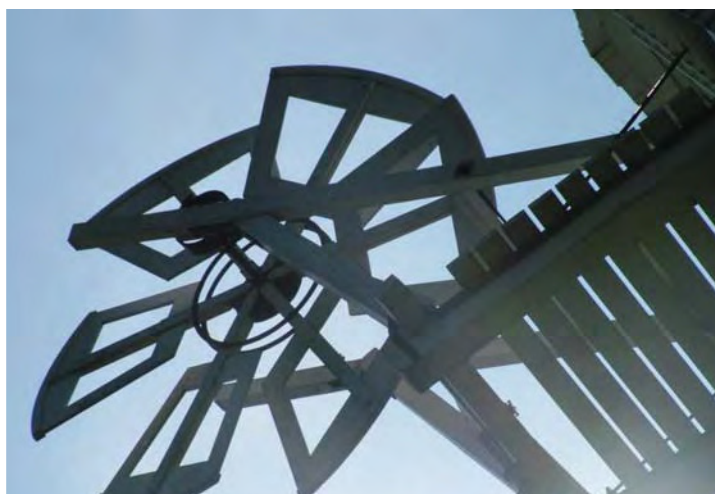


Local Development Framework  
Evidence Base

Rayleigh Conservation Area  
Appraisal and Management Plan



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

Contributions to this document were made by the following officers in the Essex County Council Historic Buildings Section:

David Andrews BA, IHBC  
Robin Carpenter  
Corrie Newell

With document production by Cathryn Thaiss and Rochford District Council

The Council carried out public consultation on a draft version of this document from the beginning of May until 16<sup>th</sup> June 2006. Publicity included press releases, information on display at the Council Offices in Rayleigh and Rochford, as well as headline information on the Council's website. The final appraisal has been prepared having regard to the results of this consultation exercise.

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Under S.71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the local planning authority has a duty from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.

Under S.39 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the local planning authority has a duty, when exercising its functions, to contribute towards achieving sustainable development.

Under S.40 of the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006, the local planning authority has a duty, when exercising its functions, to conserve biodiversity.



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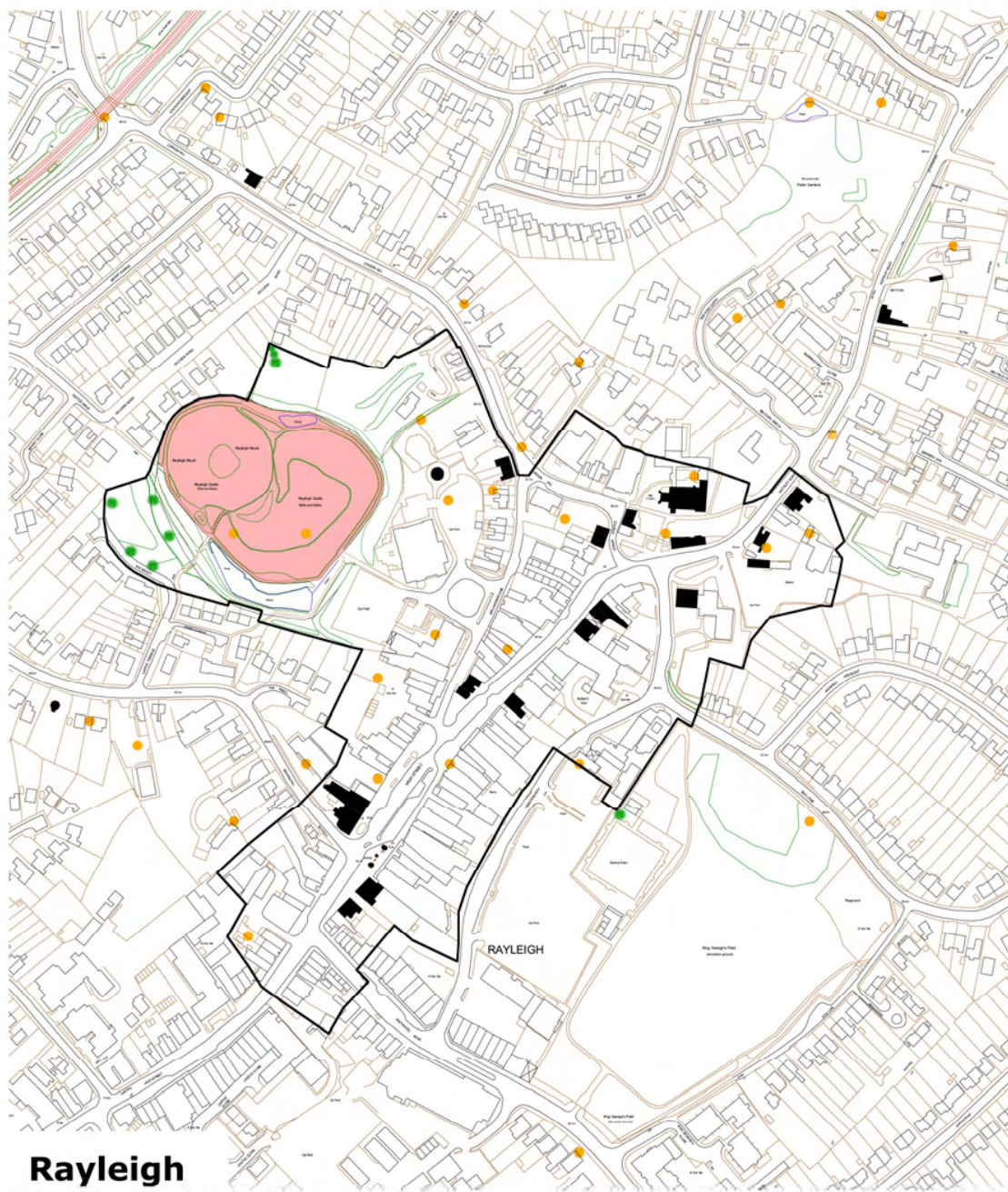


## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Rayleigh is a bustling hilltop town with a population of about 30,000 in the Rochford District of south-east Essex. Like many small market towns, its historic core is little more than a single street. Rayleigh owes its original importance to the Norman earthwork castle on a spur to one side of the High Street.
- 1.2 The conservation area (*Fig. 1*) covers the historic centre of the village, comprising Holy Trinity Church, the High Street, Church Street, Bellingham Lane, the Mount or motte and bailey castle, and adjoining roads. It also includes part of Websters Way, a modern road forming a back lane and service road parallel to the High Street.
- 1.3 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). Government Planning policy Guidance 15, Planning and the Historic Environment, emphasises that conservation areas are not just about the quality of individual buildings, but also 'the historic layout of property boundaries and thoroughfares; on a particular "mix" of uses; on characteristic materials; on appropriate scaling and detailing of contemporary buildings; on the quality of advertisements, shop fronts, street furniture and hard and soft surfaces; on vistas along streets and between buildings; and on the extent to which traffic intrudes and limits pedestrian use of space between buildings' (para. 4.2).

## **2. CHARACTER STATEMENT**

- 2.1 Rayleigh is a traditional market town which was established at the gates of a Norman castle, the market function being accommodated in its exceptionally wide High Street, which is presided over at one end by the church. Castle and church are well preserved features of the conservation area. The almost complete redevelopment of the High Street in the second half of the 20th century has ensured its success as a shopping centre but left it with few traditional buildings, though the town's original framework and structure remain legible today. Service areas to the rear of the High Street and Bellingham Lane, and hard standings used for car parking, form unattractive townscape which would benefit from improvement.



## Rayleigh

### Conservation Area Designation Map

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Scheduled Ancient Monument |  Essex Historic Environment Record Sites        |
|  Listed building            |  Tree Preservation Order (approximate location) |
|  Conservation Area          |  |

Fig. 1 Rayleigh town centre, designation map showing conservation area boundary, the scheduled ancient monument, listed buildings, and tree preservation orders.

### **3. STATUTORY PROTECTION WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA (Fig. 1)**

- 3.1 The conservation area in Rayleigh was designated in November 1969. Its boundaries have since been revised to exclude the large car park in Websters Way and the adjacent King George's field .
- 3.2 There are 24 listed buildings in the conservation area, including a gravestone, a horse trough, a pump and the Martyrs' Memorial.
- 3.3 The Mount is a scheduled ancient monument protected under the 1979 Ancient Monuments Act.
- 3.4 There are no public rights of way indicated on the Definitive Map of footpaths in Essex.
- 3.5 A small number of trees on the Mount are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. The trees within the conservation area enjoy protection inasmuch as anyone within a conservation area carrying out works to a tree must give written notification to the local planning department at least six weeks beforehand.

### **4. PLANNING POLICIES**

- 4.1 Rochford District Replacement Local Plan was issued in its second deposit draft form in May 2004 and is expected to be adopted in 2006. Its objectives include the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environments, and the encouragement of good design. Conserving and enhancing the District's heritage, particularly in the centres of Rayleigh and Rochford, is identified as a priority in the context of the Thames Gateway. Attention is drawn to significant improvements in Rayleigh town carried out in recent years.
- 4.2 In the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan, Rayleigh is classed as a Principal Town Centre, albeit lacking a major food superstore.
- 4.3 In planning documents, Rayleigh has long been identified as an important shopping centre. Since at least 1967, it was classified as a subsidiary shopping area to Southend, to service the satellite settlements and villages, traffic congestion being considered its main problem.<sup>1</sup> In the 1970s, this was relieved to some degree by the introduction of a one-way system, despite local opposition. Planning documents of this period tried to observe the principle of not lengthening the High Street shopping area, to keep the retail function compact.<sup>2</sup> The Rochford District Local Plan First Review adopted in 1995 recognised Rayleigh as the principal town in the District, with the main shopping and commercial areas, a role which the Plan is designed to preserve. Detailed plan policies were designed to maintain the town centres as lively and successful shopping centres, with good townscape and car parking facilities,

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<sup>1</sup> *Review County Development Plan and the Statement of Principles*

<sup>2</sup> *South Essex Aspect Report, C3 shopping issues.*

and elements of business and residential use. Whereas in the 1960s and 1970s there had been concern to provide for further expansion of the town's shopping facilities, by the 1990s changes in retail patterns (such as out-of-town shopping centres) had led instead to an emphasis on safeguarding and retaining the existing shops and frontages. Rochford District Council monitors shopping provision in the town centre, and in 2003 carried out a survey of the frontages there<sup>3</sup>.

- 4.4 Aspects or features of the town addressed in the Local Plan First Review included the following:
- The damage done to the High Street in the 1960s, something which the implementation of conservation area policies will ensure is not repeated.
  - The town's serious traffic problems, which have led to the creation of a one-way system (9.7.2).
  - Industrial buildings at the north end of Websters Way which were considered an inappropriate use in this area, ideally to be replaced with buildings with an office use (9.7.4). This has now largely been achieved.
  - The previous conversion of several houses to office use at the north end of Bellingham Lane, a use considered acceptable (9.7.4).
  - The possibility of residential use at the upper storeys of a development with lapsed planning permission for business use at 3-5 London Hill would be encouraged (9.7.5). This site has now been developed with a large block of offices and flats.
- 4.5 The Replacement Local Plan Rayleigh Town Centre Inset Map (A) shows the High Street as a Primary Shopping Frontage Area, with a Secondary Shopping Frontage Area at the north end on the east side. London Hill and the south end of Hockley Road are residential.
- 4.6 The Replacement Local Plan contains a series of policies (BC1-4) formulated to ensure the preservation of the special character of the conservation areas and to promote good design within them. In some ways, these are less comprehensive than those in the previous Local Plan. The list of local buildings of architectural or historic importance (Appendix 8 in the previous Plan) has, for instance, been dropped.

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<sup>3</sup> Rochford District Council, 2003, *Rayleigh town centre. Frontage survey July 2003*, unpublished report

## 5. RAYLEIGH MOUNT

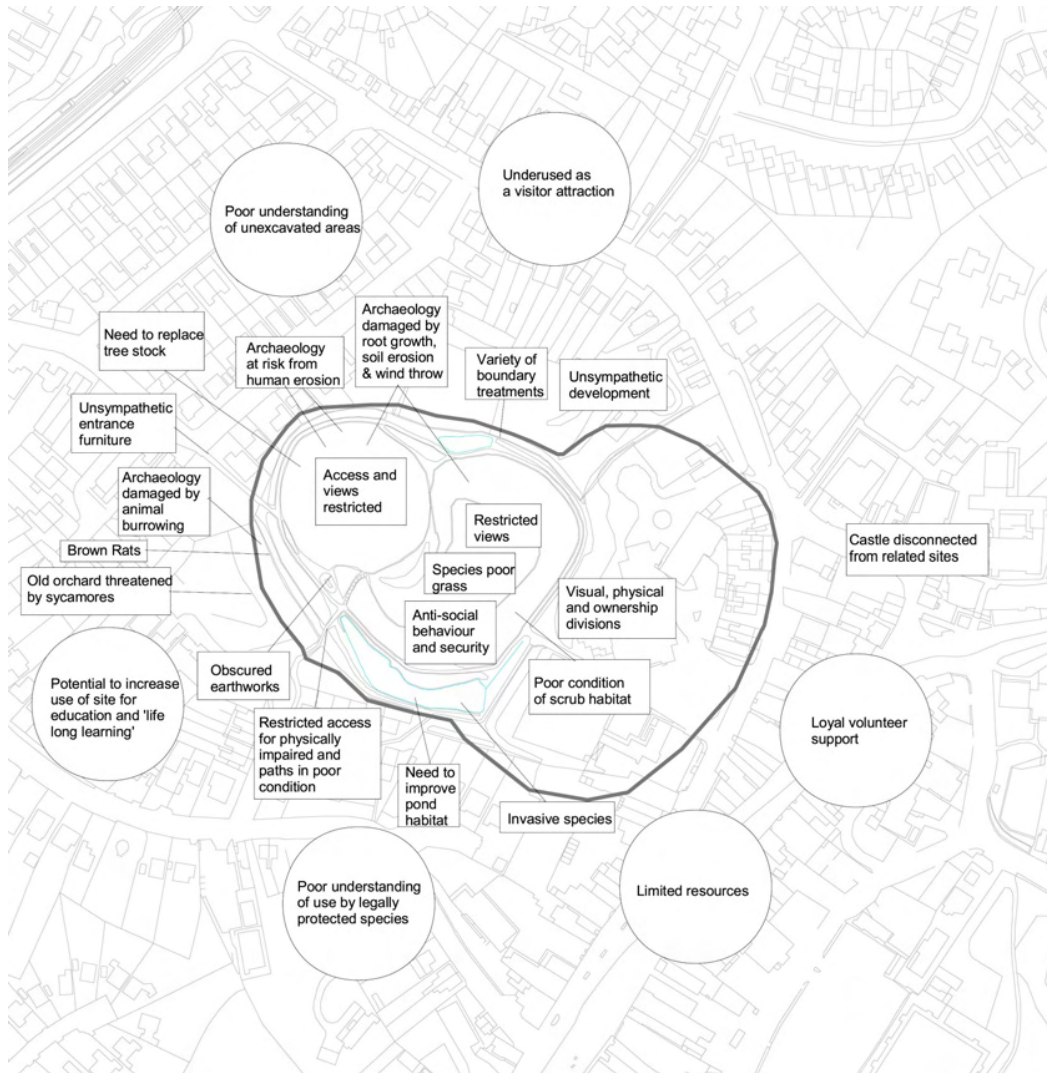
- 5.1 Most of the castle site is owned by the National Trust and managed by the National Trust Rayleigh Mount Local Management Committee. Other parts of the site are owned by Rochford District Council or in private ownership. A Conservation Plan was drawn up in 2005 to inform the management of the site, to develop its interpretation and amenity value, and to help with reviewing the means of access (ECC 2005a). An accompanying document, *Understanding Rayleigh Mount*, draws together information on the history of the castle and the excavations there (ECC 2005b).
- 5.2 The castle (*Fig. 2*) was given to the Trust by the landowner, and also excavator, Mr E.B. Francis in 1923, without an endowment. The castle is an archaeological site of national importance with potential for enlarging our knowledge of early Norman fortifications and their relationship with the settlements that grew up around them.



*Fig. 2 Rayleigh Mount from a print of 1809.*

- 5.3 Today, the Mount is an important landscape feature with a mixture of wooded and grassy areas giving a mix of landscape experiences which change seasonally. It supports Essex Biodiversity Action Plan species, namely song thrush, bats, and possibly great crested newt. There is also a large badger set.
- 5.4 The network of footpaths across the Mount are well used and the site has considerable amenity value, both for recreation and education. It is the only freely accessible motte and bailey castle in Essex. An open air theatre event is held annually in the inner bailey. The Mount has been identified as a key historical attraction in the Thames Gateway Essex Green Grid.

