



Colchester Conservation Area 4: North Station Road and Environs Character Appraisal and Management Proposals

Consultation Draft

January 2023



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Executive Summary

The report begins with a general introduction which explains the context for the preparation of this study and its purpose, followed by an overview of the statutory and policy framework for the designation, management, and protection of Conservation Areas, a account of the Conservation Area's designation and a note on the methodology for the preparation of the study.

Part One of the study comprises that Character Appraisal which is set out in five Chapters. The first Chapter provides an overview of the Conservation Area with some key information that assist its identification in its wider context. A longer section reviews its history and development which is fundamental for the analysis that follows. Chapter 2 includes the Character Analysis that examines the key components which define the appearance, character and quality of the Conservation Area.

For the purposes of the study, the Conservation Area is subdivided in five Character Areas whose selection reflects the pattern of the area's development and differences in character and appearance. Chapter 3 explores the topics of the previous chapter in detail for each Character area. The detailed review feeds into the summary

of each area's strengths and the identification of the main challenges and opportunities for the area. Chapter 5 that uses the information from the previous sections to assess the special interest of the Conservation Area, summarise its significance and appraise its condition.

Part Two presents the Managements Proposals that were informed by the analysis in Part One. These are measures to conserve the special qualities of the area.

Summary of Special Interest

Colchester Conservation Area 4: North Station Road derives its special interest from its diverse character which illustrates its rich history. North Station Road that forms its backbone was historically the main access road into Colchester from the north. Evidence of occupation to the north of the Colne dates back to the Late Roman Era. In the following centuries, the southern end of the study area was one of the main areas of extramural expansion, comprising dwellings and industrial uses associated with the river. The arrival of the railway in 1843 triggered further expansion to the north and on new roads laid either side of North Station Road. The area was greatly affected by the construction of highways infrastructure and pressure for new development in the 20th Century.

The pattern of its development is evidenced in the eclectic mix of its building stock which comprises examples dating from the Fifteenth to the late 20th Century. The mix of commercial and residential uses and their distribution within the study area illustrate further its history and result in discernible character areas with different ambience and appearance. Various historic uses (hotels and pubs), institutional and communal buildings and

infrastructure (North Primary School, former Railway Mission, former Open Air Swimming Pool) provide evidence for socioeconomic history of Colchester in the 19th Century and the role of the study area in this development. Finally, the area has great potential for regeneration that can better reveal and enhance its special interest.

1.0.Introduction

1.1. Background and Purpose

Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967 when it was recognised that whole areas could merit special protection, in the same manner that individual buildings were protected by listing. This legislative framework was further enhanced by the Local Government 1972 and Town and Country Amenities Act 1974.

In 1990 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas became for the first time the subject of a separate Act under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Act defines Conservation Areas as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” (Section 69) and provides the statutory framework for their designation and management.

Section 69(1) sets out that Local Planning Authorities shall determine areas which it is desirable to preserve and enhance and designate them as Conservation Areas. According to Section 69(2), Local Planning Authorities are required to review their past activities in their area, including existing Conservation Areas, and to

designate more Conservation Areas. Section 71(1), (2) and (3) place a duty upon Local Planning Authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas and consult the public in the area in question, taking account of views expressed. Section 72(1) prescribes that, in the exercise by Local Planning Authorities of planning functions within the Conservation Area ‘special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area’.

The established practice for the designation and management of a Conservation Area is based on a two-stage approach that includes:

- a. Conservation Area Character Appraisal which includes an analysis of the area, to define its special interest that merits its designation, as well as describe and evaluate the contribution made by the different features of its character and appearance.
- b. Conservation Area Management Proposals which use the conclusions of the Character Appraisal to set out policies and practical steps that enable the Local Planning Authority and the

local community to protect and to enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area.

Normally, these documents are prepared once a new area is identified for potential designation, to demonstrate that the area meets the criteria and inform future decision-making.

To conform with their statutory duty to review their past activity regarding Conservation Areas, Local Planning Authorities must revisit, update and expand on these documents on a regular basis or when special circumstances arise. This review should confirm or redefine the special interest that warranted the Conservation Area's designation, identify the requirement for potential boundary revisions and inform a revision of the Management Proposals.

North Station Road and Environs Conservation Area (Colchester Conservation Area 4) was designated as a Conservation Area in April 2019. A Consultation Draft Character Appraisal and Management Proposals was prepared prior to the designation, supplemented by an Addendum that covered an additional area that were included in the proposed boundary. The designation of

the Conservation Area was approved on the basis of these documents that were formally adopted in the process.

Section 1 of Colchester Local Plan 2017-2033 was formally adopted on the 1 February 2021, followed by Section 2, adopted on 4 July 2022. Section 2 Includes Local Plan Policy NC2: North Station Special Policy Area whose objective is the regeneration of the area through the enhancement of the public realm, the improvement of its connectivity to the surrounding areas and the balanced mix of uses. The effective protection and management of the Conservation Area can play a key role in the delivery of these objectives.

The adopted Management Proposals prescribed the review of the Conservation Area reports every five years after the formal designation. The process was expedited in response to the adoption of the Local Plan and the launch of a wider set of projects and initiatives that promote growth and urban regeneration for the city of Colchester. Moreover, the experience from the management of the Conservation Area in these first years after its designation provided the Council valuable insights into the pressures and

opportunities for the area which warrant a review of the Management Proposals.

The aim of the present report is to:

- merge, incorporate and expand on the reports that informed the designation of the Conservation Area in 2019, to present a comprehensive analysis of the study area which was previously examined in two stages.
- review the adopted boundary and propose an amendment where it is regarded pertinent.
- re-assess the condition of the study area on the basis of a new survey and re-examine its strengths, challenges and opportunities.
- confirm its special interest that justifies its designation;
- update and expand on the Management Proposals, including the recommendation for an Article 4 Direction.

1.2. Statutory and Policy Framework

1.2.1. Legislation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Acts 1990 provides the statutory framework for the designation and protection of Conservation Areas.

Other legislation that prescribes additional controls includes:

- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990: sets out the requirement to obtain planning permission for the demolition of unlisted buildings (that meet certain criteria) in Conservation Areas (Section 196D).
- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 which restricts certain permitted development rights (works that can be carried out without Planning Permission) .
- The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 restricts certain categories of advertisement which have 'deemed consent' restricted within Conservation Areas.

More information on these planning controls can be found in Appendix I.

1.2.2. National Policies and Guidance

Further context is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), Section 16, Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment Par. 189 -208 and the Planning Policy Practice Guidance Par. 001 -021.

1.2.3. Local Policies

- Section 2 of Colchester Local Plan 2017-2033, i Policy NC2: North Station Special Policy Area and;
- DM16: Historic Environment;
- Colchester North Station Master- plan SPD [July 2009];
- Fixing The Link [2017].

1.2.4. Article 4 Direction

As discussed in Section 1.2.1, certain permitted development rights are restricted within Conservation Areas. Other rights can be removed by a mechanism known as an “ Article 4 Direction”. An Article 4 Direction is specifically tailored to protect key features that contribute positively to the Conservation Area’s special

interest. The use of the Direction is not intended to prevent the execution of the works covered by its provisions. It generates the requirement for a planning application prior to the execution of these works (which normally would not require permission) so their details can be considered in the context of an application and assessed for their potential impact on the character of the Conservation Area. When a Local Planning Authority decides that an Article 4 Direction should be made, then it must consult the public and take into account the views of residents and property owners prior to deciding whether to pursue the Direction.

1.3 History of Designation

In 2018, a Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals was prepared in support of the proposal to designate the Conservation Area under the title of the “Colchester Conservation Area No 4: North Station and Environs”. Colchester Borough Council’s Local Plan Committee approved a public consultation on the Consultation Draft of the report on March 2018. The Committee also suggested the extension of the proposed Conservation Area boundary, to include Belle Vue Road, the northern end of North Station Road (between The Albert Roundabout and The Essex Hall Road Roundabout), Digby House and the Riverside Walk immediately to its east. A Character Appraisal that covered these areas was drafted and became available for the public consultation exercise as an Addendum to the main report (“Belle Vue Road, Northern end of North Station Road and Digby House and adjacent Riverside Addendum”).

The six-week formal public consultation commenced on 30 April 2018 and was completed on 10 June 2018. The results of the public consultation exercise did not call for any amendments and the designation of the Conservation Area was approved on the basis of the draft Consultation Reports by the Local Plan Committee on 8 April 2019 with the boundary shown on Map 01.



1.4_Methodology

The reports that informed the designation of the Conservation Area were finalised in February 2018, following research and surveys carried out in December 2017 / January 2018. The present report was drafted in November 2022, using research and data collected in September / October 2022.

The study was carried out in accordance with the methodology that is set out in Historic England's guidance "Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition, 2019)".

Additional relevant Historic England guidance documents that were useful for the study include:

- Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments (2019);
- The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition, 2017);
- Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage: Historic England Advice Note 7 (Second Edition, 2021).

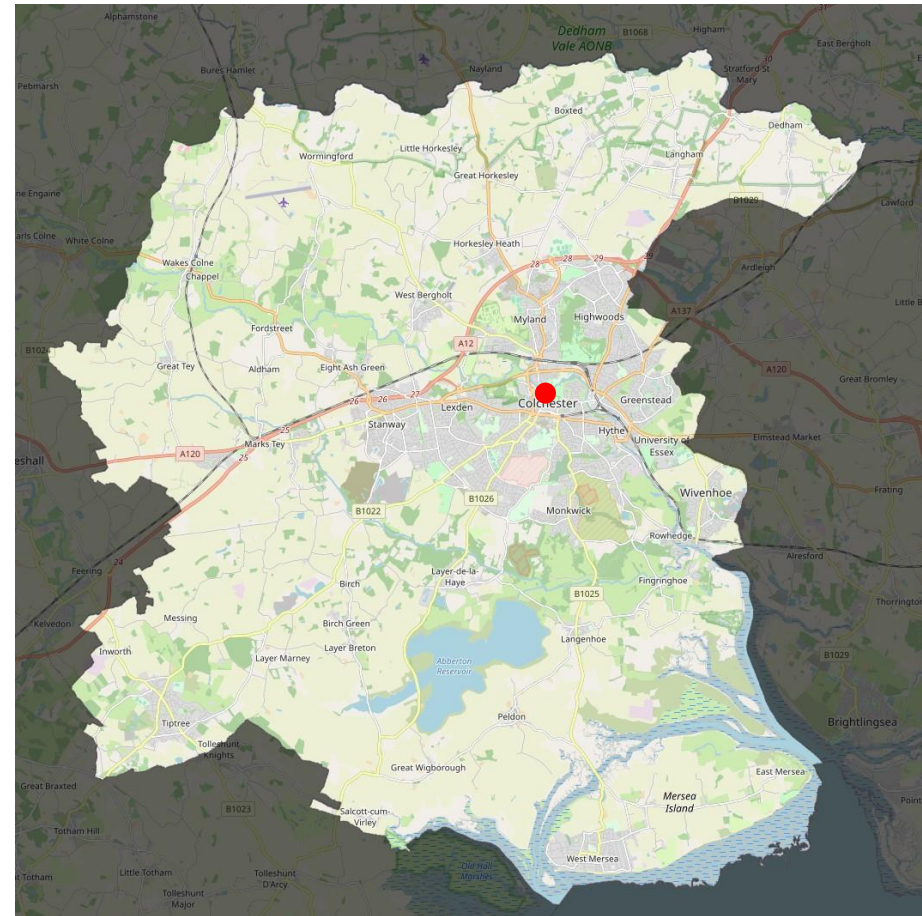
Part One: Character Appraisal

2.0.Overview

2.1. Location and Setting

North Station Road and Environs Conservation Area is an urban conservation area to the north of Colchester city centre (Map 02). Set in north-east Essex, Colchester is built on the river Colne and to the south of the A12 trunk road which links the city to London and Chelmsford to the south-west and Suffolk to the north.

North Station and Environs Conservation Area is a linear Conservation Area that covers an area of **X hectares** between the historic town centre and Colchester's main Railway Station (North Station) (Fig.01). To the south, its boundary meets the northern boundary of Colchester Conservation Area No.1 (Town Centre). The stretch of North Station Road between Middleborough and Essex Hall Roundabout forms the “spine” of the Conservation Area, intersecting with the river Colne and the northern bypass (Colne Bank Avenue and the Albert Roundabout). The easternmost end of the Conservation Area meets Castle Park, while the western end encloses the former Open Air Swimming Pool on the Colne and terminates before the Colne Avenue Roundabout.



Map.02: The location of the Conservation Area in the Borough marked by the red dot (Map data © OpenStreetMap).



Fig. 1: Aerial view of the Conservation Area in its context(©Google Maps)**Boundary to be added.**

The Conservation Area is situated within modern Colchester that has developed around the historic walled town. North Station Road has been historically the main northern road corridor into Colchester. Until the first half of the 19th Century, development within the study area was limited to its southern end. The arrival of the railway in 1843 and the opening of North Station triggered the expansion to the north end of the road and on new streets laid behind the street frontage. The construction of the northern bypass (Cymbeline Way, Colne Bank Avenue, Cowdray Avenue and St Andrew's Avenue) in 1933 was another notable change which prompted further growth to the east, outside the boundary of the Conservation Area. After World War II, the city expanded beyond the railway line towards Mile End and Braiswick but not in the land between Cymbeline Avenue and the railway line known as Cymbeline Meadows.

The Conservation Area is set immediately to the north Colchester's historic city centre. Castle Park extends to the southeast. To the east, the study area is bound by post-war residential development either side of Cowdray Avenue with retail parks further to the north and north-east. Two post-war residential estates are located

between its northern boundary and North Station The A134 creates a boundary with Cymbeline Meadows to the northwest. The river encloses the Conservation Area to the west and south-west with modern residential development that lines its banks.

2.2.Geology and Topography

The surface geology of the zone comprises primarily Alluvial Deposit with small areas of London Clay at the north and south end. The Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2005) notes that the Borough's rivers and their valleys lie on alluvium composed of clay, silt, sand and gravel which are products of subsequent post-Anglian fluvial erosion by the rivers and the diversion of the river Thames from through the Mid-Essex Depression and Colchester to its present location,

For most of its part, the boundary of the Conservation Area follows North Station Road running in a north-south direction. The river Colne traverses the southern end of the study area in the east-west direction. Historically the area along the banks of the river further up and down-stream was, and remains, flood plain.

The Conservation Area extends over a broadly flat land which rises towards North Station and Mile End (beyond its northern boundary) and North Hill (outside the southern boundary). These changes in the topography are mainly appreciated from certain viewpoints that afford open views towards these areas .

Within the Conservation Area, the only notable changes of level result from the combination of the natural landscape and man-made infrastructure. At North Bridge, there is a level change between the pavement and the Riverside Walk which enhances the sense of departure from the busy road towards the tranquil environment of the river path. At the opposite end of the Conservation Area, the sunken level of the former Open Air Swimming Pool on the bank of the Colne creates a sense of enclosure and seclusion from the adjacent busy roads .

2.3 History and Development

2.3.1. Early History

North Street, later renamed North Station Road, has been historically the main northern access road to Colchester. The road led northwest through Mile End to Nayland and by the Middle Ages continued to Sudbury (Suff.) and Bury St. Edmunds.

North Bridge, first recorded in 1189, stood on the site of a Roman bridge or ford. Masons were to build a new bridge, perhaps North or East bridge, in 1394, but the medieval North and East Bridge were later said to have been made of timber. While minor bridges were maintained and repaired by inhabitants of the parishes in which they lay, North and East Bridge, together with Hythe bridge, were in the care of the Borough. Repairs to North Bridge were recorded in 1580, 1631 and 1737. Eventually part of the Bridge collapsed in 1775 and was rebuilt in brick by 1781.

By c. 1500, the town had grown with extramural expansion in ribbon developments along the major roads, notably East Hill and East Street, Middleborough and North Street, and Magdalen Street, and in more compact suburbs outside South gate and Head gate.

Although there are records of houses outside North gate c. 1242, and beyond North bridge by the 1270s, as well as various records of building activity and property sales from the 16th, 17th and 18th century, the evidence from historic maps suggests that the development at North Street was limited to Middleborough and the area immediately to the north of the Bridge until the late 18th century.

Whilst John Speed's 1610 map records densely developed frontages on East Street and Magdalene ("Maudlyne") street, the map stops shortly to the north of North Bridge, marking a cluster of building between North Gate and the bridge (Fig.04). The Map of the Siege of Colchester also shows the group close to North Gate and a cluster of buildings to the north of the bridge (Fig.05).

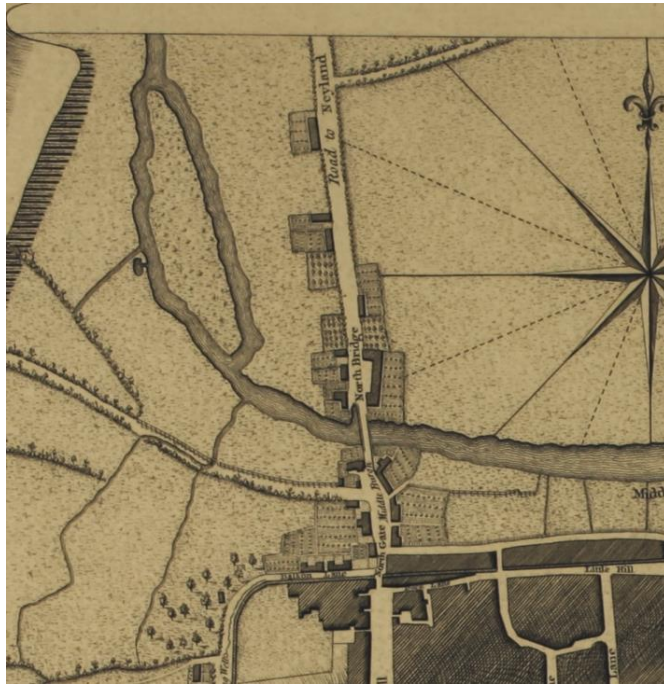


Fig. 4: Extract from Clapman and André's map (Plate IV, 1777),
(©.....).



Fig. 5: Extract from Clapman and André's map (Plate IX, 1777) (©.....).

2.3.2. First half of the 19th Century (1800-1845)

In 1843 the Eastern Counties Railway extended its line from London to Colchester and the first railway station (Colchester North) was built at the northern end of North Street where the road splits towards Mile End and West Bergholt. The Railway Hotel, of white brick in Italianate style, was built immediately south of the station in the same year but did not prove a profitable undertaking and was converted into a hospital for the mentally handicapped, mainly children at first, in 1850. Initially known as “Essex Hall Asylum (For Idiots)” subsequently became the “Eastern Counties Asylum for Idiots, Imbeciles and the Feeble-minded” and then the “Royal Eastern Counties Institution for Mental Defectives” until 1985 when it was closed and demolished.

In 1820, one of the western arches of North Bridge and the east wing and side were repaired, and the east side was widened. The bridge was taken down in 1843 and replaced with a cast iron bridge of three arches built by the town council in anticipation of the increased traffic because of the new railway station.

The land within the boundary of the Conservation Area fell within three parishes. A stretch of land that included the east frontage of

North Street up to Serpentine Walk and the west frontage approximately adjacent to Victoria Chase belonged to the Parish of St Peter’s at North Hill. The rest of the street northwards was divided between the Parish of St Michael Mile End to the east and Lexden Parish to the west.

The tithe maps of the three parishes show new buildings that had been added between the pre-19th century properties on North Street (Fig.08, 09). The east front appears more consolidated but there were still gaps on the west frontage. The buildings did not extend behind the street frontage; The northern-most building on the street was the Albert Inn on the junction with Serpentine Walk (demolished when Colne Bank Avenue was opened and rebuilt to the north of the road). Beyond that point, the land was rural with a number of isolated cottages, two farms – Poplar Hall and Merce’s Farm to the east of North Street and a brick field further to the north, later bisected by the railway line.

Additional cartographic evidence comes from Cole and Roper’s 1805 Town Plan and Monson’s 1848 map which record buildings on both sides of North Street in the vicinity of the Bridge but not further to the north.

