

# COLCHESTER CONSERVATION AREA no. 4



Colchester

North Station Road & environs  
[Morten Road, Orchard Road, St Pauls Road (S),  
John Harper Street & former Colne Bank  
open-air swimming pool]

Conservation Area Appraisal

**CONSULTATION DRAFT**

March 2018





**1. View Southwards Over North Bridge—Towards Colchester Town Centre [CCA no.1]**





**2. COLCHESTER CONSERVATION AREA no. 4: proposed boundary**

Proposed Conservation Area:

**NORTH STATION ROAD & environs:**

Draft Appraisal and Management Plan



3. Former Castle Inn, North Bridge [later Riverside Hotel] - survives today: Listed Grade II

# Proposed Conservation Area:

## **NORTH STATION ROAD & environs:**

### Draft Appraisal and Management Plan Timeline

December 2017	Condition surveys
21 December 2017	Field survey
3 January 2018	Field survey
5 January 2018	First draft
February 2018	Final Draft
March 2018	Presented to Local Plan Committee and approved for public consultation
May & June 2018	Public consultation period [six weeks]
July 2018	Amended final draft
August 2018	Presented to Local Plan Committee and approved for adoption as Planning Guidance
August 2018	Published as Planning Guidance
August 2023	First review date



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**Corporate & Policy Services**  
**The PLACE Team**  
**Colchester Borough Council**



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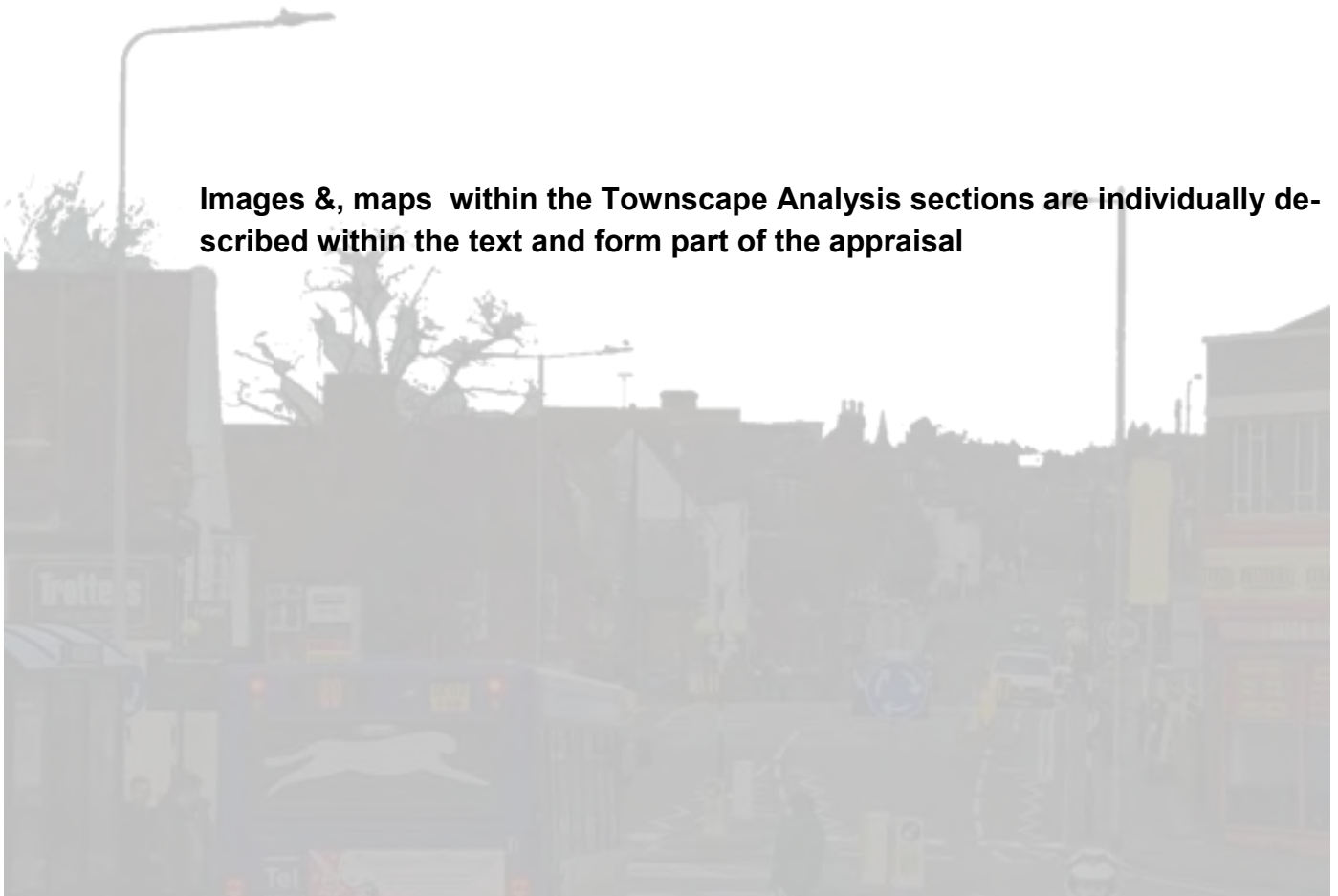
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4. General Location of North Station Road, Colchester, Essex





