

Corringham Conservation Area



Character Appraisal

March 2007



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Introduction

Corringham Conservation Area was designated in 1973 and its boundary extended in 1986.

The designation of a conservation area should not be seen as an end in itself. It is important that conservation areas are regularly reviewed and the preparation of a character appraisal is a part of this process. An appraisal should be regarded as an opportunity to re-assess a conservation area and to evaluate its special interest and significance. It is the defining of special interest that is the main purpose of the appraisal. The appraisal should also provide a basis for making sustainable decisions about the future of the conservation area through the development of management considerations.

The core of the appraisal is the definition of the special interest of the Corringham Conservation Area and this is intended to provide a vivid, succinct picture of how it is today together with an evaluation of its key characteristics.

Reference is made to the relevant national and local planning policy framework. An outline is provided of the steps that have been taken to involve the local community and other interested parties in the preparation of the appraisal.

A boundary change is described and an indication of management considerations provided.

It is emphasised that no appraisal can ever be fully comprehensive and the omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.



Planning Policy Framework

A conservation area is an 'area 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*). Designation places certain duties upon local planning authorities. They must review the 'special interest' of their areas from time to time and also consider whether new conservation areas should be designated.

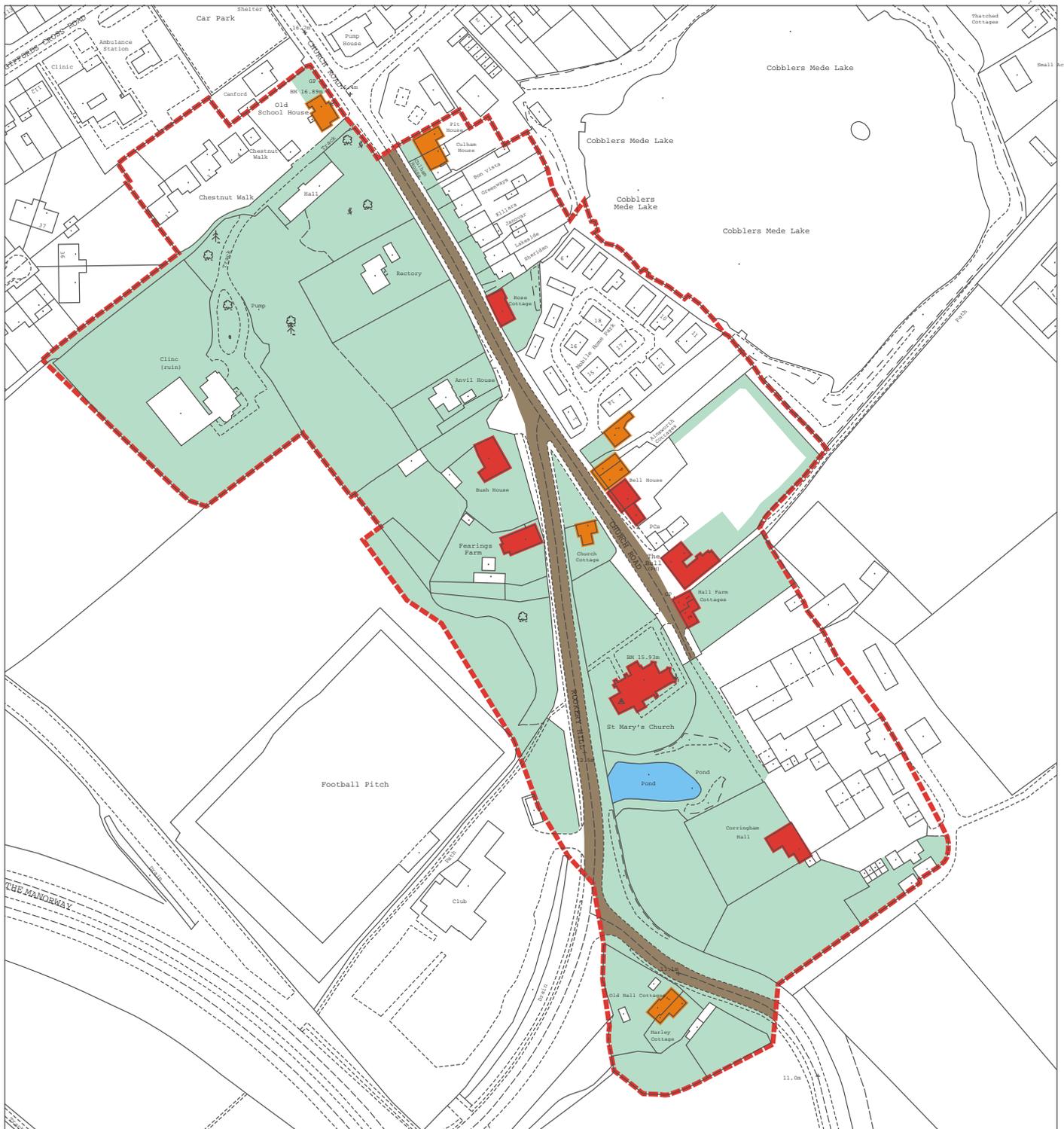
The Adopted Thurrock Borough Local Plan 1997 forms part of the development plan for Thurrock and provides the basis for decisions on land use planning. It contains policies regarding the designation, review and enhancement of conservation areas, together with guidance relating to the control of development within them. These Local Plan policies are outlined in Appendix 1.