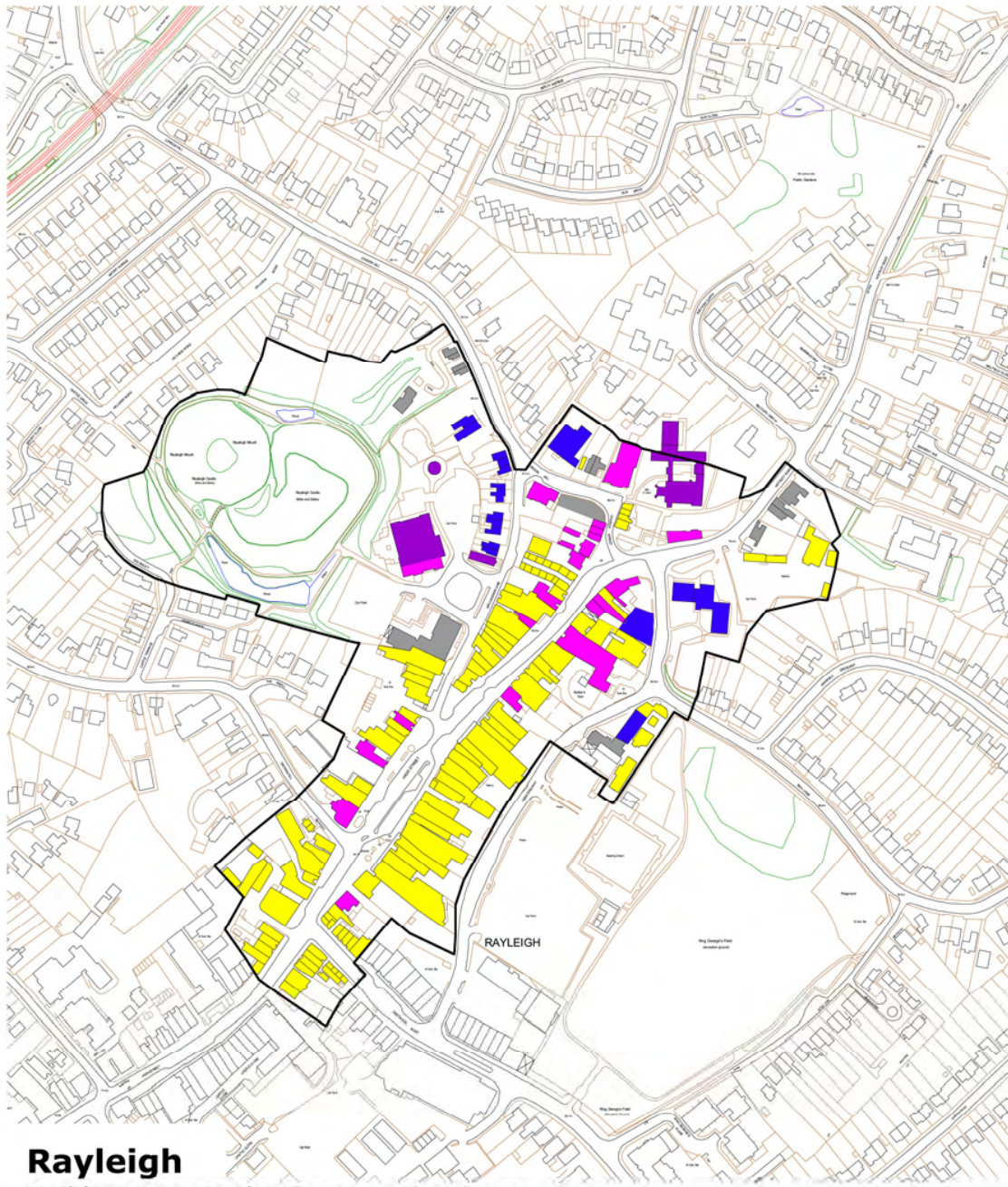
5.5 The Conservation Plan divides the Mount into nine character areas, and identifies 72 policies for its better management and enhancement. Management issues are summarised in *Fig. 3*.



*Fig. 3 Rayleigh Mount, management issues identified in the Conservation Plan (Rayleigh Mount Conservation Plan fig. 13).*

## **6. USES OF BUILDINGS AND SPACES WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA (*Fig. 4*)**

- 6.1 The High Street is almost entirely retail shopping, consistent with the role of the town identified in local and structure plans. At the northern end, there are a greater variety of uses. Houses here have been converted to offices, and it is here that the greatest concentration of pubs and restaurants are to be found. This both contributes to and reflects the rather different character of this northern end of the town.
- 6.2 There is little residential property in the conservation area apart from the edges where it abuts on the suburban development which surrounds the town. An exception is the Homeregal block of sheltered housing in Bellingham Lane.
- 6.3 The only significant public open space in the conservation area is the Mount. The churchyard is crossed by footpaths and is an important green area at the north end of the town.



**Rayleigh**

Building Uses in the Conservation Area

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Residential                   |  Retail            |
|  Food/catering, pubs and clubs |  Public, religious |
|  Business, offices             |   |

Fig. 4 Use of buildings and spaces within the conservation area.



## 7. ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

### Location and landscape setting

- 7.1 Rayleigh occupies a dominant position on a curving north-east to south-west ridge of hills on the west side of the peninsula formed by the river Crouch to the north and the Thames to the south. The hills are formed from the Bagshot Sands and Claygate Beds which overlie the London Clay, and rise to about 70m OD, about 60m above the surrounding countryside. In the past, the hills must have presented a striking contrast to the plain, for they were thickly wooded whilst the low-lying lands of the Southend area were characterised by rectilinear field systems probably of Roman origin. Significant patches of woodland survive today, notably Hockley Woods to the north-east of the town. The wooded hilltop location of the town is reflected in its place name, which means the clearing of the wild goats or deer.
- 7.2 A road from Rochford winds round the top of the ridge and down towards the coast in the direction of Hadleigh. At Rayleigh, it is joined by the east-west road from Billericay which climbs up London Hill. The Billericay road also connects to the north-south A130 route to Chelmsford. On this west side, the edge of the historic town is well defined by this escarpment, though it has not halted modern housing development. To the east, the land slopes away gently and this side of the historic town must have been more adaptable to settlement. The east-west road alignment represented by the road from Billericay is continued further down the High Street where Eastwood Road leads off to Southend-on-Sea. The town stands on what was effectively a staggered cross-roads. Since the construction of the railway along the west side of the curving ridge of hills, Crown Hill has superseded London Hill as the main route into the town from the west, and this cross-roads has become more exactly aligned.

### Historical development<sup>4</sup>

- 7.3 Although the Rayleigh Hills were probably less attractive to prehistoric settlers than the coastal and marshland areas of the surrounding estuaries, flint artefacts have been found at Daws Heath to the south of the town, and evidence for Iron Age settlement at Hambro Hill just to the north. A significant Roman site is also known from the Daws Heath area. A 6th-century Saxon cemetery has recently been found about 1 mile to the north of the town in Rawreth Lane where work on the former Park School site revealed about 150 cremation burials. A settlement to accompany it has yet to be identified.
- 7.4 At the time of Domesday Book (1086), the manor belonged to Swein of Essex, so-called because he, and his father, were sheriffs of the county. He was one of the greatest landowners in Essex, and Domesday Book tells us that he had built his castle at Rayleigh. It is one of the very few castles mentioned in Domesday Book, and one of the oldest recorded castles in England. Rayleigh Mount, as the castle is known today, is thus a historic site of national importance. It is an earthwork castle comprising a motte on a spur projecting from the west side of the ridge, from which it was severed by the ditches of the inner and outer

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<sup>4</sup> For accounts of the history of Rayleigh from an archaeological perspective, see Wallis 1993 and Medlycott 1999. The only general overview of the town's history is Yearsley 2005. Many excellent pamphlets have been published on aspects of its history by Noel Beer, including a bibliography (Beer 2003).

baileys. Five miles from the Thames estuary and three from the Crouch, with spectacular views to the south and west, the castle must have enabled Swein to control the approaches to the Rochford Hundred where he held extensive lands.

- 7.5 Rayleigh was the centre of what was known as an honour or large group of dependent estates. The Honour remained in the possession of Swein's family until 1163 when Henry of Essex, a man of even greater wealth and importance, was accused of cowardice in battle and defeated in trial by combat. The Honour was forfeited to the king. The Crown held it thereafter, apart from a period in the 13th century when it was in the possession of Hubert de Burgh and his descendants.
- 7.6 In the 13th century, historical evidence indicates that the castle had ceased to be a significant as a fortification, but it was nevertheless the site of an important and wealthy manor. By the end of the century, a royal horse stud was established there. This doubtless made use of the park located to the east of the town (Rackham 1986, fig.15). The motte is recorded as being used for pasture, but the outer bailey was probably occupied by the buildings of the royal manor.
- 7.7 Although the castle has been extensively studied and investigated (Helliwell and Macleod 1981), the development of the town and its relationship to the castle is poorly understood. Excavations on the former Regal Cinema site in Bellingham Lane confirmed that this road followed the line of the 12th-century outer bailey ditch (Fig. 5; Milton 1987, Godbold 1997). The ditch seems to have been filled by some time in the 15th century. Boundary ditches were laid out over the infilled ditch, probably in the 16th or 17th century, probably for small fields or crofts like those shown on the 1841 tithe map.

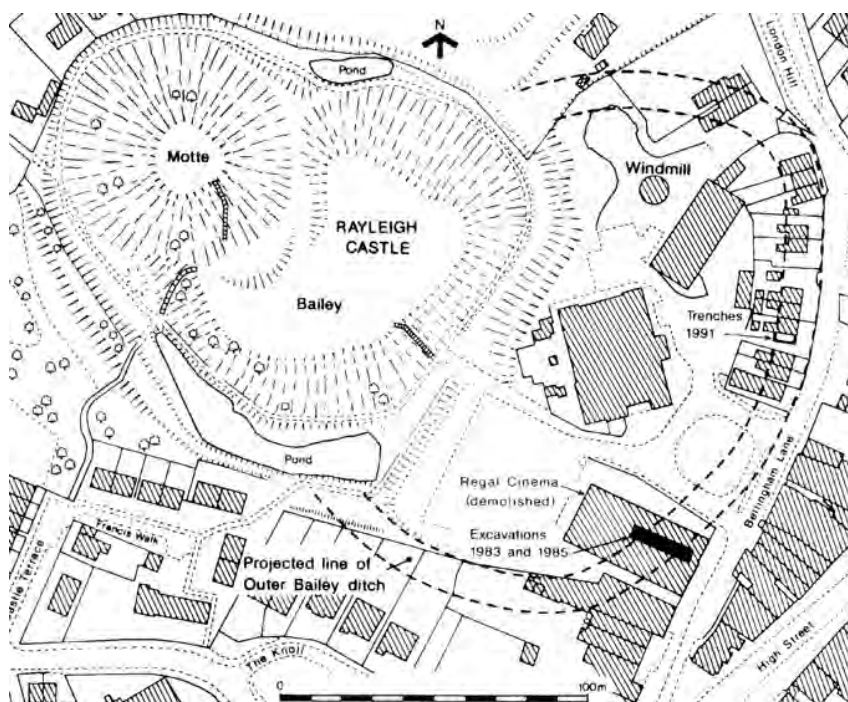


Fig. 5 The line of the outer bailey ditch as found at the edge of Bellingham Lane (from Godbold 1997).

- 7.8 Many towns situated adjacent to castles were deliberately planned settlements established within earthwork defences attached to the castle. Essex examples are Pleshey, Ongar and Castle Hedingham. At Rayleigh, it is very probable that this happened. It is possible that there was an outer town enclosure which ran east from the castle site, across the High Street, north up Webster's Way and round the north side of the church, rejoining the castle in the area of the windmill. There is a slight dip in the middle of the High Street where Bellingham Lane branches from it which could coincide with an old ditch line. Excavation on the site of nos 57-61 High Street identified a ditch in approximately this location (Godbold 1993). A substantial ditch has also been seen on the north side of the churchyard when the new parish centre was built (Brooks 1994).
- 7.9 The present market, held on Wednesday mornings, dates back to before 1181 when it was first recorded in the reign of Henry II. The market was the economic driving force behind the life of the town and also helped to shape its topography. It explains the very broad High Street, which widens out to just over 30m south of the Bellingham Lane junction so that it could accommodate market stalls. Since frontages have always tended to encroach onto the roadway, the High Street could well have been wider still. Part, if not all, the triangle of land between the High Street, Bellingham Lane, and London Hill, represents market infill, or the replacement of temporary stalls by permanent buildings. There were formerly more market infill buildings between the Half Moon public house and the church in Church Street, but these were demolished in the 1930s. Characteristic of such infill are small cramped plots with no land except perhaps tiny yards. Churches were often associated with markets, and it is not uncommon to find them, as at Rayleigh, at one end of the marketplace. The situation is similar, for instance, at Chelmsford, where the cathedral stands at one end of a block of triangular infill in a widened high street. These market related features have contributed significantly to the layout of the town and need to be recognised in the planning process. One item that would have been traded in the marketplace is pottery, as it was manufactured locally. A kiln site has been found off the High Road a little to the south of the town.
- 7.10 A late medieval building, possibly 14th-century, was identified in construction work at the east end of London Hill, representing either development along this road or more likely infill of the triangular marketplace (Peachey 2002). Medieval settlement spread at least as far as the southern end of Hockley Road. Observations made at the time of the construction of an extension to no. 20 noted a late medieval roadside ditch, external stone surface and a rubbish pit, clear evidence of occupation even if no buildings were found (Letch 2005).
- 7.11 The best preserved late medieval secular building in the conservation area is no. 91 High Street, on the east side almost opposite the Crown (Crump 1991). Refurbishment in 1989 revealed a jettied late 15th-century three-bay cross-wing at right angles to the street (*Fig. 6*), and an adjacent 17th-century three-bay building parallel to the street. The cross-wing was probably a shop. These are standard buildings of their time and there must once have been many of them in the High Street. The only other known timber-framed buildings of the 16th century or earlier are the Spread Eagle next to no. 91, nos 9 and 11 (*La Romantica and Squires*) on the east side of the north end of the High Street, and nos 40 and 42a at the south end of the junction with Bellingham Lane.

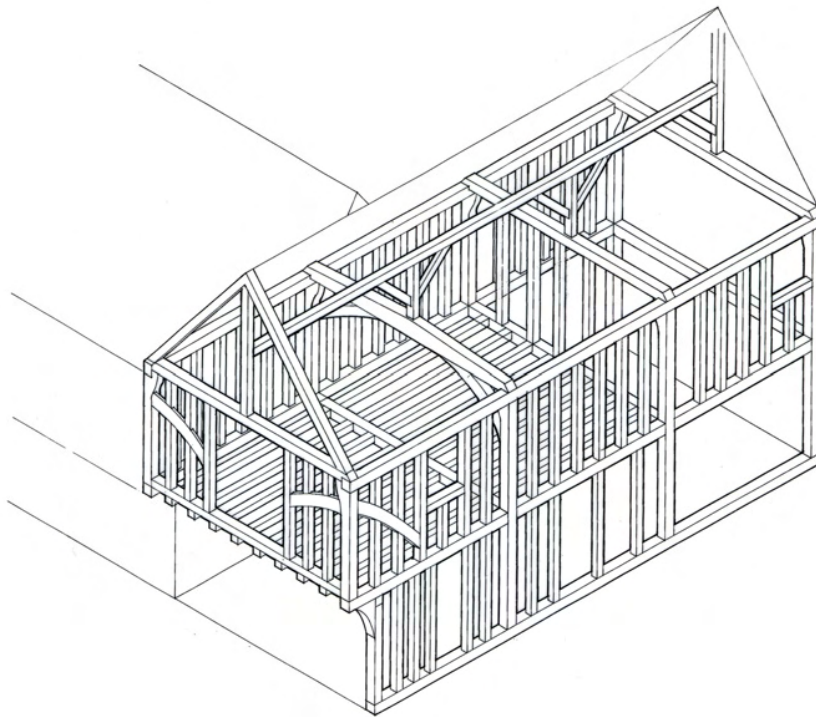


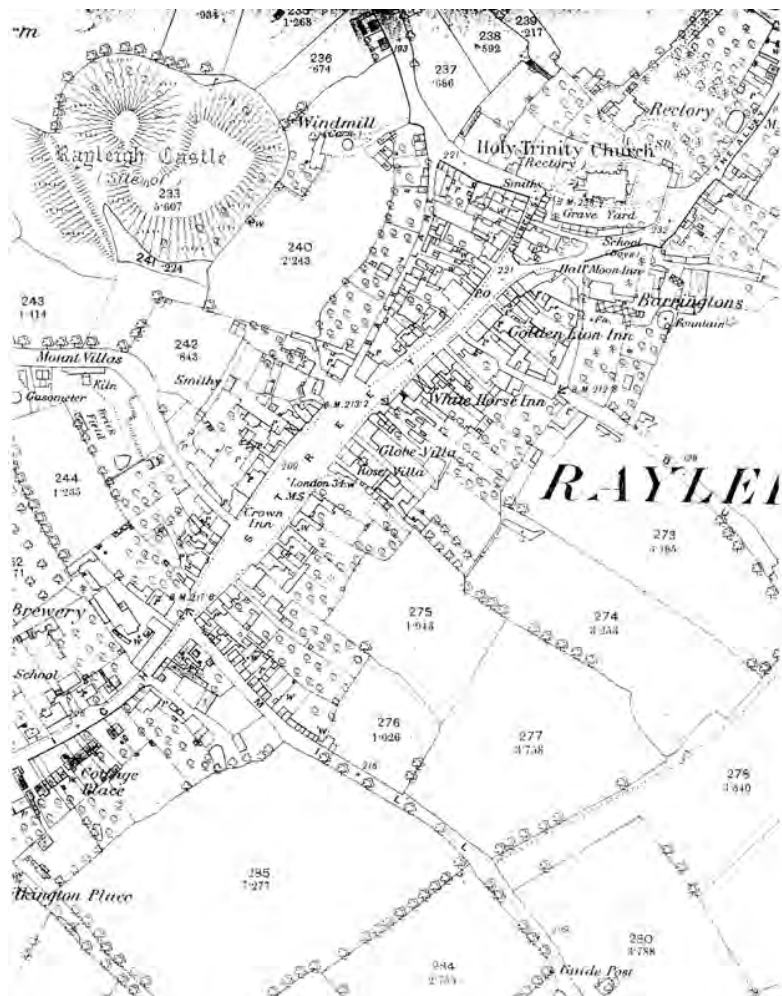
Fig. 6 The 15th-century timber frame of no. 91 High Street (after Bob Crump).