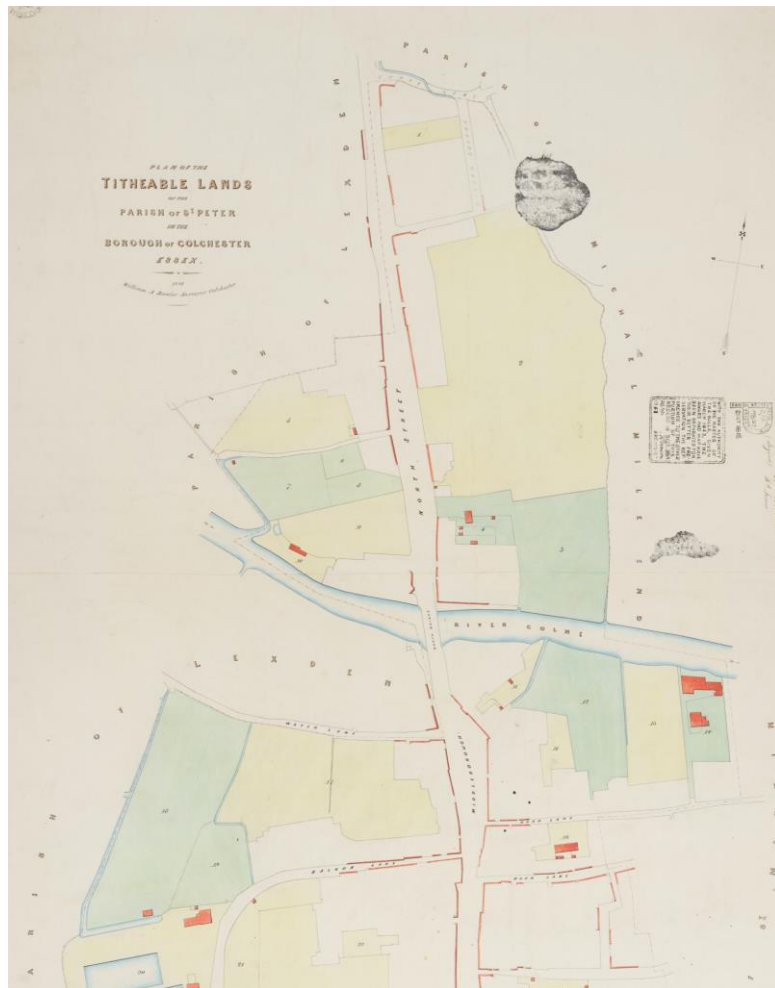


Fig. 6: Extract from the Tithe Map of the Parish of St Peter, North Hill (1849) (©.....).



Fig. 7: Extract from the Tithe Map of Lexden Hill (1839) (©.....).

2.3.4. Third quarter of the 19th Century (1845-1876)

Two new railway stations were opened in Colchester in this period; Hythe Station in 1847, to serve the port, and a small central station at St. Botolph's (now Colchester Town) on the Wivenhoe -Hythe line in 1866. However, North Station remained the main railway station and was expanded with refreshment facilities, a new telegraph office, and extra sidings in 1854. In 1865, it was rebuilt, and then extensively remodelled and rebuilt in 1894. By 1848, a private horse-drawn omnibus ran between North Station and the Cups and Red Lion hotels.

By the early 19th century, the Saturday livestock market held in High Street had become an obstruction and a nuisance. When the attempt to move it at Balkerne Hill in 1819 failed, the town council set up a cattle market removal committee in 1857 which experimented with holding the market in the castle bailey and examined other possible sites. In 1861 a public inquiry recommended a site at the bottom of North Hill, and the market moved there in 1862. The new market at Middleborough had permanent pens for animals and an octagonal settling house or office to which a small clock turret was added in 1898. The cattle

market remained in that location until 1975 when it was moved to a new site in Severalls Lane.

The relocation of the Cattle Market added another significant activity in the area, enhancing thus the importance of North Station Road as the key road that linked Colchester to the North Station and the countryside to the Cattle Market and the town centre. This significance was reflected in the residential growth within the study area. By the time the 6-inch Ordnance Survey Map was prepared in 1876 (Fig.08), the street frontage was further built up, although there were still some undeveloped plots on the west front. Development on the street expanded beyond the junction with Serpentine Walk but was limited to the west front. To the east, a nursery was opened by the family of Isaac Bunting, a successful nurseryman who had founded a flower nursery in Lexden Road in 1819.

New streets had been constructed off and behind North Street. In 1845 new streets on Golden Acre field, on the east side of the road were laid out for houses, including Albert Road (now Causton Road), Albert Street and also New Street (off Serpentine Walk, subsequently joined up with, and part of Albert Street). Golden Place Terrace was built on the east side of New Street and Fenton

Place Terrace was erected on the east front of Albert Street. The OS Map shows three detached buildings on Albert Road.

To the west of North Street, Princess Street (today John Harper Street) was opened. T. Morland and C. Wilkinson who had laid the plots in Castle and Roman Road in the 1850s, laid out a small estate west just south of the Eastern Counties' asylum in the 1860s, consisting of Belle Vue, Colne Bank, and Essex Hall Road.

The church of St Paul's was built between 1869 and 1879 on the west side of Belle Vue Road. The church was the chapel to the nearby Essex Hall asylum; the graveyard was used for the burials of the hospital's residents but ceased to be used some time before 1900. The church was demolished in 1998 when it was deemed unsafe due to damage from subsidence towards the riverbank.

A day school for 150 infants was built in 1875 by subscription and grant in Belle Vue Road (on the junction with Colne Bank Road), to serve the growing population in the area. The school received annual government grants from 1880, when it was attended by 31 children but numbers more than doubled to reach 193 by December 1891. In 1894, when North Street Board school opened, numbers dropped, the school began to decline until it was closed in

1901; the building was demolished when Colne Bank Avenue was opened in 1930.



Fig. 8: Extract from the 6-Inch Ordnance Survey Map (Essex Sheet XXVII, Surveyed: 1875 to 1876, Published: 1881)(©Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland).

2.3.5. Final Quarter of the 19th Century (1876-1900)

By the turn of the century, North Street had become North Station Road. In 1892, a school board of 11 members was formed at the request of the Borough Council, consisting at first of 6 Churchmen, 2 nonconformists, and 3 representatives of the Co-operative society and the trades council. The first school opened by the board was North Street school at the west end of Princess Street in 1894 for 872 mixed and infant children. Princess street was renamed after John Harper who was the first headmaster of the school and remained in this position until his retirement in 1922. The main school building is listed at Grade II but has been extended with consecutive additions, outbuildings and sports facilities.

At that time, the Council gradually widened its range of municipal activities with the provision of public open spaces, including an open-air public bathing place on River Colne in 1883, the Old Heath Recreation Ground in 1885, and the Castle Park in 1892. The Public Bathing Place was initially located within the grounds of Lower Castle Park but in 1883, it was re-located to privately owned land leased to the Council close to the boundary of the study area, approximately in the location where Colne Bank Avenue Intersects with the river Colne today. Initially the facilities were located on the

east bank and accessed through a thoroughfare opposite Colne Bank Road but were later extended in 1887 and 1896 with a footbridge over to the west bank of the river.

The development on North Station Road did not extend further than the areas shown in the previous OS Map, but some undeveloped plots were built up, mainly a section to the north of Princess Street. The street frontages on Albert Row Causton Road) were consolidated and the west side of Albert Street was built up as well.

The 6-inch and 25- inch 1896 Ordnance Maps (Fig.11) record the continuing expansion to the west of North Station Road when Morten Road, Orchard Road and St Paul's Road were laid to the south of Colne Bank Road; the maps also record additional development on Belle Vue Road and the south front of Colne Bank Road.

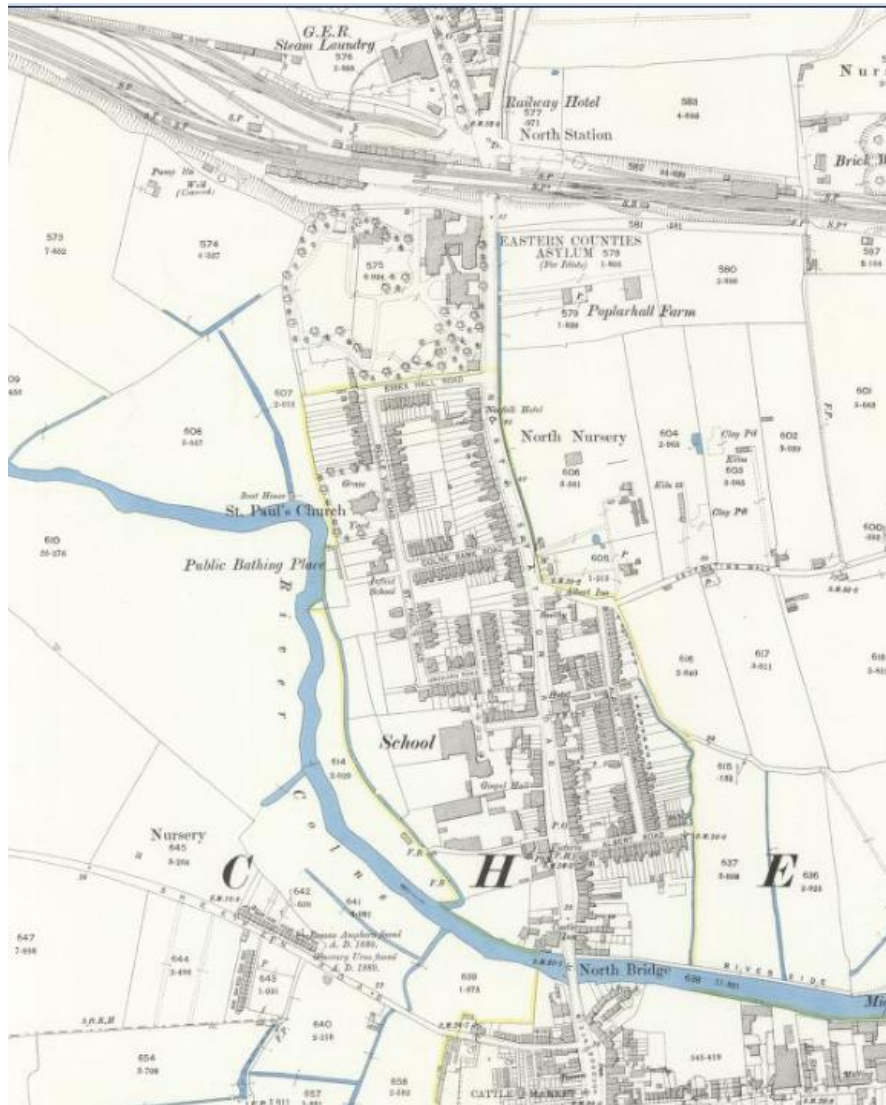


Fig. 9: Extract from the 25-Inch Ordnance Survey Map (Essex Sheet XXVII.8, Revised: 1896, Published: 1897), (©Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland).

2.3.4. The early 20th Century (1900-1920)

The horse drawn omni-bus service that linked North Station to the town centre was superseded by trams in that period. Preparations for steam trams were made in 1882 and the track was laid from the Station to Middleborough, but the scheme was abandoned for lack of funds. The Council bought the remaining materials, removed the track and in 1901, with its own electricity supply available, obtained an Act to provide its own trams. A municipal electric tramway system was opened in 1904 with a fleet of 16 trams from the depot in Magdalen Street operating on double tracks from Colchester North railway station to High Street, and from there to Lexden, the Hythe, and East Street. North Bridge was widened by 17 ft. 6 in. (5.3 m.) on the east side to accommodate the line. The trams ran at a loss, except during the First World War, but were maintained as a public service until 1929.

A Railway Mission Hall, seating 250, was built in North Station Road, to accommodate meetings previously held in an old carpenter's shop no. 1 Colne Bank Road and in rented rooms. The hall was erected in the only undeveloped plot on the west side of the road between the river and the thoroughfare that became Victoria Chase.

The 1920 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig.12) records fewer changes in the study area in comparison to the previous decades. The west side of St Paul's Road was built up and development appears for the first time on the east front of North Station Road north to the junction with Serpentine Walk, in the form of four pairs of semi-detached houses that survive today and a larger building that has been replaced by a modern office block.



Fig. 10: Extract from the 25-Inch Ordnance Survey Map (Essex Sheets n XXVIII.15 and n XXXVII.3 , Revised: 1921, Published: 1923), (©Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland).

2.3.7. The interwar years (1920-1938)

In 1933, the construction of Colne Bank Avenue which forms part of the Colchester Northern Bypass (Cymbeline Avenue - Colne Bank Avenue- Cowdray Avenue) represented a major alteration which transformed the character of the area within and around the Conservation Area boundary.

Within the study area, a new bridge over the river Colne 50 ft. in width was built of reinforced concrete. The opening of the new avenue essentially consisted of widening Colne Bank Road. The Victorian properties on the north side were lost in the process and were replaced by new buildings on the relocated north frontage, including a Church Hall for St Paul's Church on the junction with Belle Vue Road and two pairs of semi-detached houses. The new avenue intersected with North Station Road and continued eastwards running parallel to Serpentine Walk (as Cowdray Avenue).

As the construction of the bypass interfered with the Public Bathing Place, the facilities were moved to the north of the river bend and consisted of an open-air public pool (lido) set under the new bridge. The lido, complete with changing facilities and a café, was a popular public leisure space until its closure in 1978.

The construction of Colne Bank Avenue is the main change recorded in the 1938 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig.13). Development on North Station Road and the surrounding secondary streets had been consolidated by then and there are few additions since 1920s OS Map. The 1938 map suggests that the block on the east front of North Station Road between Globe Inn and Serpentine Walk was cleared off for redevelopment. The demolished buildings included Albert Inn that was recorded in the 1840s tithe maps and the subsequent OS Maps. The map also marks the new residential expansion to the east of the Conservation Area, triggered by the new bypass. New roads were laid off Serpentine Walk (Margaret Street, Mercers Way) and buildings are shown under construction one either side of the new Cowdray Avenue. Albert Street (now Causton Road) was also extended eastwards but this new section falls outside the boundary of the study area.



Fig. 11: Extract from the 6-Inch Ordnance Survey Map (Essex Sheets nXXVIII and , nXXXVII. Revised: 1938, Published: ca 1946),(©Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland).

2.3.8. Post -1938 to the date

Further highways interventions affected the Conservation Area in the second half of the 20th century. The Albert Roundabout on the junction of North Station Road and Colne Bank Avenue was opened in 1972. The roundabout was initially constructed with tyres to allow buses to cross the junction directly through the centre of the roundabout, an experiment that soon ceased. At present, it is much wider and landscaped, while a Memorial Wall that commemorates the fallen of the First World War was opened to its south-west in 1997.

The next major highway intervention that affected the area was the construction of an inner relief road (A134). Its southern section was opened in 1973, and the western section over Balcerne Hill to the northern bypass was built in 1976-81, cutting through existing road patterns and neighbourhood areas.

Within the study area, its construction resulted in the loss of Essex Hall Road and the demolition of some properties on Belle Vue Road. The road joined Colne Bank Avenue close to the former Open Air Swimming Pool, enclosing its site from the north and west.

Another major change was the relocation of the Cattle Market from Middlesbrough to Severalls Lane in 1975. The development of the vacant site triggered additional changes in the area with the demolition of timber framed buildings and their replacement by commercial development. Similar changes happened to the north of the river, where modern office blocks and other commercial premises were erected in demolition sites.

Other notable changes in the area include the closure of the Open-air public pool (lido) set under Colne Bank Bridge in 1978 and The lido, complete with changing facilities and a café, was a popular public leisure space until its closure in 1978.



Fig. 12: Extract from planning Historical Plotting Sheets (Plan TL9925NW and TL9926SW (Surveyed : 1951, Revised: 1964), (©Crown Copyright, Colchester City Council).

2.4 Archaeology

No significant archaeological remains are present along North Station Road that date prior to the Roman period. However, the area clearly became an intensively occupied part of the Roman town along a main road leading out of the North Gate, with two apparent phases of masonry buildings.

Archaeological investigations at 26 North Station Road in 1965 and 1976 revealed the remains of a substantial masonry courtyard house of Roman date (Colchester Historic Environment Record no. 1260), the foundations of which consisted of trenches 1m deep filled with Septaria (mudstone) and mortar. Enough excavation took place to partially reconstruct the plan of the building, with a range of two rooms and a cross passage flanked by passages or narrow ranges of rooms on either side. The floor of the western passage appeared to be of red tessellation. Perhaps related is a mosaic pavement discovered by workmen in 1880 while digging foundations at the back of the Victoria Inn (CHER no. 1052). This appeared to be substantial, but ran under the roadway and some buildings, and therefore its full extent could not be ascertained.

An archaeological evaluation and subsequent watching brief in 2001/2002 immediately to the south of the Victoria Inn discovered another large high status Roman house, with an unusual sunken feature containing large quantities of painted wall plaster surrounded by robbed out walls, and adjacent to a mosaic pavement (CHER no. 5428). Two further mosaic floors and a herringbone floor were revealed during the later watching brief.

This was replaced by at least one larger building which was believed to have had a public function due to the massive width of its foundations (CHER no. 2946). This has tessellated floors and was believed to date to the late 3rd century.

The second major archaeological investigation along North Station Road revealed a similar pattern. The remains of a high-status Roman townhouse were discovered at the Globe Hotel during trial trenching in 2003 (CHER no. 3026). Demolition debris showed evidence that this structure had a heating system, tiled roof and painted walls. As at the Victoria Inn the townhouse was replaced by a later building, believed to be a large, high status public structure

(CHER no. 3027). As with the townhouse, this had a heating system, a tiled roof and painted walls, but the width and depth of one of the foundation trenches suggested that it was for an exterior wall of a Roman public building of at least two storeys. Pottery recovered from the site indicated use during the 2nd and 3rd centuries, and demolition in the 3rd or 4th century.

The foundations of a further masonry building of Roman date were revealed at the Old Poultry Market site in 1998, in roughly the same alignment as the Victoria Inn structures (CHER no. 4957).

No archaeological evidence exists for the occupation of this area between the Roman and medieval periods. 25-27 North Station Road is an extant 15th century open hall house. A 16th century house at 45-47 North Station Road was recorded by the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England in 1922. A range of seven tenements at 12-24 North Station Road (CHER no. 142), also demolished since the 1922 survey, may have also been 16th century in date. The former 3 North Station Road (CHER no. 137), no longer extant, was a house and shop of 17th century origin, which is also true of the former 7 & 9 North Station Road (CHER no. 138). Part of a brick building was found during evaluation at the Old

Poultry Market in 1998, with two intact brick floors (CHER no. 2440). Dating of the bricks indicated the structure was 17th century or earlier in date.

2.5. Designation and Boundary

2.5.1_The Present Boundary

The existing boundary is primarily drawn around the properties that line the east and west frontages of North Station Road (Map.04).

The Conservation Areas includes North Bridge and extends to the south, to include the section of Middleborough between the Bridge and the north boundary of Colchester Conservation Area 1. The section was added in recognition of its historic association to North Station Road as the main areas of extramural expansion to the north of the historic walled town from the medieval times until the early Victorian era.

The boundary also encloses the two residential areas that date from the Victorian expansion behind the North Station Road frontage, St Paul's Road, Orchard Road and Morten Road to the south of Colne Bank Avenue and Belle Vue to the north

Two significant open spaces were included at the opposite ends of the Conservation Area. To the east of North Bridge, the Riverside Walk on the north bank of the Colne links the study area to Castle Park. To the north of Colne Bank Avenue, the site of a former



communal facility, the Open-Air Swimming Pool, has become a natural habitat that serves as a transitional zone towards Cymbeline Meadows. The boundary was drawn round the south front of Causton Road (up to no 8), a residential street to the east of North Station Rd. Previously known as Albert Road, its development started around the same time when Belle Vue Road was laid. However, the boundary did not extend to include Albert Street which dates from the same phase of development. The extent of alterations to the terraces that front the street has affected significantly their character to the point of compromising their legibility as typical development of their era.

