

CASTLE HEDINGHAM



Village Design Statement

Contents

Front Cover.	The Keep, Hedingham Castle
2	Parish Map
3	Contents and Acknowledgements
4-5	Introduction: What is a Design Statement?
6-9	Historic Background and Settlement Pattern
10-11	Landscape and Environment
12-13	Village Greens and Open Spaces
14-15	The Historic Centre of the Village
16-17	Map of the Built Environment
18-19	Historic Centre (continued)
20-22	Station Road, Queen Street, Sheepcot Road, Pottery Lane, New Park and Deer Park Close, Sudbury Hill, Sudbury Road and Rosemary Lane
23-24	Nunnery Street, Bowmans Park, Priory Wood, Park Vale Close, Kirby Hall Road, Crouch Green and Yeldham Road
25-26	Leisure and Community Activities
27-28	Buildings
29	Additional Features
30	Your Property
31	Conclusion
Back cover.	An ABC of Castle Hedingham: a poster by the Hedingham Brownies

Acknowledgements

Awards for All
Braintree District Council
Castle Hedingham Parish Council
Great Bardfield VDS Team
Hedingham School
Rural Community Council of Essex (Jan Cole)
1st Hedingham Brownies, Guides and their Leaders
Venture Scouts
Hilary Bartlett
Charles Bird
Harry Godfrey (photography)
Des Gilbrook
Marcus Harpur (photography)
John and Moira Moles
John Redgewell
Rob Worley
The Villagers of Castle Hedingham

VDS Group Committee:

Tom Kelly	Chairman (Planning & Consultation Phase)
Mike Hallsworth	Chairman (Editing and Printing Phase)
Miles Scrivens	Secretary
Sally Ward	Treasurer
Sonia Allfrey	Janet Hendry
John Cooke	Andrew Godfrey
Andrea Green	
Lauri Scrivens (Co-Editor)	Ian Higgins (Co-Editor)



Introduction

What is a Village Design Statement?

The Village Design Statement gives a detailed description of Castle Hedingham, the individual character of its main areas and the important features of its design and historical evolution. Design guidelines are provided for how these existing features should be reflected in any future development. It identifies the physical qualities and characteristics of the village and the surroundings that are valued by local people and any particular aspects they would like to conserve and protect.

Most importantly, it should be understood that the Statement is about managing change in the village, not preventing it.

Why produce one for Castle Hedingham?

It is not unusual for a degree of cynicism to be held by residents in small rural villages. This is because planning decisions that affect them are often made by large, urban based District Councils. Castle Hedingham is not alone in this, but working with Braintree District Council has improved the situation by producing this Statement. The Village Design Statement will give

local people a recognised voice at the very start of the planning process rather than having to rely on protest to make their views heard at the end when it may be too late to influence decisions.

How will it work?

The Statement describes the Parish of Castle Hedingham in three main ways:

- The village in its setting
- The development of the overall settlement
- The characteristics of the buildings and spaces within the village

The village has been divided into separate areas of different character. Not all kinds of development are considered suitable for each area of the village and the Statement helps the District Planning Officers appreciate this. The Statement has been considered within the context of the Local Plan Review to ensure that guidelines are appropriate to Braintree Council planning policy. The Statement will influence future development within the Parish and its approval by the District Council means it will become a 'material consideration' in the determination of planning applications and a positive influence on future development.

How has it been produced?

To be approved by Braintree District Council it is essential that the Statement represents the views of the villagers and not just the small team of people responsible for its production. The Village Design Statement is the result of full consultation with the whole Parish as well as the District Council and this has been achieved in the following way:

- A number of advertised public meetings including a full day character assessment workshop
- A questionnaire circulated to all households in the Parish
- An exhibition held in the Memorial Hall in March 2007 where work in progress was displayed along with description of the character assessment areas and design guidelines for future development
- Projects undertaken by the local Girl Guides
- Invitations to households to read and comment on draft versions
- Meetings with Braintree District Planning Officers

A small team of villagers held regular meetings over a period of two years to plan and administer the production of the document.



Who is it for?

'Development' is not only new buildings. The look and feel of a village is also affected by small alterations such as the use of open spaces, house extensions, window and door replacement or changes to walls and hedges.

The Village Design Statement gives guidance to anyone considering, or overseeing, development within Castle Hedingham. This might include:

- Local householders
- Local businesses and farmers
- County Planning Authorities and Historic Building Advisers
- District Planning Officers
- The Parish Council
- Architects and designers, (especially those based outside the local area)
- Developers and builders, (especially those based outside the local area)

Copies have been distributed to every household in the Parish of Castle Hedingham. Copies have also been lodged with Braintree District Council for issue to anyone applying for planning permission within the Parish and further copies are available from either the Clerk of the Parish Council or Braintree District Council. It will also be available on the Parish Council website.

What is included?

The Village Design Statement explains:

- A brief historical context
- The way the settlement has developed over time
- The setting of the village in the surrounding countryside
- The characteristics of the buildings and spaces within the village
- Other features regarded as important by villagers

Where appropriate, design guidelines are included and highlighted. These, with the accompanying text and cross references to District Planning Policy, provide guidance based on the views of the people who live in Castle Hedingham, and what they value and want to be retained.

In Castle Hedingham three features in particular need to be taken into account when considering any development: the Village Envelope, the Conservation Area and the Floodplain.

The Village Envelope provides the development boundary for the village. Beyond the boundary is classed as countryside. Policies RLP 2 and 3 of the Braintree District Local Plan Review refer to this. Proposals for residential development beyond the envelope

should be resisted.

The Conservation Area covers a large part of the eastern side of the village along with the Castle and its grounds. A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is important to preserve or enhance. They are often centred on listed buildings, green spaces or historic streetscapes. It is the character of the area as a whole, rather than individual buildings, that the designation seeks to preserve or enhance. There are additional restrictions for development proposed in the Conservation Area. Further information can be found on the Braintree District Council website.

Part of the built development in the south west of the village and a large part of land to the south of the village is in the Floodplain. Further information can be found on the Environment Agency's website regarding the severity of risk. Policies RLP 66-68 of the Local Plan Review refer to this. Any planning application which is proposed within the Floodplain will be expected to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment.

Historic Background and Settlement Pattern

Castle Hedingham is situated in a landscape moulded by the glaciers of 15,000 years ago, farmed, built and fought over by successive incursions of human occupation from Continental Europe and the Norse lands. There is evidence of this occupation from the Stone Age and the Bronze Age, but apart from some pottery and one gold coin nothing from Roman times in the village itself. On the surrounding farmland however Roman finds are more frequent. The Saxon legacy is still evident in the wood, lane and field names of the Parish, examples being Howe Lane, a modern corruption of the Saxon name Haughr meaning hill, and Copindown Field, from Cop en Duna, the hill of the chief. Castle Hedingham was a defended settlement surrounded by a massive henge, ditch and rampart. It was topped by a promontory fort, which overlooked a compact little town, then known as *Hengam ad Castrum*. The Domesday Book in 1086 refers to this area as Haingheham.

Hedingham Castle Keep is the most visible element of the village. It can be seen when approaching the village from all directions and for many villagers the sight provides a



Above: Little Lodge Farm from Sudbury Road

distinct sense of homecoming.

Entering the grounds through the lodge gates and proceeding up the drive, the earthworks on which the Castle was built, now covered in trees, are on the left-hand side. To the right is the Canal, originally the Castle's five fish ponds which were transformed into a lake in the 18th Century. The garden was landscaped in the 1720's and many of the fine trees in the grounds date from this original planting.

The Dovecot in the bog garden is dated 1720 on its brickwork and is one of the four listed buildings in the grounds. The others are the Castle Keep, the Tudor Bridge and Hedingham Castle House. Hedingham Castle House, circa 1718-19, was built for Sir Robert Ashhurst. It is of red brick with stone dressings and red plain tiled roofs.



Below: The listed Dovecot in the grounds of Hedingham Castle

Below left: The grounds of Hedingham Castle Below right: Once an ancient defensive earthworks now a vast expanse of snowdrops: Hedingham Castle in springtime



The Castle Keep was built circa 1130-1140 for Alberic de Vere and reputedly designed by William de Corbeuil, Archbishop of Canterbury. Of flint rubble, faced throughout with Barnack stone, it has 20th Century wooden floors and was re-roofed at the same time. Its height is approximately 100 feet and the two remaining turrets at the north west and south east corners add a further 15 feet. The remains of a rectangular fore-building on the north west side are stone faced with stone steps approaching the entrance door. The Keep walls have a battered base below the chamfered plinth, which has smaller flat central pilasters springing from it. Putlog holes remain in all walls and there are keying channels from previous buildings. Each elevation has a similar window range.

The Castle Keep is situated in the middle of the Inner Bailey, which originally had a curtain wall and was connected to the Outer Bailey by a bridge. The Great Hall and other buildings were to the south west, most of which, including the bridge, were rebuilt during the 15th or 16th Century. They were probably destroyed in the 17th or 18th Century. Some of the material was re-used circa 1718-19 when the present house was rebuilt in the Outer Bailey to the north-east.