7.12 At no. 20 Hockley Road, the archaeological evidence could be interpreted as indicating that occupation ceased in the 15th century. Certainly the earliest map of Rayleigh, to be found on the 1777 Essex map by Chapman and André (Fig. 7), indicates that there were at that time only one or two houses on this side of Hockley Road. Like other towns and villages, Rayleigh probably shrank in extent at the end of the Middle Ages.



Fig. 7 Rayleigh from the Chapman and André Essex map of 1777.

- 7.13 In the 17th and 18th centuries, Rayleigh did not prosper in the way of others such as Billericay, Chelmsford or Witham which were on major road routes. Certainly this can be inferred from its buildings. Large coaching inns and grander 18th-century town houses are absent, with the exception of Kingsleigh House. The Chapman and André map seems only to indicate 40-50 houses in the town centre. At the south end of the triangular block of buildings between the High Street and Bellingham Lane, the map seems to represent a market hall, a building open on the ground floor comparable to those at Horndon-on-the-Hill and Thaxted.
- 7.14 Little change is evident in the town from a comparison of the tithe map of 1841 and the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1872 (*Fig. 8*) beyond the appearance of a brickfield and gas works in Crown Lane, and a few rows of Victorian villas or cottages in peripheral locations. What really changed the circumstances of the town was the coming of the railway in 1889, putting Rayleigh within easy travelling distance of London. The town became attractive for commuters and also, because of its rural location close to the sea, for retired people. There was dramatic growth in the years before the First World War. Farms, estates and the grounds of larger houses were broken up for development. Brickfields were developed in the vicinity.



*Fig. 8* Rayleigh on the 1872 1st edition Ordnance Survey map.

## Recent history

- 7.15 Rayleigh town centre has experienced dramatic redevelopment since the Second World War, in which period its population has approximately trebled. This is largely to be explained by the modest character of the High Street buildings as revealed in old photographs, some of them only one-and-a-half storey cottages, hardly convenient for conversion to modern shops (Fig. 9).



*Fig. 9 View looking north up the High Street in the early 20th century.*

Piecemeal rebuilding of the High Street began in the 1950s and accelerated in the 1960s. Mounting concern at the pace of change led to the foundation of the Civic Society in 1963. This was influential in the designation of the conservation area in 1969. The defeat of a proposal to redevelop the block of buildings known as the Manns site (nos 40 and 42a) at the junction of the High Street and Bellingham Lane has been identified as a turning point in stopping the wholesale destruction of the historic town centre.



*Fig. 10 High street, nos 57-61, before redevelopment.*



*Fig. 11 Steeple High, built in 1993 on the site of nos 57-61 High Street.*

- 7.16 Nevertheless, significant alterations continued to be made to the High Street. The area west of the Manns site was altered in the 1970s to widen access to Bellingham Lane. Similarly access to Crown Hill was widened. The Mill Hall was built adjacent to the castle in 1971. A meeting room was built to the north of the church in 1976. Both buildings are uncompromisingly modern in style, despite their proximity to a scheduled ancient monument and a listed building. The large Homeregal block of sheltered housing was built in Bellingham Lane in about 1986, after the developer appealed against a refusal to grant planning permission. In 1986, after an initial refusal, permission was granted for redevelopment of nos 57-61 High Street, some of the last of the old shops surviving there (*Figs 10 & 11*).
- 7.17 Rayleigh has a reputation for traffic congestion. In the 1950s, Websters way, effectively a back lane on the east side of the High Street, was built on the open space of King George's Field. In 1972, a one-way system was created taking advantage of this new road to relieve the traffic problem.
- 7.18 The 1980s saw a number of conservation projects reflecting a different approach to the built environment. The Dutch Cottage, a Grade II listed building, in Crown Hill (not in the conservation area) was restored in 1984, and Wearn Cottages in Church Street in 1988/89. No. 91 High Street was restored in 1989, and found to be probably the oldest building in the town centre (after the church). The High Street has been provided with additional trees and seats in the 1990s, and Rochford District Council has carried out an enhancement scheme there with new paving and street furniture. In 2004/5, improvements were carried out in Websters Way and the windmill restored, all with funding from the Thames Gateway.

## 8. MATERIALS AND DETAILING

- 8.1 Old photographs show that many of the High Street buildings were timber-framed and rendered, often with pebbledash, or clad in weatherboard (*Fig. 12*). The latter, a feature of south Essex towns and villages, has today all but vanished, though it can still be found in some backlands situations. No. 91, probably the oldest building in the High Street, was formerly weatherboarded; its flank wall still is. There is a weatherboarded barn behind no.7 High Street. Yellow-brown stock brick was characteristic of 19th-century buildings (*Fig. 13*). It was made locally, as were red bricks.<sup>5</sup> The latter, more expensive, were used for the cottages and villas of the suburban expansion that began at the end of the 19th century. Thus the Dollmartons buildings at the south end of the High Street are of stocks, whilst the slightly later villas in Bellingham Lane have red brick detailing and in one case a red brick façade. The 20th-century buildings are mainly of stock-type bricks or textured brown fletton brick, painted render, and concrete, with flat roofs.



*Fig. 12 Rayleigh High Street early in the 20th century.*



*Fig. 13 No. 18 Hockley Road, an 18th-century house provided with a stock brick façade in the 19th century.*

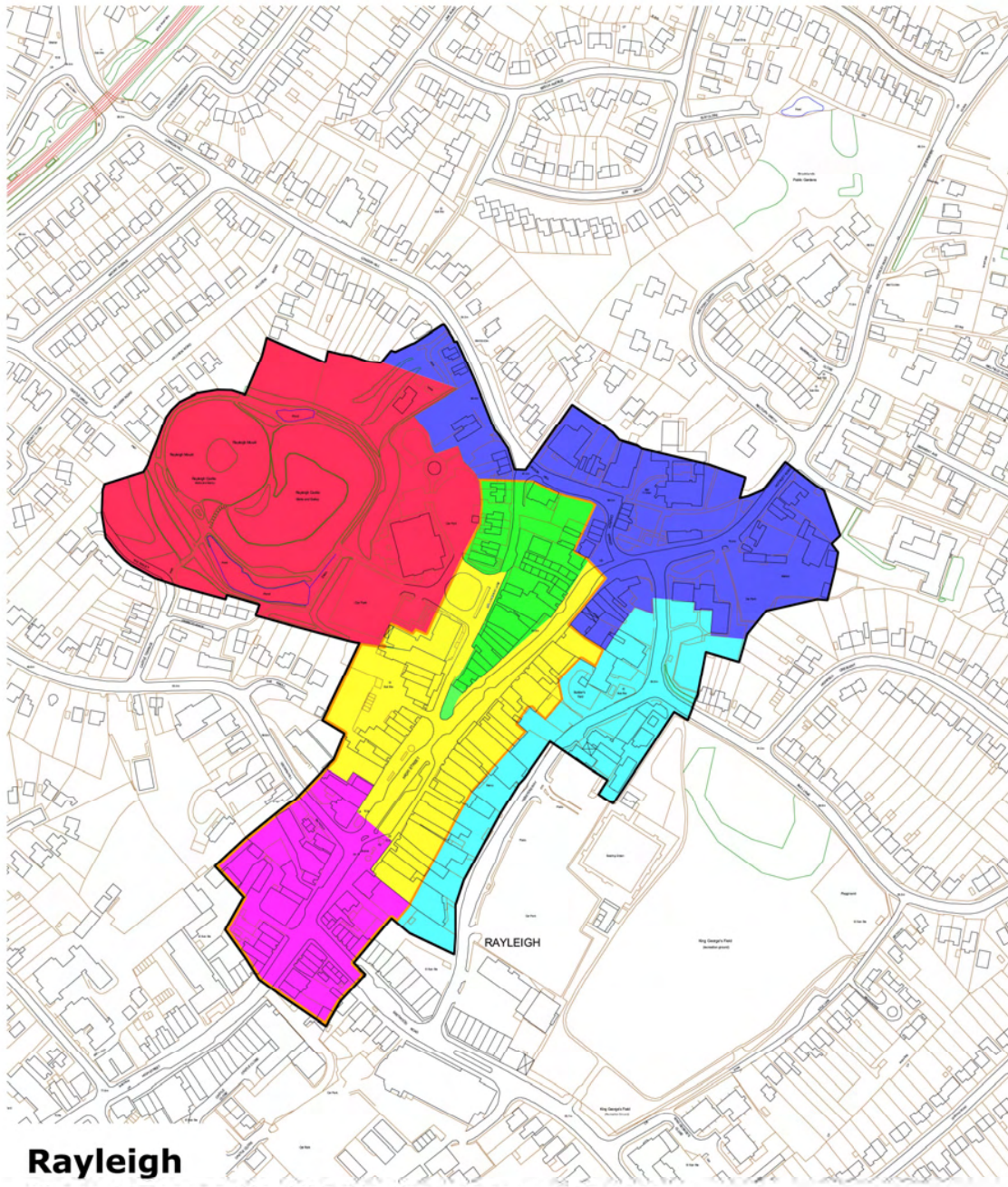
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<sup>5</sup> Beer 2005a.



## 9. CHARACTER ZONES AND SPATIAL INTERRELATIONSHIPS

- 9.1 Four well defined character zones can be identified within the conservation area (*Fig. 14*):
- a northern area comprising the church, Hockley Road, London Hill, Church Street and the north end of the High Street
  - Rayleigh Mount
  - the High Street and Bellingham Lane, sub-dividable into three areas
  - and Websters Way.
- 9.2 The church is immediately recognisable as such. It stands within the churchyard and its tower is the highest point in the town, dominating the north end of the High Street which rises up to it. The churchyard zone encompasses the surrounding area of irregular streetscape formed by the junction of London Hill, Church Street, the High Street, and Hockley Road. Here the stridently modern character of the High Street is interrupted, and there are more old buildings and more open space.
- 9.3 Rayleigh High Street is a thriving shopping centre, flanked by almost continuous shopfronts. Although the irregular frontages and its undulating width, in excess of 30m in the middle and narrowing to north and south, identify it as of medieval origin, the High Street was extensively rebuilt in the 1950s and 1960s and is now of very disparate appearance. Most of the buildings are of 20th-century date (*Fig. 15*), but it is punctuated by key older buildings, for the most part public houses of 19th-century appearance and larger town houses.
- 9.4 The High Street can be divided into three areas:
- the triangle of land between Bellingham Lane and the High Street, and the west side of Bellingham Lane. Whereas retail use predominates in the High Street, Bellingham Lane is a rather diverse area. Its east side consists mainly of yards and service buildings to the rear of the High Street frontage. On its west side, there is a row of cottages now used as offices.
  - the central part of the High Street, where the predominant architectural style is of the third quarter of the 20th century. It includes the space around the Mill Hall and the windmill, and a block of sheltered housing, Homeregal House
  - the southern end of the High Street, where most of the buildings are older, mainly late 19th- and early 20th-century.
- 9.5 The castle or Mount is a wooded area quite separate from the rest of the town. From the conservation area, it is accessed by a path from Bellingham Lane, and is traversed by a network of footpaths. The remarkably wild and somewhat overgrown woodland is in sharp contrast to the rest of the town centre and constitutes an important public open space. More information on the Mount relating to the recently prepared conservation plan is in a separate section below.
- 9.6 Like most town centres, Rayleigh suffers from traffic congestion, which has been addressed by a one-way system. This makes use of Websters Way to the east of the High Street. This is a thoroughfare of unrelieved utilitarian aspect, flanked by car parking and service areas for the rear of the High Street shops.



**Rayleigh**

Character areas identified in the conservation area







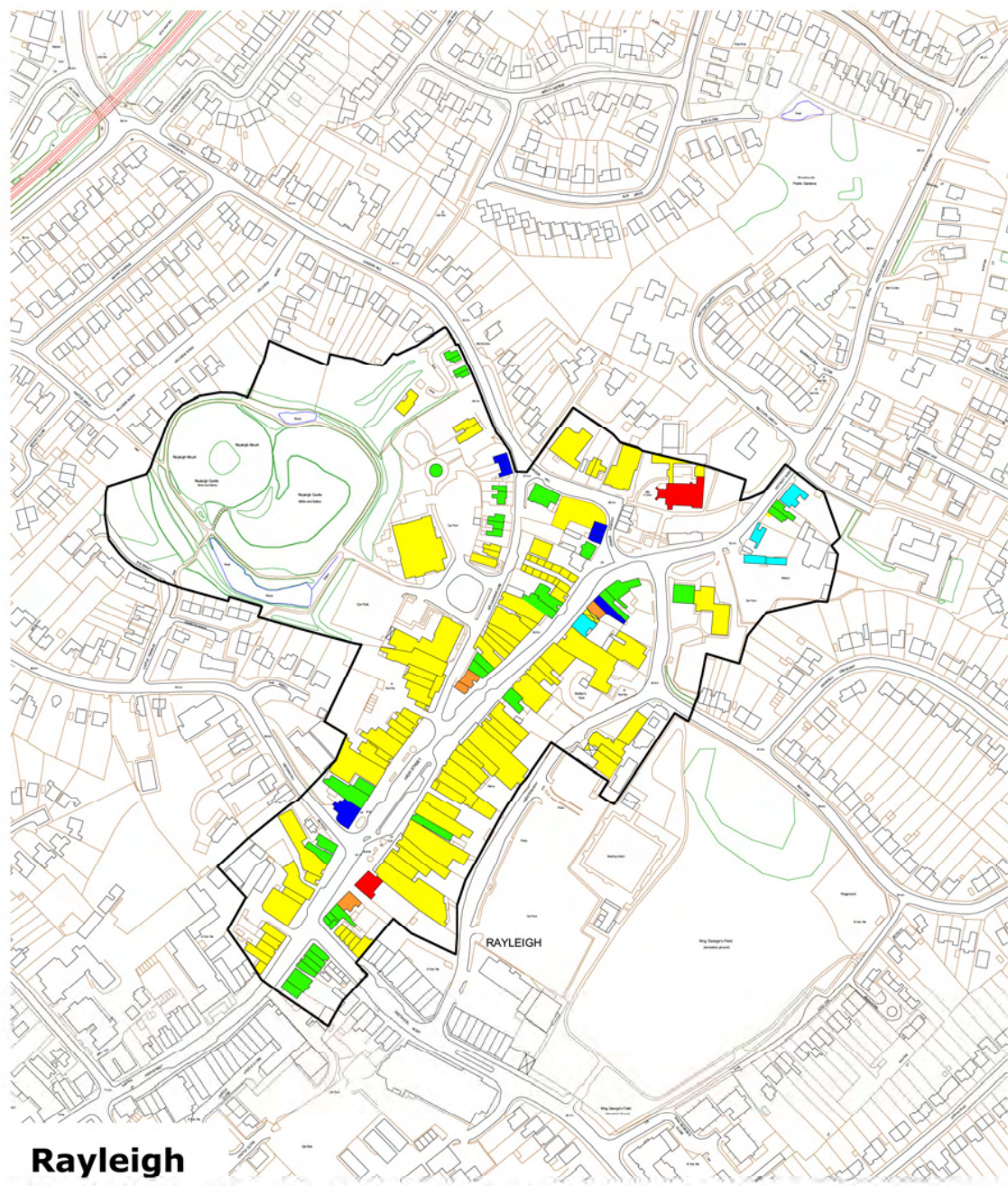
- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Rayleigh Mount     |  Mainly C19 & 1920s   |
|  Northern Character |  Mainly 1950s - 1970s, modern in style  |
|  Websters Way       |  Mixed, late medieval C19, early C20, late C20 Design Guide, includes market infill |

Fig. 14 Character zones identified in the Rayleigh conservation area.



## Rayleigh

Map indicating the age of the buildings in the conservation area



Fig. 15 Date of construction of buildings in the conservation area.

9.7 The once spectacular views from the hilltop to the west are now largely blocked off, except from the top of London Hill. Both London Hill and Hockley Road provide attractive entrances to the conservation area. The entrance to the town from the east has an element of drama: the road slopes gently down, giving a panoramic view of the High Street, the great width of which creates an illusion of foreshortened perspective. Despite the modern buildings, there is still very much a sense of approaching a historic town centre. The view looking up the hill at the north end of the High Street to the church is also very good (Fig. 16): the older buildings and road junction create diversity, and it is closed by the church tower and the bend towards Hockley Road. However, the junction of the High Street, Hockley Road and Websters Way is a very busy interchange. The traffic is a major intrusion into a visually sensitive area (Fig. 17), though to this there is probably no easy solution. The view north up Bellingham Lane is disappointing in comparison to that up the High Street, with no focal point and low level buildings (Fig. 18).



Fig. 16 View looking up the High Street to the church in an early 20th-century photograph. It is relatively unchanged today, apart from the demolition of the building in front of the church.



Fig. 17 The junction of High Street, Church Street and Hockley Road has good views and buildings but is adversely affected by traffic. In the background Wearn Cottages and no. 4 High Street.



*Fig.18 View looking north up Bellingham Lane.*

- 9.8 The public space round the Mill Hall and windmill represents a zone of transition between the busy retail High Street and the Mount. However, the predominant use in this area is car parking, and because it is wooded and situated down slope from the High Street, the Mount is totally detached from it. The entrance to it is narrow with no views through into it. Its shape and layout cannot be appreciated from the town and indeed has no visual connection with it. Similarly, the woodland screens views from the Mount into the town. The view down Websters Way has nothing to commend it.