2.5.1_Proposed boundary amendment

The present report proposes the amendment of the boundary on Causton Road, to include the terrace of nos. 12 to 18 Causton Road. By virtue of its date, style and quality, these properties form a group with the buildings on Causton Road within the existing boundary despite the disruption from the access to the site of the Riverside Office Complex that interrupts the continuity of the street

The present report proposes the amendment of the boundary on Causton Road, to include the terrace of nos. 12 to 18 Causton Road. By virtue of its date, style and quality, these properties form a

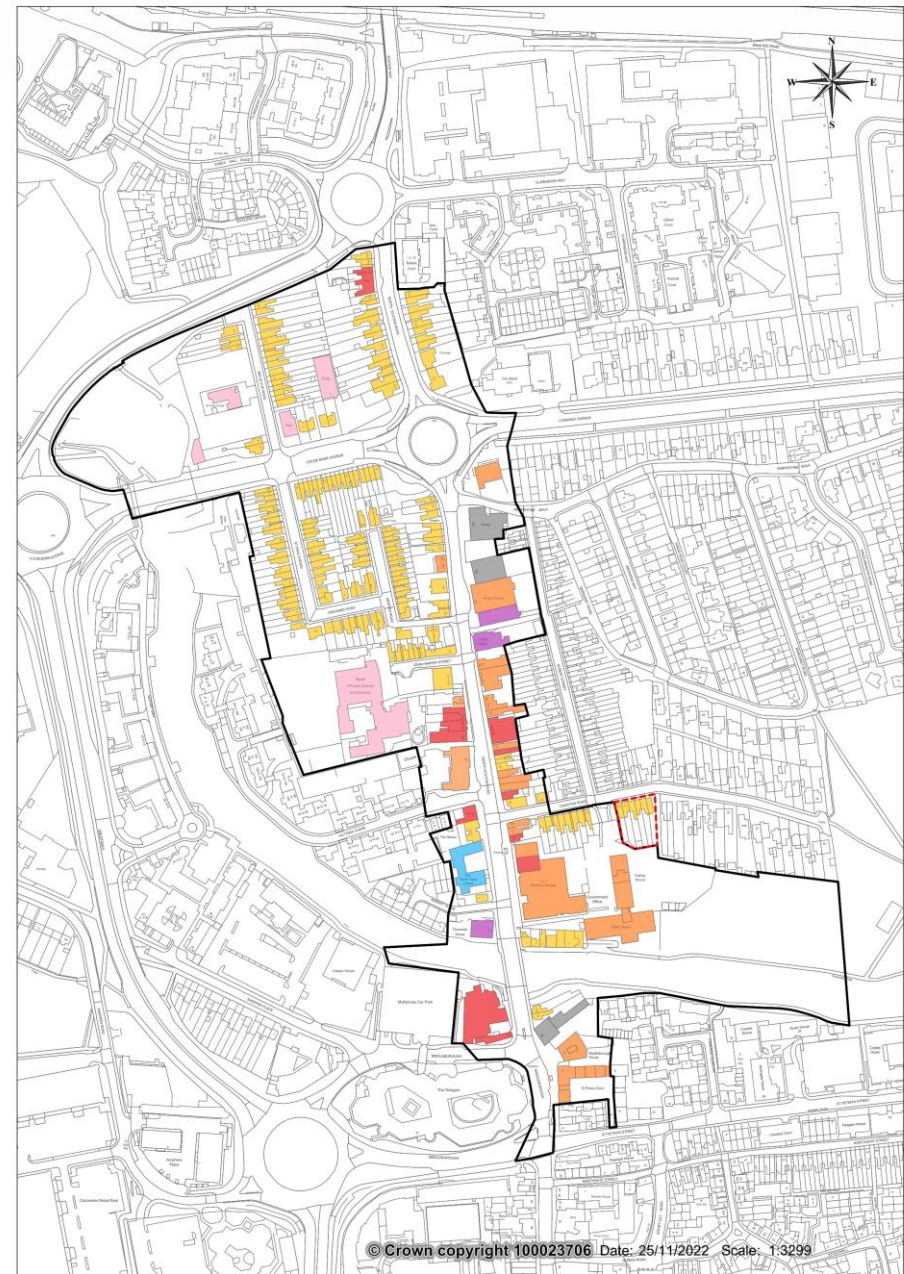
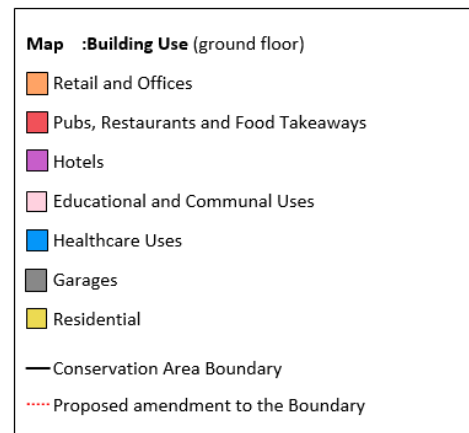
group with the buildings on Causton Road within the existing boundary despite the disruption from the access to the site of the Riverside Office Complex that interrupts the continuity of the street frontage (Fig.14).



Fig. 13: View of Causton Road (south front) , with the terrace of nos. 12 to 18 in the foreground

2.6. Land Use and Economy

The Conservation Area is a mixed-use area. The distribution of residential and commercial uses reflects its historic development (Map.04). The majority of the commercial activities are found in the southern half of North Station Road, the oldest section of the street. Its role as the main access road into Colchester is reflected in the concentration of historic hotel uses. Globe Hotel and the Riverside Hotel (former Castle Inn) continue in the same use. The former Riverside Hotel at 20-21 Middleborough, Victoria Inn and the Norfolk Hotel (the only commercial premises north to the Albert Roundabout) have been converted into pubs or restaurants. Another historic hotel, the Albert Inn on the corner with Serpentine Walk, was demolished when Colne Bank Avenue was opened but a more recent hotel use is found in the 20th century Anglia House to the north of the historic Globe Hotel.



The street frontage from North Bridge to John Harper Street comprises modest commercial units on ground floor level which accommodate a variety of retail, restaurants and food takeaways and other services (hair salons, tattoo parlours etc.). Although some chains can be found as well, the fact that the majority of businesses are independent attributes a diverse character to the area, further enhanced by their rich ethnic background. Whilst some of them have an established presence, others have a rather transient character which accounts for frequent changes to the use and appearance of some units. The upper floors are auxiliary to the ground floor use or accommodate residential use.

A number of office blocks were erected in the second half of the 20th Century in various demolition sites, the majority of them with commercial units at the ground floor. However, the office use has subsided leaving a vacuum that needs to be managed in a manner that preserves a balanced mix of uses in the area.

A few sites in close proximity to busy road junctions accommodate garages. The former Railway Mission is used as a healthcare facility and North Primary School remains the main institutional use in the study area.

Residential use is predominant in the remaining part of the Conservation Area which corresponds to the Victorian expansion after the opening of the North Station. The commercial uses are incidental and limited at the former Norfolk Hotel and nos. 66-68 North Station Road. There is also a small cluster of communal/ educational uses around Belle Vue Road, consisting of the Belle Vue Social Club, a Performing Arts School at the former Church Hall of St Paul's Church, a care home at the bungalow that replaced the Church and a canoe club at the former Open Air Swimming Pool.

Character Analysis

3.1. Townscape Character

The centrepiece of the Conservation Area is North Station Road, a wide street that retains its historic role of a principal access corridor into the historic city centre. The pattern of its development is reflected on its diverse character and appearance.

For the stretch from North Bridge to the Albert Roundabout, this pattern consisted of 19th century development between earlier timber framed buildings and their subsequent replacement by 20th century commercial blocks. The result is an eclectic mix of buildings of varying age, scale, form, materials and design.

The concentration of commercial uses in that section is another defining aspect that differentiates it from the stretch to the north of the Albert Roundabout (Fig.15). At the northern end of the road, the almost exclusive residential use and the lack of commercial activity result in a different ambience. Although the width of the street and the open views towards the city centre (looking southwards) or North Station Bridge (looking northwards) are a constant reminder that the street is a main artery which serves an important link between the North Station and the city centre, the bustling activity of the southern half gives way to a more muted atmosphere (Fig.16).



Fig. 15:North Station Road. Views of the southern half of the street (east front).



Fig. 14: North Station Road. Views of the northern half of the street (east front).

Still, there is diversity to be found in the character of the frontages of this section which were developed with an interval of forty years. The west front that dates from the first phase of the Victorian expansion displays some variety in the design of the individual buildings, together with the aspiration to transfer here the scale and character of the three-storey buildings seen to the south of the Roundabout (Fig.17)

In contrast, the east side is characterised by stylistic coherence and uniform scale by virtue of the early 20th Century terrace that occupies most of its length (Fig.18).

The architectural variety and busy character of North Station Road contrast the quieter environment of the narrow Victorian residential side streets. These are characterised by the use of more coherent architectural language, consistent scale and sense of enclosure (Fig.18).



Fig. 16: North Station Road. West front to the north of the Albert Roundabout, developed in the third quarter of the 19th century.



Fig. 17:North Station Road. East front to the north of the Albert Roundabout, developed between 1895-1935.



Fig. 18: St Paul's Road. View from the east end looking westwards.



Fig. 19: Riverside Walk. The path towards Castle Park with river Colne to the right.

Such vivid contrast in the townscape character can be experienced elsewhere in the study area, more notably on its southern end. The intense character of Middleborough that is dominated by over-scaled modern development close to the boundary of the Conservation Area, heavy traffic and cluttered public realm makes way for the tranquil and picturesque setting of the North Bridge and the nearby Riverside Walk (Fig.19).

The latter is an important green/ blue space which offers a repose amid the busy urban environment and links the study area to a greater green infrastructure, Castle Park to the east. At the north-

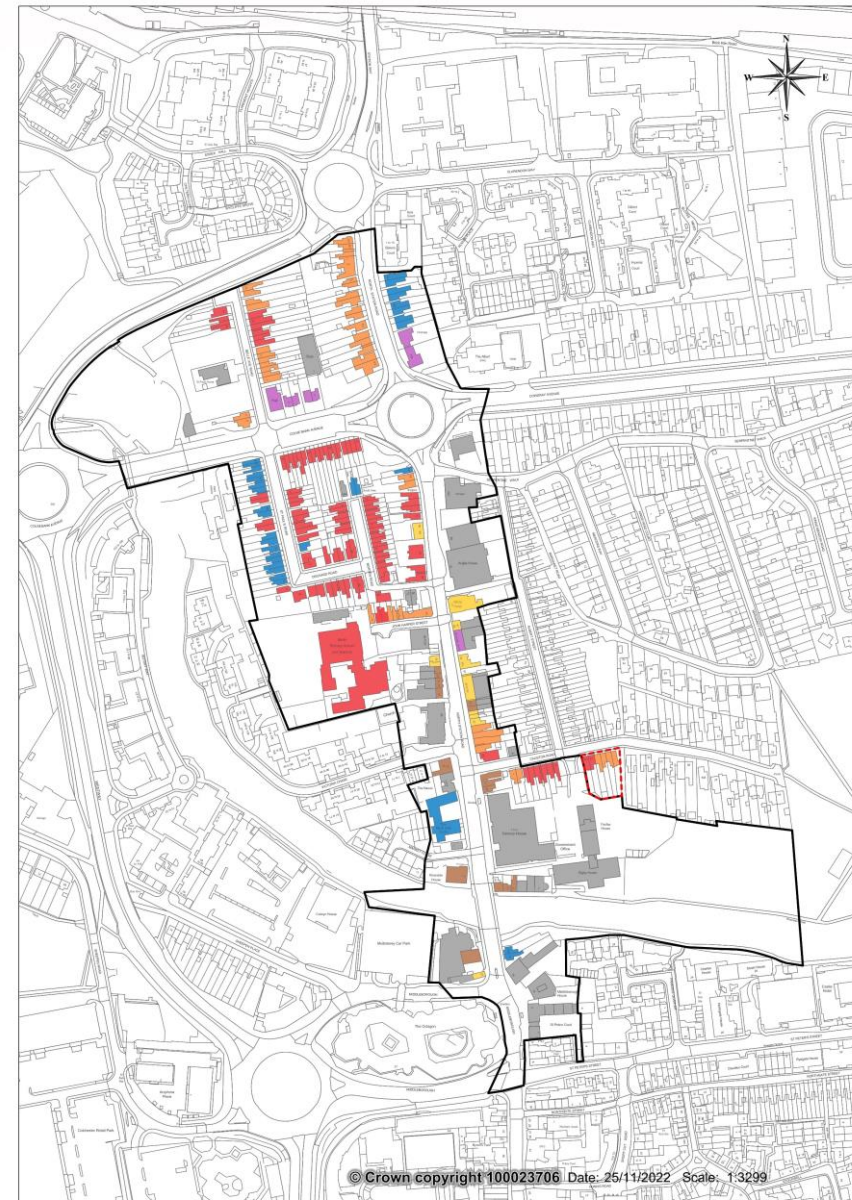
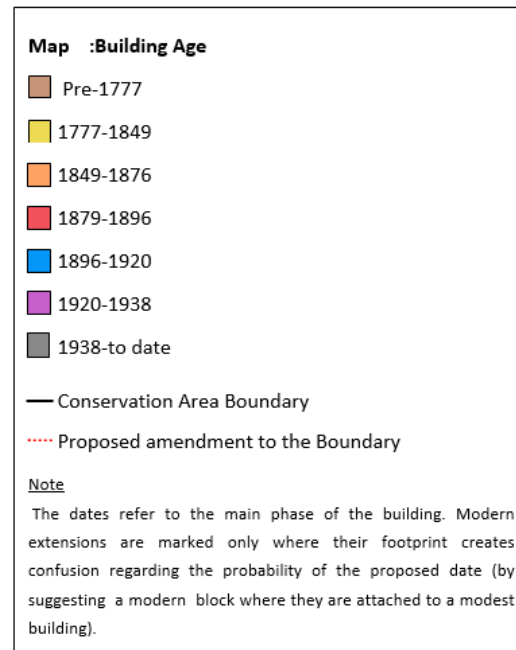
west end of the Conservation Area, the site of the former Open Area Swimming Pool on the Colne makes a similar contribution to the townscape character as a green oasis between two busy main road arteries that serves the transition from the urban environment into the rural hinterland beyond the A134.

Finally, the other significant element that define the townscape character of the study area is the highways infrastructure. Besides the disruption of the urban fabric from their construction, they have a lasting effect in the urban landscape and the way it is experienced today. The northern bypass wedged its way between

the two Victorian estates at Bellevue Road and St Paul's/ Orchard/Morten Road; the former was further truncated by the construction of the A134 inner relief road. The Albert Roundabout exacerbated the impact; its construction and consequent enlargement required the loss of more properties and disrupted the continuity of North Station Road, setting a barrier between the north and south half that amplifies, and to a certain degree accounts for, the contrast in their land use and character.

3.2. Architecture

As discussed in the previous section, a key characteristic of the Conservation Area is the offer of diverse mix of buildings that span various eras and illustrate its history and development. The Map of approximate building age (Map.05) records their distribution and provides a snapshot of the area's development from the late 18th century onwards.



The earliest surviving buildings are timber framed and many are now refaced in brick. These are perhaps best illustrated by the picturesquely located Riverside Hotel (Fig.20) with other more anonymous examples on the eastern street frontage. The Carolean architecture of the Victoria Inn with its distinctive hipped roof, large axial stack and heavy dentil eaves cornice is a formal and refined feature of the area (Fig.21). The Globe Hotel presents a later Georgian-styled formal commercial façade in Suffolk White bricks with large multipaned sashes and a shallow slate roof. This actually dates from the dawn of the Victorian era (1843)(Fig.22).



Fig. 20: The Riverside Hotel, North Bridge.



Fig. 21: The Globe Hotel, North Station Road.



Fig. 22: The Victoria Inn, North Station Road.

The North Primary School is an exceptional example of a later Victorian Board School with eclectic freestyle elevations in a Queen Anne derived style with elevations faced in red brick with terracotta aprons below the windows and panels of moulded terracotta tiling inset into the peaks of the gables. The whole composing a lively roovescape featuring a terminating faceted turret (Fig.23).



Fig. 23: North Primary School, John Harper Road.

The richest contribution to the defining character of the area is undoubtedly derived from the mid and later Victorian commercial and residential buildings that form most of the surviving frontages and residential hinterland. These buildings are conventional and mostly quite subdued architecturally. They use conventional mainstream materials with red facing brick work, contrasting masonry sills and lintels and large paned sash windows. These are mostly found in runs of short terraces with occasional more substantial semi-detached and rarely detached villas forming smaller higher status groups towards the northern end of the area. The turn of the century artisan homes in Morton Road (ca 1890) are distinguished by the applied use of moulded terracotta tiling employing motifs of the fashionable Aesthetic Movement (especially Sunflowers).

3.3. Green/Blue Spaces

The river Colne characterises two of the principal access points into the Conservation Area at Colne Bank and North Colchester Bridge and as such is the principal green/blue landscape feature influencing, and with the power to influence, the soft landscape structure and layout of these parts of the Area.

The river constitutes the underlying and constant historic landscape feature that underpins the dominant green/blue landscape structure of the Conservation Area and its environs, helping connect it with the ecologically rich and rural Cymbeline Meadows floodplains to the west and, to the south, the riverside walks that follow the River Colne's continuous corridor as it meanders its way through the City of Colchester. Beyond the riparian character of the river Colne, the late Victorian development turns its back on the river, with only the earlier grade II C17 Riverside Hotel and listed and unlisted properties along Riverside Walk facing onto and forming part of the rivers setting.

Although the Victorian development architecturally turns its back on the River Colne, the Belle Vue Road Graveyard and North

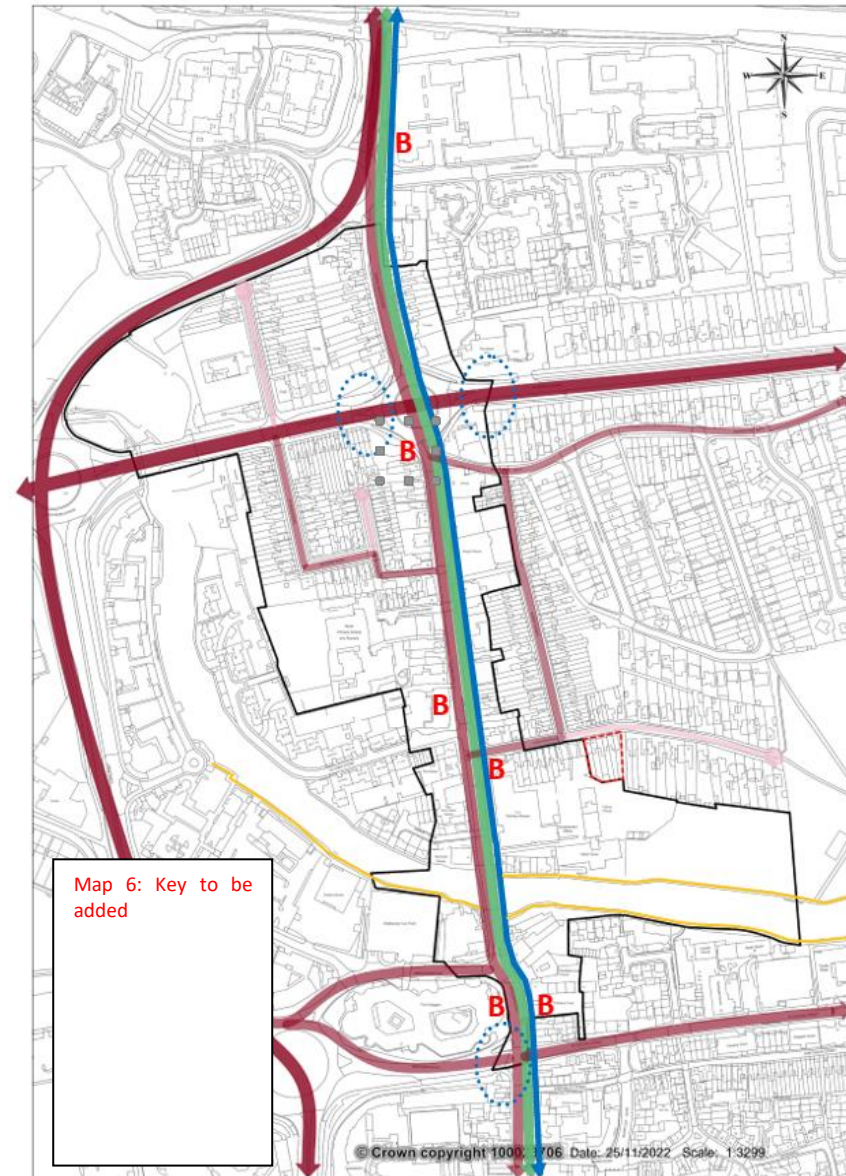
Primary School play area extend down and out toward the river, affording, historically at least, an informal interconnection between the river, with its rural connections, and the tight formality of the Area's Victorian townscape.