The Council is currently preparing its *Local Development Framework*. This will be a range of documents containing policies and proposals to guide the future development and use of land in Thurrock up to 2021, including those relating to conservation areas. It will form part of the statutory development plan and will replace the Local Plan.

With regard to the control of development within conservation areas the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995* requires that planning applications be made for certain types of development which are elsewhere considered to be 'permitted development'. This includes various types of cladding; the insertion of dormer windows into roof slopes; the erection of satellite dishes on walls, roofs or chimneys fronting a highway; and the installation of radio masts and antennae. The size of house and industrial extensions that may be carried out in conservation areas without a specific grant of planning permission is also more restricted.

Corringham Conservation Area - Special Interest

(not to scale)



Legend:

- Significant open space
- Listed Building
- Highways of historic significance
- Significant physical/built form
- Conservation area boundary



Special interest of Corringham

1. Origins and historic development

Human activity has long been present in the vicinity of Corringham. Worked flints dating from the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods have been found. Pottery from the later Iron Age and Roman periods has also been discovered.

The early settlement of 'Corinham' was situated on farmland at the very edge of the marshes. It had a Medieval market and fair both dating from the 14th century.

The historic village was relatively compact being centred around St Mary's church, churchyard and Corringham Hall. It also included an inn, cottages and farmhouses. These elements of old Corringham are still evident in the plan form.



Chapman & Andre map (1777)

The historic road layout consisted of Church Road and Rookery Hill. Church Road was the principal route commencing at the gated entrance to Corringham Hall and running north out of the village. Rookery Hill formed a junction with Church Road and originally was a track serving as an access to the marshes. This historic road layout is also still evident in the plan form.

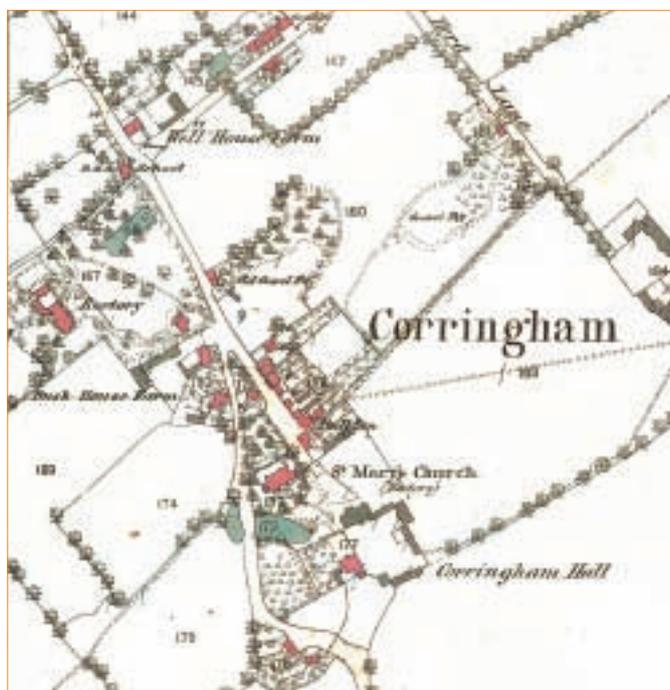


The Pond, Corringham



Church Road, Corringham

In the 19th century a large rectory was built in extensive grounds to the north of the village and west of Church Road. In this period a schoolhouse was also built adjacent to the rectory. Although it has accommodated some 20th century development, the grounds of the rectory are still evident.