The Castle ranks among the most important Norman buildings in the country, if not Northern Europe, and is scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

The Tudor Bridge spans a dry moat between the Inner and Outer Baileys and includes an attached retaining wall to the north west. It was built, reputedly for the 13th Earl of Oxford, circa 1496 and is again of red brick. This is also a scheduled Ancient Monument.

Large swathes of modern Castle Hedingham are of Norman origin, although land use has changed considerably over the years and what were once Castle grounds are now covered with houses and businesses. During their 600 years of Lordship in Hedingham, the de Veres erected many fine buildings, some of which still stand today. In addition to the lofty Castle, they also built the ancient church of St. James, renamed St. Nicholas at the Reformation, which Nicholas Pevsner called the most exciting church in Essex. There are lodges, farmhouses, inns and cottages associated with the de Veres.



Above: The keep at Hedingham Castle



Above: The Tudor Bridge spans the moat at Hedingham Castle

Below: Church of St. Nicholas (Grade I Listed)





Above: Crouch Green and the bridge in Nunnery Street, signs of the earliest settlement and the ford across the river



Above: Barns at the site of the old Nunnery
Below: Hedingham House, the ancient Guildhall is incorporated



Below: Queen Street, Chapel Green. At the far left of the picture a part of Bangslappes where hops were threshed can be seen



Old accounts speak of livestock fairs and military musters on Crouch Green near the Heng-ford and of the market held on Monday of each week in the High Street. It is likely that the focus of village life changed from Crouch Green in Saxon times towards the newly constructed Castle in Norman times. This was in existence even before the reign of King John, who took the Castle in 1216 in his campaign to suppress the Magna Carta Barons, including de Vere of Hedingham Castle. The Nunnery, founded before 1190 by Alberic de Vere, the first Earl of Oxford, for nuns of the Benedictine Order, survived until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII. At the peak of its influence it owned about 250 acres of land locally.

As a reminder that this was once a Borough town, there is the 16th Century Guildhall of Corpus Christi, now Hedingham House, built by John de Vere close to the Moot Hall, now known as the Moot House. Here the business of the town's cloth and hop merchants was conducted, a reminder of important local industries of the past which virtually ceased to operate by the mid 19th Century. The rural economy of Castle Hedingham then became geared to producing commodities for the fast-growing cities and towns, as well as goods for export. Brick-making, malting, arable and sheep farming and the cottage industries of straw plaiting and weaving all helped to maintain the village's life. In more recent times the Hedingham Pottery of Edward Bingham in what is now Pottery Lane has brought the village to wider notice. Indeed one piece of Hedingham Ware has a place in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Rippers timber works began and thrived in Castle Hedingham until it outgrew its premises and moved to Sible Hedingham. Until recently the Old School, behind the United Reformed Church, functioned as a silk mill, where fine woven silk hangings were produced on hand driven machinery.

At first glance New Park and Deer Park Close appear to be an unremarkable example of post-war community housing. However in terms of its history, this is probably one of the most interesting sites in the village.

Like most land-owners in the Middle Ages, the de Veres had a large deer park both to provide meat for their table and, more importantly perhaps, to enable them to impress their noble guests with an opportunity to indulge in a little hunting. In this context the land adjacent to the hill out of the village, with its woods and escarpment, was an ideal location for the deer herd.

At the junction of Sudbury Hill and New Park is the village's Recreation Field. In a former existence this land, originally called Chapel Pastures, was the site of a building called New Abbey, alternatively referred to as the Hospital, founded by Hugh de Vere about 1250. In the same area was the Chapel of St. James. The remains of these buildings are no longer visible, the last of which, the Chapel, is referred to by Morant in his History of Essex as still standing "in a ruinous condition" in 1678.

Adjacent to the Recreation Field is a small brick building called the Pump-House, where pumping equipment was located until relatively recently to lift water from a bore hole. A Dutchman who lived at Kirby Hall in the 18th Century, Peter Muilman, records the existence of St. James's Well where the Pump-House now stands, which he describes as being "famous for the miracles performed by it". The inmates from the Hospital and pilgrims from all parts of the country came to drink the healing waters from the well and enriched the Hospital with their thank-offerings, much to the envy and disapproval of the Prioress of the local Nunnery who feared that the Chapel might reduce the revenues of the Church. However, despite this opposition, it was the steady stream of pilgrims which helped the village develop from a predominantly agricultural community into a thriving market town.

In more recent history the escarpment to the east of New Park was the site of a windmill, approached by Mill Steps, now part of the public footpath off Sudbury Hill. The mill, for many years a principal source of flour for the village, was demolished in 1878.

During the last war the Observer Corps built an octagonal station with a glass roof from where the height and direction of enemy aircraft could be reported to the Fighter Control Centres. The station could also trigger an alarm in the Ripper family's factory in Sible Hedingham which, as part of the war effort, had a labour force of 1200 people building parts for Lancaster bombers and

Mosquitoes. A famous member of the Corps was the artist, Eric Ravilious, who lived in the village. One villager who was involved in the demolition of this station reports that there were drawings on the walls which bore a remarkable similarity to the style of Ravilious.

After the war, as the Cold War intensified, a concrete bunker was constructed in the same area. The bunker was designed to house up to five observers whose task would have been to report on nuclear explosions and fall-out. Today the

bunker is capped and lies beneath the ground, no trace of it remaining visible.

In the 20th Century the rural nature of Castle Hedingham continued to change: the scale and nature of farming and the employment it provided has led to a reduction in the workforce required and this and other factors have meant that there has been considerable emigration from the area. As a result in the 21st Century many inhabitants travel considerable distances to their work.



Above: Ripper's original workshop in Castle Lane.
Below left: Traditional local bricks in the tennis court wall. Below right: The Old Moot House, Restaurant





Landscape and Environment

Geology and Topography

Castle Hedingham lies on the northern slope of the valley of the River Colne and to the east of the Colchester to Cambridge route. The village is sited on glacial gravels and clays. The hinterland to Castle Hedingham consists of a boulder clay plateau with its north west mostly 200 feet above sea level rising in parts to over 300 or 400 feet. The slope of the valley is generally from the north west to the south east broken in this area by the River Colne flowing down to its estuary. The local chalky boulder clays produce loams rather than clays. Strips of gravel and London Clay come out in the river valley. Up to the 19th Century there was a marsh to the west between the village and the river.

Landscape

The countryside surrounding the village is located within a Special Landscape Area where extra protection is provided through Policy

RLP 79 of the adopted Braintree District Local Plan Review (2005). The land use is predominately arable with little woodland except Wren Park Wood and Hunt's Wood to the north west of Kirby Hall and Church Field Grove and adjacent woodland that has grown up around the Castle. The area of overgrown osier and willows abutting the River Colne and to the rear of the properties on Church Lane, Crown St and Nunnery St known as 'the Willows' provides the village with a unique wildlife woodland habitat. This area and the adjacent fields, partly planted with cricket bat willows and now part of a countryside stewardship scheme, is a remarkable remnant of the extensive wetlands that occupied much of the Floodplain of the River Colne up to late mediaeval times. Some parts were reclaimed for horse pasture in the 16th Century and later in the 18th and 19th Centuries some of it was drained for growing hops and for osiers for local basket-makers. Soon after the First World War an unknown blight ruined the osiers and the area reverted to willow woodland. It is now one of the few areas providing

cover for wildlife and birds in a rural environment consisting mainly of arable fields. Other woodland areas about the Parish boundary, including Kendallscroft Grove, Ramacre Wood, an unusual small wood predominantly of hornbeam, Ridley's Wood and Colliersley Wood, both of the latter being mostly in the Parish of Gestingthorpe.

The Castle has fine landscaped grounds and surrounding woodland. Both Scotch Pasture Grove and Churchfield Grove, with its sweet chestnut trees grown originally to provide straight hop poles, are significant wooded areas to the north of the Castle.

A number of fine ancient trees dot the landscape. The Fairfax Oak at Kirby Hall is a tree of great age and now a fraction of its original size. A number of other ancient oaks can be found along Kirby Hall Lane and Wellingtonia trees, a type of redwood planted by the Majendies in the 19th Century, are found in the Castle grounds and in the grounds of the Old Vicarage along Crown Street.

Below left: The view of the village from the River Colne. Centre: Willows on the flood plain. Below right: River Colne





Stile at Scotch Pasture

The Parish contains a number of other notable landscape features. Eady's Lane has protected verges along its length in recognition of its significance as a wildflower habitat for both orchids and the rare Essex Sulphur Clover. Sympathetic management by the Heritage Society and Essex County Council is necessary to preserve these wildflowers. Footpath 30 follows a route through the ancient field workings surrounding Little Lodge Farm and on the top of Brick Hill, overlooking the village from the west, evidence of Roman settlement is commonly found in the field ploughing. Similarly, evidence of Roman habitation and metal smelting was found when the pumping station was built at Maiden Ley.

A small nature reserve at Rushley Green on village green land has, with regular management, contributed to a diverse area of lime trees and wildflowers. With the assistance of the Hedingham Heritage Society, Cox's Pond and Pike Pond have been re-established.