## 10. AREA ANALYSIS<sup>6</sup>

### LONDON HILL

- 10.1 This very steep hill provides a good approach to the conservation area, with a mixture of older buildings on the south side, and on the brow of the hill the brick gate piers and chestnut trees at the entrance to the churchyard and the bend round into Church Street.
- 10.2 Just over the conservation area boundary, there are two identical pairs of 19th-century red-brick semi-detached cottages (**nos 27-29, 31-33**), well preserved with their sash windows intact, though their front doors have been replaced with ones with integral fanlights.
- 10.3 The view looking up the road is closed on the east side by the Conservative Club, a badly treated 19th-century building, and the new block of offices and flats, the most prominent features of which from this standpoint are the jagged teeth of its numerous dormer windows.
- 10.4 The next building on the south side is **nos 19-21**, a nice Edwardian double-fronted house which must have been built for the miller. The boundary wall to London Hill is of stock brick clinker, a material characteristic of the period. The house is now offices, which has resulted in its garden on the north side being an extensive tarmac car park. This has done little to enhance an otherwise good view through to the windmill. There is footpath access across the car park to the mill, through a gate in new railings. Some careful planting in this area could improve its appearance.
- 10.5 There is a terrace of three grade II listed 17th-century cottages (**nos 13-17**) at the junction with Bellingham Lane (*Fig. 19*). They are rendered with rough-cast pebbledash, the right-hand one painted. A two-pitched roof covers all three, with a catslide over a rear outshot. The middle cottage has a hole in its roof. Set high above the road, they form a picturesque group.



*Fig. 19 Nos 13-17 London Hill, with the windmill in the background.*

<sup>6</sup> Rayleigh Civic Society's *Up and down the High Street* has been very useful in preparing this description of the conservation area.

- 10.6 On the north side of the road, the first building to be included in the conservation area is the **Job Centre**, a good 1930s building in an attractive red brick. It is single storey with a hipped roof, sash windows, and nice detailing. It has a large modern rear extension which is hardly evident from the frontage. The building is set back from the road: in front of it is an extensive area of block paving delineated by bollards, with a vandalised rowan tree. Well maintained effective planting would greatly improve the appearance of this area.
- 10.7 Opposite is the **Conservative Club**, comprising converted late Victorian stock brick buildings, the left-hand one painted white, the right-hand one with UPVC weatherboard at the first floor, the whole roofed with concrete tiles. A small single storey extension on the south side sits on a bland sheet of concrete. An ugly glazed front door with glazed side panel is not used; access is from the rear of Bellingham Lane where there are flat-roofed extensions, UPVC windows, and a parking lot behind a fletton brick wall. This traditional building occupies a key corner location: replacement of the front door, restoration of the windows and the brickwork, removal of the UPVC, and landscaping in the car parking area would do much to improve the contribution of this building to the street scene.
- 10.8 At the top of London Hill is the **British Legion**, a single-storey red brick flat-roofed club building extensively refurbished in the early 1980s. Two arches in its façade front a cream painted recess with a war memorial. To the right is a UPVC bow-fronted window. Here too is a wide and not very successful area of concrete slab paving, bordered by flimsy railings. There are three benches, all slightly different. Careful landscaping could do much to improve the setting of this building.
- 10.9 Opposite the British Legion is the mixed use development known as the Forge as it is on the site of a former smithy, completed in 2003. It is a Design Guide style building, with jetties, gables, sash windows, in a mixture of traditional materials. It is reasonably successful, but its size (two-and-a-half storey) is out of proportion with its surroundings, and there is an excess of dormer windows.

## CHURCH STREET

- 10.10 This is a short northward continuation of the High Street, from which it is scarcely differentiated, though its narrowness and the presence of older buildings help to give it a separate identity.
- 10.11 Since the demolition of buildings in the south part of the street in the 1930s (*Fig 16*), the east side of it consists of a row of 19th-century cottages which back on to the churchyard and which are used as shops (*Fig. 20*). The northern three, **nos 4-8**, are a grade II listed terrace, pebbledashed and painted, though they preserve most of their sash windows. The middle one has a date plaque which reads: TU/1850. **No. 2** to the south is a separate build but probably similar date. Its windows have been replaced in ugly UPVC mahogany. Unsympathetic signs also adversely affect the appearance of these buildings.



*Fig. 20 Nos 4-8 Church Street.*

- 10.12 Opposite no. 2 are **Wearn Cottages** (nos 1-5), a terrace of three attractive low two storey cottages which are grade II listed (*Fig. 17*). They are timber-framed and thought to date from the 17th century, though they were given a brick façade in the late 18th or early 19th century. Their side walls are weatherboarded. They were restored in 1988/89 and their brickwork and pointing still look in very good condition. The roofs have machine made tiles. They are used as offices.

### **THE CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD**

- 10.13 The **church** (*Fig. 21*) is a large building (nave, aisles, chancel chapels, vestry and porch) with a prominent tower and a large 1990s extension, probably the largest church extension in the Chelmsford diocese. It is built mainly of Kentish Ragstone, but the pretty crenellated 15th-century porch and the extension are of brick. The chancel is thought to date from the 12th century on the evidence of Roman brick quoins, but most of the fabric is 15th-century. The 16th-century Alleyn chapel has Ragstone and knapped flint chequerboard masonry. There was a major restoration of the church in 1912. The church is in good condition.



*Fig. 21 Holy Trinity church seen from the High Street, Hockley Road junction.*



- 10.14 When the former National School and parish room on the south side of the churchyard was declared unsafe for use, the parish in 1976 built a modern meeting hall to the north on land that had been part of the rectory garden, its design hardly in keeping with its setting. When this became inadequate for their needs, an **extension** was built on to the church in 1993 (*Fig. 22*). This encloses a small cloister area on the north side of the church. The extension has been successfully designed to fit in with the church. These buildings are busy during the week and have an important community use. The car park area on the north side would benefit from landscaping.



*Fig. 22 The extension to Holy Trinity church.*

- 10.15 The **churchyard** is closed and maintained by Rochford District Council. A gravestone dated 1730 by the west buttress of the south chapel is listed. The footpaths are all tarmac. Whereas the main east-west path is in good condition, those which lead northwards at both ends of the church are not. Although the footpaths are well used, there are no benches in the churchyard. There are some fine trees, notably some pollarded horse chestnuts on the west side and a cedar on the east.
- 10.16 The entrance to the churchyard on the west side is between octagonal stock brick gate piers; the gates are missing. The churchyard wall on the east side is old: its brickwork is probably 18th-century or older; at the base of it are Ragstone blocks. On this side, the gateway, of cast iron with posts by Bayliss Ltd, is set in a re-entrant formed in the churchyard and rectory boundaries. This is a pleasant space shaded by the cedar tree. Between it and the road is a grassed area which needs returfing.

10.17 On the south side of the churchyard, there is an area of public open space in front of the **lych gate** (*Fig. 21*). The concrete slab path to the gate is flanked by rectangles of grass bordered by low walls of rough-faced concrete blocks with flowerbeds in the top of them. Evergreen shrubs make for attractive winter planting. On the left hand side of the path, where a brick wall divides this space from land that goes with the Church Street buildings, there are four benches. Whilst this area has a visual logic to it, to the south the situation is more confused, the legacy apparently of the buildings which formerly stood here but which were demolished in the 1930s. A tarmac path barred by an incongruous field gate leads from Church Street. South of this is a roughly triangular island at the staggered junction of four roads with extensive planting round a dying tree, and two concrete benches and litter bins for those who want to watch the traffic lights change. This area could benefit from some rationalisation and landscape improvements.

### HOCKLEY ROAD

10.18 At the north end of the conservation area, the west side of the road is occupied by the large garden of the rectory and the churchyard. The **rectory**, an L-shaped red brick building which replaced the old one pulled down in 1967, is surrounded by mature trees. On the east side, there are a series of good older houses. **No. 24, The Poplars**, is grade II listed, double fronted, its brickwork concealed by a white textured plastic coating. It has a clay tile roof. **Nos 20-22** are a late Victorian brick semi-detached pair with crenellated ground-floor bays (*Fig. 23*). They were on the local list. Their brickwork has been painted white, they have unfortunate front doors, and UPVC windows. No. 20 has been extended in 2005; the wooden windows of the extension look worse than the UPVC. **No. 18** is a very well maintained and preserved 18th-century double-fronted house with a later stock brick façade, weatherboarded sides and a gambrel roof (*Fig. 13*). It is listed grade II.



*Fig. 23 Nos 20-22 Hockley Road.*

- 10.19 **Barringtons cottage** is a former outbuilding to Barringtons and is grade II listed. Now a shop, it is an attractive building set back from the road, weatherboarded with a gambrel roof. It has a single storey brick extension to the east, originally 19th-century but extended in the 20th century. Unfortunately it now stands marooned in a sea of parked cars. This area could be softened by some judicious tree planting.
- 10.20 **Barringtons** is a grand early 19th-century white brick house, which has been extended twice on its east side, first in the 1953 for the Rochford District Council, and then again in 1964 for the Civic Suite and Community Information Centre. Whereas the first extension is in keeping, built of a good white brick with timber sashes and an imposing doorway, the later one has used modern materials (pale concrete bricks, aluminium framed sashes, an entrance canopy supported on spindly poles) to disastrous effect. The old part is now a solicitors' offices. It has a heavy ionic tetrastyle porch. There is a fine pollarded beech tree in front of it.
- 10.21 On the south side of the churchyard is the grade II listed former National School, later the parish rooms, now a **restaurant Santa Lucia**, dating from 1863. It is built of red brick with stock brick detailing and slate roofs. The windows have stone surrounds painted with white gloss; the cast-iron frames are black-painted. The cement plinth at the base of the wall is not just disfiguring but likely to be damaging to the brickwork. On its west side are steps up into the churchyard and a revetment wall which are all covered in ugly cement. The recent planning history of this building is an interesting and instructive case study in what it takes to save a threatened building. When the parish wanted to demolish it, it was spot listed. The parish then served a purchase notice on the District Council which in turn sought to demolish it. It was saved only on the initiative of local businessmen who found an alternative use for it.<sup>7</sup>

## RAYLEIGH MOUNT

- 10.22 The Mount is important as an historic monument, a public open space and amenity, and as a wildlife haven. It has already been discussed in section 5, and a very detailed account of it can be found in the Conservation Plan which has been prepared for it.<sup>8</sup>
- 10.23 The Mount comprises three main areas: the motte, the inner bailey and the outer bailey, the latter now occupied by the Mill Hall and the windmill, and circumscribed by Bellingham Lane. The inner bailey is a raised kidney-shaped area enclosed by a bank and ditch, the latter still water-filled on the south side where there is a pond.
- 10.24 There is no vehicular access. The only access from the conservation area is from the Mill Hall, where there is a footpath enclosed by railings, a not particularly inviting approach (*Fig.43*). There are other paths from the south (Crown Hill and Castle Terrace) and west (Hillview Road).

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<sup>7</sup> Beer 2005b.

<sup>8</sup> ECC2005a.

- 10.25 Most of the Mount is wooded, with tree growth of various types. As a result, it is surprisingly wild, a welcome contrast to its urban and suburban surroundings, presenting an opportunity for exploration and discovery. However, the trees mask the shape of the earthworks, such that they are difficult to appreciate and understand. From the top of the motte there is only one distant view, to the north-west (*Fig. 24*), whilst there are no views of the town, only a glimpse of the mill and church tower.



*Fig. 24 View north-west from Rayleigh Mount, the only long view not screened by trees.*

- 10.26 Some of the neighbours have failed to respect the setting of this scheduled monument, which is adversely affected by piles of rubbish, notices and sheds.

### **THE HIGH STREET**

- 10.27 The visitor might be forgiven for asking if Rayleigh had been bombed in the 2nd World War. Only a handful of buildings dating from before the War survive in the main body of the High Street (*Fig. 15*). In a short period time in the 1950s and 1960s, the majority of the High Street frontages were redeveloped. The buildings removed were mostly modest, one-and-a-half or two-storey timber-framed houses and shops.
- 10.28 The new buildings are in a variety of styles. They range from plain brick buildings in a traditional domestic style with shopfronts at the ground floor, dating from the 1950s, to brick and concrete three- or four-storey buildings in an aggressively modern style. Unfortunately, the more modern the style, the less satisfactory the buildings seem today. This is partly because they are out of

scale with the rest of the High Street, and partly because of the disparate nature of the materials involved, abetted by the multi-colour shopfronts. Maintenance is also a crucial issue. It is not just that materials have not worn well: they have not been looked after. Concrete is stained, cladding materials have deteriorated, large glass panes are dirty, and windows have not been painted. Those modern buildings which today seem most successful are those which were less ambitious, and which used modern materials on a scale with, and in proportion with, the old.

- 10.29 A street improvement scheme was carried out in the High Street in 1998. The broad pavements are made of concrete slabs relieved with red clay paving bricks in the wider areas such as the south end of the west side and round the Millennium clock. The street is quite well provided with trees, mostly planes, and in the wider part these have raised planters round their bases with integral seats. Other features are benches, a well designed bus shelter, bollards, stainless steel cycle stands, cast iron railings and traditional type lamp standards. The street furniture is all painted a uniform green. The success of this scheme is reflected in the heavy pedestrian use of the pavements in the wider end of the street and the numbers of people to be found on and around the benches.
- 10.30 The High Street is described in summary fashion, each side separately, from north to south.

#### **East side, from north to south**

- 10.31 The **Half Moon** is an attractive low two storey stock brick building with a slate roof, with sash windows to the first floor and old wooden casements at the ground floor. It has good traditional style signs. On the north side, there is an old single storey extension in white-painted brick with sash windows. The very wide area of paving around this building and the junction with Websters Way (*Fig. 25*) would benefit from softening with tree planting, and some rationalisation of features such as the bench next to the wall and the bicycle stands near it which look under-used.



*Fig. 25 Area of paving on north side of the Half Moon. In the background, Barringtons.*

- 10.32 **No. 7a**, a solicitors' office, has a curious façade, the result of it being raised in height to accommodate a second storey, and also of the unusual projecting first-floor bay windows. It forms an interesting group with **La Romantica** and **Squires**, both of which are timber-framed, grade II listed, and of 16th- or 17th-century date (*Fig. 26*).



*Fig. 26 High Street, no. 7a, La Romantica and Squires.*



*Fig. 27 High Street, Halifax and Byfords Butchers.*

- 10.33 **Kingsleigh House** is a red brick fronted three-storey house probably of late 18th-century date. It has five bays of sash windows, the top floor ones lower in height. The entrance has a handsome doorcase. It is grade II listed. On its north side, a poorly detailed extension has been built in the 1990s over a carriageway which leads to a courtyard in front of **Burley House** (1990/91), a large office development which extends back to Websters Way.
- 10.34 The **Pink Toothbrush** club is a fletton brick 1950s building rendered particularly hideous by its blocked off shopfronts. It has concrete tiles, and UPVC windows at the first floor. The **Halifax** is a two-and-a-half storey red brick building of six window bays, with metal clad projecting first-floor windows and a metal mansard roof facing the street. A modern building which attempts to reproduce the features of traditional ones, its main problem is one of bulk and scale (*Fig. 27*). **Byfords** (butchers) and the photographer's at **no. 31** are a matching pair, one in a white brick and the other in a red brick, both with projecting first-floor windows. They probably date from the 1950s and look like the refronting of older buildings. **Peacocks** (**no. 33**) also seems to be an old building refronted in the 1950s. It preserves its Crittall windows at the first floor.
- 10.35 The **Old White Horse** is an isolated survivor of the old High Street (*Fig. 28*), a stock brick double-fronted two-storey public house with a carriage arch through to a paved beer garden enclosed by a close-boarded fence with concrete posts, and beyond that car parking on Websters Way. It is grade II listed.



Fig. 28 High Street, The Old White Horse, and beyond it nos 45-47 and 55-55a.



Fig. 29 High Street, Barclays Bank, a problem of scale. In front of it, the taxi rank.

- 10.36 There follow a row of three shops, the NatWest, Clarks and Cancer Research, the only charity shop in the conservation area (**nos 45-47**), with wide fronts beneath a concrete jetty, the windows in white recessed panels set in brown stock brick (*Fig. 28*). Although hardly great architecture, the scale of this building is appropriate to the High Street and it sits comfortably in the High Street. This is not true of **nos 55-55a** (QS and Holland and Barrett), a three-storey monster with an excessively projecting jettied concrete first storey with concrete brise-soleil type mullions between the windows (*Fig. 28*). This block extends back to Websters Way. The buildings to the south (Steeple High, **nos 57-61**, occupied by Birthdays, New Look and Abbey) date from 1993 (*Fig. 11*), replacing a row of three 19th-century shops with built-out frontages. Whereas a good traditional gabled design of this sort would fit well in the average market town high street, here it looks slightly out of place surrounded by 1960s buildings. The red brick may not also have been the best choice in a street where stocks and flettons predominate.
- 10.37 Barclays Bank and Savers (**nos 63-67**) are an excessively tall three storey block (*Fig. 29*), the first floor in a good small brown stock brick. The bank has reinforced its status by constructing a dark marble façade which looks smart but incongruous next to the adjacent shopfront. A footpath down the side of Barclays leads through to Websters Way and the public car park.
- 10.38 Outside Barclays, the great width of the High Street, and the corresponding width of the pavement, has made it possible to create a parking bay for taxis and motorbikes (*Fig. 29*). Although doubtless essential in many ways to the viability of the High Street, this is an unfortunate intrusion into the pedestrian area.
- 10.39 The Woolwich (**no. 69**) and More (**no.71**) are two ill fitting adjoining three-storey blocks, the former flat-roofed and rendered, the latter with tile hanging and a pitched roof with a large dormer. The degree to which these modern buildings do not respect the former scale of the High Street is illustrated by the low two storey building to the south, Choices, an old building dwarfed by them as well as by the two-storey Boots on the other side of it (*Fig. 30*). The rear pitch of the roof of Choices has a hole in it. Boots is a plain red brick building of the 1950s or 1960s.



