

Boreham Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base

EB5 Boreham Protected Lanes

Many countryside roadways in Essex date back to the medieval period or earlier. Some lanes existed in Saxon times and it is likely that many roads and lanes were formed long before that. They connect villages, hamlets and scattered farms and cottages and many linked settlements to arable fields, pasture and other resources. They probably developed from unpaved cart tracks track-ways, following hedgerows, ditches or banks in the landscape. In Essex, some of these historic lanes have been given protected lane status. Boreham Parish contains two protected Lanes, a section of Church Road Boreham and Birds Farm Lane.

Chelmsford City Council Policy DC15 refers to the Protected Lanes policy: “2.3 Protected Lanes Policy in Chelmsford Borough The Chelmsford Borough Local Development Framework 2001 – 2021, Core Strategy and Development Control Policies. It was adopted in February 2008 and contains the following development policy (DC15) and supporting text for Protected Lanes: Planning permission will be refused for development that would have an adverse environmental impact upon Protected Lanes as defined on the Proposals Map. Any proposals which would give rise to a material increase in the amount of traffic using Protected Lanes will not be permitted. Within the Borough there are a number of country lanes and byways which are of historic and landscape value and which make an important contribution to the rural character of certain areas. The Borough Council intends to protect these lanes and byways by preserving, as far as possible, the trees and hedgerows, banks, ditches and verges which contribute to their character, and by resisting development proposals which have a detrimental effect upon them.”

Further information is found in the “Protected Lanes Study for Chelmsford Borough Council: Summary Report” dated September 2009 by Adrian Gascoyne and Teresa O’Connor.

Although Chelmsford City Council Policy DC15 has expired, the value and status of protected lanes continues to be recognised and is reflected in local planning policies. The classification of protected lanes was revisited by Chelmsford City Council in 2017 and generated Policy S3 and Policy DM14 following the adoption of the CCC Local Plan in 2020. These policies used the same methodology as the 2009 Protected Lanes Report.

This designation is also consistent with the objectives of the NPPF with particular reference to paragraph 104.

Church Road: Church Road, Boreham is, because of its historic interest and landscape value, designated from Shottesbrook to the river Chelmer Bridge (known locally as “Black Bridge”), as a Protected Lane.

In Nov 2017 - Chelmsford City (Additional Lanes) Report - Appendix 13 -PLACE SERVICES EDB 088, Essex County Council’s Place Services Historic Environment Team were commissioned by Chelmsford City Council to assess 6 Lanes of which 3 were original part of Protected Lanes Report 2009. The Protected Lanes scoring system used for Additional Lanes survey For Chelmsford City Council in November 2017 uses a consistent scoring approach as detailed in Appendix 13 Places Services Report EDB 088 and therefore alignment with original Protected Lane Survey Report September 2009 and as such Church Road was originally scored highly at 17 as a collective score across 3 stages of 7 assessment criteria. These scores no longer apply however, Church Road met Protected Lane status and as such is recognised and listed for protection under Protected Lanes Policy DC15.

Birds Farm Lane: Birds Farm Lane in the north of Boreham Parish links Waltham Road and Noakes Lane. It is designated as a protected lane with a collective score of 15 in the Protected Lanes Report 2009 across the assessment criteria and is particularly valued for its historic integrity and biodiversity. These scores no longer apply however, it too is worthy of protected lane status.

Protected Lanes bordering Boreham: Boreham Parish Council is bordered by parishes with protected lanes. Little Baddow particularly has a number of protected lanes and make specific provisions in the Regulation 14 draft of their Neighbourhood Plan to ensure future development does not impact these negatively. They are also seeking protected lane status for other lanes in their parish. Similarly, Danbury in its Regulation 14 draft of their Neighbourhood Plan lists protected lanes as heritage assets and includes policies/measures to protect these lanes and non-designated lanes which are listed. These examples support the position in Boreham that roads with protected lane status should be considered as heritage and protected from detrimental developments. The map below shows the location of Boreham's protected lanes.