The River Colne continues to be a major artery for wildlife through the Parish and, with the establishment of the Colne Valley footpath, is a chance for walkers to fully appreciate the glory of this part of the valley. The adoption of Countryside Stewardship schemes have helped to introduce more wildlife friendly farming into the landscape and the nature reserve created by the Colne Valley Railway has further enhanced this process.

The loss of farmland birds and mammals such as water voles and hares and other farmland nature has

been immense. Replacement has come in the form of an increasing muntjac deer population and throughout the Parish the sight of deer is common. Buzzards are occasionally seen over the village and there has been a marked growth in the sparrowhawk population. Evidence of the return of the otter to the River Colne is now apparent, although the mink population continues to put pressure on other native wildlife. Small, but still significant changes in the environment have helped our flora and fauna to survive but the need to continue this process will remain one of the biggest challenges of this century.

Village Gardens

Biennially in the month of June many of the finer gardens in the village are opened to the public for a whole weekend in aid of the Church of St. Nicholas. This is a time when enthusiastic gardeners can share their pride in their contribution

to the local environment with the whole community.

It is recognised that under current planning regulations Permitted Development Rights apply to most dwellings and allow paving and hard-standing to be laid without planning permission. However there is a strong desire on the part of the Parish Council and other environmentally aware local organisations to see gardens retained. Not only do they provide important habitats and support biodiversity, but perhaps even more critical in a village with a high proportion of Floodplain land, they contribute to the improvement of surface drainage.

The gardens constitute an integral and aesthetically pleasing part of the village landscape, which is at risk of being irrevocably spoiled and damaged by developments undertaken without due consideration for the environment.



Ancient landscape, Kirby Hall Road.

View over the village from the north west





Crouch Green

Village Greens and Open Spaces

A Village Green is defined as land which has been set aside by law for the exercise and recreation of the village residents. Although there are in total approximately 12 acres of Village Green in the Parish, Castle Hedingham lacks a single central Village Green.

The largest of the Greens, and historically most important, is Crouch Green at the junction of Nunnery Street and Yeldham Road. This takes its name from Crux or Cross and was the place historically where the militia gathered, or mustered: hence its other name of Mustoe Green. Crouch Green was also the location for markets and fairs and the Saxon Cross that gave the Green its name can now be found in the churchyard. In addition a part of the Green was once consecrated ground and burials took place there. The Green also

served legal and ceremonial functions as it was the meeting place for Manorial Courts and the Hundred of Hinkford Court Leet was held there, hence the fact that it was the site of the gallows.

Chapel Green was a traditional play area for the children of the British School and the place where the stocks were to be found.

Forge Green is at the junction of Bayley Street and St James Street and has, over the years, been a waiting area for animals about to be shod. It also served as a meeting place for people visiting St James' Well.

Pye Corner Green was once a part of the market place at the "town's end" outside the Outer Bailey wall of the Castle.

Although Rushley Green is often regarded as a single Green it is in fact registered under three different owners, only one of which is the Parish Council.



Above: Keepers Cottage, Rushley Green.
Below Left: Forge Green. Below right: Pye Corner



Open Spaces

There are four main open spaces in the Parish that are not Village Greens, all of which have some recreational use. These are the Cricket Ground, the area in New Park known as Claypits Field, the Playing Field and the Allotments. In addition there are also important green areas in the modern development of Bowmans Park.

The Cricket Ground is part of the land belonging to Hedingham Castle.

Both Claypits Fields and the Playing Field are on an area which was, until the Reformation, a Hospital serving the pilgrims to The Holy Well of St James. Perhaps, unsurprisingly, there was a graveyard associated with the Hospital situated below the area south of the modern Pump House. Claypits Fields has had many uses in the intervening years, including hop growing, sheep grazing and the provision of clay for Bingham's Pottery. It is owned currently by Braintree District Council.

The Allotments, no longer in use, were on the piece of land adjacent to the Memorial Hall, which is also part of the Castle Estate. The open spaces within the village allow some outstanding views of the village and its historic buildings. Areas of open space at Deer Park Close and on the south side of New Park are designated as 'Visually Important Spaces' in the Braintree District Local Plan Review. They are protected from inappropriate development through Policy RLP4.



Above: The Allotments, a major open space in the village centre.
Below: There are extensive green areas in Bowmans Park



Above: The Playing Fields enjoy a fine view over the village.
Below: Chapel Green at the junction of Queens Street and Sheepcot Road



Design Guidelines

- Visually Important Space status should be sought for open spaces within the village that improve views and contribute to the rural character of the village. This should be addressed through the Local Development Framework
- Any additional planting should complement existing trees
- Existing woodland, hedgerows and field boundaries should be preserved
- Damaged hedges should be replanted to maintain their integrity
- Footpaths must be preserved for the benefit of the community
- Tree preservation orders should be obtained for the remaining 'significant' trees in the landscape
- Planting of new trees of native species should be encouraged
- Development in the Floodplain of the river should be prohibited
- Telecommunications masts and wind turbines should be resisted where they have a visually detrimental impact on the village or the landscape



*Falcon Square in the 1930's by Eric Ravilious,
© Estate of Eric Ravilious/DACS 2008.*



Falcon Square

The Historic Centre of the Village

The main feature of the historic centre of Castle Hedingham is St. Nicholas Church. Erected on the site of a former Saxon church, it dates from 1180 and was built by the founder of the Castle, Alberic De Vere, the first Earl of Oxford. The lay-out of the village was established at this time and the streets bordering the churchyard follow exactly the same lines as those of the 12th Century. They comprise Church Lane, Church Ponds, Crown Street, Bayley Street, Castle Lane, St James Street, Falcon Square, King Street, Majendie Lane and Lucas Lane. The majority of the 100 listed buildings in the village are in this locality. Ruffles Yard is a recent, small modern development in this area.

Overall View

Forming the village boundary to the west is the River Colne. From here the land rises gently to the foot of the Castle mound and Bayley Street, which as the name implies was part of the Castle defences. Bayley Street

marks the highest part of the historic centre from where the land falls sharply to Pye Corner in the west and in a southerly direction down Castle Lane towards St. James Street. Bayley Street affords some of the best views of the roof-scapes in the centre and the imposing St. Nicholas Church.

Falcon Square is the true centre of the village, once the site of an annual fair and formerly the main shopping centre. Nowadays this area is mainly residential, apart from the doctors' surgeries, which are located on the south side of the square in an early building with a 19th Century façade. On the opposite side of the square is a 16th Century building known as the Falcon, reputedly an inn of the same name at one stage in its history. This timber-framed house is thought to have been built by the 15th Earl of Oxford and was probably once the residence of an important member of the Earl's retinue, his Falconer. The existence of an old green lane linking the house to the Castle entrance lends credibility to this theory. The mullet badge of the de Veres can be seen on a beam at the front of the house. Other houses, which served

as shops in the mediaeval era, are still evident.

Also located in the historic centre are two institutional buildings of note. One is the Youth Hostel in Falcon Square, now effectively closed and shortly to be redeveloped. Previously known as Porters, the Hostel is a timber-framed building with a 19th Century façade and has the date 1675 inscribed on its chimney. The other is the Memorial Hall built in 1858 as a Church of England school for village children, known as the National School. In 1950 pupils were transferred to the Chapel School located behind the United Reformed Church and, after a year or so, the now empty building was leased by the Castle owner, Miss Musette Majendie, to the Parish Council, who transformed it into a Village Hall and a Social Club.

Church Ponds is the westerly exit from Falcon Square and its picturesque period cottages slope gently down towards Crown Street following the line of the churchyard wall. These cottages open directly onto the road as do those in Church Lane, Crown Street and the older dwellings in Castle Lane.

Church Ponds



Crown Street



Church Lane



To the east of the historic centre lies Forge Green, at the end of Bayley Street. From here the visitor can look along the line of St. James Street, a much wider thoroughfare than the others in the centre, probably reflecting the market town status the village acquired in the Middle Ages.

One of the newest communities in the village is Ruffles Yard situated off Church Lane. It is located where a local coach business operated until it moved to new premises some years ago. On the site there is a large detached property and three mews-style cottages. The development was completed in 2003. The attractive modern houses are constructed in red brick with red peg tiles.

Buildings

Within the historic centre the continued development of the village over the years may be seen with buildings dating from the 14th Century through the Tudor, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian eras to the present day. These have all tended to be individual developments constructed in close proximity to each other and often joined together over the years. The differing ages, styles, construction materials and the variation in roof heights from one and a half storied cottages to three storied houses have resulted in a pleasing and harmonious meld.

Buckleys, a timber-framed building on many levels dating from circa 1575, is now used as a general store and gift shop with the Magnolia Tearooms at one end.

The Bell Inn, an ancient classic timber-framed building, is mentioned by name on the 1592 map of Castle Hedingham and has undergone considerable alteration. It was a noted stopping place in the 18th Century for the stagecoach from Bury St. Edmunds which took 10 to 12 hours for the journey to London. It became an important venue for political meetings in the 19th Century and an upstairs room still bears the name of Disraeli.