North Station Road & environs CA  
[Morten Road, Orchard Road, St Pauls Road (S),  
John Harper Street & former Colne Bank  
open-air swimming pool]

PART ONE: the Appraisal



# A New Conservation Area for North Station Road and Its Environs?

[including a full character appraisal and management proposals]

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to analyse the architectural and historical merits of the defined area in the form of a character appraisal and to establish whether such character is special enough to justify the additional heritage protection afforded by Statutorily Designated Conservation Area status. The conclusion in this document is that it does, as will be explained.

In this context the equally important aim of this document is to provide a firm basis for taking development management decisions and for developing proposals and initiatives within the conservation area. Once formally and properly designated it is also expected to form a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications prior to formal designation following statutory public consultation in respect of the Draft Character Appraisal and Management Proposals Document.

This document seeks to

- Trigger the start of the statutory conservation area designation procedure; and,
- Define the special interest of the proposed conservation area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the proposed conservation area (in the form of the “Appraisal”); and,
- Provide guidelines to prevent harm and achieve enhancement (in the form of a “Management Plan”)



Part of the Great War Memorial to Colchester's service and civilian dead

# North Station Road & Environs Conservation Area:

## PART 1: CHARACTER APPRAISAL

### 1.1 POLICY CONTEXT

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities (para 69 (1) (a) from time to time to determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and (para 69 (1) (b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.

In response to these statutory requirements, this document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of proposed Colchester Conservation Area no. 4 [CCA4] [North Station Road and Environs] and identifies opportunities for enhancement. It is in conformity with Historic England guidance as set out in “Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management Historic England Advice Note 1.”

The document has also been drafted having regard to National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF]

This document should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework produced by Colchester Borough Council. These documents include:-

- The Adopted Colchester Borough Local Plan [2008, 2010 & revised 2014]; and,
- Submission Draft Local Plan 2017.
- Colchester North Station Masterplan SPD [July 2009]
- Fixing The Link [2017]

CCA4 is not currently subject to any Article 4 Direction/s.

### 1.2 LOCATION and SETTING

Proposed Conservation Area no.4 is drawn around the predominantly but not exclusively commercial properties that line the west and east sides of North Station Road south of the Albert Roundabout. It embraces some 7.6ha of land and is drawn at its proposed southern extent to form a contiguous boundary with part of the northern edge of Colchester Conservation Area No 1. [The Historic Town Centre of Colchester]

It falls within the administrative boundary of Colchester Borough Council within Castle ward.

At its proposed northern edge it is a mere 433m from Colchester's Main Station [Colchester North] and is within easy walking distance of the Town Centre. It provides the principal pedestrian corridor from North Station to the Town Centre. The arrival of the railway in 1843 triggered the northward expansion of Colchester. The historic existence of a once flourishing [now gone] major cattle market at Middleborough also meant that what is now North Station Road was also a busy thoroughfare between Colchester and the villages to the north—such as Mile End. [now known for much of its extent as Myland following creation of the new urban parish with its own Community Council in 1999.

