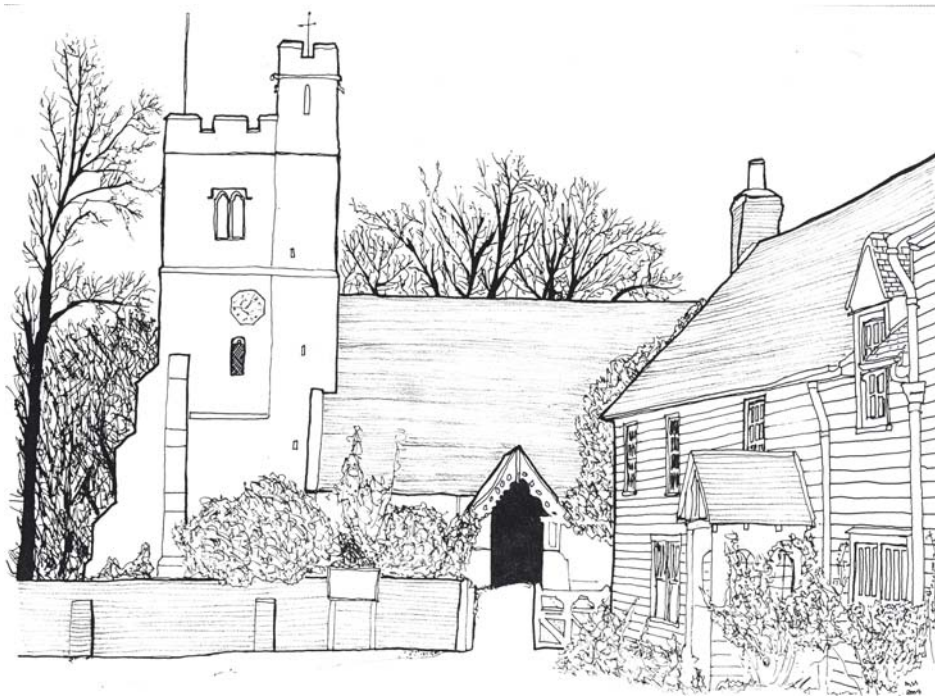


TILLINGHAM

Conservation Area Review and Character Appraisal



Front cover illustration: North-Eastern corner of The Square, The Parish Church of Saint Nicholas and 10 The Square.

This document was produced by Essex County Council
for Maldon District Council.

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Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT	5
2.1	Location	5
2.2	Historical Development	5
2.3	Cartographic Evidence	7
3.	TOWNSCAPE	9
4.	USES	12
5.	MATERIALS AND DETAILING	14
6.	AREA ANALYSIS	17
6.1	The Square	17
6.1.1	The Square – Western Side	19
6.1.2	The Square – South and East Sides	20
6.1.3	The Square – Northern Side	20
6.2	Marsh Road	21
6.3	North Street	21
6.3.1	North Street – Southern End (No's 1 - 23)	22
6.3.2	North Street – Northern End (No. 25 – Stow Cottage)	23
6.4	Brook Road	25
6.5	South Street	26
6.5.1	South Street – Northern End (No's 1 – 41 odd, Cap and Feathers to Chapel Lane even)	26
6.5.2	South Street – Southern End (No's 37-71 odd, 32-78 even)	28
6.6	Marlborough Avenue	30
6.7	Chapel Lane	30
6.8	Vicarage Lane	31
6.9	Casey Lane	32
7.	RECOMMENDATIONS	33
7.1	Proposed Boundary Changes	33
7.2	Additional Planning Controls	37
7.3	Enhancements	38
8.	CONCLUSION	41
9.	APPENDIX	42
9.1	Policy Content	42
9.2	Bibliography	42
10.	INDEX TO STREETS	43

1. INTRODUCTION

Conservation areas are 'Areas of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). The conservation area in Tillingham was designated on 15th July 1969, since which there have been no revisions to the boundaries. It covers the historic settlement, which at the time of designation comprised the majority of the village.

The conservation area centres on the parish church of St. Nicholas and The Square stretching along the linear pattern of North Street and South Street. Short lengths of side roads off The Square and North and South Streets are also included: these are Brook Road, Bradwell Road, Marsh Road, Vicarage Lane, Casey Lane, Chapel Lane and Marlborough Avenue (fig. 1).

There are 28 listed buildings within the conservation area (although this includes individual entries for groups of buildings). All are grade II listed, except for the grade II* listed church. There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the conservation area.

Designation of a conservation area extends planning controls over certain types of development, including extensions, boundary treatments, the demolition of unlisted buildings and works to trees. However, it does not prevent any change and it may be subject to many different pressures (good and bad) that will affect its character and appearance. Although Tillingham is a relatively remote village, it still faces continuing pressure for change. Since the conservation area designation in 1969 many changes have taken place. Notably, there is continuing pressure for housing development. Probably the greatest threat to the character is the continuing need for 'modernisation' and 'improvement', with alteration of existing buildings resulting in considerable loss of character through works carried out as permitted development within the provisions of the General Development Order.

Maldon District Council commissioned Essex County Council to prepare this conservation area appraisal and review in May 2004. The research and fieldwork were carried out between July and October 2004.

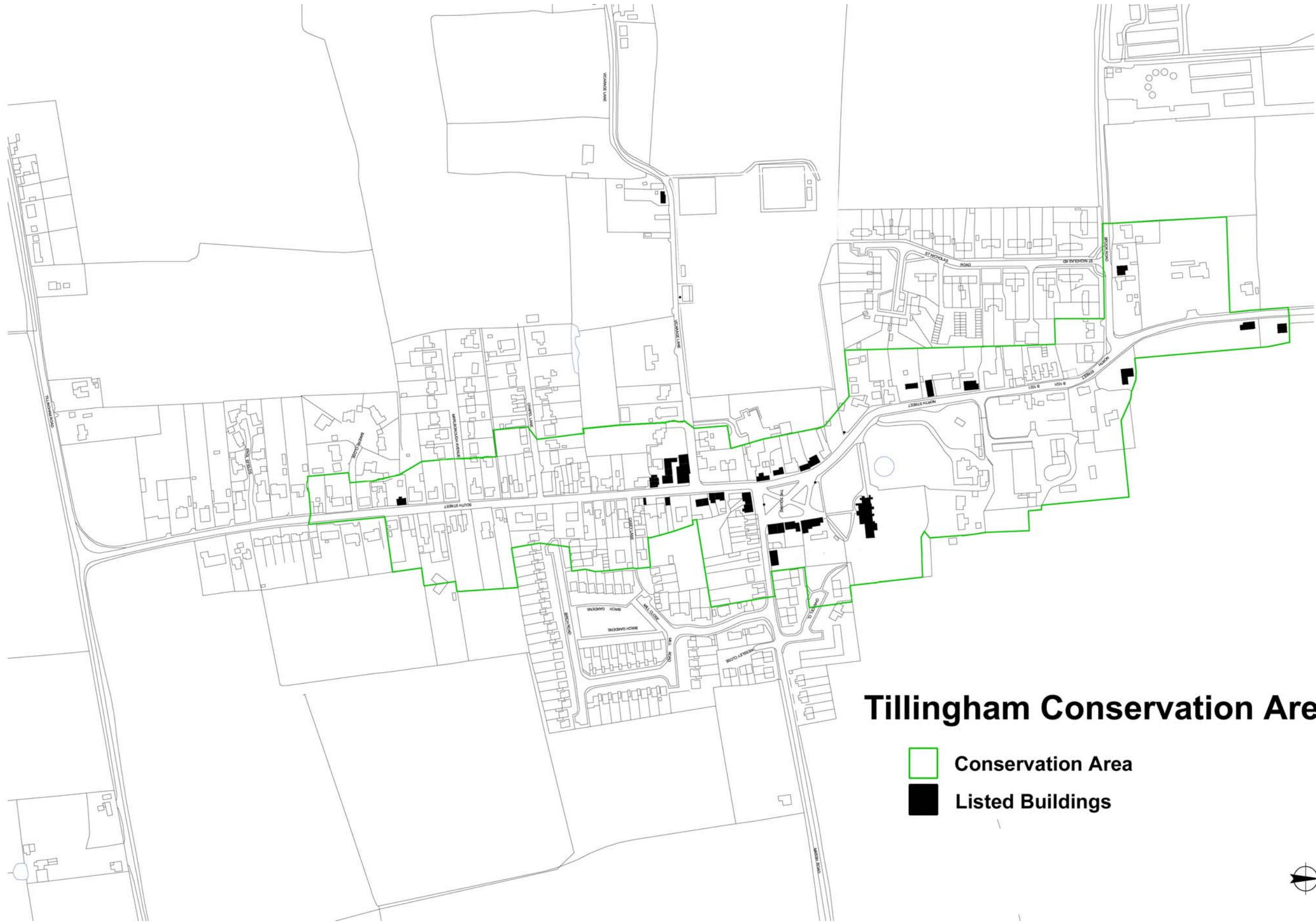
The appraisal provides a brief development history of the current settlement. This is followed by a description of the townscape and assessment of character. The contribution of different elements to the character is identified through detailed street by street analysis. To do this, the conservation area has been divided into three sub-areas which are spatially distinct and of slightly different character:

- South Street. Including Vicarage Lane, Casey Lane, Chapel Lane and Marlborough Avenue.
- The Square, including Marsh Road.
- North Street, including Brook Road and Bradwell Road.

Any issues which may affect the protection of character will be highlighted and opportunities for enhancement identified. This appraisal also considers alterations to the boundary to the conservation area.

1.1. Character Statement

The character of Tillingham has been determined by numerous factors, the following being the most significant: the remote location, Saxon layout, vernacular buildings, eighteenth and nineteenth century redevelopment and expansion, commercial activity, agriculture, marshes and wildfowl.



Tillingham Conservation Area

- Conservation Area
- Listed Buildings



Fig. 1, Tillingham Conservation Area

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2. ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Location

Tillingham is located on the western side of the low lying Dengie Peninsula. Somewhat remote, the village is linked to Maldon by the B1018 via Southminster. The nearest town is Burnham-on-Crouch, 6 miles away SSW.