19th century map of Corringham

To the east of Church Road and north of Rose Cottage, late 19th century two storey houses and 20th century bungalows were built. A caravan site, that was later to become a mobile home park, was created in the 20th century within a small previously extracted area between Ainsworth Cottages and Rose Cottage. To the rear of these developments the large Cobblers Mede Lake was created in the 20th century in an extracted area.

The large and extensive area of modern Corringham developed further to the north principally in the 1960's and 1970's. Although it adjoins, this has not materially impacted upon the historic village.

Adjoining farmland and the marshes have served to largely restrict the physical growth of old Corringham to the south, east and west. Exceptions have been the East Thurrock Football Club, which was established on fields immediately to the west of Rookery Hill and the modern farm complex that has grown at Corringham Hall.

2. Character analysis

General character and settlement form of Corringham

The historic core of the village is around the 11th century listed building (LB) St Mary's church and churchyard. The churchyard is an important central space with its graves, trees, walls, gates and styles. The mature trees are significant within the space. A large pond still exists to the rear of the church adjacent to the grounds of Corringham Hall.



St Mary's Church

Although the ancient lanes of Church Road and Rookery Hill are now of a road standard, they frame the central area. At the junction of Rookery Hill and Church Road, the residual green has some mature specimen trees in front of Church Cottage, which is also of special interest. The historic buildings, which frame the central green space, are important to the character of Corringham.



Junction of Church Road & Rookery Hill

South part of the Conservation Area

At the end of Church Road is the gated entrance to the working farm at Corringham Hall. Within the farm, is the 18th century brick Corringham Hall (LB), with an attached garden wall. The farm backs on to the open fields at the crest of the hill, which descends to the former Corinham Marsh, which extends to the River Thames and the functional engineering structures of the oil refineries.



Church Road from the entrance to Corringham Hall

On Rookery Hill are the early 19th century former farm dwellings, Old Hall Cottage and Harley Cottage with small front gardens behind a brick wall. These are important to the character.

East side of Church Road

Here there is a close-knit row of vernacular buildings fronting Church Road.



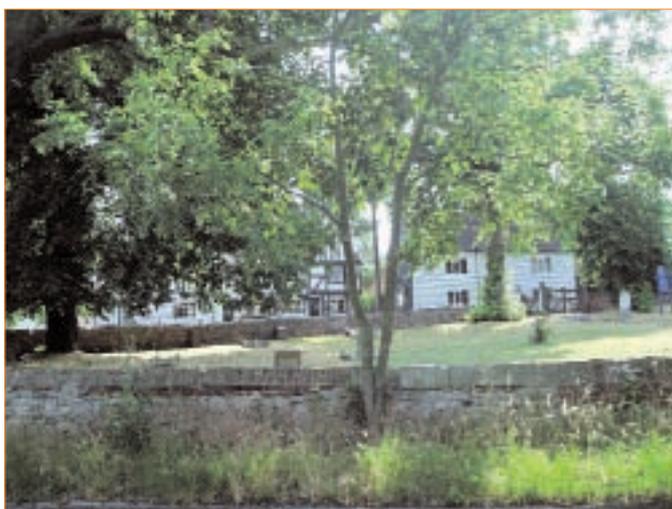
East side of Church Road

Nos.1 and 2 Hall Farm Cottages (LB) sit near to the very end of Church Road, with a large garden containing mature trees to the rear. A footpath separates Hall Farm Cottages from the building to the north, the 15th

century The Bull PH (LB) with its large rear yard, used mainly for parking and a small garden. This footpath crosses Church Road and continues over the churchyard. To the north of The Bull PH is the timber framed and weatherboarded Bell House (LB) with a garden with trees to the rear. The possibly 18th century Nos. 3 and 4 Ainsworth Cottages have a marginal front garden and behind a longer garden. The possibly 19th century nos. 1 and 2 Ainsworth Cottages are also important to the historic character.



The Bull PH & Hall Farm Cottages



View towards Church Road over the churchyard

Beyond Ainsworth Cottages is a mobile home park, set within a formerly extracted area. The brick house Rose Cottage (LB) sits on the edge of the road adjacent to the mobile home park. Its rear garden has mature trees.

West of Church Road and Rookery Hill

The fields to the west have become a football club. The trees and hedges on the edge of Rookery Hill are important and should be maintained. A public footpath travels to the west through this area.