### 1.3 TOPOGRAPHY and LANDSCAPE

The proposed conservation area which for most part is a linear street that runs south-north is bisected in a west –east direction by the River Colne. Historically much of the area along the banks of the River Colne further up and down stream was (and still is) flood plain. Whilst the area within the proposed conservation area is broadly flat land beyond rises towards north station and Myland (beyond its proposed northern extent) and North Hill (beyond its proposed southern extent).



The most significant current positive landscape elements within the townscape of the proposed conservation area are:

(i)

The River Colne and its tree lined banks on both sides of North bridge under which it passes as it gently wends its way towards Middle Mill and Lower Castle Park to the east; and,

(ii)

The former Colne Bank Open Air Swimming Pool which has now become a new watery habitat that continues to be fed by the River Colne. It is something of a green oasis and its tree edged margins provide an attractive addition to the streetscene particularly visible from the two main roads that skirt it in a horse-shoe shape.

It provides a delight to passers-by many of whom are travelling to and fro Colchester from/to North Station [particularly those accessing Colchester Institute and St Helena's School.



**5. Top:Aerial view today Bottom:Colne bank open Air swimming Pool in its heyday**



The once striking avenue of trees that lined North Station Road has unfortunately now largely disappeared leaving behind an almost totally denuded hard-surfaced and sterile public realm save for a miserable handful of mutilated or orphaned survivors of later unsuccessful attempts to enliven the street scene with municipal tree planting.



**6. North Station Road: Circa 1900**



**Same view today**



Much of the proposed conservation area is within a high flood risk zone although parts benefit from flood defences



## 1.4 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The earliest maps show that settlement along North Street was limited up to the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Street is not depicted on Speed's 1610 map of the town, which finishes just to north of north bridge. This indicates that settlement was very limited along this road at the time (in comparison, both Magdalene Street and East Street are marked on this map, and are shown densely occupied street frontages. This is confirmed by the Siege Map of 1648, which shows the road without occupation.

Chapman & Andre's map of the town (dating to 1777) shows some properties along the road frontage closest to the river, with gardens and/or orchards to the rear of the buildings and also fronting the road. Similarly, Cole and Roper's 1805 Town Plan shows frontage buildings on both sides of the road closest to the bridge but not further away from the town.

In the 1840s, as shown on the tithe maps for St Peter's, Mile End and Lexden, and also Monson's 1848 map, the street frontage was quite densely occupied. Almost certainly, expansion of the town to the north of the historic walled settlement, along North Street, began in the second quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century, following the coming of the railway in 1843 and the construction of the main station at the north end of North Street.

By the time of the First Epoch OC County Series 1:2500 (1874-87), the Street frontage was further built up, and new streets had been constructed off and behind the frontage, including Princess Street (W. side), Albert Road (now Causton Road) and Albert Street and also New Street (off Serpentine Walk, subsequently joined up with, and part of Albert Street) on the E. side, within St Peter's parish. However, there were still some areas on open frontage on the west side of the Street.

By the turn of the century, North Street had become North Station Road, shown on the Second Epoch OC County Series 1:2500 (1897-1904), and the street frontage was densely built up, with further expansion to the rear of frontage properties (along Morten Road, Orchard Road and St Paul's Road on the W. side). A school (North Primary School) was constructed at the west end of Princess Street (now John Harper Street).

There was further consolidation in the early decades of the twentieth century (Third Epoch OC County Series 1:2500 (1922-23)) and the Road was densely built up. The tramline was constructed along North Station Road in 1904, up to the station, but it closed in 1929.

The development of the area within the proposed conservation area is considered in more detail within the map extracts that follow.



### 7. Extract from John Speed map 1610 showing North bridge [10].

There was a bridge here from Roman times. In the middle ages there was a suburb on the far side of the bridge. The bridge marked the boundary of the borough jurisdiction over the Colne fishery.