2.2. Historical Development

The name Tillingham is derived from ‘the settlement of the people of *Tilli*’ (Reaney, 1935). This indicates the Saxon origin of the settlement. Although at present the village is some distance from the coastal edge, contours suggest the early settlement was closely surrounded by marsh land, which has since been reclaimed. Much reclamation took place in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Medlycott, M. 2004).

The Parish church, which is of Norman origin, is at the heart of the conservation area, with the manorial hall to the North. Stows Farmhouse (grade II* listed) thought to be a vicarage is outside the conservation area boundary. This building dates from the fifteenth century, and notably defies the tradition of traditional timber framed buildings of Essex – it has a king post roof with ridge pole (fig. 2), not common until the nineteenth century in Essex. This building’s exceptional quality and rare detailing suggests a link with the major local land owners, St Pauls Cathedral, and the work of a church carpenter rather than a craftsman from Essex or East Anglia.

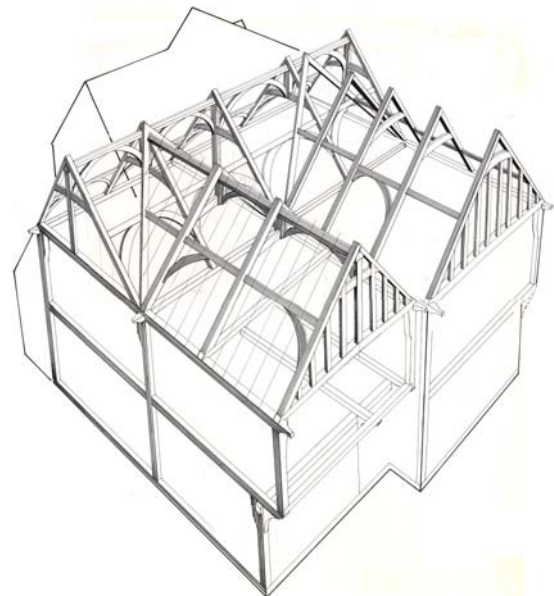


Fig. 2, Stowe Hall

St Pauls Cathedral have a long association with Tillingham and the surrounding land; it has been in their control since c.720, and they still retain the right to appoint the local vicar in the village. St Pauls had a significant land holding across the Dengie Peninsula and the south coast of Essex through the middle ages. This brought great wealth through sheep farming and later arable crops.

Little evidence is available for the early settlement of Tillingham. Few buildings survive beyond the post medieval period, other than the church, the Cap and Feathers public house in South Street and 10 The Square (formerly the Cock Inn) both of which retain fragmentary late medieval timber framing. However the street layout, based on the cross road of South Street, North Street and The Square is certainly a feature of the settlement’s antiquity.

The majority of the surviving buildings are from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with most of the expansion beyond the conservation area boundary occurring within the last thirty years.

An interesting account of life in Tillingham during the early twentieth century is given by a local agricultural worker, who describes his life in a book (A, Kemp. 1985). During the twentieth century mechanisation of arable farming reduced the need for manpower. This, combined with the shift in population to towns, led to a decline in population from 951 in 1891 to 683 in 1951. The nearby Bradwell-on-Sea Village saw a similar population decrease in that period, while the larger towns with railway links at Southminster and Burnham-on-Crouch saw substantial increases. Increased residential development in the latter twentieth century has increased population to 886 (1991).

The Square was the centre of community life with bike races, a fair twice every year, cricket matches were played there, and as a meeting place. The commercial centre was based around The Square and the northern end of South Street. In the early twentieth century, prior to widespread use of the motor car and regular public transport, the village was self-sufficient, with a full range of shops and craftspeople, including a shoe maker, doctor, butcher, wheelwright, carpenters, farmhands, school, forge, village store, tailor, inns and pubs, bike shop and a baker.

This part of the Dengie Peninsular is renowned for its wildfowl; there are several duck decoy ponds on the marshes, which have been in use from at least the early eighteenth century (fig. 3). Wildfowl and agriculture are an important part of the history of the village, shaping its development and forming an integral part of its setting.

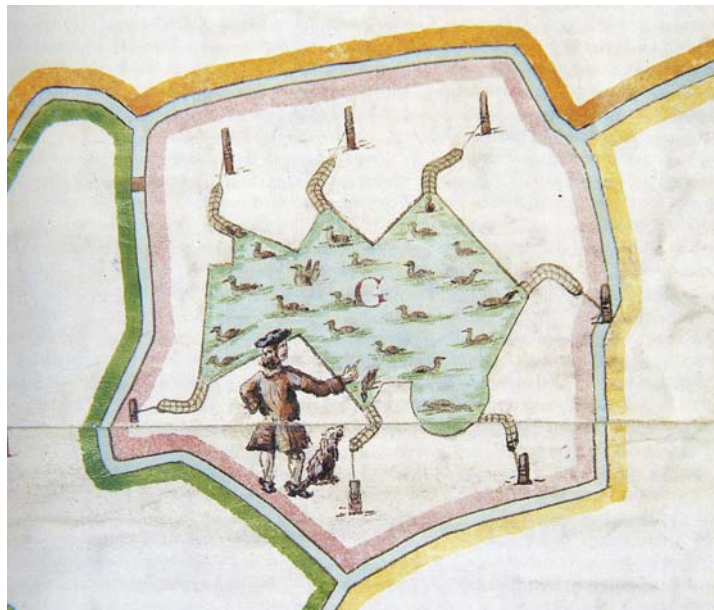


Fig. 3, 1739 Map of duck decoy pond.

The historic uses within the settlement have diminished, with most of the village trades dying out in favour of residential uses. The village has significantly expanded in the latter twentieth century, with a growth in residential development both adjacent to and within the conservation area.

2.3. Cartographic Evidence

The earliest surviving cartographic evidence for the settlement of any clarity is the Chapman and André map of 1777 (fig. 4). This shows the building forms, but in an over exaggerated plan, but gives a good indication of the extent and pattern of development.

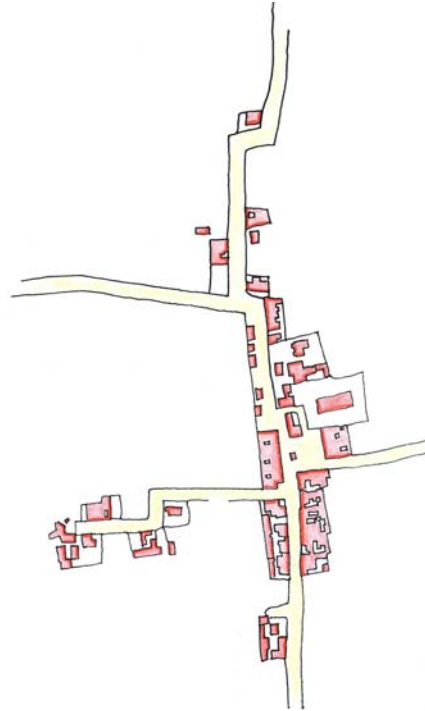


Fig. 4, 1777 Chapman and André Map

The first relatively accurate maps are of the nineteenth century, the tithe map of 1838 and first and second edition ordnance survey maps of 1874 and 1897 respectively- which can be compared (figs. 5-7).