3.4.Traffic and Movement

The study area comprises a road network branching from main arteries (Colne Bank Avenue, A134), principal roads (North Station Road, Middleborough), secondary residential streets (St Paul's Road, Orchard Road) and three streets that terminate as cul-de-sacs (Belle Vue Road, Morten Road and Causton road outside the study area). This hierarchy of streets results in sub-areas of different character, from areas dominated by heavy traffic, street clutter and highway engineering to quiet, secluded residential streets.

North Station Road is on the route of various bus services that connect the city centre to North Station, the villages to the north of the Borough and Sudbury.

It is also the main pedestrian link between the city centre and North Station. However, the highways infrastructure within the study area hinders pedestrian traffic. The Albert Roundabout disrupts the pedestrian flow on North Station Road while Colne Bank Avenue forms a barrier between Bellevue and the residential area of St Paul/Orchard and Morten Road to the south. The unattractive environment of the Roundabout and Colne Bank Avenue deters visitors from exploring the area to the west of the roundabout.



The site of the former Open Air Swimming Pool and the Riverside Walk, the two key green areas within the study area, are not connected. With an improved pedestrian route between them as part of a wider public realm enhancement scheme, the Conservation Area could serve as a link between Castle Park and Cymbeline Meadows.

3.5. Views and Building Heights

3.5.1. Views and Focal Points

There are a number of views within the study area that contribute significantly in the way that the area is experienced and appreciated. At the same time, there are views into and across the Conservation Area that illustrate its present and historic relationship with its setting, including the rural landscape and urban townscape of the surrounding areas.

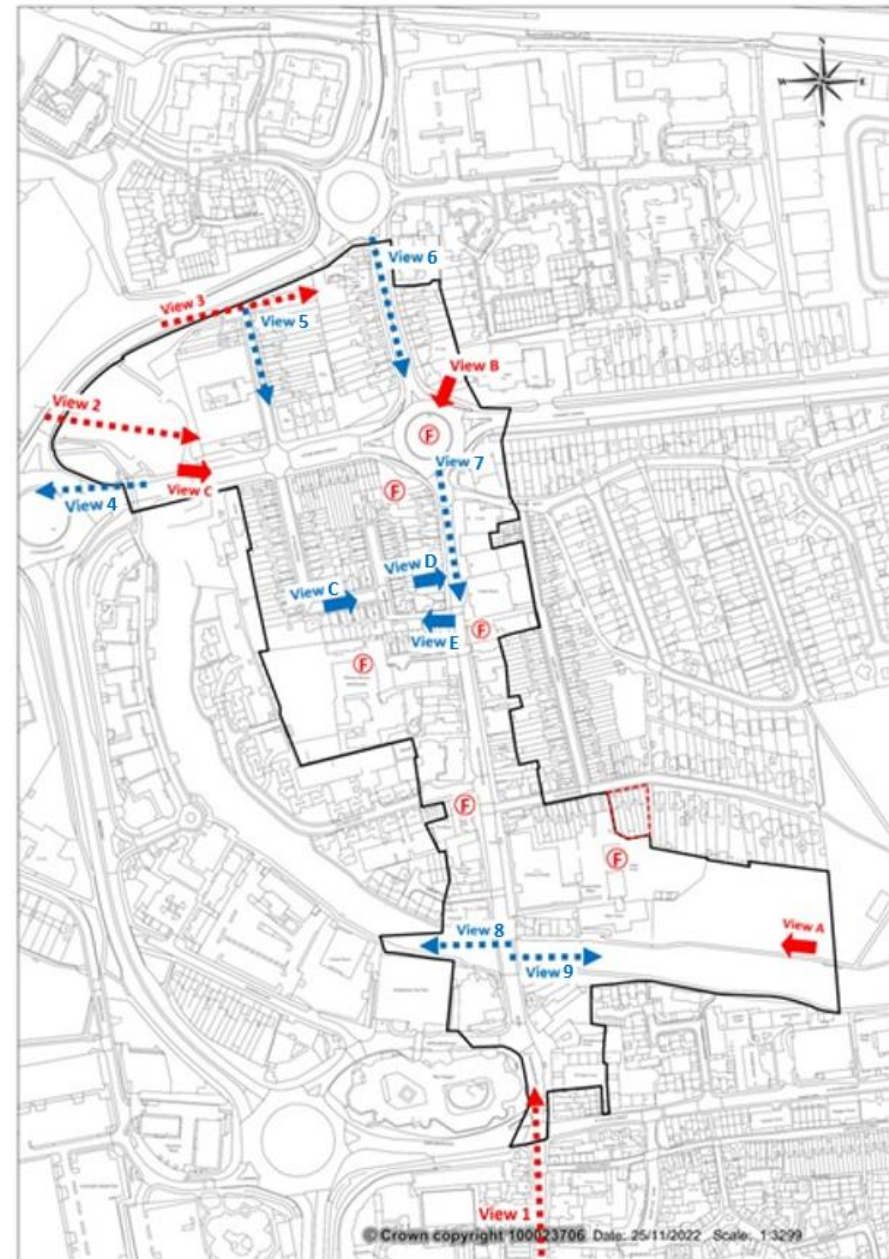
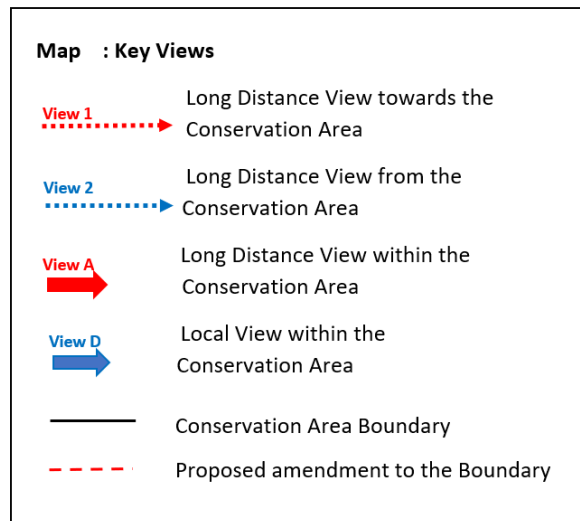
As discussed in the previous section, the Conservation Area comprises a grid of roads that vary significantly in size and significance. They range from main arteries to quiet residential streets and cul-de-sacs. By virtue of their geometry and location, these streets enable the appreciation of different types of views. Some of these views are dynamic and unfold as the visitor moves, others are fixed and experienced from a specific viewpoint. Examples of both types can be experienced on North Station Road; but there are other locations within the study area that offer significant views.

The present section does not attempt to identify each and every view into and across the Conservation Area. Instead, it seeks to

categorise them in key types and illustrate this classification with some representative examples.

The main types of views within and towards the Conservation Area include:

- a. Long distance views of the Conservation Area from the surrounding Areas;
- b. Long Distance Views from the Conservation towards the areas that form its immediate and wider setting.
- c. Long Distance views within the Conservation Area, usually towards a focal point.
- d. Local Views within the Conservation Area.



View 1

Dynamic view of the Conservation Area from North Hill. Although this impression would have been different prior to the removal of the North gate, today the uninterrupted view of North Station Road illustrates its role as the main access road into the historic walled town from the north.



Fig. 24:View of the Conservation Area from North Hill.

View 2

Fixed View down into the River Colne's former Outdoor Swimming Pool (The Lido), from Station Wy (A134) that, being largely intact, offers a historically relevant view of this important connecting feature linking and interconnecting the rural landscape and urban townscape.



Fig. 25: View of the former Open Air Swimming Pool form the north-west.

View 3

Dynamic views of the Conservation Area, unfolding along the elevated south sidewalk of Station Way (A134). They mainly reveal the unattractive rear views of the buildings that front onto Belle Vue Road and North Station Road but also afford glimpses of good fronts on the east side of Belle Vue. (Parked cars and the railings of the car park that interfere with these views would benefit from some local landscaping that would improve the north end of Belle Vue Road.)



Fig. 26: View of the Conservation Area from Station Wy (A134).

View 4

Dynamic views from the west end of Colne Bank Avenue out of the Conservation Area across Cymbeline Meadows and down the Avenue of Remembrance, that help visually connect the Area with the rural landscape of the River Colne's riparian floodplain.



Fig. 27: View from the Conservation Area towards Cymbeline Meadows and the Avenue of Remembrance.

View 5

Fixed view from the north end of Belle Vue Road looking southwards. The Jumbo Water Tower is the focal point that helps to place the Victorian estate in relationship to the historic city centre, while the graveyard to the acts as a discreet connection with the rural hinterland to the west. The protected tree in the foreground is a significant feature of the street scene. St Paul's Road is viewed in continuity to Belle Vue Road, but the link is only visual; Colne Bank Avenue disrupts their physical connection.



Fig. 28: View form the north end of Belle Vue Road towards the city centre.

View 6

Dynamic view from the north end of North Station Road towards the city centre. The tower of the Town Hall is the focal point, although its prominence is challenged by the Telephone Exchange building. This is the first sighting of a key Colchester landmark on the route from North Station that helps visitors to navigate their way towards the city centre.



Fig. 29: View from the north end of North Station road towards the city centre.

View 7

Dynamic view towards the city centre, now directed towards North Hill where St Peter's tower is the focal point to the south, and the Jumbo Water Tower to the south-west. The view illustrates the historic link of the Conservation Area to the city centre, the role of North Station Road as the key road into Colchester from the north and the form of early suburban expansion and its relationship to the walled city. As the viewer moves south, the views of North Bridge unfold, bisected by the distinct riparian character of the River Colne with its riverside trees, this demonstrating the subtle dominance and softening influence of the River Colne over this historic crossing point.

View 8

Fixed view from North Bridge looking eastwards which illustrates the role of Riverside Walk that links the Conservation Area to Castle Park. The views of the park at the backdrop are framed by the belt of mature trees on the south bank and the Riverside Cottages to the north. The modern dwellings to the south of the cottages and Digby House detract from the view but the main offender is the six-storey volume of Fairfax House, topped with telecommunication poles that exacerbates its adverse visual impact.



Fig. 30: View from the south of the Albert Roundabout towards the city centre.



Fig. 31: View from North Bridge towards Castle Park to the East.

View 9

Fixed view from North Bridge, looking westwards. The volume of the Multistorey Car Park intrudes in the picturesque views of the river but the protected trees on the south bank soften the impression.



Fig. 32: View from North Bridge looking westwards.

View A

Dynamic view towards North Bridge that unfolds along the Riverside Walk. The tranquil and picturesque setting of the Colne is marred by the views of Digby and Fairfax House, the latter being the most intrusive element by virtue of its height and bulk that can be better appreciated as the viewer approaches the site.



Fig. 33: View from the Riverside walk towards North Bridge to the West.

View B

Fixed view from the north-east of the Albert Roundabout towards the south-west. The roundabout affords open views from various viewpoints in different directions from the junction. In this view, the Memorial Wall serves a focal point, but the view serves to illustrate the busy character of the roundabout with



Fig. 34: View from the north-east of the Albert Roundabout towards the Memorial Wall.

View C

Fixed view from the west end of Orchard Road towards Morten Road. The properties either side of the street frame the views of the locally listed terrace at 1-17 Morten Road. There is a sense of enclosure and a tranquil backwater in contrast to the North Station Road corridor.



Fig. 35: View from the west end of Orchard Row towards Morten Road.

View D

Fixed view from the west end of Morten Road towards North Station Road. This view illustrates the transition from the quiet residential streets to the busy environment of North Station Road.



Fig. 36: View form the west end of Morten Road towards North Station Road.

View E

Fixed view from the east end of John Harper Street that frame the listed North Primary School. Seatrade House has a volume that detracts from the views of the North Primary School that is seen from the east end of John Harper Street.

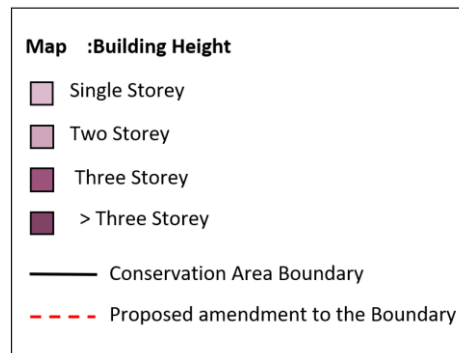


Fig. 37: View from the east end of harper Street towards North Primary School.

3.5.2. Heights

The study area comprises mainly two storey buildings. There is a number of three storey buildings, mainly found on the southern half of the Conservation Area. These are mainly the 20th century commercial buildings but there are some 19th century examples as well, including the Victoria Inn, Globe Hotel, no 41-43 and no 59-61 North Street. Some buildings dating from the first phase of the Victorian expansion to the north end of the road are of similar scale, including no 108-110, 112-114 and 124-126 whose height adds some variety on the west front after the Albert Roundabout.

The only example above three storeys is the six storey Fairfax House of the Riverside Office Complex. Its visual impact is somewhat mitigated by its location that is set back from the surrounding streets; still, it is visible from various vantage points and intrudes into some key views, as discussed in the previous section.



Character Areas

4.0_Character Areas

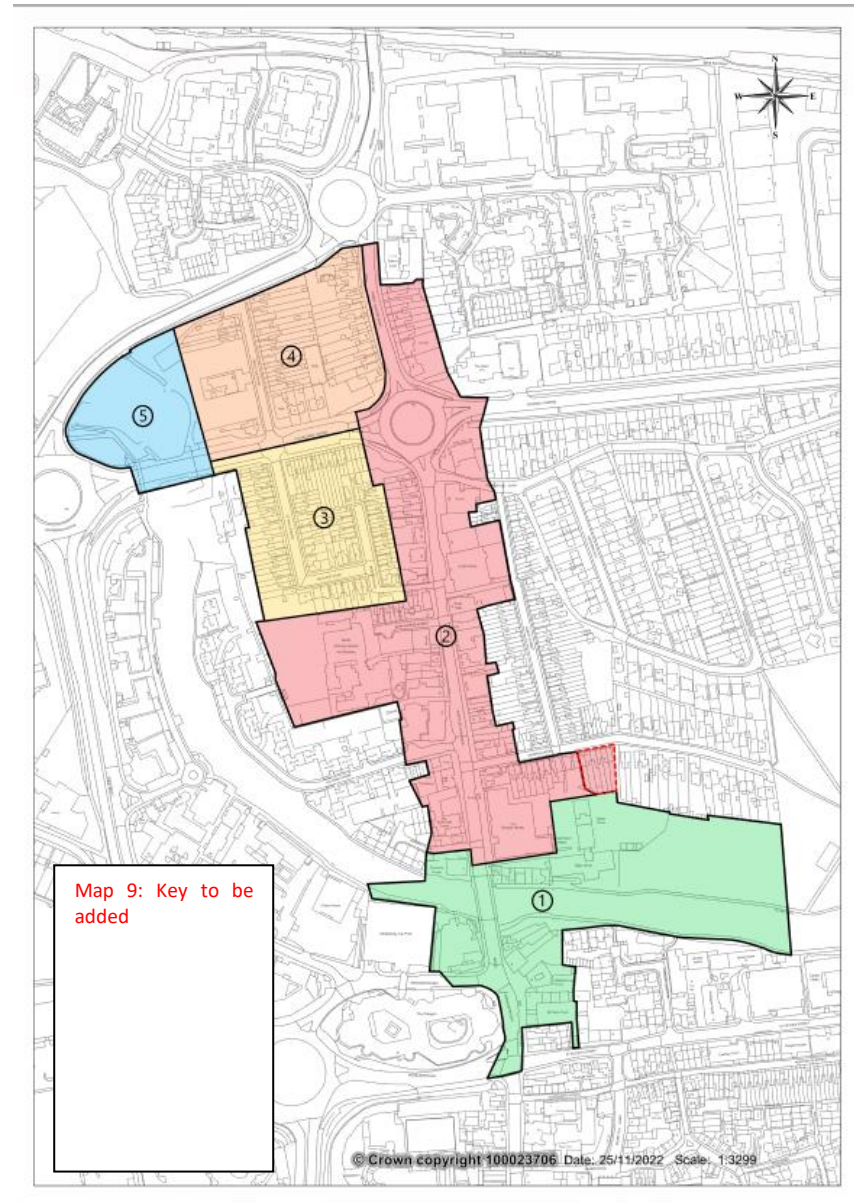
4.1_Introduction

For the purpose of this study, the Conservation Area was divided in five Character Areas:

1. Colne Riverside
2. North Station Road Frontages
3. Late Victorian Suburb
4. Belle Vue Road
- 5.Colne Bank and the former Lido

Their boundaries were drawn by considering the historical function and development of the area, as well as the present townscape character and predominant uses. For that reason, the west frontage of North Station Road from the Albert Roundabout to Essex Hall roundabout was grouped together with Belle Vue Road which dates from the same phase of development rather than the east frontage whose later date is expressed in the different character of the street frontage.

The section expands on the general Character Analysis in Chapter 3 and examines the same topics in detail for each Character Area.



4.2. Character Area 1: Colne Riverside

4.2.1_Historic Development

North Bridge, together with East Bridge, have been historically the main crossing over River Colne which led to the walled town via North Gate. The present cast iron Bridge dates from 1843 with subsequent alterations in 1903-04 when it was widened by 17 ft. 6 in. (5.3 m.) on the east side to accommodate the tram line. A cottage at the west end of the extant Riverside cottages had to be demolished to facilitate widening of the North Bridge over the Colne River. The jettied elevations and hipped roof is typical of later 15th century timber framed buildings (compare with the Stockwell Arms in East Stockwell Street in the Dutch Quarter)(Fig.38).

Middleborough's present appearance dates mainly from its post-war redevelopment. Historically the area accommodated houses and industrial uses traditionally found in extramural locations and near river streams, such as kilns, tanneries and breweries etc. The relocation of the Cattle Market from High Street in 1862 added a significant use in the area that enhanced North Station Road's role as the key link between the town centre, the North Station and the countryside(Fig.39).Its relocation in 1975 left a gap in the urban



Figure 38: a (L). View of North Bridge and the Riverside Cottages in 1880 , prior to demolition of the westernmost cottage. b (R). The cottage that was demolished for the widening of the Bridge.



Figure 39:North Station Road at the beginning of the 20th century with the tram in operation and sheep bound for market.

Fabric which was infilled by the imposing Octagon (formerly Royal Insurance Offices) in 1982(Fig.40).

The east front of Middleborough within the study area comprises post war development that replaced a row of demolished buildings recorded by the Royal Commission of Historic Monuments (RCHME) in the 1921 survey of Colchester. The group included a 15th century house of three tenements and shop with cross-wings at the N. and S. ends on the location of no 18 (National Tyres and Autocare garage) and 17th century houses with shops at no 16 and St Peter's Court (Fig.41 a,b,c) . A jettied 17th century house was removed from the south bank of the Colne in 1903 and replaced by the present semidetached pair of 19-19a Middleborough.



Figure 41: The site of the Cattle Market when it was cleared for the erection of the Octagon. The Market Tavern in the foreground was demolished as well.



Figure 40:(L-R)a. nos 10-15 Middleborough in 1951 (©National Buildings Record & Historic England),b. approximately the same view in 1965, c. the same view in 2022.

he 17th century Riverside Cottages on the north bank were truncated when North bridge was widened (see Fig.38), and two dwellings replaced a modest house to their east (Fig.41 and 42). The two office blocks further east, three storey Digby House and six-storey Fairfax House are part of the Riverside Office Complex that was erected in the later 1960's.