## 8. The Middleburgh' [sic]: James Deane's Plan of Colchester c1748

British Library The Iconography of Colchester

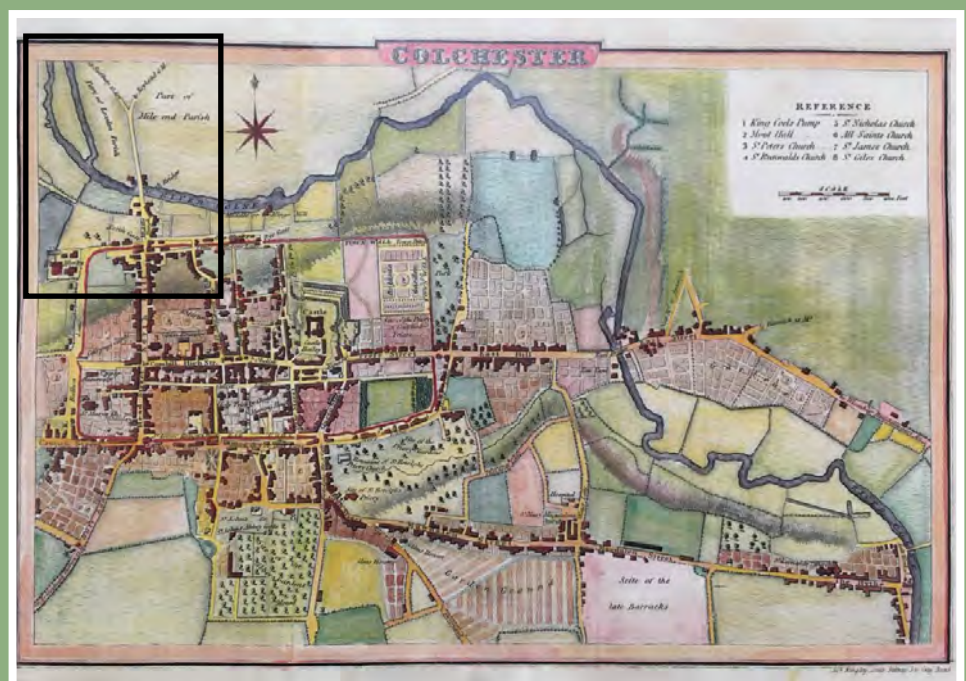


9. 1805

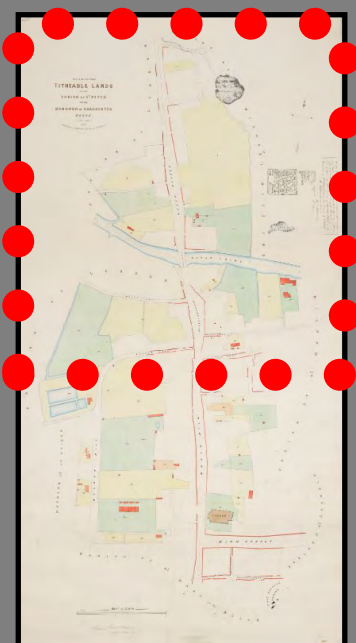
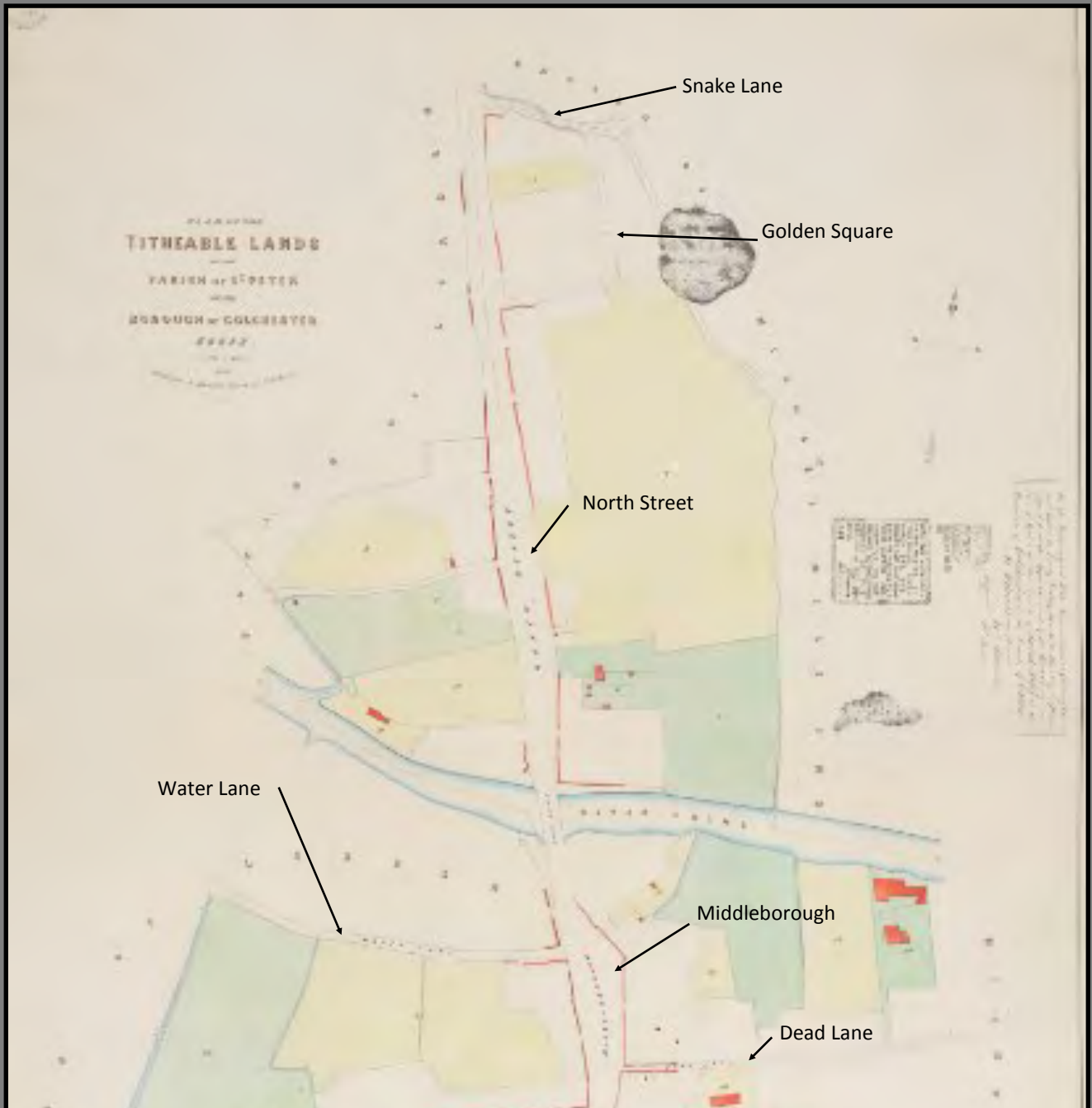
Verner & Hood