Fig. 5, Tithe Map 1838

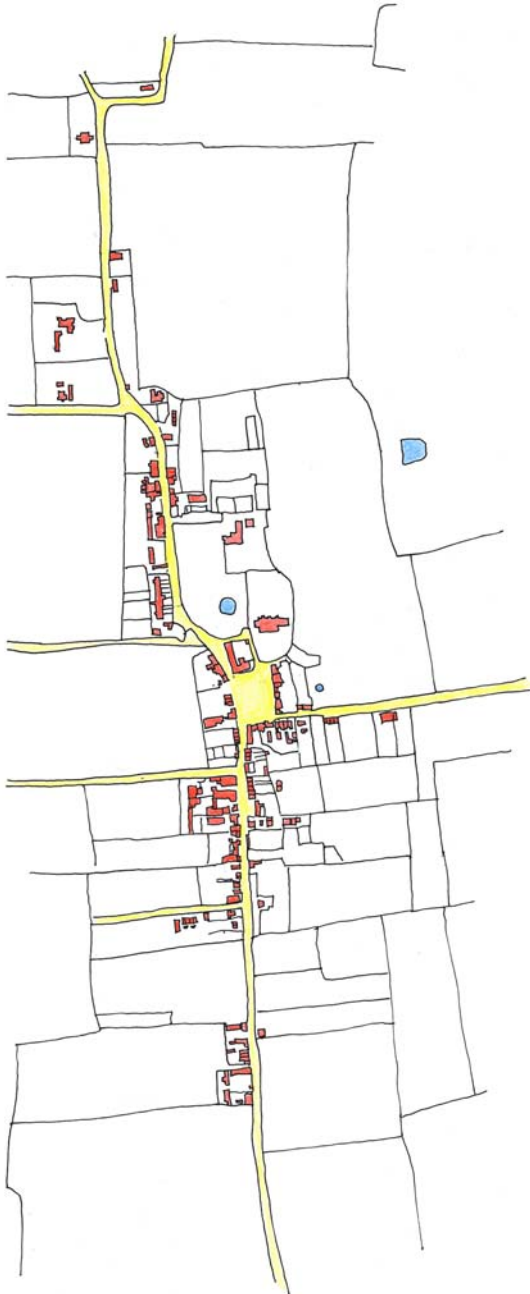


Fig. 6, Ordnance Survey Map 1874

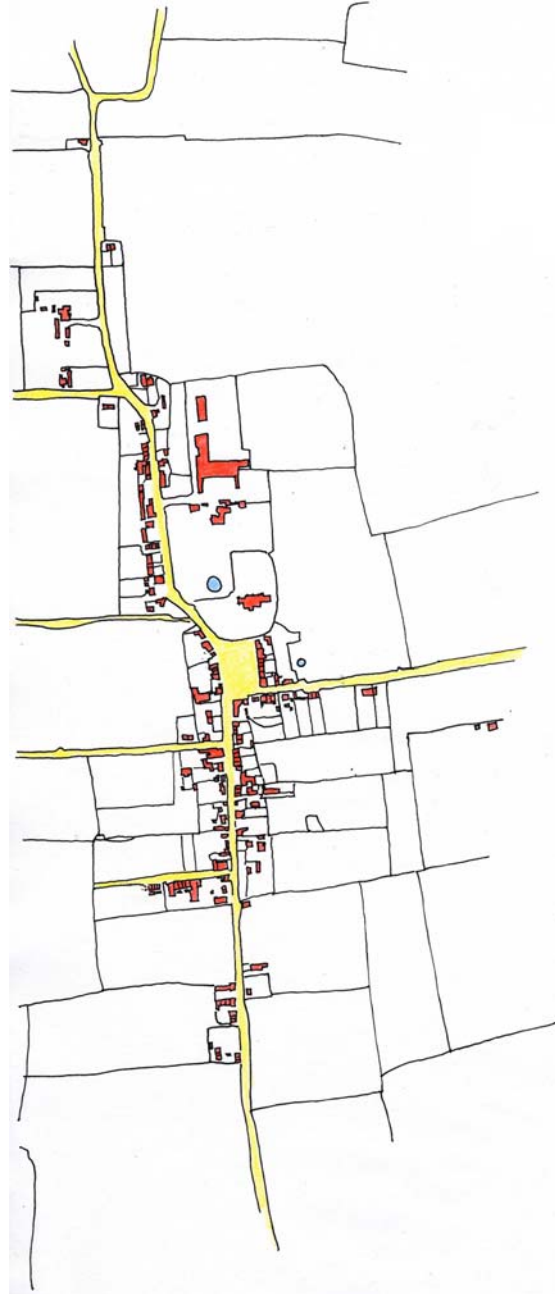


Fig. 7, Ordnance Survey Map 1897

The field boundaries shown on the tithe map are a relatively unaltered early pattern of field boundaries, which is certainly Saxon or earlier in origin. Although some of the boundaries were lost during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries there is still significant survival in the land surrounding the conservation area. In the wider landscape the division of fields runs east-west and north-south, in a rectilinear pattern.

The nineteenth century maps also show a gradual increase in built form rather than an explosion of development typical of many villages and towns in the late nineteenth century. The Chapman and André Map and Tithe map also show significant development on the unenclosed edge of The Square, which was the cobblers (A, Kemp. 1985) and is now the church yard enclosed by a low nineteenth century brick wall.

3. TOWNSCAPE

The relationship between unity and variety is an important factor in the character of historic settlements. Over-unified places are dull and monotonous and too much variety means visual anarchy. Historic towns and villages embody the right balance and this is an important part of their charm.

Townscape is the art of public space, where buildings are arranged to provide a stimulating environment. The 'unity' element is formed by the interlinking thoroughfares which bind a settlement together. An attractive place has a variety of enclosed spaces, like outdoor rooms, joined to form continuous routes.

Townscape analysis for the conservation area is shown overleaf (fig. 8). The dense planting to North Street, in particular, and open space of the playing fields are of significance. The following aerial photograph gives a good comparison of the interrelationship between planting, built forms and open spaces (fig. 9)



Fig. 8, Townscape



Fig. 9, Aerial Photograph showing Conservation Area

4. USES

Residential use is predominant, but the local facilities – shops, pubs etc. – play an important part in the sustainability, vitality and variety of the area. Local facilities should be retained and, where possible, added to. Commercial uses have reduced, but fragmentary evidence of the former commercial nature of the village is present in the form of numerous shop windows. The map of non residential uses (fig. 10) shows how the uses are spread throughout the area, without a commercial heart at the centre.

Although few agriculture buildings are within the conservation area, the agriculture location is an important part of its setting. These uses are difficult to define and protect, but certainly the harvesting of crops and the coming and going of tractors is an important part of the locality.

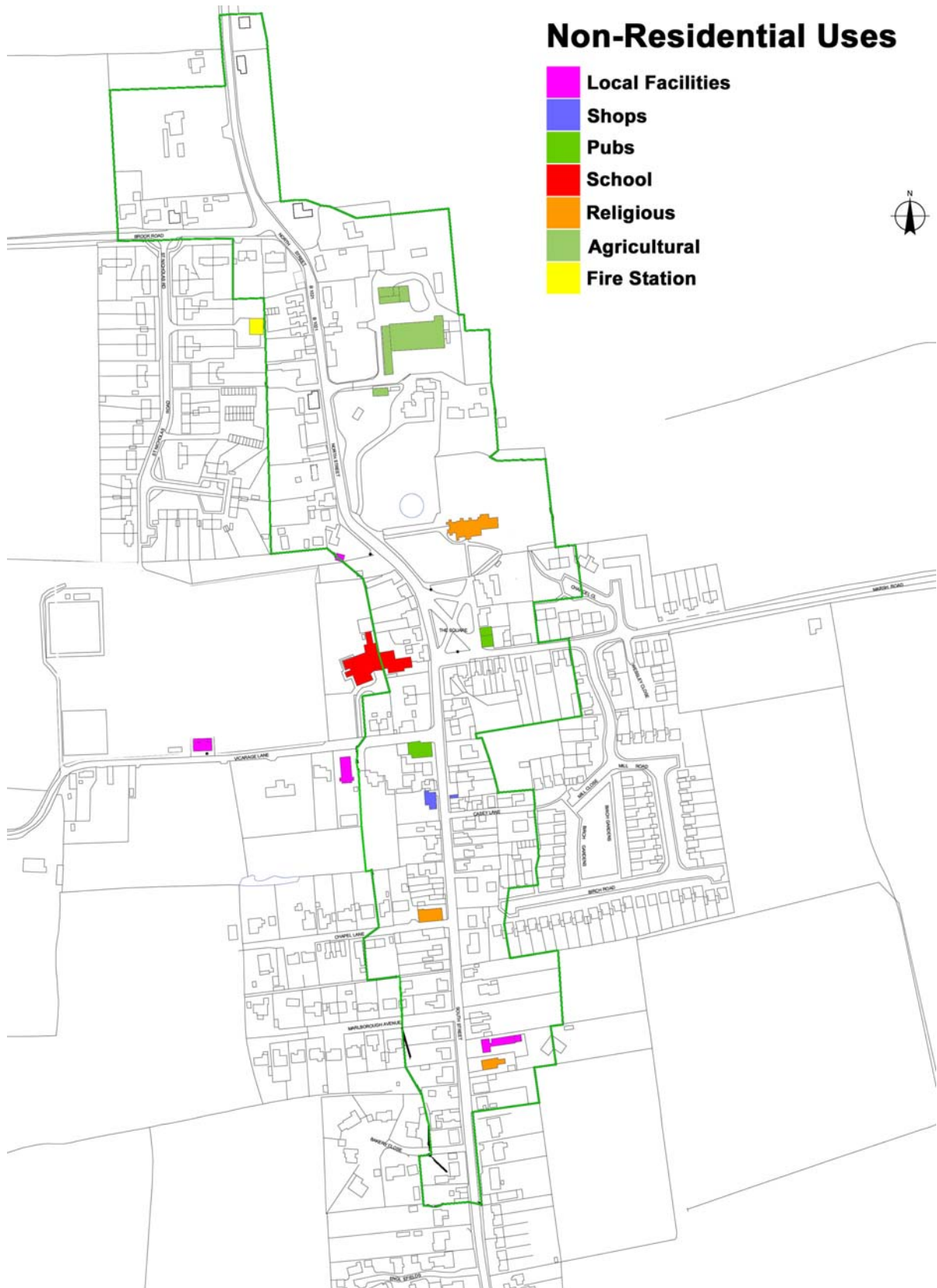


Fig. 10, Map showing Non-Residential Uses

5. MATERIALS AND DETAILING

Traditional materials and detail make a significant contribution to the character of the local area. Weather board is prevalent, both feather edged and plain edged. It is usually painted white, but also black to side and rear elevations and on outbuildings. Bricks are handmade reds, occasionally with buff brick detailing, with cambered or gauged arches to openings (fig. 11). Brick bonding is most commonly in Flemish bond (fig. 12), but always historically in a solid wall traditional bond, rather than stretcher bond which is monotonous by comparison. Unusually for Essex, rendered elevations are less common. Tile-hanging is a feature of some late 19th Century buildings. Roofs are of double cambered handmade red clay plain tiles laid steeply (47 to 50°) (fig. 13), natural blue-grey slate at a lower pitch (35 to 40°), usually hipped (fig. 14), and orange clay pantiles to outbuildings only (fig. 15). As North Street becomes more rural, traditional long-straw thatch is found (fig. 16).



Fig. 11, Brick arches and timber joinery



Fig. 12, Red brick wall in Flemish bond (with unfortunate cement repointing)



Fig. 13, Steep plain tile roof, with weatherboard painted white to front and black to sides and rear



Fig. 14, Natural slate roof with ornate ridge and hip tiles



Fig. 15, Pan tile roofed outbuilding



Fig. 16, Thatched dormer

Windows largely remain traditional, in painted timber with either symmetrical flush casements or vertically sliding sashes, although plastic replacements are seriously harming the appearance of the area due to their flat lifeless appearance and crude alien detailing. There is also a good range of historic shop windows, in the form of multi-paned large bay windows (fig. 17).



Fig. 17, Early nineteenth century shop window

Roofscape interest is derived through the use of substantial red brick chimney stacks and on low 1 ½ storey cottages dormer windows, which should be very narrow, minor incidents within the roof (fig. 18).