The Moot House, presently a restaurant, dates to the 15th Century or earlier, and may have been a public building such as a 'moot hall' or 'market house'. It is the earliest building within the area that used to be the mediaeval market place.

The Wheatsheaf public house, with its elaborately carved ceiling beams, was previously a wool merchant's house and from its decor is judged to have been an important building. Like the Moot House, its history is bound up with the town market. Facing on to it is Hedingham House, which has the remains of a guildhall incorporated in it, and is likely to have been a mediaeval public building serving the market.

Timber-framed construction either exposed or rendered over was the preferred historic choice. Fine examples of exposed timber-work are found in the Moot House (15th Century), The Falcon (16th Century) and Blue Boar House (also 16th Century). Rendered exteriors, which are the more common, are found in Trinity Hall, Southernns and High House. Georgian brick facades incorporating sash cord windows and porticoed entrances to replace mediaeval jettied overhangs were added by the more wealthy in the 18th Century. Examples are Bank House and the Surgery (formerly Hayes House). Alternatively, rendering was used to achieve the same objective with examples being the 16th Century Veres in Castle Lane and the YHA (Porters) in Falcon Square.

Vertical tile hanging was occasionally adopted with the best examples at the Dower House (15th Century) and Castle Lodge both in Bayley Street. It is thought that the Dower House, originally known as Damions, was built by a wealthy wool merchant in a period of great prosperity. The elegant house called Southernns in Bayley Street was the home of John Sowthern, one of the retainers of Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford.



Magnolia Tearooms in Majendie Lane



St. James St. looking west from Forge Green



United Reformed Church

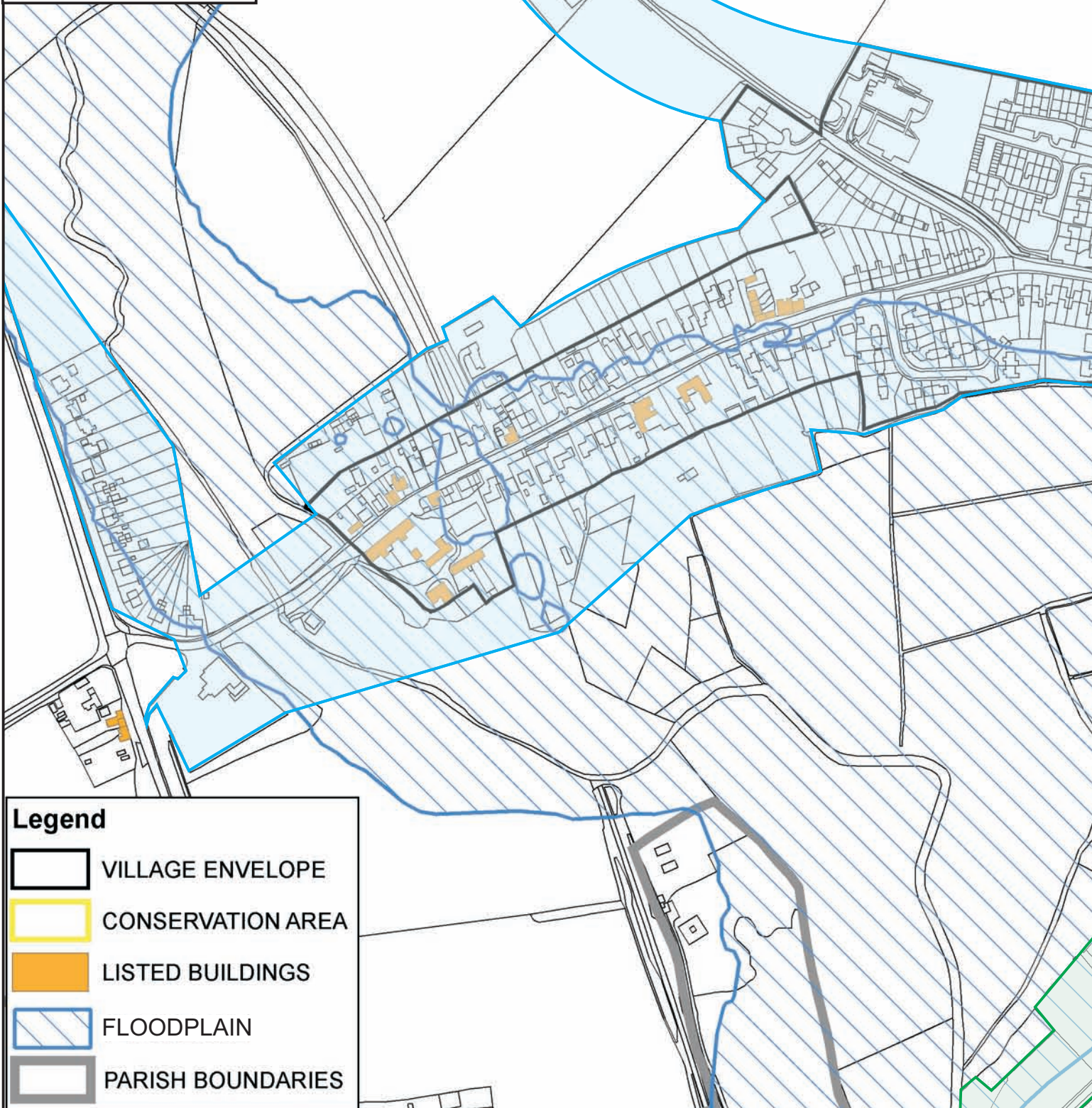


Ruffles Yard. A modern development in the village centre

Legend

- Historic Centre
- Yeldham Road
Nunnery Street
Kirby Hall Road
- Station Road
Queen Street
Sheepcot Road
Sudbury Road

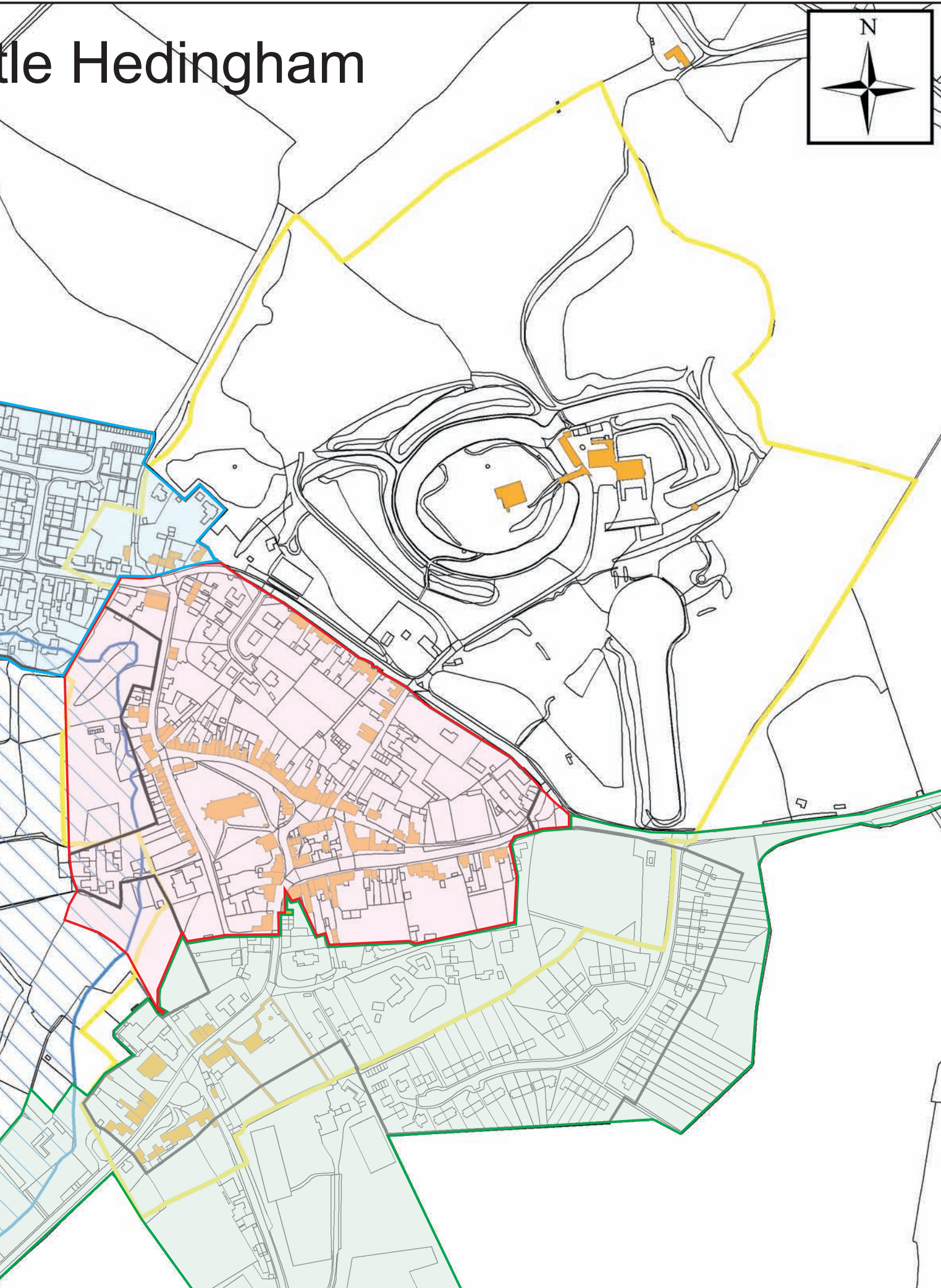
Village of Cast



Legend

- VILLAGE ENVELOPE
- CONSERVATION AREA
- LISTED BUILDINGS
- FLOODPLAIN
- PARISH BOUNDARIES

le Heddingham



In King Street an interesting four storey building is Augusta House, constructed in local red brick, with a walled garden. Another fascinating house is Astles at Pye Corner, built in the 18th Century, with a fine front facing its own garden. This construction is probably due to its origins as an inn. Early in the 20th Century it was the home of the famous author De Vere Stacpoole, who wrote his best known book "The Blue Lagoon" whilst residing in Castle Hedingham.

