed that exceed two storeys. The majority of residents would prefer future developments to be detached dwellings with three or four bedrooms to maintain the character of the village.



Infill development at the old blacksmith's site

### Guidelines

- Government guidance should be followed regarding the use of previously developed land
- New developments should use traditional materials
- It is important for the existing village character that all new development maintains a domestic scale and respects the context of the site and its immediate area
- Traditional materials should be used to match neighbouring properties



## 14.3 EXTENSIONS AND CONVERSIONS

Extensions are common place and with care and good design can be acceptable. The selection of materials for walls and roofs should be carefully considered and should enhance the property and not affect the street scene. Householders and applicants are encouraged to make use of the Design Guidance given by Chelmsford Borough Council.

- The type of extensions should relate well to the original building
- The roof form should sit well with the original building
- The fenestration, external materials and detailed design should be sympathetic to the existing building
- Extensions should be in context with the street preserving gaps between dwellings
- The extension should not unduly affect the amenities of residents of adjoining dwellings
- Extensions should preserve the existing street scene and respect the building line



Barn conversion



Extension using dormer windows

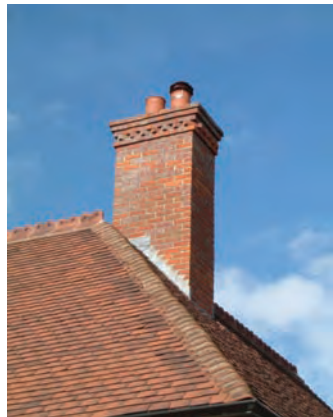
## 14.4 MATERIALS AND FEATURES

The village has mixed architectural styles and features. Future developments should reflect these characteristics by the use of traditional materials.

Extensions and the few recent conversions have generally been in sympathy with the existing, traditional styles of buildings and materials and which, having mellowed, will blend in well.

Recent developments and Bearmans and the old blacksmith's forge are examples of infill/redevelopments incorporating good features such as :-

- Pitched clay tile roofs
- Timber casement windows
- Brick corbelling
- Chimneys
- Rendered walls
- Traditional timber windows and door styles
- Brick arches
- Bay windows
- Gravel and block paved drives



Chimney detail



Pitched plain tile roof with dormer window



Cantilever floor detail

## Guidelines

- Extensions should preserve the existing street scene and building line
- Alterations and extensions should be in keeping with existing properties with pitched tiled roofs and in accordance with guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough Council
- Chimneys should be incorporated in new developments, where possible, to add variety and interest to the skyline

## 14.5 ROOF CONVERSIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Extensions and conversions of loft spaces in existing properties are acceptable so long as the guidelines set by the Design Guide, issued by Chelmsford Borough Council, are taken into consideration.

Rooms within the roof on properties of two storeys may affect the character of the building and be out of context with the surrounding properties. Where they are proposed on single storey properties careful consideration should be given to the type, size and location of

dormer windows. These are used increasingly in loft conversions and some fine examples can be seen in the village, which conform to the guidelines with regard to scale and materials.

Well-proportioned dormers with pitched roofs have maintained the character of the dwelling and reflect the overall scale. The chosen materials of plain clay tiles with rendered or vertical tile cheeks enhance the appearance. Roof windows (Velux type) should not be encouraged on front elevations as they may have a detrimental effect on the character of the building.



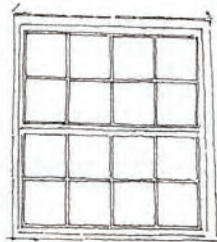
Roof conversion



Dormer to bungalow



Bay window



Sash window



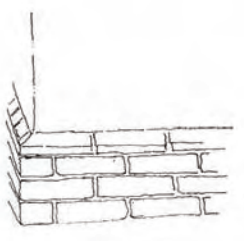
Door and canopy detail



Dormer and mews garage



Brick corbel detail



Brick plinth detail

## 14.6 WINDOWS AND DOORS

The character of a building is determined by the scale and proportions of the windows and doors together with the selected materials.

Traditional sash and casement windows maintain character and should be encouraged. However, with the exception of listed buildings, changes to windows and doors are not controlled by legislation. The trend in recent years has been for U.P.V.C. double glazed replacement windows with their varying styles of plain glass or leaded lights, which need not have a detrimental effect on the street scene.

Recent developments have, however, used more traditional timber casements and sash windows, which should be encouraged.

### Guidelines

- Roof extensions should conform to the guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough Council
- Any roof extension should respect the character of the building and not undermine the domestic scale of the buildings in the immediate area
- Windows should be in traditional materials with brick arch lintels
- Traditional features and materials should be used

## 14.7 RESIDENTIAL GARDENS AND BOUNDARIES

The village street scene is dominated by properties set back from the boundary with a mixture of boundary details. These range from open plan to hedges, timber fences and brick walls. Existing hedges should be retained.