Fig. 30 High Street, Choices, an 18th- or 19th-century building dwarfed by modern ones.



Fig. 31 High Street, the lane between no. 91 and the Spread Eagle through to Websters Way.

- 10.40 A three-storey block follows (Baker's Oven, Boots, Clinton's, **nos 81-87**). It has a concrete jetty and balconies with full height windows with timber and UPVC frames to the frontage, and brown brickwork to the sides. Again the problem is mainly one of scale. In front of the shops, there is a very wide expanse of pavement with a **pump** and the **Martyrs' Memorial** (1908), both listed, a stone **horse trough**, trees surrounded by seats, and benches. **Rayleigh Lanes**, an indoor market, is a two-and-a-half storey brown brick building with large boxy dormer windows on a mansard roof. Poor quality signage does it few favours. The building extends right back to Websters Way where there is another entrance.
- 10.41 The southern end of this side of the street has escaped modernisation, and has buildings of a variety of dates, of traditional form and scale. **No. 91** is the oldest known building in the High Street, datable to the 15th century (*Fig. 6*). Its restored exterior is recognisably late medieval. However the timber shopfront would look more attractive if it were painted, not stained. To the side of it, there is a lane through to Websters Way: poor boundary treatments and parked cars present a dismal view which contrasts with the two good buildings which frame the entrance to it (*Fig. 31*). Next is the **Spread Eagle**, a grade II listed building of medieval appearance though nothing visible externally is of that date. Inside three bays of a timber frame dated to the late 16th century have been identified. It presents an attractive composition of gables and clay tile roofs, wooden pilasters and fascia at the ground floor, cream-painted render and black-painted joinery. First Choice and the next-door barber's shop (**nos 97-99**) are a 19th-century two storey building with false timber-framing and sash windows at the first floor. On the corner with Eastwood Road, there is a pair of single-storey flat-roofed shops (Space Communications, a shoe repairer's) of a traditional sort built out in front of older buildings on high street frontages. In Eastwood Road, the conservation area includes a 1930s parade of shops on the north side (**nos 3-11 Eastwood Road**), typical of their period, white painted render lined out in imitation of ashlar with a parapet roof and a strong horizontal emphasis to the fenestration, though the windows are now UPVC, not metal.



- 10.42 On the other side of Eastwood Road, there is a three-storey stock brick building (*Fig. 32*) with a name '**Dollmartons**' in a pedimented surround and a date plaque '1881' (**nos 105-111**). At the ground floor there are four shops. It was quite a grand building in its day, with stucco surrounds to first-floor bay windows, but it suffers from poor maintenance and is not enhanced by the shop fascias. Half the original sash windows have been lost, and the most southerly property has been re-roofed in artificial instead of natural slate.



*Fig. 32 High Street,, nos 105-111, the Dollmartons building.*



*Fig. 33 High Street, Berrys Arcade and Witham Funeral Directors.*

#### **West side, from north to south**

- 10.43 **No. 4** is a nice double-fronted 19th-century house with a red brick façade, sash windows, a hipped slate roof and end stacks (*Fig. 17*). It complements Wearn Cottages to the north. **No. 6** (Rona Estate Agents) was similar inasmuch as it is double-fronted with a brick façade, but the latter has been rebuilt and all the windows renewed, so that the detailing does not fit with the architectural style of the building. In the left hand side there is now a large shop window, and above it a first floor bow window. A double pile building, the front part with a parapet to a gambrel roof, it probably dates originally from the 18th century
- 10.44 **Berry's Arcade** has traditional style shop fronts all painted to the same colour scheme which succeed in creating an attractive shopping area (*Fig. 33*). The arcade is paved with black and red tiles. The first floor is clad in vertical timber boarding and has UPVC windows. It is unfortunate that the pitched roof is almost entirely occupied by a huge dormer window. Witham and Son Funeral Directors has a good relief letter sign on a projecting shop front below a 1950s fletton brick building with metal windows in concrete surrounds and a felt roof above a timber fascia.
- 10.45 Card Fair and Papa John's Pizza occupy the ground floor of a large gothic style Victorian building (**nos 20-22**) which presents a tall gable to the street (*Fig. 34*). The shopfronts are not in keeping, but otherwise the building is relatively well preserved. It is of white brick with stock brick detailing and stone window lintels. The sash windows urgently need painting.

- 10.46 Rayleigh Food and Wine (**no. 24**) is a flinton brick building set back from the Victorian building. It has a tatty projecting canopy over the shopfront, UPVC windows at the first floor, and a parapet roof (*Fig. 34*). It is similar in style, but inferior in materials, to the Rayleigh Kebab House and **Woolworths**, a 1950s development, two storey with a parapet roof, in red brick with windows with concrete surrounds. This building is quite nicely detailed and is a good but plain example of its period.



*Fig. 34 High Street, nos 20-22, a prominent Victorian building in white brick.*



*Fig. 35 High Street, Manns Corner.*

- 10.47 Edes Electrical (**no. 32**), Fats and Figures, Nationwide and Headline Hairdressing, form a row with large first floor UPVC windows in white-painted rendered walls above the shopfronts. They occupy what may be probably 19th-century buildings. The windows seem to have been progressively enlarged towards the south, such that in Headlines Hairdressing they occupy most of the first-floor elevation. Specsavers (**no. 36**) is in a former 1930s bank, an attractive single storey building in red brick with a stone plinth, and a parapet to a hipped roof.
- 10.48 **Nos 38 and 40a** (Elan and Top Kids) occupy a deceptive stock brick building (*Fig. 35*) designed to look old but in fact dating probably from the 1970s. Old 20th-century maps show this to have been a vacant plot. It has been built of reused stocks, with sash windows and a clay tile roof, so that it blends with nos 40-42b to the south. This it does quite successfully, but some of the windows at the first floor have been replaced in UPVC.
- 10.49 **Nos 40-42b** (TKs and Sportsworld) are listed grade II; their stock brick skin, now mostly painted a terracotta colour, incorporates timber-framing probably of the 16th century. The building, known as Manns Corner, is a landmark in the High Street, not simply because of its older and traditional appearance but because it stands at a focal point where the road divides and Bellingham Lane forks off to the left (*Fig. 35*). As previously mentioned, this may have been associated with a market hall building which seems to be indicated on the Chapman and André map. Poor signage, and the bright yellow shop front of Sportsworld, do not enhance this important building. Its significance has been recognised by two initiatives. A map explaining the history of the town centre has been attached to its south elevation, whilst in the triangle of paving to the south stands the **Millennium Clock**, of cast iron and in a traditional style (*Fig. 35*). The paving is well designed and this constitutes a successful landmark. Two fastigate trees flank a bench in front of the town map.

- 10.50 To the south of the Bellingham Lane junction, the High Street is exceptionally wide, a legacy of its former marketplace function. Opposite Manns Corner are **nos 44-50** (Rosebys, Rayleigh Hi-Fi, Traveline, HSBC, and Watch Shop), an interesting modern two-and-a-half storey development with a pitched slate roof with recessed dormer windows (*Fig. 36*). The façade is in part deeply recessed with concrete jetties, presumably in an attempt to achieve interest and drama, but scale remains a problem and the building is rather intimidating. Down the side of this building is a lane through to a large area of backland parking: the view into it is unattractive (*Fig. 49*).



*Fig. 36 High Street, nos 44-50 at the junction with Bellingham Lane, Homeregal House in the background.*



*Fig. 37 High Street, nos 52-60 and 62-72.*

- 10.51 It is interesting to contrast this building with **nos 52-60**, a long row of five shops to the south which are much simpler and plainer, but a combination of good detailing with a sensitive control of scale results in their sitting much more comfortably within their surroundings (*Fig. 37*). They are two-and-a-half storey, in a stock type brick, the first-floor windows originally metal-framed, though some are now in UPVC, within concrete surrounds, some with concrete window boxes. In the pitched plain tile roof, there is a flat-roofed dormer with metal sides of relatively modest size above each of the first floor windows. This row of shops is unusual in having flats above them.
- 10.52 **Nos 62-72** (Toppers, Oldhams and Mackays) is a three-storey 1960s building in brown brick, with the upper storey windows set in vertical white-painted recessed panels (*Fig. 37*). It is well maintained and preserves its metal windows. Although a plain and basically harmonious design, in contrast with nos 52-60 it seems bulky, simply because it rises full height to the second storey where there is a parapet and apparently a flat roof.
- 10.53 **No. 74** (Johnsons Cleaners) is a two-storey 19th-century building, its brickwork rendered and painted, with UPVC windows at the first floor. **Nos 78-84, Francis House** (Lloyds Bank), is a listed early 19th-century town house, with a stuccoed classical façade, now painted white with grey detailing (*Fig. 38*). It is of five window bays, with pilasters rising through the first and second floors to a central pediment. The white paint is too harsh and does the building no favours. Nor has the bank use been kind to the ground floor: a cashpoint has been inserted into one of the windows. Outside Francis House, there is a K6 telephone box and a post box, the latter acquired by Rochford District Council in 1994.

10.54 Francis House forms a good group with another listed building, the **Crown**, an old coaching inn dating probably of 17th-century origin, its roof pitch altered to accommodate an early 19th-century stuccoed façade (*Fig. 38*). This has suffered in successive late 20th-century refurbishments, and is now bland, rendered and cream painted, the ground floor rustication lost and the pilasters which articulate the first floor barely recognisable. It is double pile; the flank on Crown Hill is weatherboarded.



*Fig. 38 High Street, the Crown and Francis House.*

10.55 To the south of Crown Hill, the High Street begins to narrow in width. The conservation area extends sufficiently far south down Crown Hill to include the cottage-style **public toilets** built by Rochford Urban District Council in 1932. The brickwork and detailing is of high quality; the pebbledash is now painted.

10.56 South of Crown Hill, there are two 19th-century buildings, their stock brickwork now concealed though their windows survive and make an important contribution to preserving their character. **No. 92** (Parker Electrics and Kingfisher Double Glazing) has its brickwork rendered and painted to the High Street, pebbledashed to Crown Hill. The brickwork of **no. 94** (Fives) is white painted; its roof has been renewed with machine made tiles.

10.57 There follows a handsome building dating from the 1920s or 1930s (**nos 96-100**, Central Chambers) with three shops at the ground floor (Burton, Dorothy Perkins and Stevens). At first floor, rusticated brick pilasters articulate five window bays, alternate ones canted, below a cornice with modillions (*Fig. 39*). The quality of this architectural composition is undermined by the fascias and signage on the shopfronts. The windows are also now in UPVC. Down the side of the building, there is an alley through to an extensive backland area of car parking and outbuildings with a business use.



*Fig. 39 High Street, nos 96-100 (Central Chambers).*



*Fig. 40 High Street, no. 102, former Westminster Bank building.*

10.58 **No. 102** Eden Independent Financial Advisers was originally built by the Westminster Bank in the 1920s or 1930s (*Fig. 40*). It has very nice brickwork, a handsome doorcase, good sash windows, and a cornice with modillions. These features complement those of Central Chambers but are at risk of disappearing behind a deluge of signs.

- 10.59 **Nos 104-106** are a pair of 1950s or 1960s buildings. In 2005 Cooperative Funeralcare succeeded in changing a decent traditional sign for a lilac-coloured internally illuminated one, despite a recommendation to the contrary.<sup>9</sup> The first and second floor windows are in UPVC. Superdrug has poor signage, and unattractive timber cladding at the first floor, where there are aluminium framed windows.
- 10.60 **Nos 110-120** are a row of 1920s or 1930s buildings with gables to the street, which illustrate how good traditional forms can look despite successive alterations (*Fig. 41*). Only two of them preserve false half timbering in the gables, and only the southernmost two have their original windows. One of the other two has UPVC windows. The large first-floor window and sun-blind at the first-floor of no. 110 are particularly to be regretted. The last building in the conservation area on this side, Stewarts Jewellers, is plain, rendered, with Crittall windows and a parapet roof.



*Fig. 41 High Street, nos 110-120.*

### **BELLINGHAM LANE**

- 10.61 Although the lane is a northward continuation of the High Street where it splits into two, it is quite different to it. There are almost no shops. The west side is occupied by a block of sheltered housing, Homeregal House, then by a transitional zone between the town and Mount, mediated by the open space around the Mill Hall, and finally by rows of late Victorian houses, now used as offices. The east side shares some the problems of Websters Way, in the form of a straggle of service buildings to the rear of the High Street shops. At the southern end of the Lane, there is a dramatic change in scale from the two-and-a-half storey shops at nos 44-48 and the four-storey Homeregal House to the open space in front of the Mill Hall and two-storey buildings. The area around Mill Hall is poorly defined with an inadequate sense of enclosure. Long views from south to north lack any focal point, the diminishing scale of the buildings creating a disappointing effect.
- 10.62 The west side of Bellingham Lane follows the line of the former outer bailey ditch of the castle (*Fig. 5*). The outer bailey area is today occupied by the Mill Hall, the windmill, and associated car parking.

<sup>9</sup> ROC/337/05

### West side Bellingham Lane (south to north)

- 10.63 **Homeregal House**, a block of 39 flats of sheltered housing, on four storeys, partially set into the ground, and thus to some extent replicating the line of the castle ditch, was built in about 1986 on the site of the Regal cinema (*Fig. 36*). In a traditional style, with rather acute 'gothic' gables, in a yellow stock-type brick, it fits reasonably well into the conservation area. If it is not entirely satisfactory, it is because of its large bulk making it out of proportion with its surroundings, and more particularly the large sheets of reflective glass in the UPVC framed windows. Refenestration in well designed timber windows would greatly improve this building.
- 10.64 There follows a gap in the frontage behind which lie the Mill Hall, the windmill and access to the Mount. These buildings stand on the outer bailey of the castle. The **Mill Hall** (1971) is a large functional rectangular community building incorporating a theatre and a cafeteria (*Fig. 42*). The grade II-listed early 19th-century red brick tower **windmill** was restored in 2005 with the aid of a Thames Gateway grant of £340,000 (which was also for the sensory garden to the north). The works included repointing and new sails. The Rayleigh Historical Society is to provide exhibits for a museum in the mill which was projected to open in 2006. The windmill is a landmark building which figures in long views from various points within the town.



*Fig. 42 Bellingham Lane, memorial and the Mill Hall (left); and windmill (right)*

- 10.65 The space between Mill Hall and Bellingham Lane is landscaped with a sub-circular paved area with seating and standard trees round a 1988 Armada beacon (*Fig. 42*). There is also a small, readily overlooked, sculpture to victims of persecution. In view of its location and the use of the buildings, this could be a place of public resort, a piazza. But the paved area is in effect a roundabout for cars going to and from the extensive car parks serving Mill Hall and Homeregal House. There is no sense of enclosure, and the buildings are different in style and separate from each other, each making an individual statement, with no unifying link between them. Views from the paved area through to the windmill have been opened up with the demolition in 1998 of a

former industrial building used as sports hall, but its site is now a car park. Although carefully landscaped, it does not really enhance the setting of the listed mill.

- 10.66 Behind the windmill, screened by temporary fencing, there is the derelict sensory garden. This unfinished project should help enhance the area, but its location shares the problem of disconnection common to most of the surrounding buildings and spaces. Rochford District Council renewed its permission for the creation of the garden in 2005 (ROC/446/05). The application was not accompanied by detailed plans.
- 10.67 On the south side of the Mill Hall, a footpath enclosed by railings (*Fig. 43*) leads to the Mount, descending into the ditch between the outer and inner baileys. The Mount is difficult to appreciate as a landscape feature because it is shrouded by woodland and because the motte does not rise significantly above its surroundings on this side. Visually there is no link between it and this part of the town.



*Fig. 43 Entrance to Rayleigh Mount adjacent to the Mill Hall.*

- 10.68 The open space in front of the Mill Hall is enclosed on the north side by the **Women's Institute hall**, a long rectangular building with a strong directional axis. It dates from 2000 and replaces a wooden building. It is built of a yellow stock-type brick. Brown stained joinery, hinged sash-type windows, and a crudely detailed ramp disfigure an otherwise sympathetic building.
- 10.69 To the north, there are three rows of terraced late Victorian or Edwardian cottages, a pair (**nos 19-21**) dated 1903, a row of three, and another pair, this last extended to one side in about 1997. They are all of yellow stock with red brick detailing, though **nos 29-31** have a red brick façade. These cottages are well preserved: all have their original roofs (both clay tile and slate) and their sash windows. Office use has had the result that their front and back gardens are now hard-standings for cars.

### **Bellingham Lane east side (south to north)**

- 10.70 This side of the grade II listed 16th-century building (nos 42B, 40 High Street) has its ground floor of stock bricks, with blue-painted fire doors, whilst the brickwork at the first floor is painted a terracotta colour. At first floor, some windows have poor quality timber frames and some are UPVC. Because of both its historic importance, and its role in the street scene, this building warrants better treatment.
- 10.71 Northward there follow fletton brick flat-roofed backside buildings servicing the High Street shops, one with a single storey white painted rendered extension featureless apart from a door, another distinguished by two large air conditioning unit. Part of the rear of Woolworths is a barber's shop; in the other part, the rear windows are boarded up and a tidy row of skips are parked on the pavement. **Nos 10 and 12** have shop fronts: they are of fletton bricks, flat-roofed, with large areas of glazing, poorly maintained. No. 10 is Rayleigh Town Council offices. One of the few surviving open backland areas in this block is partially walled and functions as a badly potholed parking space. The rear of **Berry's arcade** is typically of flettons; the arcade provides a valuable link with the High Street. The **ATS tyre** business occupies a fletton brick shed fronted by a spacious forecourt. Both this business and Berry's arcade animate what is a otherwise a fairly lifeless series of buildings. Beyond the ATS yard is a walled garden with a row of pollards belonging to no. 4 High Street, and then the Conservative Club car park.