The most important building in the historic centre is the Anglican Church of St. Nicholas, which shares the distinction of being a Grade I listed building with Hedingham Castle. Its early history is described above in the first paragraph of this section. Since its Norman origins, which are still very visible in the arches and pillars of the chancel, the wheel window above the altar and the sedilia seats, it has been added to over the centuries. The beautiful carved oak Rood Screen dating from 1400 and the elaborate 16th Century hammer beam ceiling are both fine examples of historic wood-carving. Stone carved stars and boards, the de Vere family badges, decorate the western exterior Clerestory walls. The porch is Tudor whilst the impressive brick tower dates from the 17th Century. The Church is surrounded by a closed yard.

Building Materials, Colours and Architectural Features

Nowadays within the centre only three thatched cottages remain, located in Castle Lane. However it is clear from the steep pitch of other roofs in the centre that thatching was once more popular than today. Predominantly clay peg tiles have been adopted throughout the centre based on the local availability of this material. Some later brick built Victorian properties are slate-roofed but generally modern infill



The Dower House and Bayley Street

developments have followed the preferred and vernacular clay tile tradition. Chimney-stacks vary greatly in shape and size from plain rectangular to the elaborately patterned Tudor style. This variety enhances the roof-scapes. Doors and windows vary greatly in style

with sash cord windows and panel front doors predominating. The choice of generally soft pastel external colour finishes has enhanced the overall appearance of the centre both as infill panels on the exposed timber dwellings or the more common rendered dwellings.



The Bell Inn



St. James Street North side



Roofscape of the village centre from the top of Castle Lane

Design Guidelines

- Building materials should, as far as is currently possible, be selected from those traditionally used within the historic centre for both maintenance and new build (extensions and new properties). Clay peg tiles, soft Essex red bricks and soft wood window-framing are more harmonious than harsh modern materials. Account must be taken of any surrounding or adjacent buildings when selecting materials. This includes ironmongery, meter boxes and rainwater fittings. Areas of impervious asphalt should be rejected in favour of free draining and aesthetically more pleasing blocks or cobbles
- Infill developments should be modest in proportions and in scale with surrounding properties. They should not dominate their surroundings. Their architectural style and finishes should be compatible and vernacular
- Development to the rear of existing buildings should be avoided where such development would be visible in the historic centre
- Any development within the centre should be small in scale and unobtrusive
- Roof-scape is an important aspect of the village especially in the centre. New or replaced roofs should retain the existing height and pitch
- Modern additions such as satellite dishes, wind turbines and flues should be concealed from public view
- External paint finishes should be in pastel shades with the traditional colours of white, cream and pink predominating. Harsh, shiny plastic finishes should not be adopted
- Development undertaken in these areas should be in keeping with the planned nature of existing buildings
- Careful consideration should be given to the impact of construction on views across the village particularly those of the Castle and other historically important buildings
- Listed buildings, particularly those owned by absentee landlords, must be kept in good repair and decoration. Action must be taken at the first sign of neglect
- Highly reflective solar panels should be installed so that they do not have a visual impact on neighbouring properties or the roof-scape of the village



Pooles Bridge



Station Road, the south western approach to the village

Station Road, Queen Street, Sheepcot Road, Pottery Lane, New Park, Sudbury Hill, Sudbury Road and Rosemary Lane

Station Road

Station Road approaches the village from the south west, crossing the River Colne at Pooles Bridge, which was constructed in 1736. It now carries a weight of traffic unimaginable to its builders. The road climbs steadily from the wetland area adjacent to the river, passing between fields and meadows. The pastoral landscape gives way to rural housing, and a scene unfolds of red day-tiled roofs, redbrick chimneys and plastered walls, painted in a range of pastel shades, all in total harmony with their surroundings.

At the junction with Sheepcot Road is Chapel Green, a small, triangular village green adomed by a fine chestnut tree which faces the United Reformed Church. This has a somewhat severe

appearance, built of gault brick with a stone dressing, but is greatly mellowed by the surrounding mature trees. Behind the United Reformed Church is a former school, currently being converted into a private residence. Another institutional building situated next to the church is the Old Police Station incorporating the former Court House. This too is now scheduled for private development.

On either side of the Sheepcot Road junction are two further fine buildings. Sheepcot House, former home of the botanist Mark Catesby, fronting onto Chapel Green, dates from the 17th Century. Notable for its complex tiled roof, gables and dormers, it is one of the few local houses with leaded light casement windows. On the opposite side of the junction is Trinity Hall, another elegant, timber-framed residence.

Queen Street

By modern standards this road is very narrow causing major traffic problems. Many of the smaller terraced cottages have front doors opening directly onto a narrow pavement. Immediately beyond the junction with Sheepcot Road, Queen Street narrows to a single vehicle width and has a traffic calming scheme about 40 metres in length. Along this stretch bollards have been erected on the pavement to protect pedestrians and property.

A further hazard for both traffic and pedestrians is created by the blind right-angled turn at the junction with St James Street in the village centre. At this point the pavement on the side of the road opposite The Wheatsheaf reduces to less than two feet in width. Some buildings in the area bear the scars of contact with vehicles.

Architecturally the most interesting and important section of Queen Street lies between the village boundary and Pottery Lane. In a stretch of barely 100 yards many fine buildings are to be found. Most of the diversity of the architecture found

within the village is represented here.

The Old Vicarage in Queen Street is an elegant example of Georgian architecture, dating from about 1750. Restored in 1990 by the Earl of Wilton, it is probably one of the best buildings of its period in the country. A remarkable feature of the garden is the magnificent Wellingtonia tree to the left of the house. Painted by the celebrated artist Eric Ravilious in 1936, when it had reached the height of the house roof, it now dominates the scene towering over buildings in the vicinity.

Going towards the village centre, the road is flanked by a high garden wall on the left and the gravelled entrance to Pottery Lane on the right. Beyond the junction with Church Lane, it is bordered largely by painted houses with front doors opening directly onto a narrow pavement. The buildings here include an unusual flat roofed dwelling, formerly a shop, and 'Palmer's', another substantial 17th Century house.

Pottery Lane

The well-known local potter, Edward Bingham, established his workshop here in the 19th Century. His cottage, now extensively enlarged and altered, was situated at the entrance to the Lane.

This gravelled lane starts with a broad area of grass on the left and a vista of hedges and trees. The fact that this small enclave conceals dwellings of widely differing ages, sizes and styles is not at first apparent. Altogether there are thirteen dwellings, ranging from a 17th Century three storey cottage to an ultra-modern 20th Century bungalow. Various bungalows, chalets and houses, representative of different styles throughout the 20th Century, can be found scattered along the driveways that lead off Pottery Lane. This is a diverse group of dwellings that somehow sit comfortably together, but always surrounded and largely concealed by the trees and shrubs.



Queen Street



Queen Street narrows - priority traffic flows

Sheepcot Road

This direct route from Halstead to the south approaches the village along relatively high ground on the side of a hill. To the west there are extensive views of the Colne Valley, the field running down to the river, wetland margins along the river and the sister village of Sible Hedingham rising through the trees.

On entering the village the road is bordered by the trees that surround the Cemetery and the wooden buildings of the Scout Headquarters and Bowls Club. The park-like Meadows estate rises gently to the east and as the lane approaches the village there are to be found a number of dwellings of varying styles, including a painted brick cottage, a timber-clad converted stables and a former mews.

New Park and Deer Park Close

New Park forms the south east rim of a bowl, below which sits the village centre and Conservation Area. Houses on the outside edge of the road are mainly double storey overlooking open fields to

the rear. On the inner side of the road are bungalows. The sensitive construction of this development provides excellent views of the village and Castle for residents but has little impact on the Conservation Area. Building in New Park commenced in the late 1940's with a first tranche of fifteen properties. Since then there have been five building programmes, the last of which, Allfrey Court, was completed in 2003. In common with much of this part of the village, tree and shrub planting ensures a degree of privacy from many directions.