High walls and fences and gates should be discouraged as they do not reflect the village scene. In areas of the street where front boundary features such as walls and fences are part of the character of the area traditional materials

should be used. Front boundaries and gates should use traditional materials such as hedges, timber or brickwork. Brick walls should be in soft red or orangey-red bricks to reflect the existing street scene with hedges of hawthorn or blackthorn and timber fences of picket or hazel-weave style. When considering boundary treatments such as hedges and gates ensure they respect the landscape and character of the village in terms of height and density.

The existing character of the village is enhanced by open-fronted gardens of a generous size and this should be encouraged in any new development. Attention should be given to the retention of existing trees and existing landscape features. Space should be designed into any forthcoming developments for storage of refuse bins to ensure they are disguised from the street scene.

Regular maintenance of hedges, bordering onto footways and footpaths, both by the householder and by the local authority, should be encouraged in order to preserve the pleasing appearance of the village.



Bow top brick boundary wall



Timber five bar gate



"Lich-gate" and hedge



Metal five bar gate



Post and rail fence



Open fronted garden

## 14.8 DRIVES AND PARKING

There are a variety of materials used for driveways including tarmac, concrete, block paving and gravel. The village setting would be enhanced by the use of more traditional materials such as brick or stone paving and gravel. New developments should be discouraged from incorporating large areas of tarmac.



Gravel drive



Brick paved courtyard

Parking within the boundaries of the site can present a problem. In dwellings with small front gardens, vehicles parked on front drives or in front of the property can visually dominate the street scene and be at variance with the policy in the adopted Local Plan. Householders are encouraged to consider the effect their gardens have on the appearance of the street. When proposing changes to their grounds residents should consider parking cars to the side or the rear of their properties.

### Guidelines

- High front boundary walls and gates should not be used as they do not reflect the character of the village
- Fences and gates should be in traditional materials
- Hedges should be retained
- Existing trees and open areas should be retained to keep the open character of the village
- Driveways should use traditional materials

# 15. HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

## 15.1 TRAFFIC CALMING AND PARKING

South Hanningfield Road is a commuter route and carries a considerable amount of traffic at peak times and residents are concerned about the speed of vehicles through the village. Villagers should work with the relevant authorities to achieve workable solutions to this problem. Existing road signs are generally thought to be sufficient for road safety purposes and are not detrimental to the appearance of the village. However, it is felt by the majority that traffic calming would be more effective than speed limits in slowing traffic. Such measures should not be allowed to adversely affect the character of the village.

Parking on the road was felt to spoil the appearance of the village and was thought to increase the risk of accidents in our area.

## 15.2 STREET FURNITURE

Rural features within the village should be retained, examples of these being rustic timber bus shelters, original finger post direction signs, green litter bins, dark stained wooden seats and wooden kissing gates to public footpaths. Of course, all these items need regular maintenance to keep them in good condition.



Seat on the Tye

## 15.3 POWER LINES

South Hanningfield has three overhead power lines with pylons, which cross the village and are felt detrimental to the general appearance and further ones are to be resisted.



Power lines

## 15.4 PUBLICITY SIGNS

There are existing mechanisms for dealing with signs in the highway. Any publicity signs should be of a limited time-scale, appropriate for their location and removed immediately after the event. Illuminated commercial signs would be out of keeping with the rural environment.

# 16. COMMERCE

Light industry and commerce within the village should be retained. However, its appearance should be maintained to a good standard. Any further appropriate expansion should have regard to the context of the street scene. Encouragement should be given to the re-introduction of shop facilities which would enhance the village character.



Light industrial units South Hanningfield Road



Light industrial units South Hanningfield Road



Hanningfield water treatment centre

## Guidelines

- Traffic calming measures should be designed to respect the context of the village character
- The introduction of more overhead power lines should be resisted
- Publicity signs should be appropriate for their location
- Expansion of light industry should have regard to the context of the street scene
- Encouragement should be given to shop facilities

## THE VILLAGE

- Borough planning policies should be followed to ensure the Green Belt is not eroded
- Development should be restricted to prevent merging of villages in order to preserve their identities

## LANDSCAPE

- Trees and open spaces are an important feature of the village and their retention should be given full consideration in any proposed development or other physical change
- The Tye should be preserved
- Woodlands, open landscape and hedgerows are an intrinsic part of the character of the village
- The removal of mature trees and other important landscape features should be resisted
- Ensure the preservation of the character of the footpaths

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Government guidance should be followed regarding the use of previously developed land
- New developments should use traditional materials
- It is important for the existing village character that all new development maintains a domestic scale and respects the context of the site and its immediate area
- Traditional materials should be used to match neighbouring properties
- Extensions should preserve the existing street scene and building line
- Alterations and extensions should be in keeping with existing properties with pitched tiled roofs and in accordance with guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough Council
- Chimneys should be incorporated in new developments, where possible, to add variety and interest to the skyline
- Roof extensions should conform to the guidelines set by Chelmsford Borough council
- Any roof extension should respect the character of the building and not undermine the domestic scale of the buildings in the immediate area
- Windows should be in traditional materials with brick arch lintels
- Traditional features and materials should be used
- High front boundary walls and gates should not be used as they do not reflect the character of the village
- Fences and gates should be in traditional materials
- Hedges should be retained
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- Driveways should use traditional materials