### **WEBSTERS WAY**

- 10.72 This road was constructed at the edge of King George's Field in the 1950s to relieve traffic congestion in the High Street. Its west side functions as a service area for the High Street shops and businesses, whilst the east side is largely occupied by a car park. Despite recent improvements, the road has failed to acquire any streetscape that could be considered attractive, and is the most problematic part of the conservation area.

### **West side, north to south**

- 10.73 Initially on this side, there are a series of backland plots with outbuildings and car parking, separated to some degree by boundary walls, some of which are brick and of 18th- or 19th-century date and worthy of retention. Whilst this area may cry out for redevelopment, it does contain elements of the old backlands layout which should be respected.
- 10.74 To the rear of the Half Moon, there is a potholed car park with a flat-roofed garage. Adjacent is a car park with a better asphalt surface, and a newly restored black-painted weatherboarded barn to the rear of no. 7 High Street. A large new two-and-a-half storey brick building with good detailing constitutes the rear part of **Burley House** (*Fig. 44*), accessed by an arch in the High Street next to Kingsleigh House. This is an imaginative backland development which represents an attempt to humanise this part of Websters Way and to provide some architecture that relates to the frontage. Its long axis is basically at right angles to the street, and its considerable mass is broken up by gables, dormers and other features. However, it is essentially over-large, and being set a little back from the road edge, and having no architectural context inasmuch as it is surrounded by car parks and outbuildings, it is not entirely successful.





*Fig. 44 Websters Way, Burley House and unattractive backland area to the south.*



*Fig. 45 Service buildings in the south part of Websters Way present a contrast with the landscaped car park on the east side of the road.*

- 10.75 To the south, there is a fletton brick shed and a hotch-potch of flat-roofed sheds and car parks, lacking any coherent grain or relation to the frontage. This sort of confusing array of outbuildings, hard standings for car parking, service roads through to enclosed car parks, and boundary walls old and new in brick or concrete, continues southwards for over 100m.
- 10.76 This pattern is finally interrupted by a huge rectangular brown stock brick bunker, a service building to the rear of QS and Holland and Barrett on the High Street. Similar buildings, if not so big, of varying depth, enclosing hard standings fringed with skips and bins, continue down most of this side of Websters Way up to the junction with Eastwood Road (*Fig. 45*). A tidy parking lot behind nos 57-61 High Street is, however, a contrast. Just as these are amongst the best modern buildings in the High Street, so the rear service buildings are sympathetically designed in terms of scale and materials. There is another brown brick rectangular block behind Barclays Bank, down the side of which there is a footpath from the High Street through to Websters Way. Since the recent improvements, this is now aligned on a pedestrian crossing and an entrance into the large public car park. There follow more large rear service blocks up to Rayleigh Lanes, a three-storey block of no beauty but redeemed to some extent by presenting an actively used frontage to the road. The south side of Rayleigh Lanes is a completely blank fletton brick wall, flanked by a car park which corresponds in width to no. 91, the medieval building in the High Street. Here there is a path or lane between Websters Way and the High Street. It is defined by galvanised railings on the north side and a fletton brick wall to the south, and surfaced with concrete and then potholed asphalt nearer the High Street. This should be an asset to the backlands in this area, but its uncertain status, used by both cars accessing parking lots and pedestrians, and the bleak views through from the High Street, make it a depressing space (*Fig. 31*). The rear of Ulfa Court in Eastwood Road, which is not in the conservation area, comprises flat-roofed extensions, garages, external stairs, fire escapes. The beer garden behind the Spread Eagle on the High Street is little better, enclosed by a brick wall with spindly railings and containing barrels, vegetable oil drums, skips and bins.

### East side, south to north

10.77 Most of this side of the road, from the PCS Industries factory (no. 35) with its small shops and businesses operating from the factory, to the large public car park, is now excluded from the conservation area subsequent to a revision of its boundaries. Although these areas may not seem to fit easily into the conservation area, it is difficult to see how it might be possible to be pro-active about the appearance of a road if only one half of it lies within the conservation area. This is a decision that should perhaps be revisited, particularly now that considerable improvements have been made to the car park with the aid of Thames Gateway funding. It has been resurfaced, and provided with a new boundary wall with planting behind it and conservation area style lamp standards. From here there are views across King George's Field with glimpses of open country beyond, and also to the north of the church tower. Unfortunately the brick used for the boundary wall is not what one would expect in a conservation area.

10.78 North of the car parks and still in the conservation area, is **Websters Court**, a three-storey yellow stock brick building with red brick detailing and timber windows (*Fig 46*). It dates from about 1990, and has been designed to make a contribution to the appearance of the road. It has rather busy restless elevations and roofscape, but it does successfully contain this side of the car park and have a direct relationship with the street frontage. The row of recycling skips along its south side should be relocated elsewhere in the car park. The building is mainly flats but some businesses work from it.



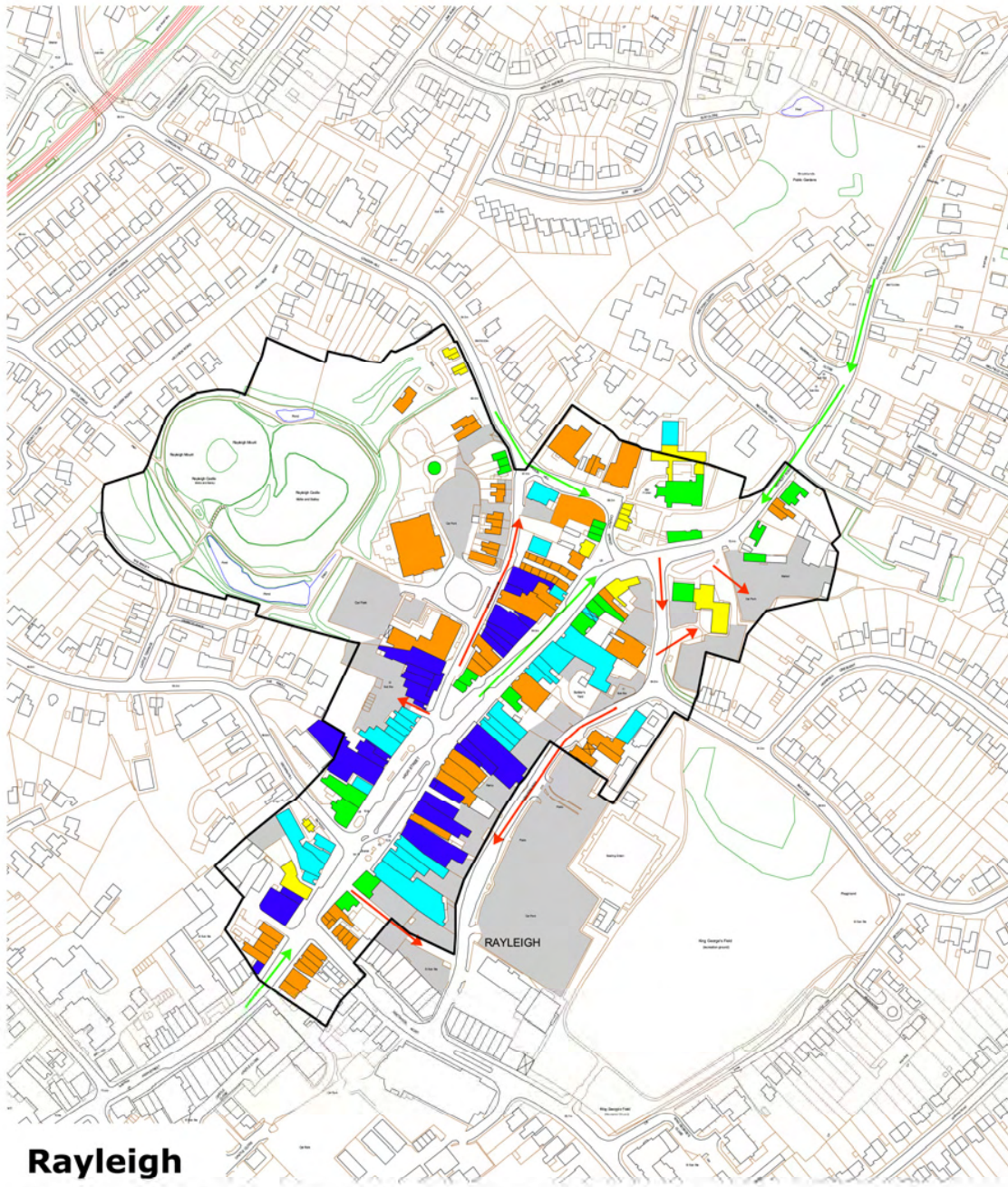
*Fig. 46 Webster's Way, Webster's Court.*

10.79 Beyond Webster's Court at the junction with Bullwood Road is the **CoombeWood Mental Health Resource Centre**, a 1960s or 1970s two-storey flat-roofed building built of brown fletton bricks. It now has plastic windows. Its scale fits in with its surroundings.

10.80 On the other side of Bullwood Road is an extensive area of car parking surrounding the flat-roofed and extensively glazed extensions to the rear of **Barringtons**. This area, and the listed building, would benefit from some careful landscaping. It is relieved only by a stupendous evergreen oak.

## **11. EVALUATION OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS TO THE CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA**

- 11.1 The principal listed buildings (church, windmill, Kingsleigh House, Francis House) are all landmark buildings which have a material effect on the appearance of the locations in which they are situated.
- 11.2 A map (*Fig. 47*) has been prepared assessing the contribution made by individual buildings to the appearance and character of the conservation area. Although a subjective process, the map can be a helpful guide in the planning process. Buildings have been graded on a scale of five according to the following criteria:
1. Negative, buildings of no architectural quality detrimental to the character of the area, either by reason of mass, design, materials or siting.
  2. Negative, buildings of indifferent design or unsuited to the character of the conservation area.
  3. Buildings which have a neutral presence in the conservation area, fitting satisfactorily into it, and buildings which have suffered unsympathetic alteration or improvement.
  4. Positive contribution through design, age, materials or detailing.
  5. Positive, listed buildings or landmark buildings.
- 11.3 *Fig. 47* also indicates good and bad views which within the conservation area, and the extent of car parks and parked cars which form negative townscape.



## Rayleigh

Map illustrating contribution to character

1 Negative

2 Negative

3 Neutral

4 Positive

5 Positive

Car parking  
(negative townscape)

Good views

Negative views

Fig. 47 Map to illustrate the contribution of individual buildings to the conservation area, good and bad views, and negative townscape as represented by car parking.

## **12. CHANGE IN THE CONSERVATION AREA AND CURRENT PLANNING PROPOSALS**

- 12.1 Examination of photographs held by the County Council of the conservation area dating from 1985, the time of the accelerated resurvey of listed buildings by the Department of the Environment, indicates that there has been relatively little change in the conservation area in the last 20 years.
- 12.2 The town centre, certainly that part of it contained within the conservation area, is a mature urban settlement, with little scope for further development. In terms of its infrastructure, in particular roads and parking provision, it is at full capacity. There is virtually no available building land, except in Websters Way and in some of the backlands. Redevelopment is another matter. There are buildings in the backlands and even the High Street which could be replaced to advantage.
- 12.3 Most planning applications made for the conservation area concern signage and shopfronts. However, in 2005 application was made to build fifteen four-storey flats to the rear of no. 91 High Street, adjacent to Rayleigh Lanes (ROC/446/05).
- 12.4 Rochford District Council commissioned Essex County Council to prepare an Historic Environment Characterisation Project for the district. This complemented work undertaken throughout the Thames Gateway in South Essex. This work places Rayleigh in zone HECA14, which is entitled 'Rayleigh'. This document identifies the dominant historic environment characteristics for this area, noting the topography, historic urban character and archaeological character of the area.

## 13. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

13.1 These are summarised on a map, Fig. 48.

### Public open space

13.2 Rayleigh town centre is not well endowed with public open space. It is important to look after what exists within the conservation area, and to protect adjacent areas, i.e., Brooklands Gardens and King George's Field. The latter has in the past been considered a possible development site.

### Rayleigh Mount

13.3 The condition of the Mount has long been a source of concern locally. The management of the site is examined comprehensively in the 2005 Conservation Plan. Its main recommendations relate to better management of the vegetation and trees and improved boundary treatments, in part to enhance the visual clarity of the monument. The sense of wilderness should be preserved, but a balance struck between that and management to reveal the shape and character of the earthworks. The motte itself has been partially colonised by trees, though successful efforts are being made to hold them in check: it is essential that this central feature remains legible.

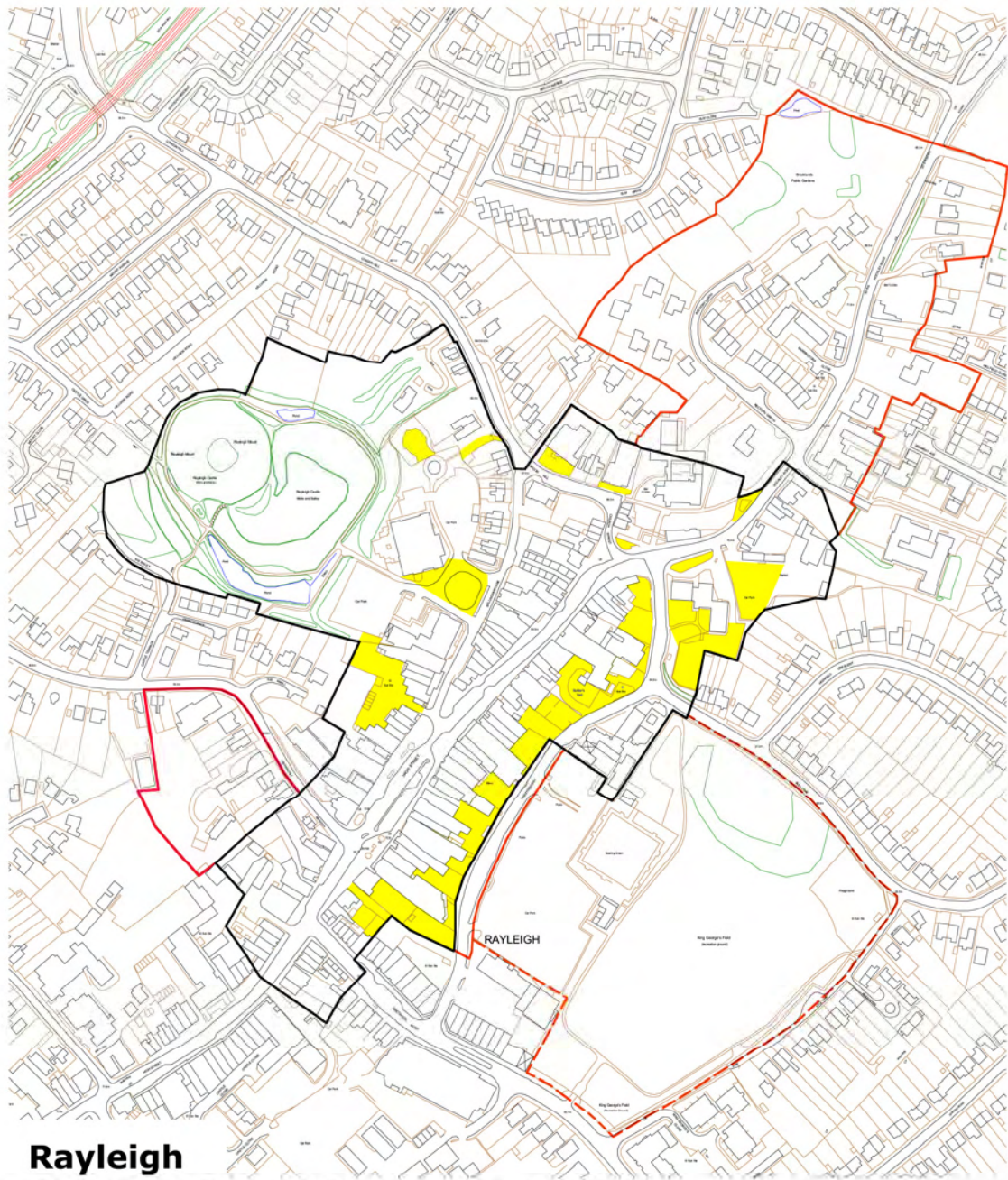
13.4 Views in and out of the Mount should be created by selective tree surgery, to try and re-establish a visual link with the town and its surroundings. However, such tree surgery should not lead to a loss in the overall amenity value of the trees on Rayleigh Mount or loss of screening for visually intrusive structures”

13.5 The asphalt paths round the base of the castle are not in good condition, particularly that round the pond on the south side. They should be resurfaced in bound gravel which would provide a more sympathetic finish.

13.6 The boundaries are particularly poor on the north side of the castle where there is a chain link fence which reveals piles of rubbish on the other side of it. On the south-east side in the area of the Mill Hall, the Mount is enclosed by intimidating railings. It is difficult, however, to see what can be done about that since the Mount is closed and made secure at night. However, the entrance by the Mill Hall needs to be given greater emphasis and presence, and needs to be advertised by a better positioned notice board (*Fig. 43*). The idea canvassed in the Conservation Plan to re-create the Barbican entrance is an exciting one.

13.7 The proposed use of the windmill as an interpretation centre for the Mount is to be commended, as it should help create an interrelationship between two sites that are quite unconnected except in terms of proximity. The unfinished sensory garden behind the windmill on the boundary with the Mount desperately needs to be brought to completion.