4.2.2_Uses and Character

The area accommodates a mix of uses, including residential, two restaurants, a hotel, a garage and two office blocks.

The character area serves as the entry/exit point to the Conservation Area. It meets the boundary of Colchester Conservation Area No.1 to the south and extends to Castle Park to the east, enclosing the Riverside Walk that provides the pedestrian link to the park

The Character Area comprises a cluster of listed buildings, grouped around North Bridge. The river Colne which forms Colchester's principal Green/Blue link, interconnecting the City along its dominant meandering course with the rural landscape beyond its settlement boundary, makes a major contribution to the character of this zone. The river bisects the Character Area and brings elements from that rural landscape, introducing open water,



Figure 42: The Riverside Cottages in 1951((©National Buildings Record & Historic England),



Figure 43: The Riverside Cottages in 2022.

mature and comprehensive tree cover, soft embankments and open green spaces that all in all bring a marked sense of tranquillity and diversity to the locality. The quality of the riparian setting combines harmoniously with North Bridge and the nearby historic buildings; the result is a picturesque and attractive area which, despite being compromised by the over-scaled post-war development within and adjacent to its boundary, makes an important contribution to the quality of the Conservation Area.

4.2.3_ Designations and notable buildings

There are four designated and one non-designated heritage asset in the Character Area, including:

1. Nos 20-21 Middleborough (listed as “Bridge House, The Moorings”, NHLE List Entry Number 1123560, Grade II);
2. North Bridge (NHLE List Entry Number 1278579, Grade II);
3. Riverside Cottages, 1, 3 And 4, North Station Road (NHLE List Entry Number, 1123543, Grade II);
4. Riverside Hotel (listed as “Market Café”, NHLE List Entry Number, 1306568, Grade II);
5. Trotters Bar, 22 Middleborough (HER ref.no DCC25502)

To the south, the boundary meets the boundary of Colchester Conservation Area No.1 that covers the historic centre. Noteworthy

trees include the trio at the site of Nos.20-21 Middleborough, two further trees south of the Riverside Hotel and a cluster of trees to the North of Riverside Cottages are protected by TPOs. There is no other building of architectural or historic merit.

4.2.4_Character Area Analysis

The southern approach to the Conservation Area is dominated by the post-war development at Middlesborough. The Octagon fronts onto the road with a octagonal two storey volume that does not appear overbearing in context. However, the scale gradually steps up to four and five storeys and is punctuated by massive towers at the corners. When seen from the north, the complex dominates the views to and from the south end of the Conservation Area and dwarfs the group of 20-21 and 22 Middleborough (Fig.44) .

No 20-21 dates from the 17th century, altered with Georgian fenestration. Formerly two houses (at the time of its listing), now a restaurant extended with consecutive single storey extensions that threaten to overwhelm the original building. No.22 Middleborough (The Trotters Bar) is a picturesque modest early 19th century building that forms a group with the listed building to provide an idea of the area's appearance prior to its redevelopment (Fig.45).

On the east side, a three-storey office block in gault brick (St Peter's court) replaced a garage that had been erected on the location of the demolished 17th century tenements. The street facing blocks are designed to evoke the appearance of townhouses with pedimented door surrounds and regular fenestration with sliding



Fig. 44: Views of the Octagon from the north east (photo to be replaced)



Fig. 45: 20-21 and 22 Middleborough.

sashes and stone sills but the double-height arch strikes a false note and overall the complex fails to leave a memorable impression and is weakly proportioned and detailed.

Built with a concrete frame, and brick infill panes, the office block at no 16 declares its age but fails to represent a notable example of its era by virtue of its squat proportions and the lack of modelling. The scale and form of the two-storey brick garage at no 18 does not look out of context in that location but its appearance is very compromised by the garish signage; early photographs of the building with its original fenestration and signage show its potential to make a better contribution if these unsympathetic alterations are reversed.

As the visitor moves northwards, the views of Colne River with North Bridge and the nearby listed buildings come into focus and, the townscape character changes notably. After the busy junction at Middlesborough, the river offers a pleasant repose whose effect is enhanced by the quality of the listed assets in its vicinity. The positive impression is most effective when the visitor arrives on North Bridge and takes in the views of the river either side of the bridge. Although the jarring sight of the post-war development interferes with these views, the quality of the scenery makes an



Fig. 46: The Riverside Hotel (then Castle Inn, unknown date).

impactful impression that serves as a positive introduction or last impression of the Conservation Area.

To the north of the river, Riverside Hotel, built in the 17th century and altered in the 18th, is marked in historic maps as the Castle Inn (Fig.46). The removal of the plaster from the south elevation of the Riverside Cottages is a historically inaccurate alteration that should be reversed in the interest of restoring their historic appearance and protect their timber frame. The dwellings adjacent to the listed cottages are of appropriate scale and form but their design that includes irregular fenestration, flat roof dormers and conspicuous solar PV panels detract from their appearance and their

contribution to the views of the north bank as seen from the Bridge. Digby and Fairfax House are concrete, brick and glass office blocks. Whilst the scale of Digby House is not contextually sympathetic, the crisp lines of the design creates sculptural and architectural interest. Sadly, the sheer scale and mass of Fairfax House precludes successful integration into the area.

A flight of stone steps either side of the bridge provide access to the riverside paths; the Riverside walk to the east linking the area to Castle Park. The lack of level access and infrequent pedestrian traffic account for the lesser popularity of this route as an access point to Castle Park. However, the visitor who ventures away from North bridge and past Digby House is rewarded with the experience of the tranquil river setting.

4.2.5_ Traffic, movement and public realm

The southern end of the Conservation Area covers an area busy with traffic. Middleborough, North Hill and St Peter's Road converge on the south boundary and a small roundabout to the north channels the traffic towards North Station Road. The bus stops on Middleborough serve frequent bus services and attract pedestrian traffic; the volume of pedestrians becomes especially

high when the students of the nearby Sixth Form College and Colchester Institute move in groups toward the bus stops.

Street clutter is abundant, including traffic lights, railings, traffic signs, cameras, lighting columns, bus stops, bins and bollards. Zebra crossings, road markings yellow lines and the painted bus lane exacerbate the junction's appearance. The pavements comprise different materials in variable condition. The attempts at improving the appearance of the junction with planters and some poorly kept planting on Middleborough lack a coherent design approach and rather exacerbate the issue of visual clutter.



Fig. 47: Pedestrian junction at Middlesbrough. View from south-east.

Moving further north after the roundabout, a key feature of the public realm are the historic railings that line the pavement before and after the North Bridge. Their state of repair is poor and detracts from the appearance of the area and the setting of the heritage assets in that location. The railings before nos.20-21 Middleborough are seen in conjunction with the railings at the riverside walk to the north of the building (Fig.48). The railings of the bridge are also in need of repairs and maintenance.



Fig. 48: The historic railings at nos.20-21 Middleborough.

4.2.6_Open spaces and Views

The Character Area includes the Riverside Walk on the north bank of the river; this area is the eastern end of Castle Park which is outside the boundary of its area that is designated as a Registered Grade II Park. This is key green space that links the Conservation Area to the main green infrastructure of the city centre.

4.2.7_ Strengths, challenges and opportunities

Strengths

- Group of listed buildings around the historic North Bridge that combine with the river to create a memorable scene
- Riverside Walk and link to Castle Park

Challenges

- Poor quality of the public realm, including condition of pavements and railings.
- Street clutter on Middleborough.
- Poor quality 20th century development that detracts from the area.
- Consecutive additions to Nos.20-21 Middleborough that threaten to overwhelm the 17th century building.

- Unsympathetic signage on the garage at No.18 Middleborough that detracts from the building and exacerbates the adds visual clutter in the area.
- Vacant Digby and Fairfax House -plans for residential conversion

Opportunities

- Public realm improvements and removal of unnecessary clutter.
- Replacement of inappropriate signage at the garage (18 Middleborough).
- Landscape enhancement with strategic planting to mitigate the visual impact of unsympathetic development.
- Repair and maintenance of the historic railings at North Bridge.
- Rendering the Riverside Cottages to reinstate their historic appearance.
- Enhancement of the Riverside walk with lighting, street furniture etc to increase pedestrian traffic.
- Removal of telecommunication poles and equipment from the roof of Fairfax House.



Fig. 49: Historic photograph of riverside walk (unknown date).

4.3_Character Area 2: North Station Road Frontages**4.3.1_Historic development**

Character Area 2 comprises the main body of the Conservation Area which includes the stretch of North Station Road from North Bridge to the Albert Roundabout. The section of Causton Road that falls within this boundary, North Primary school and the east front of North Station Road between the Albert and Essex Hall roundabout.

North Station Road was historically the main access road into Colchester from the north. As the town expanded with ribbon development along main routes like East Hill, and Magdalen Street, the southern end of the road was developed. The arrival of the railway and the construction of North Station triggered further development, with infill buildings in available gaps, expansion to the north and on new roads laid out behind the street frontage. The earliest section of the street accommodated commercial uses but its role as main link to the railway station is reflected in the number of historic inns and pubs, including Coach and Horses Inn(on the south boundary , approximately where the Drinking Fountain is located, demolished in 1970) , Market Inn (at Middleborough , demolished when the area of the Cattle Market



Fig. 50: The Albert Inn, demolished in 1932.

was redeveloped) , the Spread Eagle Inn (at 11 Middleborough , use ceased in 1920 , building demolished in the 1970s), Castle Inn (now Riverside Hotel), Victoria Inn, Globe Inn , Albert Inn (demolished in 1932 and moved to the north of Cowdray Avenue-Fig.50) and Norfolk Hotel.

Two institutional buildings, North Primary School and the Railway Mission were two significant additions at the turn of the 19th century.

In the 20th century, various early buildings at the south section of North Station Road were demolished and replaced by modern office blocks and other commercial buildings. The RCHME 1921 survey recorded a 17th century house with shop at 3 Station Road(Fig.51) and two tenements of the same era at no 7-9 (where Century house was subsequently erected), a range of seven tenements dating possibly dating from the 18th century at nos 12-24 (replaced by Midland House – Fig.52 and 53) and a range of four 17th century tenements at No.52-58 (on the junction with Morten Road ,now a vacant site with two dwellings set back from the road- Fig.54 and 55). Other demolished sites include a row of six houses from the south-west corner of the Albert Roundabout (where the Wall of Remembrance is situated) and the block bound by North Station, Serpentine Walk, Albert Street and the lane north to Globe Inn Hotel, currently occupied by Anglia House and the two nearby garages.

The latter was cleared for development after the northern by-pass was opened in 1933. Its construction, together with the subsequent enlargement of the Albert Roundabout had a major adverse impact on the Character Area forming a barrier to pedestrians and fragmented townscape.



Fig. 51:17th century house with shop at 3 North Station Road in 1921 – now demolished and replaced by Century House.



Fig. 52: Range of seven tenements at 12-24 North Station Road in 1964 -now demolished.



Fig. 53: The same view in 2022.



Fig. 55: 17th century range of four tenements at No.52-58 in 1921 -now demolished.



Fig. 54: The same view in 2022.

4.3.2_Uses and Character

The Character Area is a mixed-use area. Most buildings that front onto North Station Road accommodate commercial uses on the ground floor; upper floors are auxiliary to the ground floor use or in residential use. There is a mix of independent businesses, including convenience stores, greengrocers and butchers, drycleaners electronics, hair salons, food takeaways and restaurants (Fig.56). The majority of the shop units are modest in size and correspond to the properties that host them. The only example where two units have been merged into a larger one can be seen at no 49-51, its scale contrasting the size of the adjacent shops. Other uses on North Station Road include hotels (the historic Globe Hotel and a hotel at the adjacent Anglia House), a pub at the former Victoria Inn, two garages near the Albert Roundabout. The area has historically accommodated institutional uses including North Primary School and the Railway Mission; today the latter houses healthcare services.

The office use has subsided, leaving the Riverside Office Complex, Midland House and Seatrade House vacant. The management of these considerably sized blocks represents a challenge. Their conversion into residential use seems to be the prevalent option;



Fig. 56: North Station Road. East front with ground floor commercial uses.

Seatrade House was recently converted and there are similar plans for the Riverside Office block. However, that trend is not without risks. Under current legislation, the conversion from Office Use Class E to Residential Class (C3) use can be carried out under permitted development rights. However, when the amount of these changes which are carried without the opportunity to consider their planning implications in the context of an application reaches a critical point, there is the risk of their combined effect having a significant impact on the character of the Conservation Area and the amenity of the residents.

Causton Road is a residential street. There are no commercial uses on the east frontage of North Station Road to the north of the Albert Roundabout which accounts for its quieter character in comparison to the busier stretch to the south.

The commercial character of North Station Road defines its ambience and appearance. The presence of commercial activities is critical for the vitality and economic viability of the Conservation Area. However, the type of retail and the transient character of some businesses (hot food takeaways, hair salons etc) often translate into poor quality shopfronts and signage which detract from the quality of the Conservation Area.

Besides the land uses, the historic development of the street also reflects in its diverse character and appearance. There is a stark contrast in the scale of the surviving historic buildings and the 20th century blocks. By virtue of their size, form, design and materials, the latter failed to integrate successfully in the urban grain and serve as the main detractors in the study area.

4.3.3_ Designations and notable buildings

There is a number of listed and locally listed buildings within the Character Area, including:

1. 25 and 27 North Station Road (NHLE List Entry Number 1110913, Grade II);
2. The Victoria Inn (NHLE List Entry Number 1123544. Grade II);
3. 30 and 32 North Station Road (NHLE List Entry Number 1123545);
4. North Primary School (NHLE List Entry Number 1123581);
5. Globe Inn (NHLE List Entry Number 1169340, Grade II);
6. Former Railway Mission Hall (HER ref.no DCC25929);
7. 29 North Station Road (HER ref.no DCC25560);
8. 39-57 North Station Road (HERref.noDCC25624);
9. 28 North Station Road (HER ref.no DCC25555);
10. 34 & 36 North Station Road (HER ref.no DCC25598);
11. 38 North Station Road (HER ref.no DCC25617);
12. 61-65 North Station Road (HER ref.no DCC26082);
13. 60-62 North Station Road (HER ref.no DCC25728);
14. The Norfolk, 132 North Station Road (HER ref.no DCC25388);
15. One enamelled sign (on 27a North Station Road) and two ceramic street signs (on 60 and 140 North Station Road) (HER ref.no DCC26099).

The trees at the Memorial Wall to the south-west of the Albert Roundabout are protected under the TPO covering the trees that line the northern By-pass.

4.3.4_Character Analysis

East side

The south end of the Character Area is dominated by the alien scale and massing of Century House (Fig.57). The 1960s block relates very poorly with the nearby buildings in terms of scale, form, design and materiality. The contrast is notable when the block is viewed from the south in conjunction with the former Railway Mission on the opposite side but is even more striking when the office building is seen together the modest Fifteenth century timber framed 25-27 North Station Road from the northwest; the impact is further aggravated by the glimpses of the six-storey Fairfax House at the backdrop (Fig.58). Some localised tree planting only serves to screen the jarring effect from certain viewpoints to the south but does not effectively mitigate the overall impact of the block.

The Grade II listed timber framed 25-27 North Station Road comprises the former jettied cross wing of a 15th century hall house (No 27) and the gabled 17th or 18th century no 25 which replaced the former open hall. The third gable to the north is probably an 18th century addition as well. The appearance of the building is altered by the 20th century windows and shopfronts which detract from the remaining historic character of the group (Fig.59 and 60).



Fig. 57: View of north Station Road from North Bridge with Century House in the foreground.



Fig. 58: View of 25-27 North Station Road from the north-west.



Fig. 59: 25-27 North Station Road in 1921.



Fig. 61: Same view in 2022.

The locally listed no.29 North Station Road is a well-preserved large corner house built in the last quarter of the 19th Century (Fig.61). The use of gault brick reflects the use of gault brick at the Globe Inn and enhances its landmark quality as a prominent corner building

To its north, the east front comprises modest two storey terraced properties with modillioned eaves, corbelled window heads (no 31-37) or corbelled cills (no 49- 55); the latter retain original two-over two sashes on first floor. The two terraces are interrupted by the three storey no 41-43 which stands out for its decorative details, original fenestration and original form of the ground floor that has



Fig. 60: 29 North Station Road. View from the south-west.

not been altered with shopfronts. The adjacent timber framed no 45-47 dates from the 16th century (Fig.62). The gabled elevation of the no 57 bookends the terrace before the three storey 59-61, now much altered by the unsympathetic shopfronts, thick cement render and uPVC replacement windows.

No 63-65 was originally a single storey building designed by architects Goodey & Cressall in 1924 to provide three shop units for the Colchester Co-operative Society, for grocery, confectionary and

butchery. The front façade is clad in creamy coloured faience, mimicking stone. The pilasters have art-deco decoration, matching the original shopfront which survives intact, including the inset entrance doors with canted flank walls. The large fascia signage area is currently covered with an unsympathetic plastic fascia sign, but the surround appears to be partially present behind (Fig.63).



Fig. 62: 41-43 North Station Road (three storey) and the 16th century 45-47 to its left.



Fig. 63: 63-65 North Station Road.

A modest two storey building, marred by uPVC shop windows and doors and an overwhelming fascia sign, is located between no 63-65 and the historic Globe Hotel. The three-storey gault brick building serves as a landmark on North Station Road both by virtue of its height and prominent location but also for its continuous historic use as a hotel. The impression of the building from the south is compromised by the services on the flank wall which is visible through the gap with no 67-69.

The section up to the Albert Roundabout comprises 20th Century development. The scale of Anglia House challenges the prominence of Globe Hotel. The signage of the ground floor commercial units exacerbates the adverse impact. The two garages between Anglia House and Serpentine Walk are significant detractors. The buildings appear incongruous in that location and their negative effect is amplified by elements that are usually associated with this type of business, including the brush signage and tarmac parking and the picket fence at Kwik Fit.

Between Serpentine Walk and The Albert Roundabout, a detached single storey commercial building fails to make a positive contribution.



Fig. 64: Globe Hotel (unknown date).



Fig. 65: Anglia House to the right and the garages to the north.

The appearance of this section (from North bridge to the roundabout) is compromised by the modern development at each end. However, the character of the surviving section between 29 North Station Road and Globe Hotel has eroded by unsympathetic alterations, including the introduction of modern shopfronts and unsympathetic signage, painting of brickwork, the loss of original architectural details and the replacement of the timber fenestration by uPVC windows. The loss of the chimneys is also a notable change that detracts from the street scape (Fig. 66 and 67).

The east frontage after the Albert roundabout comprises two interwar houses on the corner with Cowdray Avenue, followed by an early 19th century row of semidetached properties in red brick and slate roofs with prominent chimney stacks at either end. Each semi-detached pair has its main recessed entrance centrally positioned in a side-by-side arrangement. The entrance alcoves have a decorative masonry arch with voussoir and a rectangular two storey brick bay with paired windows and gabled roof at each end. Typically, the front boundary to each property is enclosed by a low brick wall



Fig. 66: North Station Road. East side from No 29 to the Globe Hotel (unknown date).



Fig. 67: The same view in 2022.

with metal gates corresponding to each entrance and hedges behind. There is a uniformity of floor plan and consistent external appearance that makes this group such an important part of the street scene

West side

The former Railway Mission is the first notable building on this frontage. Built by William Willett in 1896 in stock brick with red brick dressings, arched windows and doorway, the building is part of Colchester railway heritage. The main block and the Sunday School, to the north were linked with a reception block of c. 1998 to accommodate healthcare services. The boundary wall of the Railway Mission contributes positively to the street frontage but a close boarded timber fence behind the street boundary and the tarmac parking forecourt are negative features.

The locally listed building is flanked by modern, rather nondescript development. The dwelling to the south is part of the development of 13 dwellings at the Old Poultry market. The building to the north dates from the development of the land adjacent the Victoria Inn c.2001 with 12 flats distributed in two blocks, to the south and west of the listed building. The height of the southern block could have been made more subordinate, to enable a smoother transition



Fig. 68: The former Railway Mission on North Station Road.

between the three storey Victoria Inn and the single storey Railway Mission and preserve the prominence of the listed building which is challenged by the three-storey gable elevation.