Fig. 18, Traditional narrow dormer

Boundary treatments are an important form of townscape enclosure and make a significant impact on the area. Boundary walls and fences are typically low to front and side elevations on public through-fares. Brick boundaries are usually only used on prominent corner sites where enclosure by built form is lacking. The most common form are timber picket fences painted white (fig. 19). Hedged boundaries are also frequent, particularly on the more rural periphery. Iron railings are less numerous and only found on the urbanised centre in the northern end of South Street, although estate railings are used elsewhere. There are also a range of poor quality timber, concrete and brick boundaries which harm the appearance of the area.



Fig. 19, Timber picket fence

The main roads are predominantly tarmac with large rolled aggregate, although side roads are loose shingle. The pavements to South Street, North Street and The Square have been covered in bonded pea shingle (fig. 20), which is wholly appropriate for this semi-rural village. Kerb stones are natural granite, although some concrete replacements are bland and inappropriate by comparison. There are small areas of blue stable block, red brick and flint cobbles (fig. 21) which make an interesting and varied floor covering.



Fig. 20, Bonded pea shingle surfacing



Fig. 21, Flint and blue stable block floor covering

6. AREA ANALYSIS

In many ways Tillingham is typical of a rural Essex village, in its building types, forms and materials, for instance, but the sum total created is very unique. Its picturesque qualities are immediately apparent, but its special character is made up of distinct features. The following paragraphs will define this special character, by aid of description and visual annotation.

The conservation area has been divided into three sub areas, based around The Square, South Street and North Street.

Each building has been assessed and its contribution to the appearance and character of the conservation area has been graded (fig. 22). Whilst this system is subjective, it aims to provide a guide to aid the planning process. The criteria for the grading were:

1. Negative buildings, which do not relate to the character of the area. Demolition and redevelopment would be encouraged.
2. Negative design or siting (including substantially altered or of poor materials). Enhancements may increase to 3 or 4.
3. Neutral contribution. Neither positive nor negative contribution. Includes buildings which may have been altered in an unsympathetic way.
4. Positive contribution through design, age, materials, siting or detailing.
5. Listed buildings, important landmarks, buildings making a significant positive contribution.

6.1. The Square

The Square is the centre of the conservation area and the heart of the historic village. The greatest density of listed buildings is at this point. The Square has an urban built edge to its perimeter, with buildings lining three sides and the low nineteenth century church yard brick wall to the fourth. There is a relatively tight grain, although the plot widths are generous compared with other historic settlements suggesting that the pressures on land driven by commercial activity were not sufficient to make frontage space a premium. The mixture of built form gives variety, with many 1½ storey cottages, but also more dominant nineteenth century buildings of red brick.

The Square is strikingly scenic and remains relatively unchanged since the late nineteenth century. However there are two major factors which detract from it: the introduction of unsympathetic alterations, such as replacement plastic doors and windows; and the extent of road cutting across the square, whose blank tarmac and concrete kerb stones are alien to the soft textures and varying colours of the traditional materials within the conservation area. This is worsened by the almost permanent use of the cross roads as a car park. Historically The Square was covered in hogging, rather than the current grass landscaping.

Assessment of Contribution of Individual Buildings to the Character of the Conservation Area

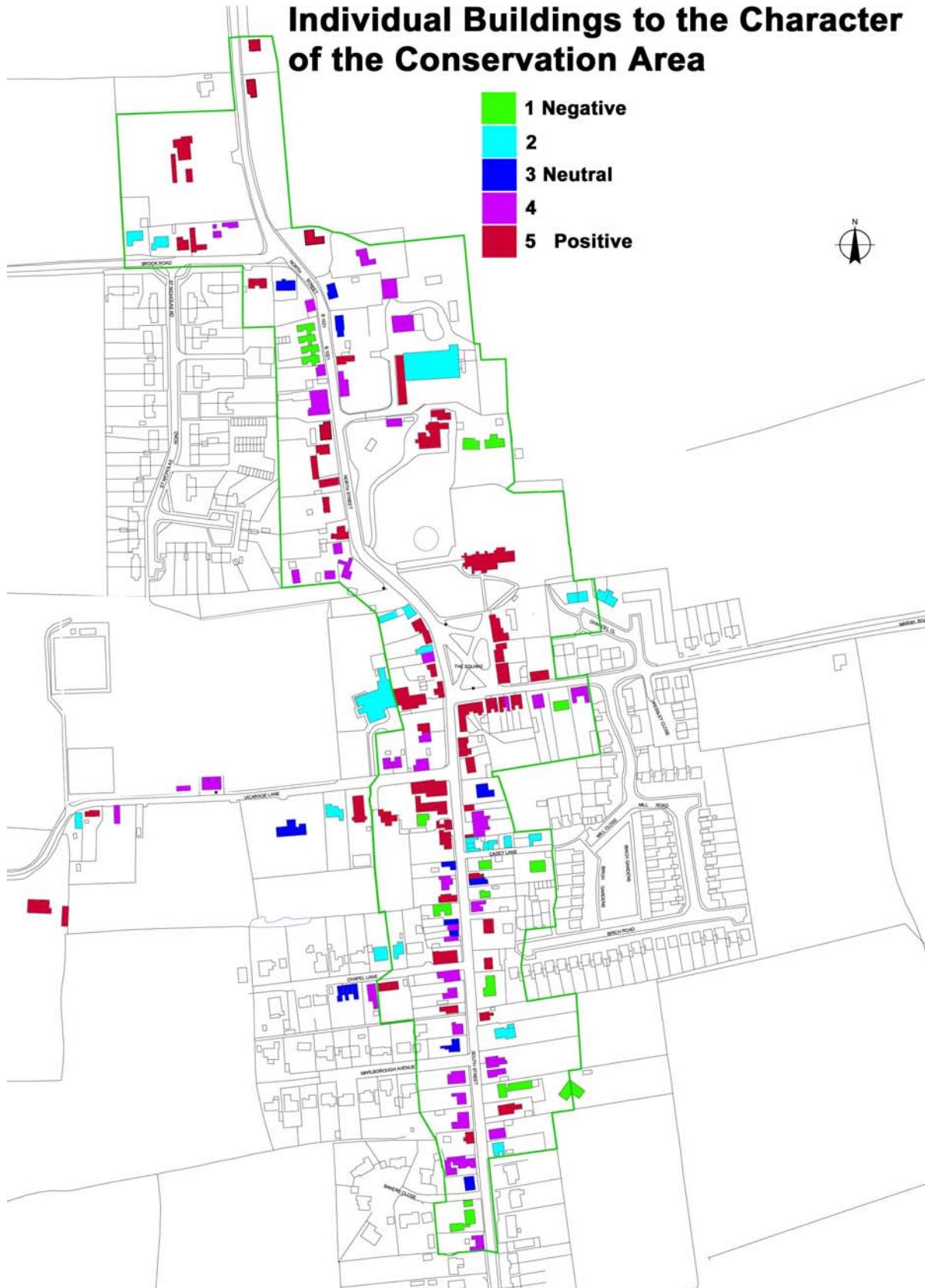


Fig. 22, Map showing the contribution of individual buildings

Its form, physical relationship with the church and hall, position at the centre of the settlement and the presence of the earliest vernacular buildings all indicate The Square is the original centre for the medieval village. The earliest clear cartographic evidence shows high density built form to The Square, interestingly, with commercial units (Kemp, 1985) encroaching upon the south western corner of the church yard. A small building is also shown to the south western corner of The Square, a village lock up or market hall, perhaps.

Although historic uses within the Square have diminished, there are several eighteenth and nineteenth century shop fronts and bay windows surviving. These are a valuable record and defining characteristic, and must be retained.

6.1.1 The Square - Western Side

The West side of The Square is a close knit group of urban vernacular buildings, of shallow plan, 1½ and 2 storeys (fig. 23). The narrow spaces between buildings give important glimpse views to soft planting, small scale outbuildings and open space. Roofscape interest is provided by a mixture of substantial red brick chimney stacks and narrow dormers to low cottages. White painted weatherboard (to all sides of the building) is the predominant walling cladding, with handmade plain tiles to the roof at 47 to 50° pitch. Red brick is also present, usually laid in Flemish bond, with hipped natural slate roofing at a low pitch of 35-40°. The buildings run parallel to the road, except No.5 which has a gabled nineteenth century crosswing. Rebuilding the bulky workshop range would be a significant improvement. The new house between No.9, a fine early nineteenth century former shop, and the car park entrance, is bulky, deep and tall, standing out in a dominant way.



Fig. 23, Western side of The Square

No.1 The Square, a seventeenth century gambrel roofed cottage is empty and on the buildings at risk register. It is an important building, a significant landmark framing the long view up South Street and back into The Square. Sensitive reuse should be encouraged.

The school building is a picturesque mid Victorian, brick and steep slate roof building with prominent gables; its low brick boundary walls give a legible and

defined entrance. Trees and soft landscaping help to mask the ungainly flat roofed additions to the West.

6.1.2 The Square – South and East Sides

To the South side, the attractive eighteenth century terrace also frames the view up South Street. The building's position, raised plinth and vertical proportions make it stand out as an important landmark, which must be retained.

The South-East corner of The Square has a change in character from traditional Essex vernacular to a more robust, standardised nineteenth development. Three semi detached villas of red brick and hipped slate roofs are to the south. The spaces between are important and infill should be resisted. Opposite, the Fox and Hounds public house of the early nineteenth century is a substantial red brick and slate building. Its massive plan depth and dominant height mark it out as a landmark with commercial presence (fig. 24). Whilst these buildings lack local character, they add to the variety and history of this part of the conservation area.



Fig. 24, South-East of The Square

More local vernacular and rural character is found on the Eastern side of The Square. There is great variation in building types, with the Fox and Hounds, a late seventeenth/eighteenth century 1½ storey cottage and a low two storey house, with a cross-wing, all of which are grade II listed. Painted brickwork and weatherboard is found on the latter two. The sides of the buildings are weatherboarded; here the colour is black which is more common to rural Essex for secondary elevations, rather than the all white on the west side of The Square. The main negative factor is the box like garage block to the east adjacent to No.11.