13.8 The space in front of the Mill Hall on Bellingham Lane is a prominent one at the edge of this group of public buildings and the monument. It is laid out with sculpture and planting (*Fig. 40*), but although it has the potential to be a piazza, it is in effect a roundabout and is not enhanced by the grim buildings opposite in Bellingham Lane.



## Rayleigh

Management Proposals for the Conservation Area

- Recommended boundary changes to the Conservation Area
- Areas capable of improvement through hard or soft landscaping

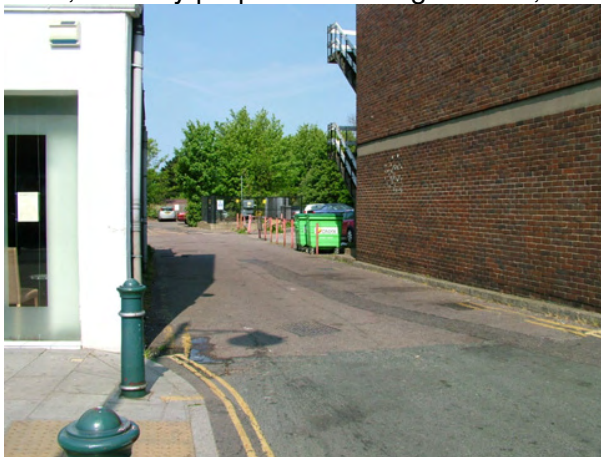
Fig. 48 Map to illustrate management proposals for the conservation area.

### The churchyard

- 13.9 Some of the paths through the churchyard are not in good repair. When the paths are renewed, their appearance could be improved by surfacing them with bound gravel instead of tarmac. Whilst there are many benches in the roadside area to the south of the churchyard, there are none in the churchyard itself. It is possible to have too many benches, but one would be of benefit to parishioners and pedestrians.
- 13.10 The hedge and trees on the north-eastern boundary of the churchyard would benefit from thinning and replanting. The grass area outside the east gate in Hockley Road needs turfing.

### Backlands and car parking

- 13.11 Backlands are a characteristic feature of historic town centres, but one vulnerable to unsympathetic use and development. They do, however, present an opportunity to preserve the old boundaries and spaces which have evolved behind street frontages and to use them in an imaginatively, creating footpaths, shopping arcades, courtyards, and places for small businesses of various types.
- 13.12 There are two types of backlands spaces: those open to the highway (Bellingham Lane, Websters Way) and those which are enclosed (west side of the High Street). The former impinge directly on the townscape; the latter do so when there are views into them, as for instance between nos 50 and 52 on the west side of the High Street (*Fig. 49*). The condition of the backlands is thus a material factor in the appearance of the conservation area, and the way they are used, and any proposals relating to them, need to be considered with great care.



*Fig. 49 View into the backlands between nos 50-52 on the west side of the High Street.*

- 13.13 Most of the backlands spaces in Rayleigh town centre are used for car parking which, being devoid of any landscaping, represents negative townscape. An exception is the Burley House development where there is a courtyard. The depot used by the dairy on the west side of the High Street is also a good backland use. The proposed development adjacent to Rayleigh Lanes could revitalise a derelict backland area on the east side of the street, as it is difficult to see how it could be viable without enhancement of its surroundings. Most of the beer gardens to the rear of the public houses are visible from the highway: all would benefit from tidying up and landscaping.



- 13.14 Car parking is a problem throughout the town, not only in Websters Way, but round the Mill Hall and Barringtons, down the sides of Bellingham Lane, in the backlands and wherever there is a hard standing. A solution would be to build a multi-storey car park, which could screen the cars and provide an architectural setting for them to complement the town centre. The obvious site for this would be Websters Way, but the opportunity for this was probably missed several decades ago.

### **Architectural style and design**

- 13.15 Rayleigh town centre contains buildings of many different architectural styles. The middle of the High Street is predominantly late 20th-century. Some of this is of indifferent quality and could be replaced with no loss, but some represents a brave if not always successful attempt to design in a modern style for a historic town centre. It should not be dismissed as totally inappropriate and not in keeping. There is too much of it to do so. English Heritage's guidance on conservation area appraisals says 'the twentieth century is often the most undervalued and vulnerable period of building' and says that the appraisal should recognise the contribution made by it.<sup>10</sup>
- 13.16 The recent Essex Design Guide type buildings (The Forge in London Hill, Homeregal House, Burley House, Websters Court) tend to share one of the failings of those of the 1960s, that of not taking sufficient account of their surroundings. They fail to respect existing scale, and do not always use the most appropriate materials. In short, an uncritical application of a Design Guide solution may not always be the best one. This is nowhere better illustrated than by Steeple High (57-61 High Street), a perfectly good building but one that sits uncomfortably with its modern style neighbours and which uses red brick, a material of which there is very little in this part of the street.

### **Uses**

- 13.17 A number of recently completed buildings are mixed use (residential, office, business and occasionally retail), a policy which should help maintain the vitality of the town centre. In retrospect, the decision to allow office use in the houses at the north end of Bellingham Lane has had an adverse effect on the Lane, inasmuch their gardens are now paved over and used for parking. Office use would be more appropriate over the shops in the High Street.

### **Streetscene, soft and hard landscaping**

- 13.18 The improvements to the High Street paving layout and street furniture have been successful and worn well. On a point of detail, it might be worth observing that the seats on the planters round the trees are better used than the benches accompanied by litter bins which stare out on the traffic, and which in some cases are effectively redundant.

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<sup>10</sup> English Heritage 2005, *Guidance on conservation area appraisals*.

- 13.19 There are two areas in the complicated junction at the north end of the High Street which would benefit from some redesign. The wide area of paving by the Half Moon (cf. 10.30) could do with being broken up in some way or softened with tree planting. The space south of the churchyard at the junction of the High Street and Church Street is unsatisfactory (cf. 10.17). There is a gated asphalt track which leads nowhere. The property boundary to Essex Countryside estate agents (2 Church Street) comprises a low brick wall which abuts a much taller one which encloses the west side of the approach to the lych gate. It would be an improvement to build the low wall up higher. This would screen the garage and car parking behind no. 2 Church Street, increase the sense of enclosure in the public realm. The wall could be softened with espalier trees.
- 13.20 In London Hill, there is bleak expanse of paving in front of the Job Centre which could be improved by landscaping.
- 13.21 Barringtons and Barringtons Cottages are listed buildings which occupy key positions at the junction of Hockley Way, the High Street and Websters Way, but are surrounded by large areas of car parking. Landscaping could help to improve the setting of these buildings and improve the views in this part of the conservation area.
- 13.22 There is a striking contrast between the two sides of Websters Way, the east side with the new boundary treatment to the car park, and the west with ugly service buildings and parking lots. The west side has no pavement for much of its length, and is relieved by only three unsuccessful areas of planting. There is scope for improving the west side by providing pavements, planting trees, and the construction of well detailed walls in brick to screen the service areas. The recycling point against the side of Websters Court should be moved away from the building to a new position in the car park.

### **Shopfronts and advertisements**

- 13.23 The quality of shopfront design and advertisements in the conservation area is not high and certainly does not reflect the tightly drafted policies SAT7-11 of the Local Plan First Review (now SAT7-10 in the Second Deposit Draft). No. 102 High Street (*Fig. 40*) is an example of how a building can be completely submerged in signage; the fascia of the adjacent Co-operative Funeralcare is an case where a good sign has been replaced by a poorly designed one. More rigorous implementation of these policies would benefit the appearance of the conservation area.

### **Maintenance**

- 13.24 Poor maintenance has been highlighted as an issue in the conservation area. Many of the buildings present a sad contrast with the good quality of the public realm. It is difficult to know how to address this issue, especially as the improvements to the public realm might have been expected to prompt more of a sense of pride in the buildings which face on to it. In the case of the modern buildings with facades partly in concrete, experiments might be made with cleaning the concrete or it might be painted as has been done in other high streets with buildings of this type, though this in turn would require maintenance.

### **Boundary changes**

- 13.25 The car park on the east side of Websters Way and King George's Field have recently been removed from the conservation area. The boundary is currently drawn running along the west side of Websters Way. If Websters Way is to be improved, then both sides of it should fall within the conservation area. There can be little objection to including the east side now that the improvements have been carried out to the boundary of the car park. At the very least, the boundary should run down the east side of the road.
- 13.26 The same argument could be used for reinstating the car park and field in the conservation area. If there is an aspiration to improve the conservation area, then this has an important relationship to it, occupying a key position to a problem area, Websters Way, and also representing a landscape which illustrates the former urban edge in past centuries where the High Street backlands met open countryside.
- 13.27 The northern boundary of the conservation area cuts through the extension to Holy Trinity church built in 1993 and clearly needs some revision. The developments which have taken place to the north of the church include the new rectory with its large garden with mature trees and some good Design Guide housing on the side of the ridge, where there is also some remaining open space, including Brooklands Public Gardens. Being virtually the last surviving undeveloped part of the hillside, this is worth protecting, particularly in view of the shortage of open space in the vicinity of the town centre. Brooklands itself has been demolished and rebuilt, but opposite it on the other side of Hockley Road is a listed thatched cottage and another listed house, Ruffles. A case could be made for extending the conservation area out as far as this, especially as the road at this point rises up and then dips down, giving an attractive view into the edge of the town. An extension of the conservation area in this direction has in the past been suggested by Rayleigh Civic Society.<sup>11</sup>
- 13.28 The south side of Crown Hill is occupied with late Victorian houses which preserve much of their original character. The conservation area could be extended down this side of the road to just beyond the Baptist church.

### **Additional planning controls**

- 13.29 In a conservation area, additional planning controls can be introduced by limiting permitted development rights through the use of an Article 4(2) direction under the Planning Act, such that planning permission would be required for certain defined categories of works. The original character of some of the 19th- and 20th-century buildings has already been altered, through replacement timber windows, concrete roof tiles, and the painting or rendering of brickwork. It is important to try and prevent its further erosion, to try and promote the restoration of original features, and to try and check the spread of UPVC, a material which is neither sympathetic in appearance or sustainable. Poor maintenance means that there will be a need to replace windows in many buildings in the conservation area; the opportunity should be taken to ensure that new windows are in character. The appearance of the properties which have undergone alteration would be greatly improved if new windows were inserted to the original

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<sup>11</sup> See Rayleigh Civic Society, *Over the years*, 1997.

pattern. Front doors also contribute greatly to the appearance of houses, and similarly controls to ensure that they are not replaced unsympathetically would be valuable. Boundary treatments have been highlighted in the appraisal as a problem in the conservation area. It is therefore proposed that the following works should require planning permission under an Article 4 direction:

- Alterations to a property affecting windows, doors or other openings, including the insertion of new windows and doors.
- The application of render or cladding to the external walls of a dwellinghouse, or the painting of brickwork.
- The erection or construction of any fences, gates or other forms of enclosure to the front or sides of a dwellinghouse, or the alteration of fences, walls or other forms of enclosure if they adjoin the highway.

### **Locally listed buildings**

13.30 The Replacement Local Plan proposes to drop the practice of keeping a local list of buildings of architectural or historic interest. Although local lists may not always have achieved a great deal, they do at least represent an aspiration to enhance the protection given to the historic environment. Abandoning them cannot be a step forward. The Heritage Protection Review also envisages local lists having a place in the protection of the historic environment.<sup>12</sup> It is recommended that it be reinstated, and that the following buildings be added to it:

- Nos 27-29 and 31-33 London Hill, well preserved pairs of 19th-century cottages
- Nos 20-22 High Street, Victorian gothic style building
- Nos 96-100 High Street, Central Chambers
- Nos 36 and 102 High Street, former bank buildings
- Nos 105-111 High Street, Dollmartons building

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<sup>12</sup> Review of Heritage Protection: the way forward, Department of Culture Media and Sport, July 2004.

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**APPENDIX 1****Listed Buildings in the Rayleigh conservation area**

TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

CHURCH STREET

7/71

Church of Holy Trinity

27.8.57

GV

II\*

Parish church. C12 Chancel, C14/C15 west tower, Nave, north and south aisles and north vestry. Circa 1517 south chapel and C16 south porch. C19 and C20 restorations and enlargement of north chapel. Ragstone rubble, flint and some brick. Limestone and Roman brick dressings. Red plain tiled roofs. South porch of red brick. East walls, gabled Chancel and north chapel, catslide roof to north vestry, crenellated parapet to south chapel, band under. Buttresses to south chapel and Chancel. Flint and stone chequerwork plinth to south chapel, moulded plinth to Chancel and north chapel. 4 light cinquefoil windows under square heads with labels to south chapel and Chancel, the latter with a small trefoiled light over. 4 light 2 centre arched window with label to north chapel and a small square chamfered 2 light window to north vestry, all C19/C20 or heavily restored. Blocked C15 segmental doorway to Chancel and a C19/C20 north vestry doorway. North walls. North vestry west return has a small trefoiled 2 light window and a small rectangular light. 5 buttresses to Nave and north aisle with windows between. That to east of 3 cinquefoil lights in a 3 centred head, the others, 5 cinquefoil lights in segmental pointed heads, labels over. The western window is above the blocked 2 centre arched north doorway. West return window of 2 cinquefoil lights under a 2 centre arched head, label over. West tower of 3 stages, crenellated with raised crenellated stair turret to south west. Gargoyles to parapet band. Second stage band. Moulded plinth with band over. All faces of bellchamber with 2 cinquefoiled lights under square heads, labels over. North, south and west walls with a trefoiled light under square head to second stage, west wall with a similar window over. West window of 3 lights with vertical tracery over, 2 centre arched head and label. The band of stone panels below this window formerly with shields, including the De Vere arms. In the buttress to south of this band is an ogee niche with label over. West doorway, moulded jambs, 2 centre arch under square head and label. South walls. South aisle has 3 windows between 3 buttresses to east of south porch, the western of 3 trefoiled lights under segmental head, the 2 eastern of 3 cinquefoil lights under segmental pointed heads. 2 centre arched south doorway, of 2 orders, shafts with capitals and bases, label over. West return window of 3 pointed lights in a square head. Crenellated parapet, red brick band under. South chapel, 3 buttresses and two 3 cinquefoiled lights under square heads. South porch. Early C16 red brick. Crenellated crow stepped parapet, trefoiled corbel table. Angle buttresses. Chamfered outer archway, 4 centred head and label. Niche over with chamfered 4 centred head set in a square outer order. Side walls each have a 2 light window in a square head with moulded label. Brick vaulted roof with chamfered diagonal and wall ribs springing from moulded corbels in the angles. Seats to each wall. Interior. Chancel. 2 arm crown post roof, moulded capitals and bases, possibly a copy. C19/C20 panelled reredos, carved altar rail and carved choir stalls. Square chamfered piscina to north wall. North and south walls with C15/C16 chamfered 4 centred arches. C15 Chancel arch of 2 moulded orders. Above the Chancel arch to north is a square niche, possibly part of the rood screen walk. C20 Chancel screen. Circa 1517 South chapel, south wall, recessed wall monument the base with 3 cusped and traceried panels, 2 with shields, moulded edge to top slab, rear wall has 5 traceried ogee niches with moulded pedestals, remains of foliated cornice and 2 shields, square headed canopy with cusped and panelled soffit and side shafts with moulded capitals and bases. Said to be the tomb of Richard Alen, the chapel built by him over the grave of his father William Alen. North chapel. Probably late C15 7 cant roof. C15 carved screen from Runwell Church. C16 glass in east window. Circa 1500 piscina in south wall, 3 centred head and round drain. Nave. C15 north and south arcades each of 4 bays with 2 centred arches of 2 moulded orders, 4 attached shafts to

columns and moulded capitals and bases. Roof of 5 and a half bays with 5 tie beams, 4 arm crown posts with moulded capitals and bases. Consecration crosses on west wall flanking tower arch. Inscriptions to south aisle piers. Red and yellow brick floor, other than to pew areas. C19 large octagonal stone font with fleuron and roundel decoration, central stem with 4 attached shafts, square base, wooden traceried pointed cover. C20 octagonal pulpit. Brass lectern. North aisle. 2 doors to rood loft stairs, the lower has rebated jambs and 4 centred head, the upper has a re-used cusped and sub cusped head. C15 brasses set in stone slab, Sir Thomas Barrington and his wife 1416 and 1420, man's head missing. South aisle. Screen in memory of Lt. Chapman killed in action 2.12.1917 with carved figure of a soldier on battlefield. 2 shields to splay of window east of south door. West tower. 2 centred tower arch of 2 continuous chamfered orders. Moulded 2 centre arched doorway to stair turret, nailed 3 board door with strap hinges and lock plate. C17 gallery. Tie beam carved with jewel decoration, hearts to spandrels on moulded wall posts. Royal arms on north wall of Queen Anne before the Union. Medieval dug out chest with traces of iron straps and hinges. Bell, on floor, mark of Robert Burford, said to be early C15, moulded "Sit Nomen Domini Benedictum", another old bell is still in the tower made by Thomas Bullisdon and possible arabic numerals, 1508, motto. Sancta Marguereta Ora Pro. There are 6 other bells, 2 recast 1790 and 2 dated 1897. The stone for the tower is believed to have come from Rayleigh Castle, a licence was granted by Richard II in 1394 to the people of Rayleigh for the carrying away of stone for repairs to church and building of a belfry. A document of 1396 specifies the building of the tower. A Short History of Rayleigh Parish Church. Rev. G.W. Hatch, Rector. Church Carpentry. C.A. Hewett. RCHM 1.

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TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

CHURCH STREET

7/72

Head stone immediately to east of west buttress of south chapel of Church of Holy Trinity

GV

II

Head stone. Dated 1730. Curved top with lower scroll ends. Central skull and cross-bones. Inscribed, here Lyeth Ye Body or Rebecka Merryfield, Wife of Thomas Merryfield of this Parish Who Departed This Life March Ye 4th 1730 aged 38 years.