Rookery Hill

Adjacent and to the north behind a wall is the 16th century Fearings Farmhouse (LB). Set back slightly further, is the 16th century hall house, Bush House (LB). These properties are set within large gardens with mature trees and hedges to the rear field boundary.

In the 19th century the church created a rectory to the west of Church Road on the land between Bush House and what is now Chestnut Walk. Although the rectory (subsequently to become the Kashody Clinic) has been lost, the grounds, garden and planting is mature. Not only has the rectory been demolished but the superseding extension to the Kashody Clinic has also fallen into critical disrepair.

Towards the rear field boundary, the residual parts of the iron frame are partially clad with corrugated sheeting and are steadily collapsing. There are two modern houses and gardens in this larger area, Anvil House and The Rectory. Nonetheless the trees and shrubs are still dominant on the west side of Church Road and are important to the special interest of the Conservation Area.



Kashody Clinic site (former rectory)



Old School House

Beyond Chestnut Walk, the 19th century arts and crafts Old School House, set behind a modest garden, is also important.

The late 19th century brick Pit House and Culham House have small front gardens and contain the space before the Fobbing Road junction and petrol station.

Building materials and details in Corringham

Although the village's timber frame buildings and oldest plan forms date from the Medieval period, the present external appearance of many of these earlier original buildings owe their external surface character from the later agriculturally prosperous 18th and 19th centuries. Although retained, these alterations hid a wealth of earlier historic fashion and detail.

The later use of render or re-facing in brick, the raising of roofs and the alteration of doors, porches and windows took place.

The basic building forms with later detail changes give Corringham Conservation Area its varied sense of historic detail, with the exception of the majority of the 20th century buildings and additions. The use of locally sourced materials and skills unites the character of the historic vernacular structures to give them their special interest.

In addition to the historic building forms, walls, roofs, doors and windows, the materials and details also have special interest.

St. Mary's church appears to be the only ragstone or flint structure in the Conservation Area. Timber frame was commonly used with all the pre-17th century buildings, which were subsequently rendered or clad with brick.

Timber frame

The Medieval and Tudor buildings, which remain in Corringham, surround the churchyard and are the earlier settlement. They are constructed with timber frames and have timber external walls. These are principally farming related buildings. There are two 16th century hall houses in evidence, Bush House and The Bull PH.

Corringham Hall Farm has a large functional barn, with a central threshing floor, constructed in timber frame with a tiled steep dual pitch roof and horizontal weatherboard walls. In a similar manner, farm and farmyard outbuildings are constructed in contemporary traditional forms and materials.

The granaries were smaller and notably stood on saddle stones. They could be one or more storeys had weatherboard walls and red tile pitched roofs.

The historic buildings on the east side of Church Road are within residential plots, the ancillary functions and buildings are clustered or attached to the rear and were smaller than the principal building. In the case of The Bull PH and Bell House there are attached single storey ancillary buildings on the road edge as well.

However, the other structures were constructed from the same range of locally available materials. If not originally attached to the main structure there would be a free standing structure, close to the brick lined well, which would house the kitchen.

From the 17th century, many buildings were plastered over and lime washed, concealing much of their framing. Plaster ornamentation develops from the 17th century onwards in the form of pargetting (incision or moulding of plaster).

Weatherboarding is also in use on farm buildings and as a later cladding for house external walls. This is usually painted white on the front or other important elevations and black or tarred on the sides or rear.

Brick

Hand made bricks come into use, apart from early chimneystacks, as external walling in the 18th century (red brick) as at Corringham Hall and in the 19th century (yellow stock or grey gault brick). Until the later 19th century lime mortar was used.

The Old School House is a fine example of polychromatic (many colours) brickwork and although modest, is executed with great skill and harmonious detail.

In the 20th century, re-pointing and repair often uses detrimental cement based mortar. Its use can often be seen in combination with the use of unsuitable protruding and thickened cement.

20th century

In the late 19th and early 20th century, cement and machine made bricks became available as a walling material.

Although previously lime render and weatherboard had been used to reduce the penetration of damp on traditional buildings, with the availability of expanded metal lath some buildings were encased in cement render.

Industrially produced materials such as asbestos and concrete tiles also came into use in the 20th century. Due to their interlocking, lower pitched roofs than before were constructed.

All of these forms contribute to the interest and character of Corringham Conservation Area although not all are externally visible. Earlier buildings are often upgraded with features such as lime washed render, sash windows or Victorian chimney stacks attached to the sides, rising from the ridge or parapet gables.