6.1.3 The Square - Northern Side

The northern side has a low nineteenth century red brick wall in Flemish bond to the edge of the church yard. The church stands out as an important land mark with the fourteenth century tower rising above the trees (see front cover). The dense, mature planting within the church yard and grounds of the hall form a thick natural backdrop to The Square, marking the beginning of the low density rural character of North Street.

6.2. Marsh Road

Marsh Road runs from the east side of The Square towards the marshes and is an area of nineteenth century expansion. This narrow and relatively quiet lane has a pedestrian friendly scale. The mixture of building types, gaps between buildings and set back from the pavement edge give a suburban character which contrasts with The Square (fig. 25).



Fig. 25, Marsh Road

Weatherboarding painted white and red brick for walls and hipped natural slate roofs are prevalent. The bungalow on the South side (14) fails to relate to the scale, design or materials of this part of the conservation area. If the opportunity arises redevelopment with a two storey building in weatherboarding and slate closer to the edge of the pavement would be an enhancement.

The view from Marsh Road through Chancel Close to the church is important, as is the view West towards No.1 The Square and the school building.

The boundary treatments form an important part of the street scene, with a mixture of white painted picket fences, brick walls and soft landscaping. Timber picket fences at 8, 12 and 15 (The Square) should be retained, 2, 4, 6, 10 and 14 (The Square) would benefit from replacement with white painted timber picket fences.

6.3. North Street

Trees, hedges and garden spaces are very significant for the character of North Street. Plot boundaries remain soft – hedges or picket fences – and the boundaries at 90° to the road are as significant as those parallel to the road, for their softening affect on angled views of buildings. Surfaces are gentle, with bonded gravel on the pavement. Buildings generally have the soft, low-key character of traditional vernacular buildings, with the occasional exception, but while the latter remain limited in the number they do not dominate the street (fig. 26). Weatherboard is common, but brick is found on later buildings. The buildings are predominantly low scale. Strong hedged boundaries and spaces denote the rural character and care must be taken not to lose this special, undeveloped quality. North Street is much quieter and rural in character, unlike South Street (the principle route in and out of town).

North Street is more divorced from The Square than South Street, due to the curve in the road combined with a break in development. The breaks created by the car park, churchyard and the soft green edge of hedges frame an attractive and very significant view of no.11, The Old Stores, at the corner.



Fig. 26, Street scene of the eastern side of North Street

There is a distinct character change. North Street has a softer, more suburban and peripheral character than South Street. The East side is dominated by a strong green edge, which provides glimpses of the farm and hall but there is also clearly depth to the planting, with mature trees. The open spaces of gardens give very much a rural character. Development is mostly confined to the West side, but remains loose in pattern, with variety in the building line, boundaries and building forms.

6.3.1. North Street – Southern End (No's 1 - 23)

The garden of No.1 North Street, Rathescar, defines the townscape more than the house, which is angled to the road. Church Cottage, No.7, is modern but blends well in size, proportion and materials and being set back behind its garden, it allows The Old Stores to remain the landmark building. This cottage is very vernacular and rural in character, with a 1½ storey gambrel roof and a front slate roofed lean-to with shop window to the road, showing more regard to practicalities than aesthetic principles. Its prominence is emphasised by the soft boundaries (of hedge and picket fence) which run up the road as far as No.25. Such prominence makes it a defining building of North Street (figs. 27 and 28).

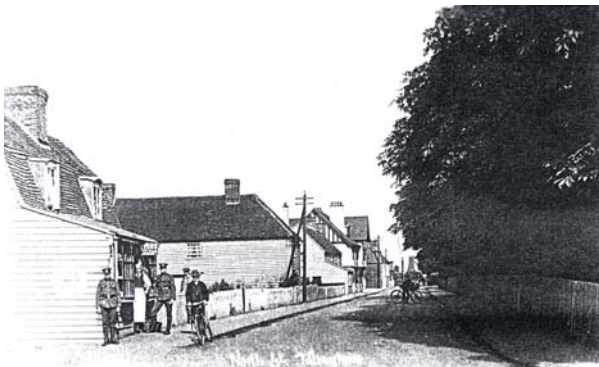


Fig. 27, North Street, early twentieth century



Fig. 28, North Street, 2004

No.13 is discrete not only in its height (1½ storeys) but it is set back behind a front garden. Fake timber framing has unfortunately been applied to the façade. Latch Key Cottages are a full two storeys, but their affect is softened by being gable end onto the road and by being set behind a hedge. In contrast, the red brick double garage at the end of the drive appears solid and harsh – it is being softened by planting, but traditional style vertical boarded doors would help and perhaps weatherboard.

The outbuildings and the single-storey cottage at No.23 are very significant to North Street and Tillingham as a whole. The outbuildings are typical nineteenth century service structures, of relatively insubstantial construction, and the cottage is of simple, neat derivative design – with weatherboard, slate roof and sash windows. They show the historical low-key character of the village and provide a memory of the working environment within the village. The cottage was a typical design for Tillingham but their number is threatened by redevelopment. The space, simply defined by a low white picket fence to the road side, is also significant, giving meaning to the cottage as well as the outbuildings. Their significance is about what they tell of Tillingham's history and the built variety that they provide (see fig. 19).

6.3.2. North Street – Northern End (No. 25 – Stow Cottage)

No.25 starts a group of buildings set forward to define the road edge again, but all notably with space between buildings that provides glimpses of open gardens beyond. No.25's design makes the transition from low key to more substantial and prominent design, combining weatherboard and clay tile with a full two storeys, full length to the road, sash windows, but again with a quirky front lean-to and large wide commercial sash window. The Swan Care Home is something of an anomaly (fig.29). Of solid Edwardian construction with a modern cross-wing extension, the medieval cross-wing design is typical of Essex. 2½ storeys appears massive and too high status in this particular context. However, the building is finely detailed, with precise brickwork in Flemish bond, gauged arched heads, egg and dart detail and jetty. It can be considered a stand-alone feature building, adding variety to the conservation area (another, however, would create too dominant a combination).



Fig. 29, Swan Care Home

Opposite, the entrance of the farm gives glimpse views of outbuildings, fields beyond and the hall. The large Edwardian hall surrounded by dense planting, gives significant sense of status and enclosure. Any incremental erosion of this setting should be strongly resisted. The strong boundary, open space and historic setting of the hall make a significant contribution to the conservation area. In the farm complex, the long black weatherboarded range is important to the rural character, but the buildings at the rear are modern and of no significance.

Adjacent to the care home, there is a drop in the scale of buildings and these are now matched on the east side of the road by development. Buildings are small scale, of traditional character, with narrow spans and shallow roof pitch, but with unsympathetic alterations in the use of concrete pantiles and wood stained windows. Lime Tree Cottage has a better survival of historic windows and also the quirky addition of shutters, possibly a Victorian feature. This has a flimsy single storey shop attachment and a yard, enclosed by a black weatherboard and pantile outbuilding gable onto the road. This marks the proximity to the countryside. The uninterrupted sweep of the pantile roof is a distinct feature on the road view to the south.

Two contrasting developments from the twentieth century face each other. On the west side, there is attempt to use a more Modern language while respecting the small scale of the buildings in the area. Small units, articulated by jetties and a staggered building line, with low pitched roofs hidden by parapets, combine weatherboard and render. Such a venture relies on quality of detail and material, but here the architectural affect is spoiled by the crass detailing of uPVC windows and doors, in a bland concrete frontage and lack of variation in the box like units; the set back from the building line on either side is not successful. On the East side, the brick bungalow has a more self-effacing character, being set back and with a large expanse of roof, but its standard detail makes it characterless. If there is an opportunity for redevelopment based more on local character this could be a significant enhancement, but even to replace the front brick wall with a softer treatment would be an improvement.

A curve in the road provides another framed view of a vernacular cottage (The Olde House) this time set behind a garden and low brick wall. The streetscape is damaged by too wide a gap between the modern units and Cinamon Cottage; a physical boundary between the two would help break this up. Cinamon is a neat Victorian brick cottage, spoilt by uPVC windows. The Pinnacle is modern but more Edwardian in character and scale, and it sits well in this location with front planting softening the harshness of modern detail.

The curve again provides a transition of development, with a strong green edge on both sides of the road, which opens out to the junction with Brook Road. Northbrook is a characterless modern house that follows the line of development along Brook Road, but provides the terminating view into Tillingham from the North. The fire tower and the arts and crafts character of 1 and 3 Brook Road provide better visual interest on this approach.

The junction with Brook Road is very open with a cottage garden leading back to 2 and 4 Brook Road and a motley collection of outbuildings. There are good open views to countryside. Beyond the junction, the road is defined by strong hedged boundaries on either side, with a sense of open space beyond. On the west side are glimpses of garden and a high status house, The Limes, 2½ storeys, of polite architectural design with a slate roof and dormers, and extensive lands. On the east side, a long garden leads up to a cluster of vernacular cottages which marks the entrance to the village. Little Savages is a thatched, weatherboarded 1½ storey cottage fronting the road. Stow Cottage, of clay plain tile and weatherboard, is set further back with its gable to the road, behind a picket fence.

6.4. Brook Road

Brook Road is characterised by low density development leading quickly out to the countryside, with green open spaces and hedged boundaries providing the main visual features. This character should be maintained. Modern housing is set well back to maintain this green view. On the north side, The Manse provides historic character with weatherboard, plain tile roof and sash windows. Nos. 2 and 4 are particularly exposed in views from North Street, set behind a large cottage garden with ramshackle outbuildings. Despite unsympathetic window alterations, these form an attractive group. On the south side, The Arts and Crafts character of nos. 1 and 3 (with tile-hung elevations) makes a distinct entrance into the conservation area. The Old Cottage and its walled garden is again a significant landmark, terminating the view east into the conservation area (fig.30).



Fig. 30, Old Cottage, North Street

6.5. South Street

South Street is notably different from other parts of the village. It has much more activity, pedestrian, commercial and vehicular. There is great variety in its built form, with a mixture of building types, positions and scale. The mixture in building heights is an important aspect of the townscape, low bungalows are relatively frequent, although some have been lost through redevelopment schemes. Although there is great variety, this is broken up by areas of relative unity with groups of red brick late nineteenth century terraces, groups of detached weather boarded villas and low scale bungalows. The density markedly reduces south of Casey Lane away from The Square; the open gardens and soft planting play a fundamental role in this.