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TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

CHURCH STREET

7/73

Nos. 1, 3 and 5  
(Wern Cottages)

21.8.72

GV

II

Row of 3 cottages. C17 or earlier origin with later alterations and additions. Timber framed, weatherboarded rear, C19 red brick facing, plastered and weatherboarded returns. Red plain tiled roofs. 3 rear gables. 2 storeys. 4 window range of mainly small paned vertically sliding sash windows, C19 shop bay to ground floor right. 3 panelled doors, those to right and left with top lights.

TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

CHURCH STREET

7/74

Nos. 4, 6, and 8

GV

II

Row of 3 cottages. Mid C19. Probably timber-framed, rough rendered. Hipped red tiled roof. 3 red brick chimney stacks. 2 storeys. 3 window range of mainly small paned vertically sliding sashes, that to ground floor left a 2 light shop window with segmental heads to each light. 3 C20 doors. Plaque to first floor reads T.U. 1850. Included for group value.

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TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HIGH STREET  
(east side)

7/81

No. 9. (La Romantica  
Restaurant )

GV

II

Cottage now a restaurant. C17 or earlier origin with later alterations. Timber framed and plastered. Red plain tiled roof. Left attached shaft chimney stack. 2 storeys and attic with hipped dormer. 2 light first floor window. C20 3 light shop window and glazed door. Rear wing. A false ceiling to ground floor prevented inspection of first floor and roof at time of re-survey.

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TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HIGH STREET  
(east side)

7/82

No. 11. (Holland and  
Barret Health Food  
Shop )

GV

II

Cottage, now a shop. C16 or earlier with later alterations. Timber framed and plastered. Red plain tiled roof. 2 rear red brick chimney stacks. 2 storeys. 2 small paned vertically sliding sash windows to first floor. Full width red tiled porch enclosing C19/C20 right and left angled shop bays and central small paned shop door. Rear wing. Storey posts and heavy arched braces to tie beams visible. Halved and bridled top plate scarf, heavy flat section ceiling beams and bridging joists. Originally with crown post roof, notches to each rafter pair visible but no full inspection of roof at time of re-survey. Angle chimney stack.

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TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HIGH STREET  
(east side)

7/83

Kingsleigh House

GV

II

House, now offices. C18 with later alterations. Red brick. Red plain tiled roof. Right and left red brick chimney stacks. 3 storeys. Parapet. Band to first floor. 5 window range of vertically sliding sashes, 6 panes to second floor, 12 panes to first floor, plain to ground floor, all with gauged brick arches. Central 6 panelled door, traceried round headed fanlight over. Leaded light frieze with house name. Reveal panels, fluted surround, fluted support to open pediment with dentilled soffit. Plaque relates: The Building Stands on the Site of The Bull Coaching Inn and Bull Baiting Garden, 1560-1791.



TQ 8090-8190	RAYLEIGH	HIGH STREET
7/84		The Old White Horse Public House
-		II

Public house. Early C19 features. Gault brick faced, grey slate roof. 2 rear gault brick chimney stacks. 2 storeys. 4 window range of small paned vertically sliding sashes with gauged brick arches. 2 similar windows to ground floor to right and left of panelled door, half column surround with moulded capitals, frieze, moulded flat canopy. To right is a segmental headed archway with double vertically boarded doors.

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TQ 8090-8190	RAYLEIGH	HIGH STREET (east side)
7/85		Town pump on pavement in front of No. 83
GV		II

Town pump. C19. Cast iron. Handsome urn shape on a panelled and moulded base, the lower half with foliate decoration and foliated spout. Moulded rings and foliate decoration to neck and top. Fixed curved bracket supporting the curved handle.

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TQ 8090-8190	RAYLEIGH	HIGH STREET (east side)
7/86		Martyrs Memorial Obelisk on pavement in front of No. 85
GV		II

Obelisk. Dated 1908. Marble obelisk on plastered double base with chamfered upper edges. The lower block with ornate cast iron drinking fountain to west face, this with semi-circular bowl and pendant, moulded head and lotus head fosset. Moulded marble base to obelisk "Thy word is truth" to west face. The obelisk polished with rough centre panels. Side panels read: "Erected 1908 by the Protestants of Rayleigh and District. The Noble army of Martyrs praise Thee". "On this spot suffered for the truth Thomas Causton 26 March 1555, John Ardley 10 June 1555, who, in reply to Bishop Bonner said, If every hair on my head were a man I would suffer death in the opinion and faith I now profess." "Also commemorating Robert Drakes, Minister of Thundersley and William Tyms Curate of Hockley, both suffered in one fire at Smithfield 24 April 1556." Situated between the pump q.v. 9/85 and horse trough q.v. 9/87 forming an important group in the former market place.

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TQ 8090-8190	RAYLEIGH	HIGH STREET (east side)
7/87		Horse Trough and Drinking fountain on pavement in front of No. 87
GV		II

Horse trough and drinking fountain. C19. Stone. Curved trough on stone supports, one side inscribed Metropolitan Drinking Fountain. Cattle Trough Association. Victoria Street. The north end is raised and curved with a flat head, the edges moulded, the north face has a spout opening and an iron cup ring, a moulded semi-circular basin at the base with curved and moulded soffit and pendant. Few of these drinking fountains survive in Essex.

TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HIGH STREET  
(east side)

7/88

No. 91. (North Thames  
Gas)

GV

II

House, now a shop. C16/C17 or earlier with later alterations and additions. Timber framed and plastered. Red tiled roofs. 3 red brick chimney stacks. Left range with gabled crosswing to right. 3 vertically sliding sashes with glazing bars and horns to first floor. C20 shop front in C18 style with continuous fascia and base, pilasters with moulded capitals and bases and 3 small paned bows, the door with lower panel, small paned upper glazing and side lights. Internally most features are covered but pairs of heavy jowled storey posts are visible to the first floor of the crosswing, a C18 roof to left range, side purlin pegged at ridge, and stick baluster staircase at rear.



#### SCHEDULE

The following building shall be added to the list:-

TQ 8090

RAYLEIGH

HIGH STREET

7/10001

No 93  
Spread Eagle Public House

GV

II

House, now public house. Late C16, with late C18 and early C19 additions. Timber framed and brick, painted render; roof of tile with gable facing to High Street. Two storeys, 3-window range. Three bays of older structure survive; C20 fixtures and decorations make the interpretation of the original plan difficult; good jowled posts exposed at several points in first floor. First floor reglazed in late C18 or early C19, with sashes of an original design. Early C19 canted bay to right side, ground floor. 4-bay shopfront of early C19 design to centre and left hand ranges, returning. Plane of front wall sets back to right of facing gable. Roof largely rebuilt in C19, although some evidence that original collars reused. Lower two-storey range to left rear; C19 stack to outer wall of return. Forms a group with no 91 High Street (qv), and the Crown Public House opposite (qv).

TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HIGH STREET  
(west side)

7/90

No. 42A. (Singer  
Sewing Machine Shop)  
and part of No. 40  
(Mr. B.'s (Textiles)  
Ltd shop) attached to  
north

II

Shops. C16 or earlier origin with C18/C19 brick facing and later alterations. Timber framed, painted brick faced. Hipped red plain tiled roof. No chimney stack. 2 storeys. Moulded eaves cornice. One small paned vertically sliding sash to first floor, C20 shop front to ground floor. Left return with end pilasters and 2 window range of small paned vertically sliding sashes. 2 circular cast iron tie plates. Of 2 builds. Rear ground floor room with heavy moulded bridging joists and flat section ceiling beams. Front room with heavy stop chamfered bridging joist and ceiling beams. Heavy arched brace tie beam to first floor, possibly with crown post over. Some heavy wall studs and side girt exposed. The adjacent shop with C20 ground floor shop bay extension and 2 small paned vertically sliding sashes has been extensively altered but retains its ground floor ceiling and to the first floor south wall are 2 wall studs covered with coloured foliate painting probably of C16 date, these attached to No. 42A.

TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HIGH STREET  
(west side)

7/91

Nos. 78 to 84 (even)  
Francis House  
(Lloyds Bank)

GV

II

Former house, now a bank. Early/mid C19. Plastered brick. Hipped grey slate roof. 3 storeys. 5 bays with central raised pediment. Parapet. Band to each storey end and pediment. Pilasters with moulded capitals to first and second floor. 2:1:2 window range of vertically sliding sashes, moulded surrounds, 12 panes to first floor and 9 panes to second floor, excepting central first floor double doors. These with anthemion and roundel motifs to cast iron balcony. 5 moulded openings to ground floor, those to right and left with 6 panelled doors, central small paned window with sidelights, small paned door to right and blocked opening to left now with service till. A plaque to first floor relates "Here Lived Edward Belcher Francis, Local Archaeologist and Benefactor who Donated Rayleigh Mount to The National Trust, 1850-1939".

TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HIGH STREET  
(west side)

7/92

19.12.73

The Crown Public House

II

Public house. C17 origin with C19 and later alterations. Timber framed and plastered, batten decoration to upper floors. Double range grey slate roof, red ridge tiles. Right and off centre left front range chimney stacks. 3 storeys. 5 window range between pilasters of small paned vertically sliding sashes, excepting first floor name plaque to second window. Ground floor second and fourth bays with segmental headed arches and recessed board doors with top lights. Tripartite small paned vertically sliding sashes to first and third bays, the latter bay also with recessed board door, small paned sash window to fifth bay.

TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HOCKLEY ROAD  
(east side)

7/93

5.8.81

GV

Barringtons

II

House, now offices. Mid C19. Gault brick. Hipped grey slate roof. 2 storeys. Coped parapet. North face. Centre bay breaks forward, central band. 5 window range of vertically sliding sashes, those to ground floor C20. Gauged brick arches. Central prostyle portico with paired Ionic columns carrying entablature. Double panelled door, light over. Angled bay to west face. Interior with simple spiral balustered staircase. Modern additions to south and east.

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TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HOCKLEY ROAD  
(east side)

7/94

14.11.79

GV

Barringtons Cottages

II

Row of cottages, now a shop. Probably C18. Timber framed and weatherboarded. Half hipped gambrel roof. 2 red brick chimney stacks to right. One storey and attics. 5 window range of various C19 casements and vertically sliding sashes, with pentice boards over. 2 boarded doors, that to right approached by steps. Door and window to left return.

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TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HOCKLEY ROAD  
(east side)

7/95

16.3.73

GV

No. 18. (The Ferns  
House)

II

House. C18 with later alterations. Timber framed, gault brick faced, weatherboarded returns and rear. Red plain tiled gambrel roof. Central red brick chimney stack. 2 storeys and attics. 2 segmental headed dormers. 2 window range of small paned vertically sliding sashes with shutters. 3 step approach to central 4 panelled 2 light door, moulded surround, frieze, moulded pediment.

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TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

HOCKLEY ROAD  
(east side)

7/96

22.6.84

-

Nos. 24 and 26

II

House. C18. Painted brick. Hipped double range red tiled roof. Left and right chimney stacks. Parapet. 2 storeys and cellars. 3 window range of small paned vertically sliding sashes with glazing bars, painted gauged arches with keystones. Central 4 panelled 2 light door, frieze, flat canopy on brackets. Round headed window to left return. Curved parapet to right single window range with 4 panelled 2 light door, panelled surround, frieze, flat canopy on brackets. Internally fireplaces and simple stairs of the period.

TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

BELLINGHAM LANE

7/101  
27.8.57  
-

Rayleigh Windmill  
(formerly listed as The  
II Old Windmill)

Tower windmill. Early C19. Red brick. 6 storeys. Fully restored externally 1970's, with sails, cap and fantail. The 2 lower storeys vertical, upper storeys tapering inward. Various 2 light windows with segmental heads. C20 double doors with segmental head over. Second storey double doors. No internal inspection at time of re-survey. Batsford Guide to Industrial Archaeology of East Anglia. John Booker.

TQ 8090-8190

RAYLEIGH

LONDON HILL

7/102  
-

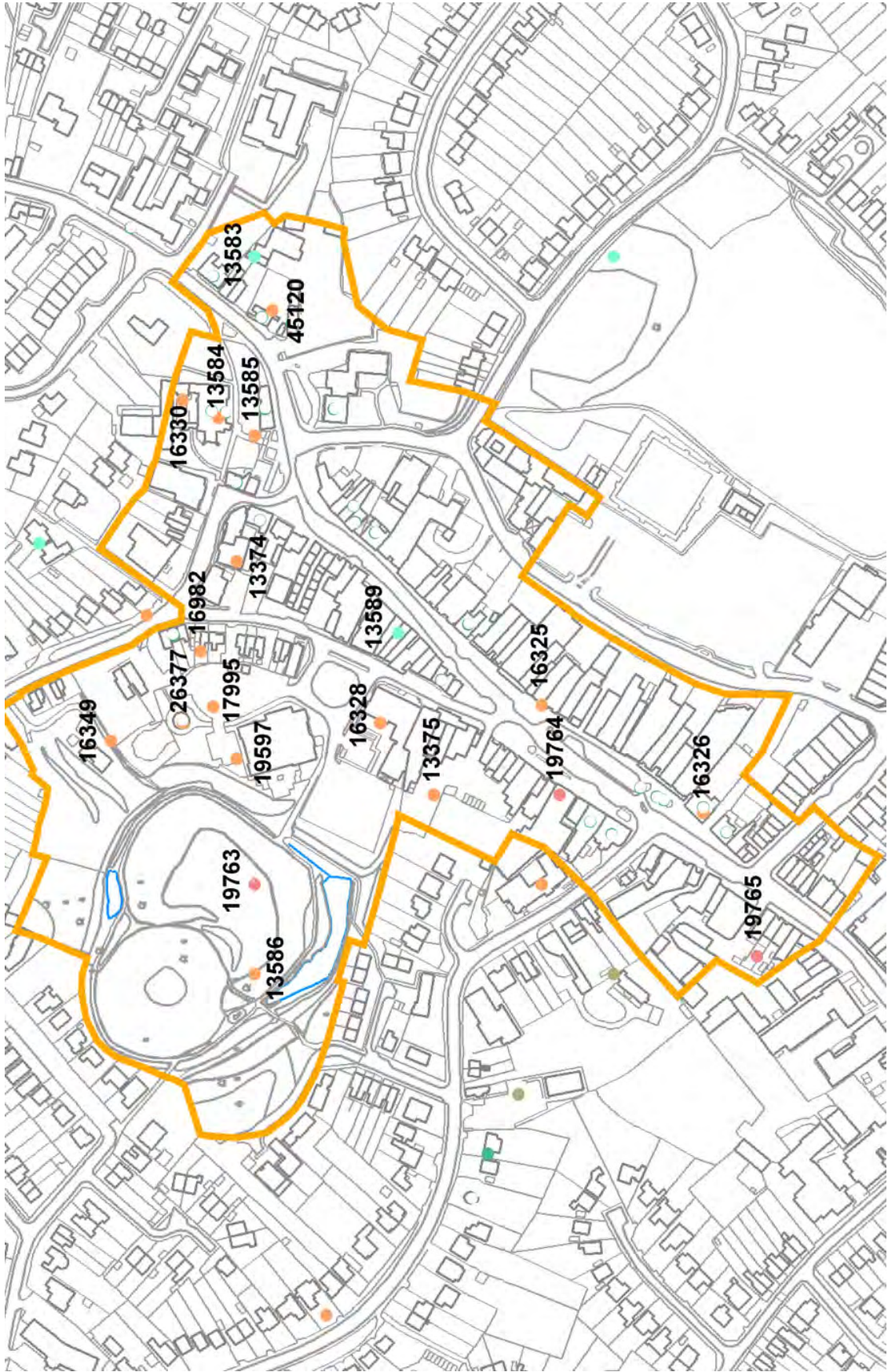
Nos. 13, 15 and 17

II

3 cottages, formerly a house. C17 or earlier with later alterations and additions. Timber framed and rough rendered. Red plain tiled roof, outshot at rear. C17 external left red brick chimney stack and off centre right red brick chimney stack with attached shafts. 2 storeys. 3 window range of C19 vertically sliding sashes with glazing bars, those to ground floor right and left angled bays. 3 vertically boarded doors, slanting porches on brackets. Interior features to No. 17 include, original doors with ironmongery, stairs beside chimney. Brick fireplace with wooden overmantel, central surround with moulded cast iron grate and fireback, said to be similar (back to back) in No. 17. Boxed in hogsback grate to first floor. Jowled ground floor storey post, chamfered bridging joists and flat section ceiling beams. At one time called The Green Bough Inn.

**APPENDIX 2      Essex Historic Environment Record –  
Archaeological sites in the Rayleigh conservation area.**

13374	Late medieval building identified in foundation trench
13375	Prehistoric sherd found in outer bailey ditch
13583-13585	Holy Trinity church
13586	Castle motte and bailey
13589	Roman? vase found
16325	Watching brief on foundation of 51-61 High street
16326	Building recording at no. 91 High Street
16328	1983 and 1985 excavations on Regal cinema site in Bellingham Lane
16330	Monitoring of extension to church 1993
16349	Excavation in 1969 on outer defences of castle
16982	Line of outer bailey ditch
17995	Archaeological features found in evaluation
19763	13th-century references to king's gaol, site unknown
19764	Site of smithy on 1st edition OS map
19765	Anchor brewery (demolished) on 1st edition OS map
26377	Windmill
45120	Post-medieval pit found at 18 Hockley Road





**Rochford District Council**

Council Offices South Street  
Rochford, Essex SS4 1BW

Telephone: 01702 546366

Facsimile: 01702 545737

Website: <http://www.rochford.gov.uk>