Community involvement

Involving the local community and raising public awareness was an integral part of the process of preparing the character appraisal.

This took the form of sending consultation letters to all residents and occupants in the Conservation Area requesting views on the following-

- What features are important to Corringham Conservation Area and make it special
- What adds to the character
- What takes away from the character

Included with the consultation letter was a questionnaire together with a plan of the Conservation Area and a summary of the considered character and possible issues.

In addition, the entire public consultation process took place online on the Council's website. Notice of the public exhibitions was given in the local press.

Corringham & Fobbing Community Forum was consulted, as were local ward members, the MP and other interested parties.

An exhibition with historic maps, photographs and documents was held on 27th and 30th September 2006 at St John's Hall, Corringham where Officers were available to talk through issues and answer questions.

Consultation responses affirmed the following issues:

- The importance of the designated Conservation Area
- The possible expansion to include other areas of special interest
- Involvement of the public in the process of character appraisals
- Involvement of the public in the production of management proposals
- The preservation and management of the special issues
- Any new proposal should respect and not detract from the existing character

Boundary changes

An important aspect of the appraisal process is the consideration of where the boundary of the Conservation Area should be drawn. The appropriateness of current boundaries should be regularly reassessed, perhaps on a five-year cycle (*Guidance on conservation area appraisals – English Heritage 2006*).

One change to the boundary of Corringham Conservation Area has taken place. The boundary to the south of Corringham Hall has been revised to follow more easily recognisable drain and building boundaries.

Management considerations

Conservation Areas are living environments, which are inevitably subject to change and evolution. It is important to try and prevent erosion of the essential character of the Corringham Conservation Area as a result of inappropriate changes and alterations.

The restoration of original features should be promoted. The spread of the use of UPVC, a material that is neither sympathetic in appearance nor sustainable should be prevented if possible. Poor maintenance means that there will be a need to replace windows in many buildings and in such circumstances the opportunity should be taken to ensure the new windows are in character.

The appearance of properties that have already undergone alteration would be greatly improved if new windows were inserted to the original pattern.

Front doors can also contribute greatly to the appearance of houses and controls to ensure that they are not replaced unsympathetically may also be valuable.

Exposed and prominent boundary treatments in the Conservation Area are important and their alteration has the potential to be a problem.

The Council will consider the production of design guidance with regard to matters of the nature outlined to assist residents and landowners in their choices.

Once a conservation area is designated, additional planning controls can be introduced by limiting permitted development rights through the issue of an Article 4(2) direction under the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995*.

Planning permission would then be required for the works that are specified. There is no intention at this stage to consider use of an Article 4 direction.

Nevertheless the Council reserves the right to consider use of a direction in the future if it is deemed necessary and appropriate to control serious loss of character.

In the event that such a decision is taken, there would be a formal process of notification and opportunity for those affected to support or object to the proposal.

Management Proposals for Corringham Conservation Area were published in March 2007. The Management Proposals provide an outline of general and specific issues relevant to the Conservation Area. Actions are recommended.

Appendix 1 - Thurrock Borough Local Plan 1997 – Conservation Area policies

BE22 – Conservation Areas – Designation, Review and Enhancement

'The Council will regularly review conservation area boundaries, amend them when necessary and examine the need to designate new conservation areas using the following broad criteria to assess the special interest of areas:

- (i) The origins and development of the topography of the area;*
- (ii) Archaeological significance and potential;*
- (iii) Prevalent building materials, character and hierarchy of spaces;*
- (iv) The quality and relationship of buildings in the area including the contribution of unlisted buildings;*
- (v) The contribution made by trees and other green features.*

Using the above criteria, the Council will also formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas'.

BE23 – Development affecting Conservation Areas

'Development proposals within, adjacent to, or affecting the Borough's conservation areas will be expected to preserve and enhance their character or appearance. The Council will not permit any development that would be in conflict with this objective.

In this regard, special attention will be paid to the following:

- (i) The retention and protection of all buildings, whether listed or not, trees and any other features which are important to the character or appearance of that area;*
- (ii) The position of new buildings, which should enhance the character and appearance of the area and be in scale and harmony with the adjoining buildings and the area as a whole;*
- (iii) The use of materials, which should be appropriate to the area and sympathetic to adjoining buildings.*

The desirability of preserving or enhancing the area will also be taken into consideration by the Council in the handling of development proposals which are outside the area but would affect its setting, or views into or out of the area.'