The variety is greatest at the northern end. The tight grain on the East side contrasts with the set back houses between the school and Vicarage Lane, whose landscaped gardens and low brick wall form an attractive break in the built form.

The view up South Street is stopped by the dense mature planting of the church yard and the grounds of the hall. The church tower forms a prominent landmark when approaching The Square and in long views of the village.

6.5.1. South Street – Northern End (No's 1 – 41 odd, Cap and Feathers to Chapel Lane even)

The Cap and Feathers is an important landmark on the corner of Vicarage Lane. Its double pile gabled form conceals its sizable plan, with the massive chimney stacks and sash windows helping to balance its elongated form. It forms an enclosed courtyard with its former stable block and 10A to the South. This courtyard is a pleasing static space with a cobbled surface. Painted white weatherboard and handmade plain tiled roofs give a strong unifying element to this group and within the broader townscape.

The post office building is slightly set back, with the roof parallel to the road, providing contrast with the strong gables of the Cap and Feathers, but unity with 12 and 10a, both of similar form.

The seventeenth century cottages Nos.1-5 and 7-9 are an attractive group of vernacular buildings. No.1 is of two storeys and Nos.3-5 of 1½ storeys with gambrel roof, its nineteenth century red brick re-fronting giving a distinct contrast in hierarchy with the black weatherboarding to the sides. Nos.7 and 9 are set back, of very low two storeys with a steep plain tiled gabled roof and white painted weatherboard to the walls. The hedge and estate railing to the front boundary give important townscape enclosure. The openness of 7 and no.9's plot marks a break in the run of urban form from The Square. The trees behind form an important back drop.

The Manse bungalow is set back and of little architectural interest, but its low key form adds to the variety in South Street. The tall front hedge is more important. The land to the rear has potential for development, but any proposals should remain low key, subservient to the South Street frontage, and maintain a degree of space, open views and the mature planting.

Quineys is set on the pavement edge with a gambrel roof gable onto the road. With the adjacent mid nineteenth century terrace (c.1863) and quirky eighteenth century shop also at 90°, they form a U-plan courtyard giving a visual widening in the street, although the parking detracts from the appearance as do the unfortunate replacement windows to the terrace. Three late nineteenth century terraces (19-23) of red brick and slate roofs are built up to the pavement edge, although again replacement windows seriously damage their appearance.

No.25 is a late twentieth century house of poor design and materials, and its open driveway leaves a wide gap in the street frontage. 27 and 29, a substantial (in the local context) semi detached villa of the late nineteenth century, serves as a good comparison of inappropriate alteration: this attractive building is seriously harmed by the pebbledash render, plastic windows and concrete roof tiles on no.29. No.31 is a modern house, set back behind screen planting which helps to conceal its ugliness, although further boundary improvements would help. No.35 is set further forward, with railings in front. This forms an important group with 37 and 41, all being of white painted weatherboard and hipped slate roofs.

No.16 is a former commercial building, which has been unsympathetically altered (in the guise of the wicked plastic window!). The open plot adjacent is one of the few places for potential infill development. The Hollies, red brick with feature bay and timber sash windows forms part of a mixed group of incredible variety. Adjacent is the old forge, a nineteenth century single storey building at 90° to the road. Wheelwrights bungalow is out of character with the area except for its scale. Southwards to the chapel, the houses of red brick with buff brick detailing form a tight urban group. The mid Victorian independent chapel is an important landmark; its fine brick detailing, with dominant gable make an irreplaceable contribution to the street scene. The red brick wall encloses the front. The chapel and view up South Street is relatively unchanged since the early twentieth century (see fig. 31).



Fig. 31, South Street C.1910

6.5.2. South Street – Southern End (No's 37-71 odd, 32-78 even)

South of Chapel Lane on the west side and number 37 on the east side, there is lower density of development, with significant breathing space separating most buildings.

No.37 marks the beginning (Southwards) of late nineteenth century adornment, namely decorative ridge tiles. The solid boarded fence to the front is poor. The large open garden with soft landscaping opens the street up giving an important sense of open rural character. Any infill should be strongly resisted. No.41 is a picturesque mid nineteenth century weather boarded house sitting in an open plot, which forms an important visual stop from Chapel Lane (see fig. 35). No.43 is a reasonable arts and crafts style bungalow, but the cramped pyramidal garage clashes with the form of the bungalow and detracts from this part of the conservation area.

No.49 is a small late nineteenth century weather boarded bungalow, which is of exceptional importance, like 23 North Street, and must be retained at all cost. It makes a significant contribution to the historic low key, low density housing in South Street. No.51 is set back in an open garden, where a hedged boundary would be a significant improvement. 55 and 57 are red brick with buff brick detailing, of the late nineteenth century. These form a pleasant group with the red brick 59 of c.1906, although unfortunately window and door replacements have begun to detract from their appearance.

The doctor's surgery is a low building, which manages to conceal its size convincingly. However its poor materials and detailing, combined with open concrete forecourt seriously harm the appearance of the conservation area. By contrast the visual delight of the Chapel of the Peculiar People makes an impressive contribution (fig. 32).

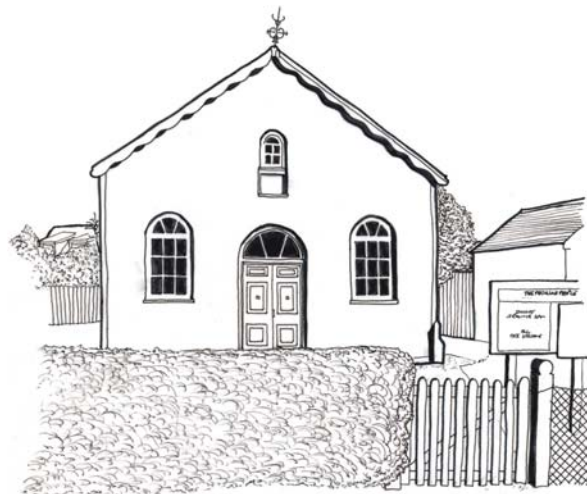


Fig. 32 The chapel of the Peculiar People, South Street

Set forward of the chapel, The Corn Mill is close to the roads edge; of 2 ½ storeys, it is one of the tallest building in South Street and marks the latter part of the nineteenth century expansion. It is visible from long views across the fields from Grange Road. This building should remain as a landmark and does not serve as precedent for large scale or tall development. Its replacement windows and roof covering are poor. No.67 the low bungalow gives contrast to The Corn Mill and the break in plots gives good views out into the fields, an important characteristic of Tillingham. The modern bungalows which front the conservation area boundary further are low scale, low density with indifferent boundaries; the hedges at Pabaria make the most significant contribution.

On the West side there is a reduction in density from Chapel Lane south. 32/34 is a former shop (see fig. 33) which has been altered. Chapel House, the former chapel with gable to the street, of single storey with slate roof, makes an important contribution to variety (fig. 34). The adjacent late nineteenth century red brick shop has a large opening sash window shop front of interest.



Fig. 33, South Street C.1910

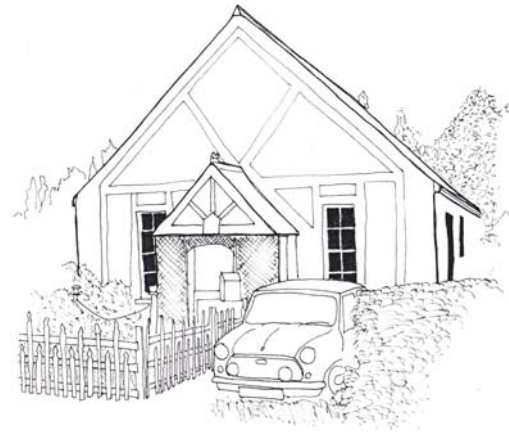


Fig. 34, Chapel House, South Street

The new development on the corner of Marlborough Avenue is too bulky and too tightly packed, which undermines this part of the conservation area, although its materials and detailing relate to its context.

Nos. 46, 48 and 50 are bungalows on a regular building line parallel to the road. 46 is red brick, with slate roof, dated c. 1925 with a timber picket fence. 48, Gypsy Lodge, c. 1913 is also red brick and slate, but with a poor quality brick boundary wall. 50 is a late twentieth century bungalow of weatherboard, but its bulky porch beaks down the simple form. This group of bungalows brings an important area of relative unity within the townscape which is a defining characteristic of South Street.

Tight up to the pavement edge the eighteenth century cottages 52/54 make a significant contribution to the townscape. Set in a large open plot with an outbuilding, their open character must be retained. No.56 dates from the nineteenth century but has been heavily altered, with render, stained joinery, poor boundary fence and an open concrete parking area. No.58 is a new building of reasonable design. The housing behind is far too bulky, poorly detailed and informally laid out and seriously harms the setting of the conservation area.

Swallows Reach is too cramped on its site with the garage block and rear wing. Poor red brick is used for all the buildings and the harsh boundary wall. Soft planting would help improve its frontage.

Nos.74-78 is a late nineteenth century terrace of red brick with slate roof, shallow plan, typical of the Victorian expansion of Tillingham. Similar examples are found at 11-17 Chapel Lane, 37 North Street and 16-20 Marsh Road. The hedged boundary at 80, although beyond the conservation area makes a positive contribution to its setting.

6.6. Marlborough Avenue

Marlborough Avenue runs West off of South Street, it's a late twentieth century development of housing of no particular interest. The beginning of the road is included by virtue of the conservation area boundary running along the rear of the South Street properties. The loose gravel road surface, hedged boundaries masking set back houses and mature trees at the end are all important features which are positive to the conservation area.