Sudbury Hill and Sudbury Road

From the Bayley Street junction, Sudbury Hill climbs steeply eastwards away from the village. Past the Village Playing Field and the entrance to New Park on the right and the wooded grounds of the Castle and the Cricket Field on the left, it travels through a tunnel of trees emerging at the top of the hill to views of open countryside, where it becomes Sudbury Road.

Little Lodge Farm is clearly visible

across the fields to the south. Past the junction with Rosemary Lane there are a few properties on both sides of the road, including Coppingdown Farm, a modern development of four houses in brick and weatherboard. After another junction on the right, the route continues to the Parish boundary, beyond Pannels Ash Farm.

Rosemary Lane

This small country lane heads northwards from the Sudbury Road, bordered at first by fields and farmlands and then by the more wooded areas of the Hedingham Castle Estate. The buildings along the Lane or at the end of tracks leading from it are mostly farmhouses, cottages or outbuildings associated with farming. One of the most interesting buildings is the ancient Keeper's Cottage, with its thatched roof. This redbrick cottage once belonged to the Castle Estate. It has subsequently been extended with tiled roofed additions, but nevertheless retains a venerable charm surrounded by the woodland setting.



Above: Sheepcot House
Below: Trinity Hall



Above: Sheepcot Road
Below: The Great Wellingtonia and The Old Vicarage



Design Guidelines

Station Road

- The green approaches to the village should be maintained free of development to ensure the separation between Castle and Sible Hedingham

Queen Street

- Building materials should, as far as is currently possible, be selected from those traditionally used within the Street for both maintenance and new build, extensions and new properties. Clay peg tiles, soft Essex red bricks and soft wood window-framing are more harmonious than harsh modern materials. Account must be taken of any surrounding or adjacent buildings when selecting materials. This includes ironmongery, meter boxes and rainwater fittings. Areas of impervious asphalt should be rejected in favour of free draining and aesthetically more pleasing blocks or cobbles
- Development to the rear of existing buildings should be avoided where such development would be visible and contained within the village envelope
- Inappropriate back land development should not be allowed
- Modern additions such as satellite dishes, wind turbines and flues should be concealed from public view
- External paint finishes should be in pastel shades with the traditional colours of white, cream and pigs blood pink predominating. Harsh, shiny plastic finishes should not be adopted
- Any opportunity to improve pedestrian or vehicular safety should be taken

Sheepcot Road

- Development should be in keeping with existing buildings in terms of scale and materials
- Any development must include the provision of adequate off-road parking
- As with all locations, the Village Envelope should be strictly adhered to

Pottery Lane

- The green, virtual invisibility of Pottery Lane should be protected
- Any development should continue the green curtain that characterises the Lane at present
- Infill development should be sensitive to the nature and scale of the buildings in the vicinity

New Park and Deer Park Close

- Development undertaken in these areas should be in keeping with the planned nature of existing buildings and building lines should be respected
- Materials used should be in keeping with the area
- Mature trees should be maintained to ensure the green aspect of the environment is preserved
- The Playing Field is a very important space for the village and, though the facilities could be improved, this must be done in a manner that respects the recreational space
- Any development on New Park should adopt the extended front gardens that are a feature of this area
- Off road parking should be encouraged wherever possible
- Any development on the lower side to the west of New Park should be limited to bungalows

Sudbury Hill and Sudbury Road

- Building materials should reflect the appearance, textures and palettes already prevalent within the village
- It is important to preserve the countryside and therefore no further development should be encouraged alongside Sudbury Hill and Sudbury Road beyond the Village Envelope.
- Access to any development should be via New Park

Rosemary Lane

- Any development should only be extensions to existing properties and have the utmost synergy with other buildings to remain in keeping with the agricultural use of the area
- There should be no new development in this area as it is outside the Village Envelope and in an area of Special Landscape Value



Above: Entrance to Pottery Lane, no houses in view



Above: Deer Park, a hunting ground in former times



Above: New housing in New Park, Alfrey Court.
Below: The 'tunnel of trees' at Sudbury Hill



Nunnery Street, Kirby Hall Road and Yeldham Road

This includes Bowmans Park, Priory Wood, Park Vale Close and Crouch Green.

Nunnery Street contains both some of the oldest and the newest houses in the Parish, consequently it has the greatest range of building styles and is the most heavily populated part of the village. The older houses are thinly spread along the length of the road. They are more frequent towards the River Colne where Nunnery Farm, late mediaeval cottages and 19th Century industrial cottages can be found. From here to the beginning of the road at Pye Corner there has been a considerable amount of infill building at different times during the later part of the 20th Century. The range of styles include plain and rendered brick and half weather-boarded. There are detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows. There are two groups of terraced houses near the corner with Kirby Hall Road. Those which are closest to the junction are constructed in the red bricks typical of the area. The newer terrace next to them is in a different brick, but with age they have toned in with the older terrace. Nunnery Farm stands on the site of the Hedingham Nunnery. The chapel belonging to the Nunnery was still standing in the 18th Century but today nothing remains apart from some of its stones which have been incorporated into the building of the farm. Nearby Memories Restaurant is built on the site of the mill that served the Nunnery and which later housed a public house originally known as The Eleven Elms and later as The Viking. The Rising Sun, now a single building, was until the Second World War, part house and



Nunnery Street looking towards the Castle

part public house, thought to be 16th Century or earlier with attractive gables at each end of the front.

Bowmans Park is a modern planned development with a separate design philosophy; the houses and maisonettes make use of the contours to provide a changing eye-line. The bricks are a very close match to those of the terraced houses on the corner of Kirby Hall Road and Nunnery Street. Generous green spaces and the planting of trees are used to separate the groups of houses. This gives a spacious feel to the modern development.

Priory Wood is a secluded, modern planned development of five substantial houses in a variety of styles.

Park Vale Close is a slightly older planned development than Priory Wood and has many partially white weather-boarded houses which are similar in age and style to their neighbours in Nunnery Street and appear to be influenced by an earlier 1970's Essex Design Plan.

To one side of Kirby Hall Road is De Vere County Primary School and the rear of bungalows that form a part of the Bowmans Park development. The School has been developed

in recent years and is a familiar mix of permanent and temporary accommodation. The growth of trees and shrubs obscure much of it from the road. The other side of the road is made up of post-war Council houses and a more recent cul-de-sac of low cost Housing Association homes in red brick.

The houses on Kirby Hall Road, once it has passed out of the Village Envelope, are virtually all farms, many of them dating to the 16th Century or earlier. They are largely of timber-framed construction and plastered with some pargetting. House roofs tend to be plain red tiles although on outbuildings and barns there are a variety of other materials used.

The principal building is Kirby Hall, considered by local historians to be second to the Castle in historical significance. The Kirby family are recorded as having built a house here in 1256 and owned 530 acres of the surrounding farmland. The house later became a de Vere residence, at one stage the home of Francis and Horace de Vere. The brothers were sent by Queen Elizabeth I to lead an English army in the Netherlands to confront the Spanish invaders. They won a significant victory, returning Holland to Protestant rule and receiving huge national acclaim as a result.

Tudor cottages, Nunnery Street



Victorian Terrace, Nunnery Street



Late 20th Century houses in Nunnery Street





The Rising Sun Public House



Bowmans Park



Park Vale Close



Post war housing Kirby Hall Road



Kirby Hall



Cherry Lawn - Nunnery Street

It is also thought to have been the home of the children of King Charles I after his execution in 1649. Charles and James, who are said to have been looked after by Lady Mary de Vere, ascended to the throne after the restoration of the Monarchy as Charles II and James II. Even later in its history Peter Muilman, the Dutch engineer who was charged with the task of draining the Fens, lived at Kirby Hall.

Today the house is once more at the centre of a very important local farm. The outbuilding at Kirby Hall is of red brick with a roof of plain red tiles. From the road at this point there is a view of the Colne Valley Railway in the middle distance.

Another significant building in Nunnery Street is the house known as Cherry Lawn. Originally a timber-framed Tudor building, it has been substantially altered in the Georgian and Victorian eras and at one stage was an Inn known as Dragons. It became a Dame School in 1875 and from 1893 to 1952 was the home of Harry Tucker Ripper, the founder of Rippers Limited, the local manufacturers of timber products. In the latter decade of the 20th Century it was also the home of the internationally renowned astronomer, the late Sir Robert Wilson.

Crouch Green lies alongside the Yeldham Road and is made up of mainly modernised post-war housing

constructed of brick with render in a variety of colours. On the opposite side of the entrance to Nunnery Street is Memories, a part brick and black weatherboard structure in keeping with the barns along the roadside at Nunnery Farm. On the far side of the junction are several houses of various periods and construction, presently all painted white.

Further along Yeldham Road is Newmans Farm, now a private residence, which stands in a prominent position in open countryside on the left. A small group of houses and a number of industrial buildings with a re-cycling facility are on the right hand side of the road approaching the entrance to the Colne Valley Railway. The houses are more visible approaching from Great Yeldham and are largely finished in yellow. The visual impact of the industrial units is limited to some extent by trees and shrubbery.