BE-23A-Demolition in Conservation Areas

'The Council will not grant consent for the total or substantial demolition of a building in a conservation area unless it can be shown to their satisfaction that the building is wholly beyond repair; incapable of reasonably beneficial use; or where its removal would enhance the character or appearance of the area.

If necessary, the Council will impose a condition on the grant of any consent providing that any development shall not take place before a contract for carrying out the works of redevelopment on the site has been granted for the development for which the contract provides.'

BE24-Article Four Directions in Conservation Areas

'In exceptional circumstances, including where there are real and specific threats to the character of the conservation area, and subject to approval by the Secretary of State, the Council will make direction under article 4 of the General Development Order to restrict permitted development rights in conservation areas.'

Appendix 2 - Listed Buildings in the Corringham Conservation Area as shown in the 17th list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (as at January 2007)

CHURCH ROAD Church of St Mary

Grade I

Late C11 west tower, nave, chancel, C11 and C14 north aisle and north chapel.

Ragstone rubble and flint, with Reigate and limestone dressings. Roofs are plain tiled.

West tower is of 3 stages with a pyramid roof. Tower arch is of one plain arch with chamfered imposts. Keystone on the east side is carved with a small head.

The north, south and west walls have windows renewed externally but retaining original features internally. Blind arcading in 2 upper tiers, with semi-circular arches.

Nave has early C14 north arcade, with 2 centred arches of 2 chamfered orders. Octagonal columns with moulded capitals and bases and responds have attached half columns.

South wall has 2 C19 windows and late C14 south doorway. Chancel has C19 east window.

North wall has an early C14 arch, 2 centred, of 2 chamfered arches, and a C14 window of 2 trefoiled ogee lights with tracery in a 2 centred head.

Lower part of south wall is possibly pre-conquest. South wall has 2 windows, one C14 and one C15. Chancel arch is C19. North aisle has C14 window in north wall and C19 doorway, also C14 north doorway with 2 centred arch.

North chapel has C14 east window, with 3 trefoiled ogee lights and modern tracery. North wall has C14 window. C14 west arch is 2 centred with 2 chamfered orders.

Vestry C19. South porch is also C19. Wall plate of north aisle has crenellated and is hollow moulded, presumably of the C14. 1843 restoration by Gilbert Scott. (RCHM 1).

CHURCH ROAD Rose Cottage

Grade II

Late C18 house in painted brick with red plain tile roof. Two storeys.

Parapetted verges and red brick ends. Two window range double hung vertical sliding sashes and central doorway.

CHURCH ROAD Bell House

Grade II

Early C18 house, timber framed and weatherboarded with some brick. Two storeys. Red plain tile roof. Original central red brick chimney stack. Two window range double hung vertical sliding sashes. Modern bay window. Moulded eaves cornice.

CHURCH ROAD Bull Inn

Grade II

C15 with later alteration. Timber framed and plastered. Red plain tile roof. Two storeys. Crosswing to south is jettied with double hung vertical sliding sash at first floor and canted bay with double hung vertical sliding sashes below. One double hung vertical sliding sash and arch bay to main range. C17 red brick chimney. C18 and later extensions at north end and at rear. (RCHM 2).

CHURCH ROAD
Hall Farm Cottages (Nos 1 and 2)

Grade II

Late C16 or C17 house, timber framed and weatherboarded, with red plain tile roof. Two storeys. Three window range, 3 light casements with glazing bars. Large red brick central chimney stack.

CHURCH ROAD
Corringham Hall

Grade II

Early C18 house, in red brick with flared headers, and red plain tile gambrel roof. Two storeys and attics. Originally rectangular plan with end wall chimney stack, now has later extensions at rear. Three window range, modern casements, 3 hipped dormers.

ROOKERY HILL
Bush House

Grade II

C16 house, with possible earlier south crosswing. Timber-framed and weatherboarded, with red plain tile roof. H-plan, with gabled crosswings. Three window range double hung vertical sliding sashes. Ground floor has casements and 3 sided bay with flat roof. Red brick chimney stacks. (RCHM 3).

ROOKERY HILL
Fearings Farmhouse

Grade II

Late C16 house. Timber-framed and plastered, with red plain tile roof.

Three bays and chimney bay. Two storeys. Three window range, modern casements. Modern porch.

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