6.7. Chapel Lane

Chapel Lane runs West off of South Street. It was added in the mid-nineteenth century. The narrow lane with loose gravel surfacing is appropriate for this side road and makes an important contribution to the character of the lane (see fig. 39). Hard resurfacing should be avoided. Loose chippings are spilt out onto South Street- a rumble strip of cobbles could be added to the back edge of the pavement to help prevent this. The low density, mixture of building heights, set back building line and soft landscaping and road surfacing help define the character of the lane. Although to the North side and Western end the buildings are predominantly of the latter twentieth century and make little contribution.

The view east is closed by 40 South Street (see fig. 35) a symmetrical mid nineteenth century house of white painted weatherboard and a slate hipped roof. The view west is out into open fields, such glimpse views are frequent within the village and should be retained unimpeded.



Fig 35, View into South Street

Nos.10 and 12 are of no interest and it is proposed to delete them from the conservation area; see recommendations. 1 and 5 are a semi detached weather boarded and slate roof pair, with margin light timber sash windows. Their scale, position, materials, detailing and boundary treatments are an important part of the street scene and must be retained.

Number 9 was formerly the Primitive Methodist chapel and has subsequently been converted to a house. Its scale and materials make an important group with 1 and 5 and it is proposed to extend the conservation area boundary to include it (see recommendations). The hedged boundaries and tree planting to the fronts of the modern houses make an important contribution to the lane.

6.8. Vicarage Lane

The entrance off of South Street is attractively framed by the Cap and Feathers to the South side and the low brick boundary wall of 6 South Street to the North side, allowing long views West to the fields. The density is low and the openness and rural surroundings a clear defining characteristic.

2 and 4 Vicarage Lane is a late nineteenth century pair, with plain tile hanging, similar to 2 and 4 South Street and 1 and 3 Brook Road. These form an important group and unifying element within the broader townscape.

The change in boundary from brick to hedges signifies an important transition to the perimeter of the village, into the semi-rural fringe. This is reinforced by the views up Vicarage Lane (West) and across the playing fields and farmland. The fenced boundary to the school yard, although beyond the present conservation area boundary lacks visual enclosure and detracts from the area (fig. 36).



Fig. 36, Vicarage Lane

The outbuildings to the rear of Cap and Feathers, although run down and lacking maintenance are an important part of the street scene and warrant retention and sensitive repair. Low density and extensive planting and soft landscaping, with open views are an important characteristic of Vicarage Lane.

6.9. Casey Lane

Casey lane is narrow and has a loose pea shingle surface. The buildings and boundary fences form a tight, continuous enclosure making the space dynamic, but pedestrian friendly (fig. 37). Low level planting helps to soften the harshness of the built forms and the large willow tree on the Birch Gardens green closes the view East. The primary importance of the buildings is their low scale, commonly of low outbuildings and their enclosure of the boundaries. Weatherboard, red brick and render are present, but most of the buildings have been significantly altered.



Fig. 37, Casey Lane

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Proposed Boundary Changes

The boundary of the conservation area has been unchanged since the first designation in 1969, since which there have been some significant changes in the recognition of later buildings and the importance of the spaces between buildings. There are also a number of anomalies created due to new development since designation which has split land ownership in some cases. It is generally desirable to define boundaries on significant features 'on the ground' and use existing property boundaries, rather than dissecting buildings or land ownership. The revised conservation area boundary is proposed (fig. 41);

1. At the rear of The Olde House, North Street the conservation area follows the development boundary. This would more logically follow the property boundary of 40 North Street, as shown.
2. Chancel Close, to the south east of the church yard has been developed on the site of an orchard following the original designation. This group of semi detached bungalows is of no special interest and does not relate to the character of the conservation area or any historic field boundaries. It is therefore proposed to omit this part and follow the line of the church yard and the rear boundaries of The Square.
3. 11 South Street is within the conservation area, but the majority of its curtilage is excluded. It is proposed to include this area to the rear of the Mill Close housing boundaries.
4. The housing development within Birch road renders the present boundary intangible, cutting through a building which is part of the non-descript modern development. The boundary at this point does follow a nineteenth century field boundary, which has been obliterated, but it is not part of the earlier field system. It is proposed to follow the line of the rear of the South Street property boundaries.
5. The new house to the rear of the Chapel of the Peculiar People, South Street is partly within the conservation area. This building or plot is not of special significance so it is proposed to redefine the boundary to exclude this area.
6. The track between 67 and Whistling Wings, South Street currently abuts the conservation area boundary. This opening in the built development gives important views out in the fields, which is a strong part of the character of South Street (fig. 38).



Fig. 38, View out to the fields, adjacent 67 South Street

7. The boundary to the rear of the 78 South Street, currently bulges out into the garden of 80 for no apparent reason. It is proposed to follow the property boundary of no.78.
8. The garage block to the side of 4 Marlborough was constructed post designation and it is dissected by the boundary. It is proposed that this is omitted and the property boundary followed.
9. 10 and 12 Chapel Lane have been built since designation and do not warrant inclusion. However, the mid nineteenth century independent Methodist chapel (number 9) and the late nineteenth century brick terrace (numbers 11-17) make a significant contribution to the street scene and are typical of the buildings within the conservation area so should be included (although the latter has been altered to an unfortunate extent).



Fig. 39, Chapel Lane

10. Vicarage Lane and the playing field are the largest recommended inclusions. The school playground and the playing fields form an important part of the character of this part of the conservation area as open space on the edge of the settlement, in stark contrast to the urban built form of The Square and South Street. There are a number of good trees which would also gain added protection. Vicarage Lane includes the early twentieth century play group building (fig.40), important for its added variety to the building types and materials and for the vitality of the area. Further important open space is included to the South of Vicarage Lane. The cricket pavilion, 3 Vicarage Lane and the early nineteenth century Vicarage are all significant buildings. The open space of the school playground, playing field, land between the playgroup hall and vicarage and farmland beyond are all important green spaces on the edge of the conservation area where new or intensification of development should be resisted. The play group hall and playing field facilities also make a significant contribution to the vitality and amenity of the conservation area and should be retained and enhanced.



Fig. 40, The play group building, Vicarage Lane

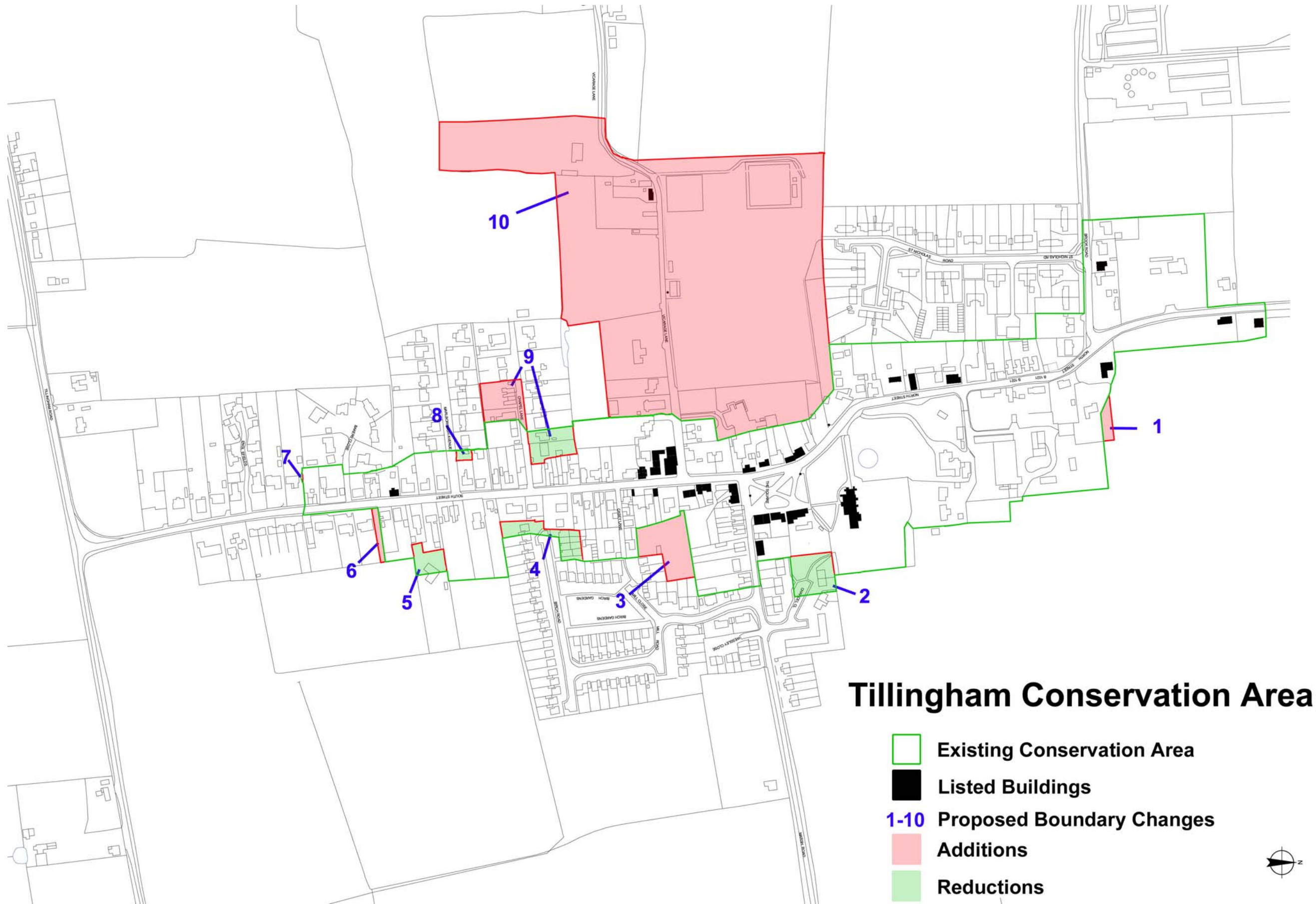


Fig. 41, Proposed boundary changes

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7.2. Additional Planning Controls

The major threat to conservation area character is gradual erosion by minor changes, most of which do not currently require planning permission. Many of these objectives could be achieved in less damaging ways, if proper care and thought can be given, which is the benefit of the planning process.