The height of the three storey Midland House reflects the height of the listed building but its design fails to make a positive contribution. The solid mass at the south end that intended to create a strong corner element is too imposing and the mansard roof is alien in this context. The relationship with the adjacent historic group at no 28 – 40 is also problematic.

The frontage from Midland House to Seatrade House comprises the listed 30-32 North Station Road, a rendered brick 18th century two storey house. The building forms an important group with the adjacent locally listed building. To the south, no 28 is a timber framed rendered two-storey building dating from the 17th century or earlier, its appearance compromised by the modern shopfront and unsympathetic first floor windows. At no 34-36, a two-storey timber-framed house, also dating from the 17th century, is divided in two properties; no 34 has a shop front from c.1900 and faux timbers on first floor that may correspond to the original frame.

The modest two-up, two-down red-brick house at no 38, is also included in the local list. Built circa 1860-1870, has an original double two-pane sash window with horns at first floor and an early 20th century shopfront(Fig.69).

Seatrade house to the north is another modern block whose construction eroded further the character of the street. A mid 19th century building 19th survives on the opposite corner with John Harper Road but the demolition of the tenements at nos.52-58 left a gap on the street frontage.



Fig. 69 : no 28 to 38 North Station Road (to be replaced with better resolution).

The front from the junction with Morten Road to the Albert Roundabout comprises 19th century buildings. Some stylistic variations indicate their date of construction but overall, the character of the frontage is coherent and contrasts notably with the opposite side that is dominated by the two garages. The earliest building of the section appears to be no 66-68 (a hair salon); although the building retains its original fenestration of eight over eight sliding sashes on first floor, as well as a margin-light glazed window to the appended side volume, its appearance is altered by the use of conspicuous green paint throughout, the loss of the shopfront and relocation of the central door.

At no 60-62, the pair of red brick two-storey semis with bay windows and with stucco quoins, dentilled eaves, lintels and corbelled cill in included in the local list although it has lost its original fenestration and railings. The pair of semis at no 78- 80 has good details in polychrome brick, modillioned eaves and original margin glazed windows that survive at no 80.

4.3.5_Traffic, movement and public realm

North Station Road is busy two-way traffic street. It is also the main pedestrian link between the city centre and Nort Station, and a main bus route with a number of bus stops along its length that



Fig. 70: 66-68 North Station Road.



Fig. 71: 60 -62 North Station Road.

serve several bus services. However, whilst the northern by-pass and the Albert roundabout were constructed in order to facilitate vehicular traffic, they have the opposite effect on pedestrian circulation; the visitor has to negotiate a number of traffic lights, traffic islands and pedestrian crossings amid heavy traffic.

The width of North Station Road allows for spacious pavements either side of the street but the quality of the public realm is poor. The pavements comprise a mix of materials, mainly tarmac with some localised inconsistent use of paving. The quality and state of repair of the materials together convey an impression of neglect. The use of railings along some stretches of the street makes a negative impression and adds visual clutter in an area which is blighted by poor shopfronts and signage. The localised planting does little to improve the quality of the public realm; the area is in need of more generous gestures and a coherent public realm strategy.

The Albert Roundabout suffers from similar abundance of street clutter as seen at Middleborough, further exacerbated by the extent of the area it covers and the heavy traffic on Colne Bank Avenue that create an intense environment that is not particularly pedestrian friendly (Fig.72).



Fig. 72: Pedestrian crossing on the Albert Roundabout.

4.3.6_Open spaces

The main open space within this character area is the Wall Memorial on the south-east corner of the Albert roundabout. The site is an important marker of Colchester's history. Each tree on the Avenue of Remembrance to the west of the Conservation Area was originally planted to commemorate the fallen of the Great War, incorporating a plate with the corresponding name at the foot of each tree. As these plates corroded, that record was gradually being lost. In 1996, the Memorial Wall was built to incorporate plaques with the names previously engraved on the plates at the Avenue of Remembrance. The wall was complemented by a



Fig. 73: The Memorial Wall to the southwest of the Albert Roundabout.

landscape scheme with tree and shrub planting, benches and bollards(Fig.73).

When the terrace of nos. 52-58 was demolished on the corner of North Station Road and Morten Road, the replacement dwelling was set back from the North Station Road frontage. Until a few years ago, the vacant plot was used for billboard advertisement that were very detrimental for the character of the area. That use has now ceased and should never be reintroduced but the redundant structure that supported the billboard on Morten Road remains in situ and should be removed.

4.3.6_Strengths, challenges and opportunities

Strengths

- diverse architecture with examples that date from the 15th to the 20th century and illustrate the history and development of the study area,
- vibrant commercial character with independent businesses.
- good connectivity with frequent bus services.

Challenges

- Poor quality of the public realm, including condition of pavements and railings.
- Street clutter on the Albert Roundabout.
- Poor quality 20th century development that failed to integrate well into the area.
- Incompatible uses (garages) that detract from the street scene
- poor quality shopfronts and unsympathetic signage.
- unregulated external changes, including the loss of chimneys and other architectural features, replacement of roofing materials, loss of original fenestration and replacement with uPVC windows and composite doors, external painting (of previously unpainted surfaces) with inappropriate colours.
- management and use of vacant commercial properties.

Opportunities

- Scheme of public realm improvements and removal of unnecessary street clutter.
- Removal of incompatible uses and redevelopment with appropriate scale and design that will reinstate the continuity of the street front
- shopfront and signage improvements in accordance with the Council Shopfront Design Guide SPD
- Introduction of Article 4 Direction to control unregulated external alterations and changes of use that fragment the commercial street frontages

4.4. Character Area 3: Late Victorian Suburb

4.4.1. Historic Development

Morten Road, Orchard Road and St Paul's Road were laid between 1876 and 1896. The 1920 OS Map records additional growth with the development of the west front on St Paul's Road.

This part of the study area underwent fewer changes in the 20th century compared to the other Character Areas. The Northern bypass that was constructed in 1930 -1933 created a barrier that severed the link with Belle Vue Road to the north. However, when Colne Bank Road was widened to become Colne Bank Avenue, its north front was moved northwards, but the south side was unaffected. The construction of the Albert Roundabout resulted in the loss of the buildings on the south-west corner of Colne Bank Avenue and North Station Road but the frontages on St Paul's Road, Orchard and Morten Road were consolidated in the 1920s with very few changes in the recent years (erection of 18a and 27-28 Morten Road)

4.4.2_Uses and Character

The Character Area is exclusively residential and there are no buildings in different use. Although there are two vehicular access points, though St Paul's Road from Colne Bank Avenue and though Morten Road from North Station Road, the latter is a cul-de-sac and the area is characterised by a sense of enclosure and

4.4.3_ Designations and notable buildings

There are no designated heritage assets within the Character Area but there are two locally listed sites:

- 1-17 Morten Road, Colchester (HER ref.no DCC25363)
- 25 Morten Road, Colchester (HER ref no DCC25534)
- Five ceramic street signs are locally listed as well (HER ref.no DCC26099).

4.3.4_Character Analysis

Starting at no 8 Colne Bank Avenue on the junction with North Station Road and moving westwards, Colne Bank Avenue affords wide views of its north frontage and glimpses of Colne Bank Avenue Bridge with the trees of the former Lido and Cymbeline Meadows at the backdrop. The south frontage comprises two terraces that survived from demolition when Colne Ban Avenue was opened. The busy character of the avenue and poor quality of the public realm with the sterile tarmac sidewalks do not make this an attractive walk.

The character and quality of the street scape changes upon turning south onto St Paul's Road. The street comprises a mix of semi-detached and terraced two storey properties, the east front pre-dating the west (Fig.74). The half-timbered gables at the bookended terrace of no 7-13 are repeated in detached properties; despite their irregular distribution in the street frontage, these gables accentuate the roofline and add some interest to the street scape. Despite being developed in different phases, there is a coherence in the use of materials and architectural details. The material palette comprises polychrome brickwork with slate roofs



Fig. 74: View of St Paul's Road(east side) from the junction with Orchard Road.

originally, although there are piecemeal replacements of the roofing material. The windows would have been timber vertical sliding two over two sashes, but their vast majority have been replaced by uPVC windows. There are surviving examples of three over three at no 34 and 36, while the terrace of no 7-13 has pairs of narrow sashes, all uPVC replacements. The architectural details include stone cills and plain, flat stone lintels or brick gauged arches and simple geometric brick apron details below cills. The properties have shallow, soft and ornate front gardens enclosed by low brick walls which preserve the underlying Victorian landscape character

of the Character Area. A close boarded fence encloses the rear garden of 42 Colne Bank Avenue that fronts onto St Pauls' Road, The same boundary treatment is used to the long and narrow gardens of the adjacent properties of this terrace.

As the visitor enters into Orchard Road and moves towards the centre of the Character area at its junction with Morten Road, there is an increasing sense of enclosure, and the character becomes quieter and more intimate. Orchard road is lined with two storeys detached and semidetached properties. Some properties are built in polychrome brickwork, but the use of red brick prevails on the south side (Fig.75). There are some architectural details also seen in St Paul's Road (half-timbered gables, cill aprons) but the fenestration which comprises tripartite windows with multi-pane upper sashes over single-light low sashes hints at Art and Crafts influences and a later date of construction. These properties also have shallow front gardens, originally enclosed by low brick walls. Their removal or replacement by inappropriate means of enclosure (rock faced concrete block wall, picket or close board timber fences) detracts from the appearance of the street.



Fig. 75:View of Orchard Road (south side)from the junction with St Paul's road.

Continuing west on Morten Road, the character of the street is defined by the good quality locally listed terrace of nos. 1-17 Morten Road (east side- Fig76). The terrace is decorated with picturesque details, including as string course with guilloche pattern, terracotta plaques, fluted and sunflower keystones (. The raised parapet walls add interest to the roof but the replacement of the original slates by concrete tiles detracts from the appearance of the terrace, together with the loss of the original windows and doors and the modification or replacement of the low garden walls.



Fig. 76: 1-17 Morten Road, view from the north-west.



Fig. 78: 25 Morten Road. North elevation (to be replaced with west elevation)



Fig. 77: 1-17 Morten road. Decorative details , including tile with the year of construction (1890) and initials for builder A. Diss.

No 25 Morten Road is included in the Local List for decorative relief tiles and original windows and doors. Morten road then turns to the east and terminates on North Station Road. This short stretch is lined by an L-shaped house that incorporates some modest decorative details , followed by a modern pair of semis in roughcast render that would make a better contribution with a different external finish and better fenestration.

4.4.5_ Traffic, movement and public realm

The Character Area comprises quiet residential streets low in traffic and pedestrian circulation. The condition of the public realm is does not differ from the other Character Areas. The streets comprise mainly tarmac pavements with concrete kerbs, their surface in poor condition with patch repairs. However, the section of Morten Road before the junction with North Station Road has a granite sett drainage channel on the south side.

4.4.6_Open spaces

There are not open spaces or vacant plots within the character area.

4.4.7_Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

Strengths

- Quiet residential area with coherent character.
- Design variations and architectural details evidence the dates of construction and suggest influence from the Arts and Crafts & Aesthetic Movement.

Challenges

- Unregulated alterations that erode the character of the area by virtue of their cumulative effect.

- Poor quality of the public realm, including material and condition of pavement
- Lack of connection to the residential area to the north (Belle Vue Road) and the site of the former Open Air Swimming Pool

Opportunities

- Introduction of Article 4 Direction to control unregulated external alterations.
- Scheme of public realm improvements and removal of unnecessary street clutter.

4.5. Character Area 4: Belle Vue Road

4.5.1. Historic Development

The small estate consisting of Belle Vue, Colne Bank Road, and Essex Hall Road was laid out in the 1860s. The North Station Road was fully developed by 1876 whilst the frontages of the secondary streets were consolidated gradually until 20th century. St Paul's Church was built in 1869 and a school was erected on the junction of Belle Vue Road and Colne.

The character of the area was altered significantly by three key changes, the construction of the Northern by-pass in 1933, the opening of A134 in the late 1980s and the demolition of St Paul's Church in 1998. The new avenues obliterated the two side roads that defined the estate, Essex Hall Road to the North and Colne Bank Road to the south. This loss affecting the cohesion of the character area and disrupted the connection of Belle Vue to the adjacent streets. The demolition of St Paul's Church (Fig. and its replacement by a modern care home removed had a regrettable effect on the character of Belle Vue Road but the graveyard that remains as a green space makes a positive contribution.



Fig. 79: St Paul's Church (unknown date) -now demolished.

4.5.2. Uses and character

The area is predominantly residential. Non-residential uses include the Norfolk Public House, a performing arts school at the former St Paul's Church Hall on the corner of Belle Vue Road and Colne Bank Avenue and Belle Vue Social Club which is housed in a building set back from the street boundary on Colne Bank Avenue. Permission for the erection of an office block to the rear of the Norfolk pub (with access from the A134) has been granted in 2021 and is being implemented.

Belle Vue is a quiet residential street. The opening of the A134 has essentially transformed Belle Vue Road into a cul-de sac. Colne Bank Avenue also disrupted its link to St Paul's Road and Morten Road to the south. St Paul's graveyard that serves as a transitional green space towards Colne River and the Cymbeline Meadows contributes to the quiet character of the street.

The quiet character of Belle Vue Road contrasts the busy Colne Bank Avenue that is dominated by traffic. The section of North Station Road within the Character Area is quieter compared to the southern half.

4.5.3. Designations and buildings

There are no designated heritage assets within the Character Area. The Norfolk Pub is included in Colchester's adopted Local List (Fig.80). The cast iron street sign on 6 Belle Vue Road was also added in the Local List together with other historic in Colchester. There are two trees and a group of trees protected under TPO's in St Paul's Graveyard.



Fig. 80: The Norfolk Pub, North Station Road.

4.5.4. Character Area Analysis

Starting at the north end of Belle Vue Road, the street can be accessed on foot via the pedestrian lane on the south side of A134 but there is no vehicular access at this point. A tarmac parking area is located at the north end of the road, enclosed by metal railings to the north due to the drop of level between Belle Vue Road and the A134. The spot affords a key view towards the city centre with the Jumbo visible at the backdrop. The East side comprises two pairs of semi-detached properties, followed by two terraces (the southern



Fig. 81: Belle Vue Road. View from the north end (east side).

one pre-dating the other) and the former church hall of Ste Peter's Church (Fig.81). On the west side, the road starts with a detached house and continues with a short terrace, the site of St Paul's Church with the modern bungalow amidst the graveyard and a pair of semi-detached properties that survived demolition when Colne Ban Avenue was opened.

With the exception of the bungalow and the former Church Hall, all buildings are two storey. The roof ridges run parallel to the street, with the exception of no27 and 29 Belle Vue whose double gable

front disrupts the continuity of the front. The materials palette comprises red brick and slate roofs. Most windows have been replaced by unsympathetic uPVC models where the original windows would have been timber vertical sliding two over two sashes, although there are some examples margin-light glazing. The Church Hall has original Crittall windows. Architectural details include modillioned eaves (Byculla Cottages/no 31-33), fretted decorated barge boards (no 27-29), a variety of lintels, stone quoins, decorative elements in gault brick (string courses, keystones, jambs). Chimneys are rather low and plain. The front gardens of the properties are enclosed with low brick garden walls with a pedestrian metal gate corresponding to the house entrance, accessed through a few steps for the properties on the east side whose gardens are slightly elevated above street level. A low close board fence with hedge encloses St Paul's churchyard with a low picket fence around the house; The former Church Hall is enclosed by a taller brick wall and close boarded fences are used on non-street facing boundaries. but also, on Colne Bank Avenue on the corner with Belle Vue Road.

The character changes when the visitor turns left on Colne Bank Avenue. The north front was redeveloped when the avenue was constructed and comprises that former St Paul's Church Hall on the west end, a pair of semi-detached properties and the tarmac car park of Belle Vue Sosial Club. The single storey club building is set deep back from the street boundary and makes a limited contribution to the street scene. The front elevation of the Church Hall and the boundary wall and railings add character to the street frontage. The adjacent semi-detached properties are built in brick with clay tile roofs and simple flat lintels, without other decorative elements. These properties have deeper front gardens enclosed by low brick walls but close board fences are found on the side boundaries as well.

Although they make an interwar group with former Church Hall that provides evidence for the development of the area, they are rather non-descript buildings that have little inherent merit.

There is a green area on the corner with North Station Road that is poorly landscaped and maintained but helpfully serves to screen the car park of the Belle Vue Sosial Club. With an improved landscape scheme, that area could reflect and complement the site

of the Memorial Wall to the south, framing nicely the east end of Colne Bank Avenue.

The west front of North Station Road comprises a mix of two and three storey terraced or semi-detached properties built in brick with slate roofs. With the exception of the Norfolk Pub, the use is predominantly residential, and this lack of commercial activities attributes a different character to this section of North Station Road that contrasts the busier ambience of its southern part. The west front was developed between 1845 and 1876 (when it appears built up in the OS survey map) but lacks cohesion in the form and design of the properties. Besides the Norfolk Pub, other buildings have good architectural details, including stone string courses and canted ground floor bay windows, gault brick quoins and corbelled window heads and cills. The properties have shallow front forecourts enclosed by low brick walls but there are some examples with railings or combination of low walls and railings.

4.5.5_ Traffic, movement and public realm

The street is subject to traffic restrictions that discourage private cars, and this does helpfully serve to reduce the traffic flow. This

section of carriageway forms a link between the roundabouts to the north and south and has busy footways with major peaks at rush hour in the morning and evening as commuters access the station on foot.

4.5.6_Open spaces

The key open space for the Character area is the graveyard of the demolished St Paul's church; today the open graveyard encloses the modern bungalow that replaced the church. The open aspect of the graveyard lends a sense of openness to Belle Vue Road. Despite being a cul de sac, the street does not feel truncated with a visual open link to the A134 Station Way. The former graveyard forms an extension of the key green space where the River Colne turns south towards the city centre and enters the built-up area after leaving the tranquillity of Cymbeline Meadows. The former Lido is now largely reclaimed by nature and is a key piece of green/blue infrastructure.

The tarmac car park to the south of the Belle Vue Social Club is largely concealed from views from Colne Bank Avenue and it is

important that this screening is maintained to protect visual amenity on this key main thoroughfare.

4.5.7_Strengths, Issues and Opportunities

Strengths

- Belle Vue is Quiet residential backwater with coherent character and modest terraced artisan housing.
- The green spaces to the east and west of Belle Vue Road provide a green oasis and a transition from the denser urban development to the south/east and the verdant water meadows to the west
- Design variations and architectural details evidence the dates of construction and suggest influences from the Arts and Crafts Movement.
- The west side of North Station Road is rich in mid and late Victorian villas and terraced development predating the final quarter of the C19 century.

Challenges

- Unregulated alterations that erode the character of the area by virtue of their cumulative effect.

- Poor quality of the public realm, including material and condition of pavement s
- Lack of connection to the residential area to the north (Belle Vue Road) and the site of the former Open Air Swimming Pool

Opportunities

- Introduction of an Article 4 Direction to control unregulated external alterations.
- Scheme of public realm improvements to include landscaping of Albert Roundabout
- Removal of unnecessary street clutter from the Albert Roundabout.
- Introduce pedestrian links on Colne Bank to improve connection to Belle Vue Road and the site of the former Open Air Swimming Pool.
- Landscaping of the car park to the north end of Belle Vue Road to improve its vies from the street and the A134.
- Landscaping and maintenance of the north-west corner on the Albert Roundabout

4.6. Character Area 5: Colne Bank and the former Lido

4.6.1_Overview

This Character Area includes the bend of River Colne between Colne Bank Avenue and Station Wy(A134). When Colne Bank Avenue was opened in 1933, its route disrupted the Public bathing Space that had relocated to the area from Castle Park in the 1890s. The facilities were moved to the north of the new Colne Bank Bridge and consisted of an open-air swimming pool (lido) with changing facilities; a café was added later, and the site was a popular leisure facility until it was closed in 1975 (Fig.82). The area was changed further when Station Way (A134) was constructed in the 1980s, enclosing the site of the former Lido from the north.