The Colne Valley Railway is largely invisible from the Yeldham Road apart from a small, orange industrial diesel locomotive and the various signs indicating the preserved railway's whereabouts. With its associated Farm Park it is much more visible from Kirby Hall Road but the historic buildings present on the site are almost lost to view, obscured by the rolling stock stored on the site. However, the view across open fields to the railway contribute to the rural character.

Design Guidelines

Nunnery Street

- The Village Envelope should be drawn to ensure that back land development does not take place and should be maintained on its existing line and definition
- Height of buildings should be in keeping with adjoining properties.
- New building/extensions should retain the same building lines as the adjoining properties
- Materials used should be appropriate to the location
- Boundary treatments should respect the surrounding development
- Overhead cables should be removed if the opportunity arises

Bowmans Park, Priory Wood and Park Vale Close

- Development undertaken in these areas should be in keeping with the planned nature of existing buildings

Kirby Hall Road

- In the part of Kirby Hall Road that is within the Village Envelope any development should adhere to existing building lines and be in keeping with the materials used
- Any building work at the Primary School should be of permanent structures where possible, in keeping with the style of the original building, avoiding piecemeal development
- Development outside the Village Envelope should be restricted to affordable housing subject to meeting the criteria in Policy RLP6 of the Local Plan Review.

Crouch Green and Yeldham Road

- Development on either side of the road should be in keeping with the nature of existing development. This location is beyond the Village Envelope, therefore Countryside policies in the Braintree District Local Plan Review apply.

Leisure and Community Activities

Many rural communities, particularly in the busy commuter belt of the south east, have lost their unique identities. At Castle Hedingham's heart is its strong community spirit, fostered perhaps by a diverse population many of whom have retired.

Churches

Two important institutions are the churches, the Parish Church of St. Nicholas and the United Reformed Church. Throughout the 20th Century, as churchgoing declined nationwide, this village's experience was not untypical. The buildings themselves are important features in the village and are used for a variety of activities, some of which are secular in nature. During the four years from 2004 to 2007, for instance, they were transformed for two weeks each summer into concert halls for the Castle Hedingham Music Festival. The continued existence and strength of the churches remains vital to the life of this village.

School and Pre-School

De Vere County Primary School, with around 150 pupils, is in Kirby Hall Road. On the same site, separate from the School, is the Pre-School Playgroup.

Sports Facilities

The Tennis Club was set up in 1923 on the original site of the Blue Boar Inn next to Forge Green on St. James Street. Over the years it has been an important sporting activity in the village and currently has men's doubles, ladies' doubles and mixed teams playing in the Halstead and District League. A vital element is the Club's dedication to the training of youngsters.

The Cricket Club dates from 1863. It has played on its present ground off Sudbury Hill since the end of the



Tennis Courts

First World War. It currently fields two teams known as the Saturday and Sunday sides. The pavilion was a prototype prefab designed by the Rippers Factory in Sible Hedingham and installed on the present site after the Second World War.

The Bowls Club was first registered in 1924 and played on a green adjacent to Bayley Street for many years. In the late 1980's it moved to its current location on Sheepcot Road with a well maintained 6-rink green for the summer. The pavilion was erected in the 1990's and is used for indoor bowling in the winter.

Scouts and Guides

This village has a strong scouting tradition due to the influence of a former Castle owner, Miss Musette Majendie. A personal friend of Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of the Boy Scout Movement, she succeeded in persuading him to visit Castle Hedingham to help in setting

up the local scouts. Wooding Lodge on Sheepcot Road was purpose built for the Castle Scouts in 1987 and provides a meeting place for Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts, Explorer Scouts and Girl Guides. Rainbows and Brownies meet at De Vere School.



De Vere Primary School



Cricket Ground



The Bowls Club

Clubs and Societies

A large number of activities take place in the Memorial Hall on Church Lane.

These include:

- Modern Sequence Dancing
- The Castle Players Drama Group
- The Yoga Club
- The Badminton Club
- The Carpet Bowls Club
- The Heritage Society
- A Parents and Toddlers Group
- The Friday Art Group
- The Gardening Club
- The Women's Group
- Hedingham Flower Club
- The Castle Hedingham Workers' Educational Association

Public Houses and Restaurants

- The Bell Inn
- The Wheatsheaf
- The Rising Sun
- The Old Moot House
- The Magnolia Tea Rooms
- Memories Restaurant and Takeaway

Colne Valley Railway

Operating on the only remaining section of the Halstead to Cambridge line, which was closed in 1964, the Colne Valley Railway offers visitors the opportunity to ride on the rolling stock of yesteryear, pulled by both steam and diesel engines.

Memories



The Scout Hut

Post Office

The village has retained its Post Office, despite the many closure programmes carried out by successive governments. Mortimer's Stores, in which the Post Office is situated, operates as a newsagent, off licence and grocery store helping to maintain the independence of a community, nearly half of whom are pensioners.

Doctors' Surgeries

The village is also fortunate to have two doctors' surgeries located in the same building, where people without transport have easy access

to medical advice and treatment.

The decline in the rural lifestyle throughout the country has been driven by the closing of local businesses and community facilities. Although Castle Hedingham has lost many of its shops over the years it is still able to cater for most of its villagers' needs. This is appreciated by residents of all ages who remain determined to do everything possible to maximise employment opportunities and preserve the existing community and leisure facilities.

From the Colne Valley Railway to the Castle



Buildings

Castle Hedingham constitutes a unique and fragile environment, which needs careful management if it is to survive unspoiled. There is a fine balance between preservation and progress.

To protect the essential character and identity of the village it is vital that local authorities, developers, builders, architects and householders work together to ensure that decisions taken by this generation do not adversely affect the village for generations to come.

For hundreds of years, buildings, whether stately homes or more modest dwellings, have undergone changes and extensions. St. Nicholas Church is a good example of a structure, which has been added to and modified in different eras, reflecting the design standards of the age in which the work was undertaken. The main consideration is that any development, whether

new or extensions to existing buildings, must be in harmony with the surroundings in respect of materials, colour, texture, proportion and scale, whilst not necessarily being exact copies or pastiches of neighbouring buildings.

In areas of more modern housing, such as New Park or Bowmans Park, care must be taken to create developments that harmonise with the existing built environment. Good design is usually simple and functional, employing materials appropriate for the surroundings and the use of the buildings.

It is clear from the questionnaire and comments recorded during the exhibition that very few residents are against change. However, there is a strong feeling about the process for managing change and the way in which the decision makers will nurture and protect the rich variety of architecture that is Castle Hedingham.



Orbell House exhibits pargetted rendering, exposed timber and varied window styles



A few thatched roofs remain

Design Guidelines

New buildings

- New buildings, in any area, should respect the scale and design of adjacent buildings
- Building details such as doors, windows and roof pitches should be designed with regard to buildings existing in the vicinity
- The Parish Council will be particularly supportive of the provision of 'starter homes'
- Any new developments should include adequate car parking discreetly positioned within the curtilage of the site
- Wherever possible mature trees and shrubs should be conserved
- Any new agricultural buildings should be designed and sited to minimise the effect on the overall landscape

Extensions and alterations to existing buildings

- Original materials or materials which are sympathetic to the existing buildings should be used
- Details such as windows, doors and roof pitches should reflect those of the original building
- Careful consideration should be given to the visual impact of extensions and particularly conservatories, when they are visible either from the street or from public thoroughfares such as footpaths, bridleways etc.
- There should be no unacceptable adverse impact upon the amenities of adjoining residential properties
- Wherever possible mature trees and shrubs should be conserved



Replacement Georgian brick facade of Hayes House



Traditional lime mortar repairs

Roofs

- Dormer windows are a common feature in many roofs but should remain as minor incidents in the roof plane. They blend best into the rooflines when their pitch is the same as that of the main roof. This should be encouraged in preference to flat dormers with lead roll finishes which in most situations appear less integrated within the main roof structure. Cat slide dormer roofs are more appropriate with mansard roofs
- Any replacement or extension to the existing roofs should be to match existing. This applies in all areas of the village but is very important in the historic centre and Conservation Area where most roofs are clay peg-tiles, with slate and thatch in some locations. Red ridge tiles on slate roofs should be avoided
- Roof windows and skylights should be kept to the least visible locations in the historic centre and Conservation Area
- The use of flat roofs, particularly in the historic centre and Conservation Area should be avoided where possible
- Chimneys add further interest to the skyline and should be retained and encouraged on extensions where appropriate

Walls

- Any extension, repair or alteration to existing buildings should be to match existing whether in render, brick or weatherboarding
- Where old timber framed buildings are in need of re-rendering this should be in lime mortar which enables the building to breathe, keeping the timbers dry and avoiding infestation
- Good quality brickwork is essential in any form of building
- Attention should be paid to quoins and reveals when Flemish bond is employed
- Stretcher bond is appropriate for new build only
- Arch brickwork can be incorporated where appropriate
- Lime mortar, appropriately aged, should be used when repairs become necessary

Doors and Windows

- In the historic centre and Conservation Area replacement windows should match the original in style, size and material. This does not necessarily mean matching to existing which could already be visually unacceptable. In such locations the use of UPVC, stained or sealed doors or windows is not appropriate and especially not on older buildings
- Building regulations require double glazing in new works. Double glazing is acceptable in extensions to listed buildings, subject to appropriate window frames being installed, but cannot be used within the existing structure of a listed building

Services

- Items such as meters, flues and ventilation grilles should be positioned on the sides or backs of buildings and not visible from the front
- In new buildings and extensions to existing, drainage pipes should not be exposed on the outside of the building.
- Where possible, TV and radio aerials should be concealed in roof spaces. Satellite dishes are not generally permitted on listed buildings but anywhere in the Conservation Area they should be concealed from view



Various dormer styles in close proximity



Old Police Station and British School face the challenge of modernisation



Industrial Building blends with the landscape



Discreet barn conversion back development

Additional Features

Car Parking and Traffic Problems

Few houses in the historic centre of the village have car parking facilities and consequently park on the roadside. Although in other parts of the village, houses may have on-drive or garage parking, it remains the case that parking in the village causes problems.