The local planning authority can bring many of the changes within the remit of the planning system, with the use of Article 4(2) controls. Changes and alterations have begun to take place within the conservation area to a damaging extent; traditional details, windows types, doors, materials, boundary treatments all play an important role in defining the character of the area. It is proposed that article 4(2) directions are sought to control the following works within the conservation area:

Alteration of a Dwelling house affecting windows, doors or other openings to the front and side elevations including the insertion of dormer or other windows in the roofs and the change of roof materials.

The application of any form of cladding or rendering to the external walls of the front and side elevations.

The erection or construction of a porch outside the front or side door of a dwelling house.

The erection or construction of any fences, walls, gates or other forms of enclosure to the front or sides of a dwelling house.

The construction within the curtilage of a dwelling house of a vehicle hard standing incidental to the dwelling house. The formation of an access to a dwelling house from an unclassified road.

The painting of the exterior of any wall of a dwelling house with a different colour.

Where additional planning controls are imposed it is important to make it clear to residents that existing listed building controls are far more stringent, so that there is no misunderstandings regarding the control of works.

7.3. Enhancements

An important part of the role of conservation area designation is the duty to enhance, not only preserve. There are a number of opportunities to reinforce the character and improve the appearance of the conservation area, which are set out below.

1. The Square

The major detraction from The Square is the extent of hard standing and the parked cars. Clearly car parking was not a concern within The Square until the twentieth century, and now the reliance on the motorcar is such that it would not be feasible or desirable to completely restore The Square to a car-free state.

It is, however, proposed to substantially reduce the parking in The Square (fig.42), with the parking relocated in the current car park in North Street adjacent to the playing fields, which is currently underused at times. Improved, high quality sign posting and reduction of parking in The Square, combined with better security should improve its use. It may be possible to extend the car park further, although this would mean some loss of open views to and from the playing fields, but the overall benefit to the character and appearance to The Square outweighs this loss.



Fig. 42, Pedestrianisation of The Square

2. North Street Car Park and bottle banks

At present the North Street car park is an unenclosed element of the streetscape, with the untidy recycling station and public toilets. It is proposed that the car park is more clearly signposted, the car park extended as 1 above and the some railings added to enclose the North Street side, with the recycling bins rationalised and the toilet block cosmetically remodelled (fig. 43), e.g. weatherboard cladding.

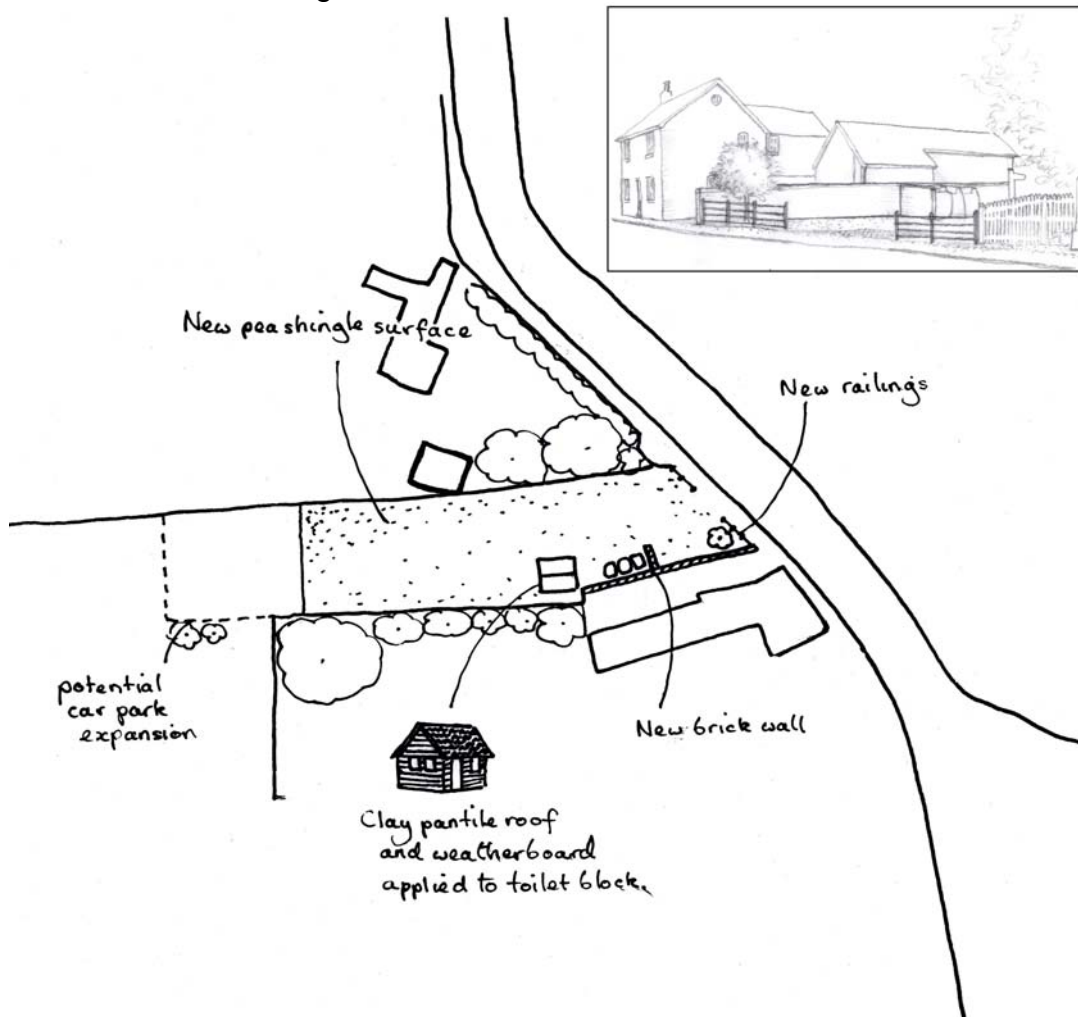


Fig. 43, Improvements to the North Street car park entrance

3. Pavements

The existing hot bonded pea shingle pavements in South Street and North Street make a significant contribution to the character of the area. The finish is particularly appropriate for this semi-rural village. It is proposed that existing tarmac and concrete paving is resurfaced with either hot bonded pea shingle or resin bonded shingle, which may be longer lasting. Some areas retain natural stone kerbs, but there are large areas of ugly concrete kerbing, which should be replaced with granite kerb stones. Deviation from standard road markings is allowed in environmentally sensitive areas; the use of narrow yellow lines within the conservation area would be a significant enhancement.

4. Boundary Treatments

Boundary treatments play an important role in the enclosure of the street edge within the conservation area. Painted timber fences and brick walls are particularly prevalent. New boundary treatments would be beneficial at a number of sites where streetscape enclosure is lacking or poor quality fences, walls or coniferous hedges are present. An example of such an improvement is shown in North Street (fig 44).



Fig. 44, Boundary improvements in North Street

5. Sites With Development / Redevelopment Potential

There are few sites with development potential within the conservation area. Infill has taken place, particularly through the second half of the twentieth century, using up most of the free plots. The open space, including gardens are an important part of the character of the area and further infill should be avoided. There is scope for redevelopment in sites which comprise of negative buildings (see fig.22) however care should be taken to ensure siting, scale, detailing and materials are appropriate for the context. There is scope for new development at the rear of the Manse and adjacent to the Post Office both in South Street.

6. Relocation of services below ground

Above ground electricity and telephone cables and associated poles make a considerable intrusion into the conservation area. They are a particular problem in North Street, South Street, Chapel Lane and Marsh Road. Their relocation below ground should be encouraged.

8. CONCLUSION

Tillingham is a significant village, rural in character, with attractive buildings and good townscape. Many of the buildings are of architectural and/or historic interest in their own right, but the combination of built form, open spaces, soft planting and trees help to define the character of Tillingham.

The village remains strikingly picturesque. This is in part due to its relatively unaltered state, particularly in The Square, which is evocative of a past era.

Some new development has been successfully integrated in the village, such as 5 North Street, whose design, scale, siting and orientation add to the variety and almost fits seamlessly into the area. In contrast, the Bakery Close development directly adjacent to the conservation area in South Street is overly bulky and too complex in form and layout.

The remote location has helped shape the settlement and to an extent protects it from pressures for redevelopment and alteration. However, pressures for residential development and alterations to existing building, such as replacement windows, have begun to seriously harm the character of the conservation area. The introduction of additional planning controls should allow greater care and scrutiny over such changes.

The enhancement recommendations provide an opportunity to reinforce the special character of the area. The revised boundaries will make a more logical and definable conservation area, which is altered to take into account the current village layout and character.

The character appraisal and review should help to allow the local planning authority, the highway authority, local residents, developers and other organisations to make informed decisions about changes affecting the conservation area and preserve its special character for future generations.

9. APPENDIX

9.1. Policy Content Maldon District (Draft 2003) Replacement Local Plan

Tillingham is situated in the Coastal Zone (Policy M/CC/10) and the Dengie Marsh Special Landscapes Area (M/CC/6). The District Councils general Conservation Area Policies are as follows :- M/BE/17 (Protection) M/BE/16 (Advertisements) M/BE/18 (Demolition) M/BE/19 (Development) M/BE/27 (Satellite dishes). Protection for Listed Buildings is contained in :- M/BE/20 (Demolition) M/BE/21 (Change of Use) M/BE/22 (Curtilage) M/BE/16 (Advertisements) M/BE/27 (Satellite dishes) Archaeological sites in Historic Towns are subject to M/BE/23 (Protection).

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10. INDEX TO STREETS

Bradwell Road	1
Brook Road	1, 25
Casey Lane	1, 32
Chancel Close	33
Chapel Lane	1, 30, 34
Marsh Road	1, 21
Marlborough Avenue	1, 30, 34
North Street	1, 5, 21-24, 33, 38, 40
South Street	1, 5, 26-29, 33, 34, 40
The Square	1, 5, 17, 19, 20, 38
Vicarage Avenue	1, 31, 34