4.6.2_Uses and Character

The only building in the character area is a flat roof outbuilding that originally accommodated changing rooms and a café. It is currently used by Colchester's Canoe Club. Colne Bank Avenue forms the boundary between the City of Colchester and its rural hinterland. The Lido site serves to very sensitively soften that interface, with its sunken aspect, open water, lawned areas and mature tree cover

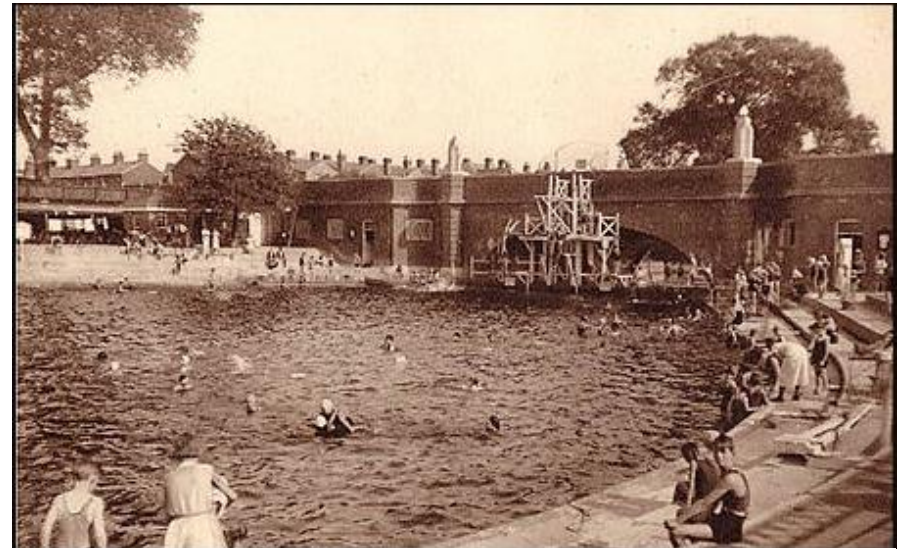


Fig. 82: The open air swimming pool (unknown date).

that comprehensively screens the Belle Vue development beyond. It is an important green and blue infrastructure which mirrors the Riverside walk in Character Area 1 at the opposite end of the Conservation area, both serving as areas of repose from the busy environment of North Station Road. In the case of the former Lido, this contribution is somewhat undermined by the highways works that have disrupted its connectivity with the surrounding areas.

4.6.3_ Designations and notable buildings

Besides the non-descript changing rooms, the only built structure within the character area is the Colne Bank Bridge. The bridge is constructed of reinforced concrete and according to the Victoria County Record, it is believed to be the first two-hinged arch bridge in the country. A hinged arch bridge has hinges incorporated into its structure to allow movement. Contrary to the fixed arch bridge which lacks such hinges and stresses caused by change of temperature or shrinkage of concrete have to be taken up by the arch, a two-hinged arch has a hinge at the base of each arch (the springing point), to prevent structural stresses from being transferred to the bridge abutments. The bridge also has Art Deco inspired lamp post bases, although the lamps do not survive. A commemorative plaque on the north side marks its opening in 29th June 1933.

4.6.4_Character Area Analysis

The Character Area comprises the site of the former Open Air Swimming Pool that is bound by the graveyard of St Paul's Church to the east, the A134 to the north and west and Colne Bank Avenue

to the south. The site can be accessed via a number of footpaths and via a flight of steps to the west of the bridge. A pedestrian underpass under the A134 links the site to the Cymbeline Meadows to the west.

The area of the open area swimming pool has become a tranquil natural habitat amidst a very busy environment blighted by highways engineering and heavy traffic (Fig.83). However, this infrastructure affects its connectivity to the surrounding areas; without an anchor communal or leisure activity, the site's potential to serve as key green space within the study area is undermined by the weak link to the main body of the Conservation Area and the rest of Colchester. Colne Bank Avenue and Station Way are not pedestrian friendly environments. Although they benefit from wide pavements and various access points to the site, the public realm is unattractive and does not encourage visitors to venture west of the Albert Roundabout and discover the site of the former Lido.



Fig. 83: The site of the former Open Air Swimming Pool.

4.6.5_ Traffic, movement and public realm

The site is bound by the north by-pass (Colne Bank Avenue) and the inner relief road A134 (Station Way) and as such, the traffic is particularly heavy. The volume of pedestrian traffic is moderate and oriented mainly towards the residential streets either side of the Colne Bank Avenue. The quality of the public realm is poor. The

wide tarmac pavements with concrete kerbs are in a varying state of condition and lack planting, street furniture or lighting that could mitigate the impact of the heavy traffic. The galvanised barriers to the east of the bridge are not sympathetic additions and add to the dominance of motorised traffic.

4.6.6_Open Spaces

The former lido set within an elbow of the river Colne sits a lower level from the adjacent Station Way and the canopies of maturing trees engender the whole with a dell-like quality providing a link with the Cymbeline Meadows to the west. The levels help to reduce intrusion from traffic on Station Way/Colne Bank Avenue.

4.6.7_Strengths, Issues and Opportunities

Strengths

- The naturalised former Lido basin with associated trees;

Issues

- The busy major roads that bisect the conservation area and act as a barrier to pedestrian desire lines.

Opportunities

- Explore the feasibility of refurbishing original lighting columns on the bridge and adding appropriate light fittings to restore the original art deco character.
- Explore the feasibility on improving surveillance around the former swimming pool to enhance a sense of safety for users and actively manage and promote biodiversity.

- Work with the local highway authority to encourage the softening of the visual impact of the recently installed galvanised safety panels which have improved highway safety but have introduced a harsh 'fortress like' visual element into the street scene

Significance and Assessment of Condition

5.1. Buildings of Merit

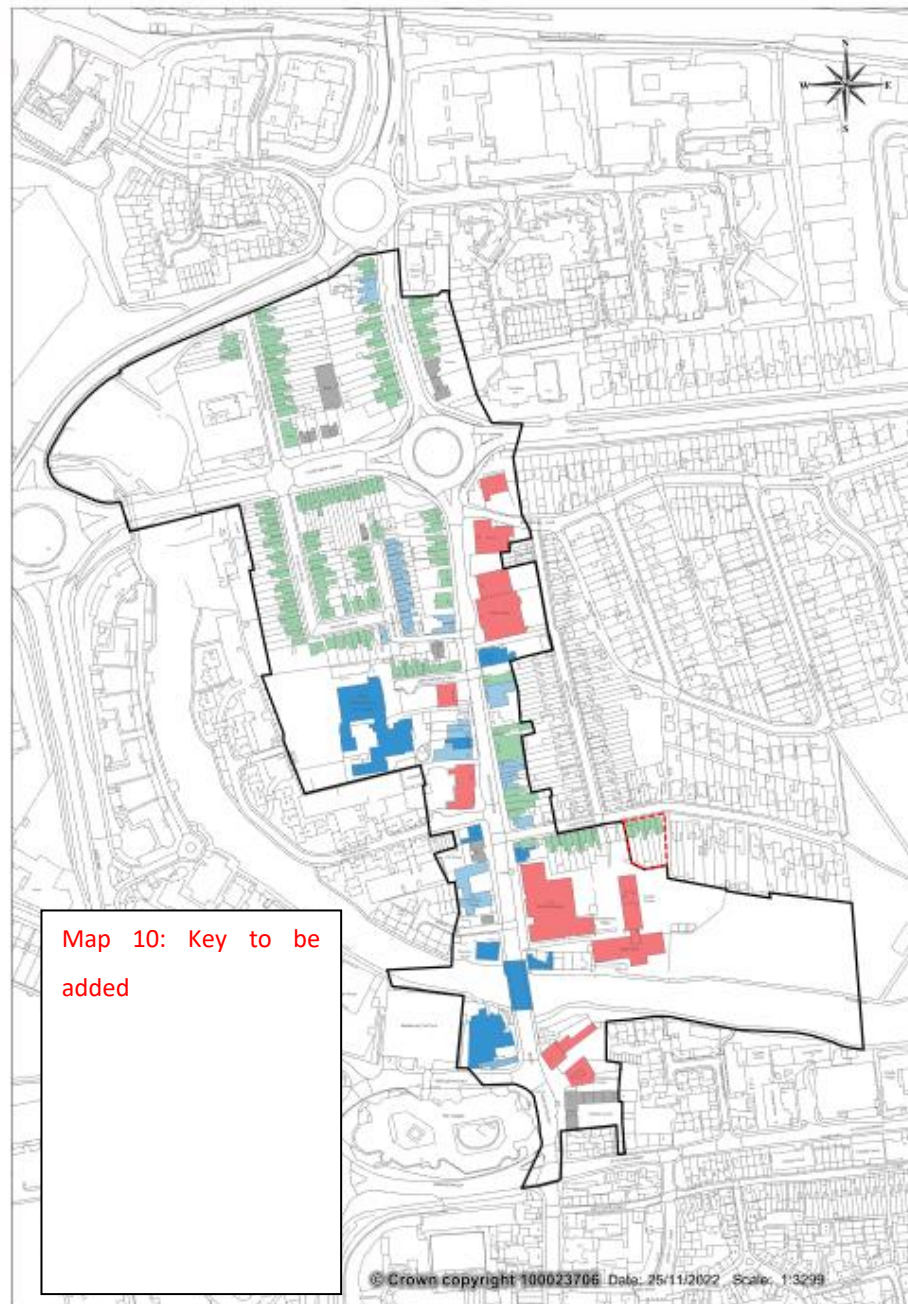
The Character Analysis identified three main groups of buildings that contribute positively to the character and quality of the Conservation Area:

a. Listed and Locally listed buildings: buildings which whose national or local heritage significance is recognised through their designation or their inclusion in Colchester's List and make by definition a positive contribution

b. Buildings of Townscape Merit: buildings that have group value with the adjacent properties, either as parts of a designed group or by virtue of stylistic similarities. Individually, the appearance of these building may have been eroded by unsympathetic changes but as a group, they make a positive contribution to the townscape character and illustrate the development of the Conservation Area. Moreover, in most cases, these changes are reversible and have not altered the intrinsic architectural character.

c. Individual Buildings of Merit: buildings that make a positive contribution as stand-alone examples or stand out within a group of stylistically similar buildings by virtue of more elaborate design, better details, materials and execution. Besides their architectural

and aesthetic merit, other attributes may ascribe additional interest to these buildings, such as historic, townscape and or communal significance. The Selection Criteria of Colchester's Local List are a useful tool for their identification; buildings that meet these criteria will be considered for inclusion on the List.



5.4. Buildings that Detract

The study identified buildings in the Conservation Area that detract from its character and appearance. These detractors are identified on Map 10 on the previous page and are listed at the end of the report in Appendix III. The redevelopment of these buildings will be encouraged to enhance the special character of the area.

The determining factors for their selection are:

- **Design:** poor design includes inappropriate scale and form that clashes with the prevalent scale and architectural language in the area, generic style that does not represent an original architectural expression, poor quality materials and/or detailing.
- **Location:** detractors can be situated on prominent locations that exacerbate their adverse impact on their surrounding or poorly positioned in locations where they clash very notably with adjacent buildings, affect the impact of a listed building or intrude in important views.
- **Age:** the identified detractors date from the later 20th century. Their age does not warrant this assessment by default as there are examples of contemporary buildings, mostly in residential use, that have integrated better into the area. However, the lack of any

historic, associational or communal interest signifies that their negative impact on the townscape is not mitigated by any positive contribution in other respects that could justify their retention.

5.5. Buildings at Risk

The survey that was carried out for the purposes of this study did not identify any buildings at immediate risk. However, there are buildings which demonstrate signs of neglect that detracts from their appearance and contribution to the street scene. Moreover, a number of vacant or underused buildings and properties show signs of deterioration. Although their vacancy does not pose a threat to their condition per se, it could become an issue, if prolonged. Many buildings have inappropriate interventions such as cement render, poorly maintained timber windows, fascias and the substitution of traditional materials such as cast iron rainwater goods and timber windows by poorly detailed plastic alternatives. Slate and clay tiled roofing is often poorly maintained and redundant chimney stacks removed. The lack of routine maintenance and ill-considered, but well intended, alterations cumulatively rob the area of its traditional detailing and hasten the decline of historic character.

5.6. Erosion of Character

Three principal types of threats were identified to the character of the Conservation Area:

- a. Unsympathetic alterations to individual premises that have an adverse cumulative impact on the quality of the area;
- b. Poor quality specification and poor condition of the public realm;
- c. Incompatible uses and vacant sites.

a. Unsympathetic alterations to individual sites that have cumulative impact on the quality of the area.

The main categories of alterations comprise:

- Loss of timber windows, doors and/or decorative barge boards where these exist.
- Removal of chimney stacks and pots.
- Removal of existing boundary walls and/ or railings.
- Erection of inappropriate boundary walls or fences.
- Parking in front gardens
- Addition of porches.
- Painting of original brickwork.

- Use of non-matching bricks (colour and texture), bond and mortar in wall repairs.
- Poorly executed repointing with ribbon/struck cement jointing buttered over the brick face
- Removal of decorative terracotta tiles.
- Removal of clay plain tiles or real slates.
- Use of concrete roofing materials.
- Installation of Solar PV panels on street facing roofs.
- Installation of microwave antennas and satellite dishes.
- Poorly designed extensions erected under permitted development.

b. Poor quality specification and poor condition of the public realm;

- Removal of traditional shopfronts and inappropriately designed replacements.
- Excessive shop signage and internally illuminated box signs and projecting signs.
- Non-traditional shop blinds/canopies [e.g., 'Dutch balloon blinds'].

- Unauthorised illuminated commercial signage.
- Installation of uncoordinated street furniture.
- Use of road markings other than conservation type (especially yellow lines and bus stops).
- Excessive road signage.
- Enclosed parking and servicing areas on the street frontage.

c. Incompatible uses and vacant sites.

- Garages at Middleborough and the near the junction with Severalls Lane.
- Vacant site on the junction of North Station Road and Morten Road.
- Vacant former office buildings.

5.7. Public Realm

The quality of the public realm has been identified as a key issue for the Conservation Area that detracts from its character and quality. There are two key areas of concern:

- the overall condition of the public realm, including the maintenance regime, the quality of materials and condition of ground surfaces, the quantity and quality of street furniture and equipment (including the condition of historic features) and the amount and condition of street tree planting and lighting [figures with examples].
- areas of specific concern, mainly on busy junctions which suffer from abundant street clutter. The most problematic areas are Middleborough and the Albert Roundabout.

These issues cannot be addressed with localised interventions and short-term solutions. Isolated actions and initiatives can exacerbate the situation by generating new issues rather than resolve the existing (e.g., by impeding access, creating visual clutter in congested areas etc). A typical example of such piecemeal attempts

at improvement includes localised planting, patch pavement repairs and the addition of street art.

Historic England has produced guidance titled “Streets for All” (2018), supplemented by “Street for all” regional documents, that provide practical advice for planning and implementing highways and other public realm works in sensitive historic locations with the aim of securing public realm improvements without compromising their valued character. The document provides specific recommendations for works to surfaces, street furniture, new equipment, traffic management infrastructure and environmental improvements. This advice is very relevant and useful for the Conservation area that would benefit from a holistic approach to the treatment and management of the public realm.

5.8. Shopfronts and Signage

Where the commercial uses in the area are a key aspect of their character, the quality of the street scene depends largely on the quality and condition of the shopfronts and associated signage. This is the case of the southern section of North Station Road where the majority of the commercial uses within the Conservation Area cluster.

Although some examples of good traditional shopfronts have been identified in the study area, including no 33 and 63-65 (east side) and 34 and 38 (west side), the majority are of inferior quality with oversized fascias and garish internally illuminated signage. Their design is utilitarian, lacking modelling and decorative details, and relates poorly to the age and appearance of the parent buildings. Fascia signs are often oversized and overwhelm the modest elevations that accommodate them. The use of unsympathetic materials (plastic, aluminium), intense colours, internal illumination of box signage and lettering style exacerbate the poor impression.

Part Two: Management Proposals

2.1. Introduction

2.1.1. The need for Policy Guidance

The Character Appraisal identified a set of challenges and pressures that threaten the special interest of the Conservation Area. the area has a fragile character that deserves to be carefully managed to secure enhancements to reinforce the special qualities that justified designation as a conservation area.

The identification of Character Areas in Section 4 above and the specific challenges that exist in each (4.2.7, 4.3.6, 4.4.7, 4.5.7 and 4.6.7) together with sections 5.6 Erosion of Character, 5.7 Public Realm and 5.8 Shopfronts and Signage have identified a series of vulnerabilities and threats that need to be addressed through the development process and, resources permitting, proactive interventions to promote positive change.

2.1.2 Legislative background

The designation and appraisal of any Conservation Area is not an end in itself. The purpose of Part Two is to present proposals to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation

area's special character and to consult the local community about these proposals. The special qualities of the area have been identified as part of the appraisal process in Part One of this document and both will be subject to monitoring and reviews on a regular basis. This guidance draws upon the themes identified in the negative features and issues section of this document.

The document satisfies the statutory requirement of Section 71(1) of the Planning (listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Namely: "It shall be the duty of the local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation are- as."

The document also reflects national policy as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

It is recognised that within the conservation area there is likely to be demand for new development including infill and replacement buildings. It is therefore important that the Development Management process ensures the preservation of special character

and that opportunities are taken to identify and implement enhancements.

The designation process has several associated statutory provisions aimed at assisting the 'preservation and enhancement' of the area. Demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area generally requires planning permission. Permitted Development rights are also reduced for extensions and alterations and there are greater restrictions on advertisements/ Prior notice is required for works to trees.

MP1: The Council will ensure that new development within the conservation area preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area. Development that fails to achieve this will be refused in conformity with Policy DM16 of the Adopted CB Local Plan 2017-2033.

2.2. Protecting the historic environment

2.2.1. Buildings of Townscape Merit

The Townscape Appraisal Map identifies properties (non-listed) as ‘Buildings of Townscape Merit’ which, it is considered, make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and these are marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map. These properties are now considered to fall within the policy ambit of DM16 of the CBLP 2017-2033.

Any application for the demolition of Buildings of Townscape Merit will require exceptional justification need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification statement explaining why the building cannot be retained and adapted for re-use. The provisions of the NPPF and relevant local plan policies should be addressed.

The Council will expect an applicant seeking the demolition of a ‘Building of Townscape Merit’ to demonstrate that:

- The building is beyond economic repair;
- The building has been offered on the open market at a realistic price reflective of its condition;
- If vacant, that alternative uses have been sought

Furthermore, the Council will expect all applications for extensions and alterations to Buildings of Townscape Merit to be particularly carefully considered and only well detailed schemes, using the appropriate traditional materials, will be approved.

MP3: Buildings identified as having local interest will be further assessed for statutory listing once a detailed inspection has been undertaken. In the event that they are not listable then an Article 4 Direction removing all domestic PD rights will be considered.

MP2: The Council will seek to ensure that all Buildings of Townscape Merit are protected from inappropriate forms of development or unjustified demolition. Furthermore, there must be satisfactory proposals for the re- development of any site before consent will be granted for demolition.

2.2.2. Erosion of character and the need for additional planning controls

The Character Appraisal has identified the following alterations that pose a threat to the special character of the area:

- Loss of timber windows, doors and/or decorative barge boards where these exist.
- Removal of chimney stacks and pots.
- Removal of existing boundary walls and/ or railings.
- Erection of inappropriate boundary walls or fences.
- Parking in front gardens
- Addition of porches.
- Painting of original brickwork.
- Use of non-matching bricks (colour and texture), bond and mortar in wall repairs.
- Poorly executed repointing with ribbon/struck cement jointing buttered over the brick face
- Removal of decorative terracotta tiles.
- Removal of clay plain tiles or real slates.
- Use of concrete roofing materials.
- Installation of Solar PV panels on street facing roofs.