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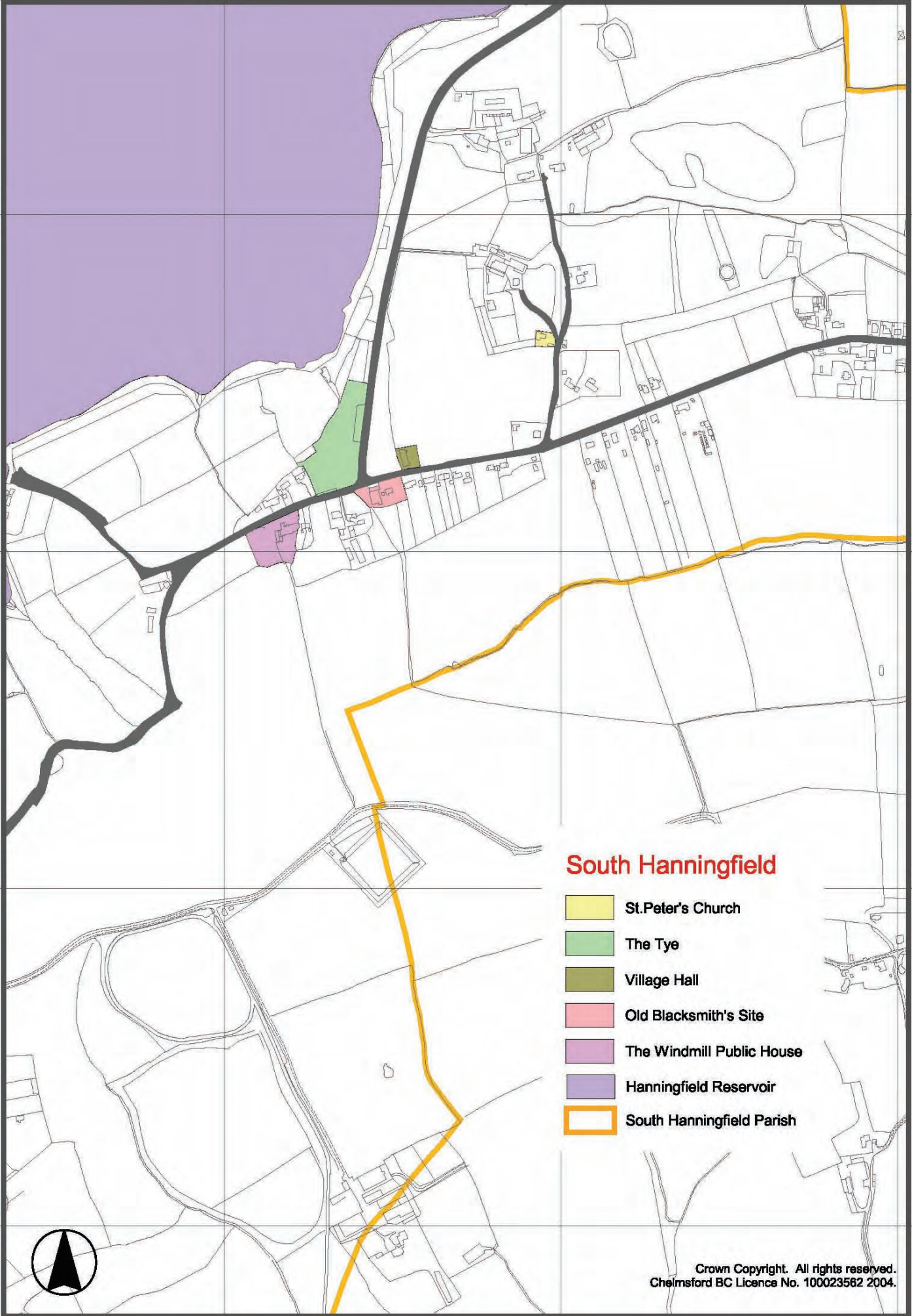
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### South Hanningfield

- St. Peter's Church
- The Tye
- Village Hall
- Old Blacksmith's Site
- The Windmill Public House
- Hanningfield Reservoir
- South Hanningfield Parish



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Parish of South Hanningfield  
Village Design Statement Association  
Wish to thank those below for their  
assistance and support in the  
preparation of these Design Statements

Chelmsford Borough Council

South Hanningfield Parish Council

Rural Community Council of Essex

Essex Rural Renaissance Fund  
Community Hub Small Grants Fund

The Residents of the Villages of:

Downham  
Ramsden Heath  
South Hanningfield