Street Lighting and Light Pollution

Although there is some demand for additional street lighting on safety and security grounds there is rather more support for reducing light pollution.

Signs

Although some directional and other general highways signs are essential there is a strong feeling that these and other signs should be kept to a minimum in a rural area such as Castle Hedingham. Visually obtrusive, in size, colour or illumination, signage should be resisted.

Walls and boundaries

Most of the buildings in the centre of the village open either directly onto the road, as in Church Ponds, or onto very narrow pavements. Consequently where walls are evident as boundaries such as that around the Churchyard or in Castle

Lane or at the Tennis Club they take on a particular visual importance. Elsewhere in the village, where walls are used to indicate boundaries they are kept to a very low level and are not obtrusive. Hedges are little used in the historic centre but are more common in Nunnery Street, Pottery Lane and Yeldham Road. The height of the hedges is variable but most are in keeping with the low boundary model except on Yeldham Road where they act as a barrier to road noise.

Overhead Cables

Recently, overhead cables have been removed from Bayley Street and run underground. It is to be hoped that this policy can be extended throughout the village, as the presence of the cables is a considerable intrusion in such a picturesque setting.

Business and Commercial Premises

Business developments are generally located in properties which were dwellings in a former age.

Street Furniture

The benches and litter bins in the village have been provided piecemeal but are visually neutral. There are three 'listed' milestones within the Parish and the Telephone Kiosk in St James Street is also 'listed'.



Above: Post Office and Shop, central to the village scene



Above: Recycling bins - discreetly located

Below: Lychgate built by local craftsmen nearly 100 years ago



Design Guidelines

- Any new development, residential or commercial, must provide sufficient off-street parking and no existing parking should be lost by development or change of use
- Street lighting should, where provided, give a white light and yellow sodium lights should not be used. Lighting should be the minimum necessary for security purposes and should minimise pollution and spillage whilst not causing hazardous driving conditions in accordance with Policy RLP65 of Braintree District Local Plan Review
- New traffic signage should be kept to a minimum allowable under Highway Regulations. Shop signs should complement the village setting and internally illuminated box signs should be prohibited
- All development should: (i) retain, repair or improve existing boundary walls and stonework; (ii) incorporate low boundaries of natural features relating to those used on neighbouring plots (brick, stone or hedges); (iii) use native hedging plants rather than exotic conifers
- Utility companies should seek to minimise the visual impact of their installations and should be encouraged to re-site overhead cables underground
- Designs of commercial premises should complement the rural setting. Developments must have adequate parking and, where possible, be encouraged to provide additional parking for residents. Village shops and pubs need the support of the community. Where proposals are put forward to change the use of business premises every effort should be made to preserve employment opportunities
- Street furniture such as litterbins and benches should be of a design that blends well with the rural village environment. Where existing street furniture is replaced this should be taken into account although a uniform urban approach is not considered necessary or appropriate



Your Property

If you are considering alterations to the exterior of your own property anywhere in the village, there are a number of factors that you should consider. Do you think of these changes as significant, such as replacement windows or doors? Or, are they seemingly less important items such as paintwork, signs, boundary walls or fences, gates, hedges or the removal of a tree?

Whatever the changes, they will affect the building and its surroundings. They will also affect the overall look of the village. So please make your own assessment of the impact of the intended change by studying each visible elevation of your property, including the rear elevation if visible, prior to alteration and ask yourself:

- What are the distinctive features of the property and the area?
- Are any of these features out of character with the property or with adjacent properties or with the Design Guidelines in this Statement?
- Think about the alterations you are considering. How do they affect the positive distinctive

features of your property? Do they complement the character of the local area? If not, how could you change them so that they do? Alternatively is there the opportunity to remove any uncharacteristic features?

Contact Braintree District Council to establish if planning permission, Listed Building Consent or building regulations permissions are required for your proposal.

Check also if there are any other restrictions on the development of your property. Is it a listed building? If it is, it is subject to much stricter controls than for non-listed buildings. Is it in the Conservation Area? If so, amongst other restrictions, this means that you will need permission to cut down or significantly reduce the height of trees. Please note that most work to listed buildings will require listed building consent. Permission is also required for demolition within the Conservation Area.

If you are in doubt employ an architect or seek professional advice about your proposals. The local planning authority, Braintree District Council, is happy to provide advice prior to the submission of an application.

Useful contacts

Braintree District Council
Development Control Department
(For information regarding planning permissions)
Tel: 01376 552525

Braintree District Council
Planning Policy Department (For information regarding planning policies, the Local Plan Review or the Local Development Framework)
Tel: 01376 552525

Braintree District Council
Building Control Department (For information on Building Regulations)
Tel: 01376 552525

Essex County Council
Listed Buildings Officer
Tel: 01245 437653

Essex County Council
Highway (Road Conditions, Traffic Management)
Tel: 01245 240186
Email:
highways-midarea@essex.gov.uk



Conclusion

The printing of the Castle Hedingham Village Design Statement represents the culmination of a collaborative project spread over many months involving people from the community.

The starting point was an Open Meeting on the evening of 10th October 2005 when over 50 people attended a presentation in the Memorial Hall. Since then many of those present, plus others who have joined the team along the way, have contributed volunteer time amounting to hundreds of hours as the Design Statement has taken shape.

One of the most important events was the Exhibition on the 3rd and 4th March, 2007 when over 250 people came to see stands and displays setting out the progress to date. The Exhibition sought to promote a debate about the features of the village which residents value and, more importantly perhaps, those which they feel spoil the environment.

All of the comments forthcoming from the Exhibition, as well as those provided in the responses to a

questionnaire circulated to residents in 2006, have been rigorously analysed and recorded so that the Guidelines in this document reflect the consensus views of local householders.

Inevitably there were some issues on which opinions were divided and this continues to be the case. An example is street lighting where, although the majority view is against further light pollution, a significant number of people have a strong desire to see further lighting installed on the grounds of safety and security.

However there was a clear perception that the essential character and appearance of the village must be preserved. Respondents appreciated the diversity of building styles and the colour variation and came close to unanimity in their view that new buildings and extensions should be in sympathy with their surroundings in terms of size, proportion and building materials used. Greens and open spaces were seen to be extremely important and there was a strong view supporting the planting of trees and shrubs.

People were very concerned about parking and expressed the view that

developers should provide off-road parking for any new housing complexes. Another feature which produced widespread disapproval was the existence of overhead cables which, to quote one respondent, 'create a real eyesore in the centre of the village'. Other adverse comments were made about the heavy traffic and, in several central areas, the inadequate pavements.

The Introduction states that this document 'is about managing change in the village and not preventing it'. Of course the village will continue to develop and the Design Statement provides a vital insight into the values of the community which, it is to be hoped, will enable the appearance of the village to be maintained. The Design Guidelines contained in this Statement have been approved by Braintree District Council as conforming with their planning policy and thus will be regarded as 'a material consideration' to be taken into account whenever a planning application comes before the Council.

The passion expressed by the residents in helping to produce this Statement illustrates how much they cherish their village and demonstrates the pride they have in its vibrant community.



CASTLE HEDINGHAM AN ALPHABETICAL PORTRAIT OF THE VILLAGE BY 1ST HEDINGHAM BROWNIES

BROWNIES - Erin Abrey Amy Bowles Grace Boyle Jade Brewer Abbie Brewster Eisligh Cary Carly Ann Chapman Jasmine Chapman Ellie Churchlow Amy Felton Zsara Finch Olivia Hill Abigail Hogg Jasmin Lock Clemency Morgan Bethany Roach Rebecca Ruffle Lillie Thompson Summer Thompson Georgina Turner
PACK LEADER - Lisa Blake **WITH THE HELP OF** - Hilary Bartlett Emma Blake Michele Blake (Assistant Guider) Jean Rulten (Brownie Guider) Hilda Whiting
 Our thanks to Common Ground www.commonground.org.uk for inspiring us to recognise the importance of local distinctiveness.

Origination by Andrew Godfrey