- Installation of microwave antennas and satellite dishes.
- Removal of traditional shopfronts and inappropriately designed replacements.
- Excessive shop signage and internally illuminated box signs and projecting signs.
- Non-traditional shop blinds/canopies [e.g., 'Dutch balloon blinds'].
- Unauthorised illuminated commercial signage.
- Installation of uncoordinated street furniture.
- Use of road markings other than conservation type (especially yellow lines and bus stops).
- Excessive road signage.
- Enclosed parking and servicing areas on the street frontage.
- Poorly designed extensions erected under permitted development

2.2.3. The case for an Article 4 Direction

Dwellings

The erosion of the character of domestic buildings through cumulative change is a particular concern and can be brought

under greater control through the use of an article 4 direction to remove permitted development rights. This requires the submission of a planning application for works that could otherwise proceed. It is proposed that all single family dwellinghouses (not flats which do not benefit from these rights) are consulted on a potential direction to remove the following classes of permitted development (Schedule of Addresses included in Appendix III):

Schedule 2, GPDO (2015 as amended)

Part 1 Development within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse

Class A: Enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwellinghouse

Class B: Alterations etc. to the roof of a dwellinghouse

Class C: Other alterations to the roof of a dwellinghouse

Class D: Porches

Class G: Chimneys, flues etc. on a dwellinghouse

Part 2 Minor operations:

Class A Gates, fences, walls etc.

Class B Means of Access to a highway

Class C Exterior painting of previously unpainted surfaces

MP4: The Council will seek to control permitted development to ensure that the special qualities of the conservation area are not eroded by cumulative changes to both homes and commercial premises. The council will consult the community on the draft Article 4 Directions and make informed recommendations for action based on the consultation responses received.

MP5: The Council will ensure that unauthorised development is subject to timely and effective enforcement action, to ensure that the special qualities and character of the conservation area are pre- served. Untidy sites may be the subject of the service of S215 Notice/s by the Council.

Commercial premises

The principal street frontage at the southern end of North Station Road remains characterised by commercial uses that line the street and provide vital services to the local community and beyond. The loss of these services and further fragmentation of the commercial

frontages through the operation of permitted changes of use from use class E (includes offices, retail, hot food and drink, professional services but excludes public houses and takeaways) to residential would harm the vitality and viability of the area through the loss critical mass and active frontage. It is consequently proposed that an Article 4 Direction is imposed following public consultation to remove the permitted change of use under Class MA commercial, business and services uses to dwellinghouses of Part 3 Schedule 2 from relevant commercial premises fronting North Station Road (Schedule of Addresses included in Appendix III).

2.2.4. Trees

Within conservation areas, six weeks written notice must be given to the Council before starting work of lopping or felling a tree greater than 100mm, in diameter at 1.5 metres above the ground .P provides the Council with an opportunity of assessing the tree to see if it makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area., in which case a Tree preservation Order [TPO] may be served. Whilst this appraisal identifies a number of significant trees which should be retained and further detailed Arboricultural survey is required to make a

proper assessment of the public amenity value of the many trees within the Conservation Area.

The loss of street trees from the area and erosion of its former leafy quality has served to erode the environmental quality of the area significantly and the council will seek opportunities to reverse this decline in concert with the highway authority.

MP7: The Council will consider the use of TPO's in appropriate circumstances where a tree has significant amenity value and is under threat. This will include trees both within and outside the conservation area or views identified in this appraisal. In addition, the reinstatement of street trees to recreate a boulevard character will be encouraged.

2.2.5. Setting and Views

The setting of the Conservation Area is very important and any development that would have an adverse impact upon the immediate setting and long distance views, into and from the

Conservation Area, will be resisted. The important views are identified on the Views Analysis Map of Section 3.5.1, although the list is not exhaustive and other, equally significant views can be identified elsewhere. The Council will ensure that all development serves to respect and where possible, enhance these important views.

MP8: The Council will ensure that all development respects the important views within, into and from the conservation area as identified in the appraisal. The Council will ensure that these remain protected from inappropriate forms of development. Regard will be given to the Colchester LCA [2005] when determining planning applications.

2.2.6. Shopfronts and signage

The Council will encourage the retention of traditional shopfronts as these contribute positively to the special qualities of the area and furthermore on the basis that this complies with the Council's Adopted Shopfront Guidance SPD.

Traders will be encouraged to replace unsympathetic shopfronts and to comply with the Adopted Shopfront Guidance SPD when considering replacement.

MP9: The Council will robustly apply its Shopfront Guidance SPD when considering the merits of any proposal to replace a shopfront within the Conservation Area. The council will seek to retain all surviving traditional shopfronts and to ensure that the detailed form and materials proposed are harmonious with the host building

The Council will encourage the use of sensitive shop signage that is subdued in nature but that is sufficient for the purpose of reasonable announcement and promotion. Internally illuminated box signs will not be supported in the Conservation Area. All fascia and projecting sign advertisement displays should be non-illuminated lettering applied to a flat non internally illuminated surface. Where illumination is required then external illumination

or halo effect illumination may be considered appropriate. Internally illuminated signage will be resisted.

MP10: Control will be exercised in respect of proposed commercial signage displays on premises to ensure that that character of the Conservation Area is preserved or enhanced. Excessive and extraneous signage will be resisted where it will harm visual amenity or result in unnecessary visual clutter or over-illumination. Traditional applied individual lettering and sign painted facias will be encouraged.

2.2.7. Enhancements

Having recognised the heritage value of the area within the defined boundaries and having analysed and demonstrated its special historical and architectural value the Council will seek to positively intervene where feasible to enhance the character of the area. It will also encourage its partners to join in that ambition.

Wherever possible the Council will seek to secure external funding for enhancement projects and initiatives that will help it to deliver

on these management proposals. It is recognised that in a time of economic restraint and austerity funding is not always as available. The Council believes that a holistic approach to improving the wellbeing of the City and the people that live, work and visit it holds out the best chance of delivering real improvements that can embrace heritage assets.

For example, much of the City Centre is an Air Quality Management Area [AQMA] but it is also a major tourist attraction. Environmental enhancements in North Station Road (a principal pedestrian corridor) should encourage greater use of public transport, increase dwell time in the proposed Conservation Area, encourage greater spend which owners can then re- invest in their buildings.

2.3. New Development in the Historic Environment

2.3.1. The design of new development

The Conservation Area Statement in part 1 above identifies the strengths, weaknesses and harm caused by insensitive development in the 20th century, through the introduction of over scaled and contextually inappropriate development. Opportunities for the removal of these developments rarely arise and for this reason it is important that new development has a positive and harmonious response to context. In particular, though the careful consideration of:

- i) Form: Frame spaces and create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting
- ii) Scale: Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings
- iii) Details: Use traditional architectural features that are commonly found in the area
- iv) Materials: Use materials and building methods which are as high quality as those used in existing buildings
- v) Spaces: Sit happily in the pattern of existing development and the routes through and around it

2.3.2. The Public realm

Highways and groundscape

Within the Character Area 'Challenges' sections and Section 5.7 Public Realm above of this appraisal it has been noted that the character of the conservation area is being harmed by piecemeal, inconsistent and inappropriate pavement repairs along with a clutter of street signs in prominent locations. As a consequence, the action plan will be supplemented here in the Management Proposals by a commitment to tackle these issues with the local highway authority and the North Essex Parking Partnership [NEPP]. The reinstatement of traditional paved footways and appropriate street furniture with street trees (see above) is highly desirable.

Street furniture

The many hot food takeaways, restaurants and convenience stores create a high demand for waste bins to provide for the easy disposal of packaging. Littering is a significant problem in the area and the provision of more frequent bin facilities is an objective along the main street corridor. The strategic importance of this

pedestrian link between the town centre and North Station necessitates the provision of seating in strategic locations and these should respond to the prevailing character of their location and provide opportunities to linger.

Street Clutter

The presence of over scaled street signs, large advert hoardings, pedestrian guard rails on the footway to prevent street crossings and fly tipping needs to be addressed to improve the environmental quality of the main street and to encourage investment in homes and businesses. These are important issues as they have a bearing on the vitality and viability of the commercial

MP13: The Council will seek to work in a coordinated and collaborative manner with other statutory agencies and internally to ensure that issues that detract from the quality of the public realm are addressed where possible to improve the environmental quality of the streetscape in order to encourage inward investment in the fabric of the Conservation Area and engender community pride.

frontages and the quality of businesses attracted to the area.

Greening the Public Realm

Historic photography evidences the loss of former Edwardian boulevard street trees that formerly graced the main throughfare. The wholesale loss of this defining feature has robbed the street of its sense of enclosure and scale. Accordingly, reinstatement of large scaled street trees such as London Planes should be encouraged as a high priority along this key gateway to the historic town. This may not always be possible due to the presence of underground services in the footway but resources permitting, every effort should be made to reinstate the lost boulevard planting.

2.3.3. The Community

People make places. Although the Council has planning powers it can exercise over development and may, when funds are available, carry out enhancement works, ultimately the quality of any place depends on all the people who affect the area. In residential areas the owners of property play a key role in affecting how the area looks. It is clear from the current appraisal that in Birch great pride is taken in the look of the place by the people who live there. Good

communication between local residents and the Council is one way of helping owners to directly input into the management of the area.

2.3.4. Opportunities for new development

The townscape analysis within the above statement has identified a series of sites hosting unsympathetic buildings or uses where redevelopment would be encouraged to reinforce the special qualities of the area. Most notably, these include the large car tyre garage premises on the eastern side of North Station Road, located immediately to the south of the Albert Roundabout. All redevelopment opportunities should seek to create an appropriate scale of development, including a robust street frontage of domestic scale and massing. The proposals should achieve compliance with relevant place making, housing and design policies in the adopted CBLP 2017-2033 including SP7, ENV1, DM9, DM10, DM12, DM15, DM16 and NC2 North Station Road Special Policy Area. Proposals should not exceed three storeys in height and should incorporate effective enclosure of the front boundary with street trees, boundary walling and planting.

APPENDIX I: Planning Controls in Conservation Areas

Planning Permission

The protection of a Conservation Area's character is mainly carried out through the development management application process, the use of good design and managed change.

Planning Permission is required for new development such as the erection of new buildings or extensions within the Conservation Area. Under Section 72(1) of the Planning (*Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas*) Act 1990, Local Planning Authorities have a duty to "pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area" when considering these applications. The proposals will also be advertised more widely than usual with adverts placed in the local paper and a site notice placed outside the property. Their impact on the special architectural and historic character of that area will be a material consideration for decision of the application.

Planning applications in Conservation Areas should be accompanied by sufficient details to enable the impact of the proposed

development on the character of the conservation area, to be assessed. This includes details of scale, massing, design and materials of buildings and their relationship to existing buildings and the impact on their setting. Applicants are required to describe the significance of all assets affected by development, proportionate to the proposal. This should be done through Heritage Appraisals and Impact Assessments or as part of a Design and Access Statement.

Permitted Development Rights

Permitted development rights (works that can be carried out without Planning Permission) are slightly different in Conservation Areas when compared to other areas. According to the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*, planning applications are required for some forms of development which would not need such applications outside Conservation Areas, such as some residential changes like two-storey extensions, addition of stone cladding, insertion of dormer windows etc. Further restrictions apply to properties that are non-domestic buildings, flats or listed buildings.

Article 4 Direction

Other rights can be removed by a mechanism called “Article 4 Direction”. An Article 4 Direction is specifically tailored to protect key features that contribute to the Conservation Area’s special interest. The use of the Direction is not meant to prevent the execution of the works covered by its provisions. It generates the requirement for a planning application prior to the execution of these works (which normally would not require permission) so their details can be considered in the context of an application and assessed for their potential impact on the special interest of the Conservation Area. When a Local Planning Authority decides that an Article 4 Direction should be made, then it must consult the public and take into account the views of residents and property owners prior to deciding whether to pursue the Direction.

Restrictions on outdoor advertisements

Certain categories of advertisement which have “deemed consent” under the *Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007* are restricted within Conservation Areas. Further clarification and advice can be obtained from the Planning Department.

Trees in Conservation Areas

Within Conservation Areas trees are given special protection. Written application for consent must be made to the Council giving six weeks prior notice of intent to top, lop, or fell a tree over 75mm (3 inches) in diameter, measured at 1.5 metres above ground. This period of six weeks must be given for the council to either approve the application or to serve a Tree Preservation Order

Control over Demolition

Unlisted buildings, in groups or individually, can often contribute towards the character of a conservation area and the loss of these buildings can be detrimental.

For this reason, planning permission is required for the substantial or total demolition of certain buildings exceeding 115 cubic metres and the demolition of a boundary wall or fence over a metre high where it fronts a highway, or two metres in height to the side or rear of the property. Exceptions apply and therefore advice should be sought from the Council prior to making an application.

APPENDIX II: Gazetteer of Listed and Locally Listed Buildings

Listed Buildings

1. Former Riverside Inn - Bridge House [no 20] & The Moorings [21]

C17 brick house with late Georgian windows, 2 storeys and attics, cellars and tiled roofs. South front has 6-windows range of double hung sashes with glazing bars, segmental heads, pointed heads to glazing bars in upper sashes, ground floor 3-light windows, 4 oval brick panels divide the upper storey into pairs. Brick band. Upper storey Georgian oriel window east side.

2. North Bridge

Road bridge. Plaque on west side shows that it was erected in 1843 when R R Dunn, MD was mayor and a plaque on the east side commemorates the widening of the bridge by 17 feet 6 inches by Henry H Elves, JP, Mayor on 22 October 1903. Cast iron bridge on substructure of brown brick in flemish bond having 3 piers with pointed stone cutwaters. Three cambered cast iron arches with blank spandrels and cast iron balustrading above of 11 sections with arched pattern and buttresses. There are 2 dividing cast iron piers and the ends have cemented brick piers with tooled stone coping. East side has attached flight of stone steps to riverside path with ornamental footscrapers and handrail. Approaches to the bridge have cemented revetments with stone coping and cast iron railings.

3. Former Riverside Hotel (former Castle Inn)

Built in the C17, much altered in the C18, picturesque position on north bank of the river west of North Bridge. 2 storeys and attics, the roofs tiled, 2 gables on the front. 1 C18-C19 oriel bay windows on river side, one facing east.

4. Riverside Cottages

Picturesque C17 timber-framed and plastered cottages, restored. On north bank of river east of North Bridge. 2 storeys, tiled and pantiled roofs. Timber framing exposed on the front.

5. Victoria Inn

Second half C17, altered early C19 and later. 3 storeys, 2 windows, blind flank. Brick now cemented; hipped, tiled roof with sprocketed eaves and modillion cornice. Central chimney

6. No. 25 & 27 North Station Road

Shops, C15 and later. Timber framed and rendered with 2 parallel gabled pantiled roofs, at right angles to frontage. Front elevation of No 25 has 20-pane double hung sash window, on first floor over C20 shopfront. No 27 has C20 two light casement over C20 shopfront. First floor of No 27, now forms ancillary accommodation for No 25. No 27 is former, jettied, 'high-end' cross wing of C15 merchant's house.

The south flank wall had a high-end bench recess and moulded bressummer, over which survives intact and exposed to interior of 25. The flank wall over has tension bracing (infilling missing) and remnants of 2 windows, one over jetty and one to rear. The cross-wing was formerly of 3 or more bays and has been truncated at rear. No 25 is gabled timber framed structure of C17 or C18 over site of former open hall.

7. No 30 & 32 North Station Road

C18. Brick and rendered. 2 storeys, one window, canted bay below, No 32 has glazing bars, sashes above. Paired panelled doors with panelled reveals. Tiled roof rebuilt brick stack.

8. North Primary School

Circa 1900 by Goodey and Cressall. Red brick, tiled roof. Single storey. Front has 3 triangular gables; 3-light windows with round-arched centre; panels of patterned brickwork, Small octagonal tower to north with steep concave roof and lantern. Rear relatively plain. Addition to south.

9. Globe Inn

Early/mid C19. Plain, 3 storeyed building of painted brick; slated roof with eaves. 4 windows, curved corner and 3 windows to return; strip pilasters; 3 doors with coarse cornice-hoods on brackets.

Locally listed Buildings

A. 22 Middleborough

Trotters Bar near North Bridge. Small 2-storey brick building with hipped slate roof. A 16-pane sash window on the 1st floor. c.1825-60. The shop-front may be original or at least reflect its original (c late C19) form. The building is a survivor from old Middleborough and was saved when Middleborough was redeveloped.

B. Former Railway Mission Hall

By William Willett, 1896. Stock brick with red brick dressings. Arched windows and doorway, the latter with columns. Gabled front with lettering '1896 RAILWAY MISSION'.

An interesting survival and part of Colchester's rail- way heritage. The hall was built for the Colchester Branch of the National Railway Mission; contractor, Robert Beaumont of Lexden. Plans in Essex Record Office (D/B 6 Pb3/987); see also 'The Builder', vol. 71 (29 Aug 1896), p. 178. [JB].
Date: 1896

C. No 29 North Station Road

Large gault-brick house. Good corner building. Well preserved with original windows. Date: late C19

D. 39-57 North Station Road, including:

A group of buildings with a strong street value.

Nos 41-43: Most important building of the group. Pair of brick three-storey houses with slate roof. Each with single window on each floor. Mostly double six-pane sashes with at least one wooden replacement. Frames flush with wall. A vertical band of brick at either side of the facade typical of the period 1825-50. Both ground floors retain their original form, ie no shop fronts. A rare survival of this kind of building which should be protected.

Nos 45-47: Two-storey building with peg-tile roof. Timber framed and C16; includes moulded C16 joists [RS]. Contains moulded beams. Needs investigation.

No 57: Two-storey brick house. Painted upper storey masks stucco details. Plaque: 2 initials and 1878

Nos 39-57 form a group.

E. 61-65 North Station Road

Designed by Architects Goodey & Cressall in 1924, who also designed the similar (already locally listed) 23 Drury Road in 1926. This is a single storey building designed to provide three shop units for the Colchester Co-Operative Society, for grocery, confectionary and butchery. The front façade is clad in creamy coloured faience, mimicking stone. The pilasters have art-deco enrichment, matching the original shopfront which

survives intact. The inset entrance doors with their canted flank walls give additional interest to the shopfront. The large fascia signage area is currently covered with an unsympathetic plastic sign but the surround appears to be partially present behind. It is unlikely that the original raised lettering or divisions across the fascia survive but the building is nevertheless well preserved, and its quality is worthy of recognition.

F. 28 North Station Road

Currently the Raj Palace restaurant. Two-storey rendered building with peg-tile roof. Timber-frame. Modern shop front. C17? or earlier. Needs investigation. Adjacent to listed building nos 30-32. Nos 28-38 form a group. Date: C17 or earlier.

G. 34-36 North Station Road

Two-storey building with peg-tile roof. Presumably timber-framed and C17 or earlier. Currently two properties. No 36 (on the right) has a double eight-pane sash window on the first floor. Shop front c 1900. Mock Tudor look of no 34 may reflect something of the original frame. Adjacent to listed building nos 30-32, Nos 28-38 form a group (nos 30-32 is a listed building).

H. 38 North Station Road

Two-storey two-up, two-down red-brick house. Upstairs window (double two-pane sashes) with horns. Brick lintels. Thin stucco cill. Date c 1860-70. Shop front? Edwardian.

Nos 28-38 form a group (nos 30-32 is a listed building).

I. 60-62 North Station Road

Plaque: 1883. Pair of two-storey semi-detached houses with attics lit by original dormer windows. Red brick with cavity walls. Stucco details: quoins, dentilled eaves, lintels and corbelled eaves. Bay windows. Replacement windows detract. Not original railings. Important site. Date c 1890.

J. 1-17 Morten Road

Well-preserved terrace of two-up, two-down houses. Dates AD 1889 and 1890. Yellow brick with relief-decorated brick. Double three-pane sash windows. Monogram on wall for builder A Diss. Date: 1889-90

K. 25 Morten Road

Large well-preserved brick house with original windows and doors. c

1890. Incorporates decorative relief tiles. Corner building with two houses, one in Morten Road (no 25) and the other in Orchard Road (no 2). Date: c 1890.

L. 132 North Station Road (The Norfolk)

Original pub on the left presumably enlarged with the addition of the house on the right. Good fenestration presumably dating to the enlargement. Original building with slate, hipped roof. Date probably c.1860-70 (1873-4??). Addition C20.

Formerly the Norfolk hotel.

APPENDIX III: Article 4 Direction- Schedule of Addresses (to be added)

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