10: 1820

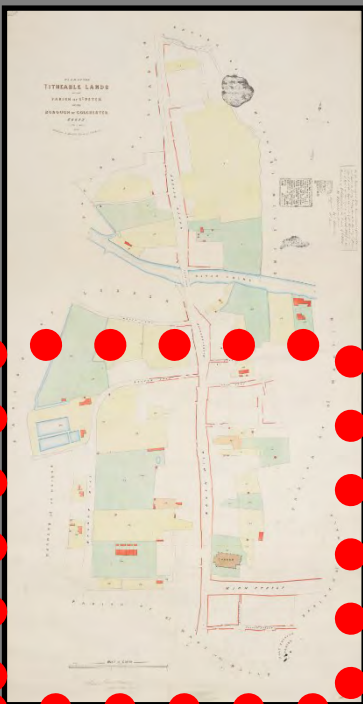
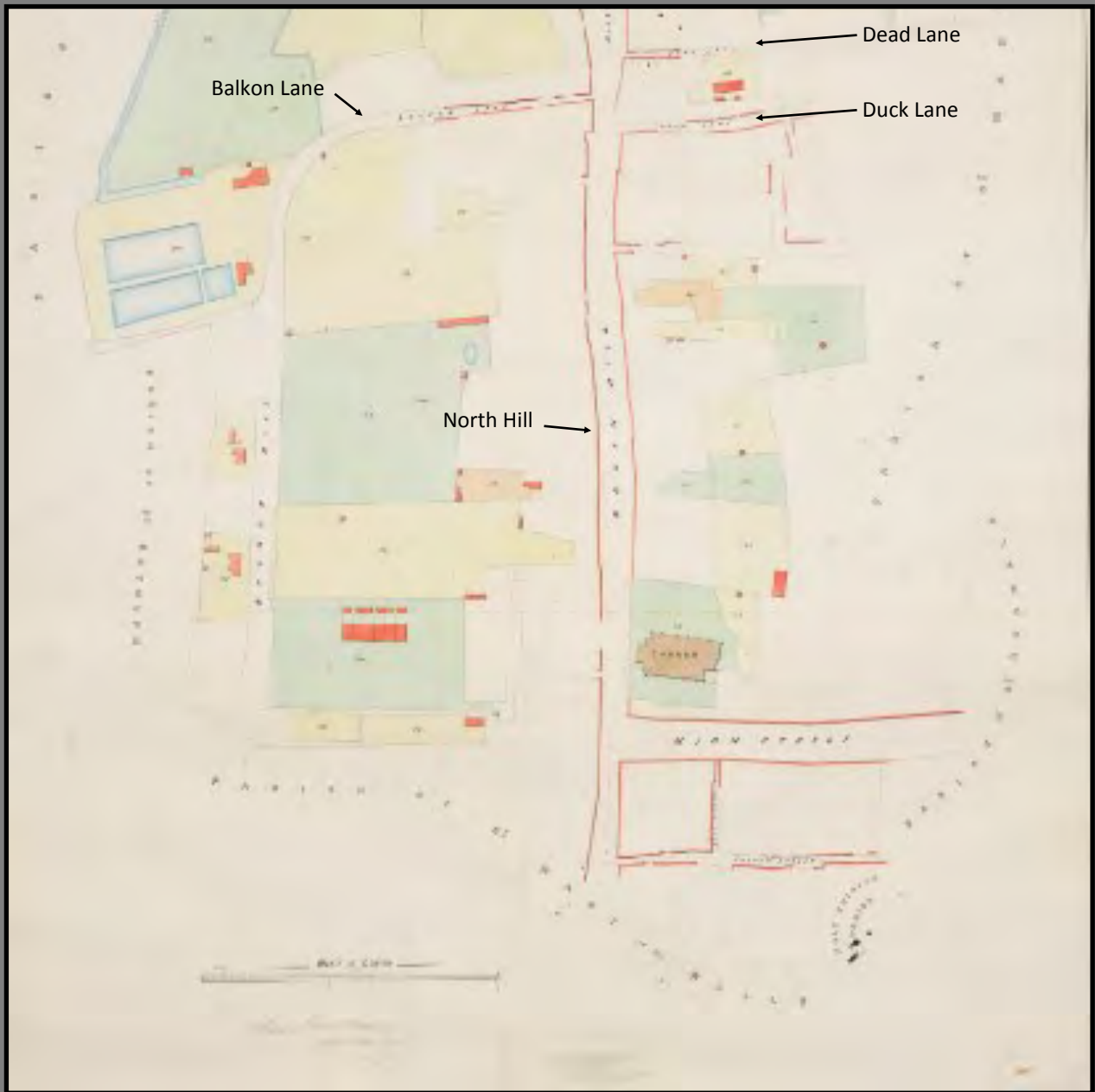






11(1) Tythe Map: 1847  
St Peter's





11(2) Tythe Map: 1847  
St Peter's



**12: OS First Series 6inch  
1870**





13: OS First Series 1870 larger scale extract





14. OS six inch Published 1881

Surveyed 1875-1876



# 15. OS: six-inch: Revised 1896, Published 1898

Note the reference to Public Bathing Space within the elbow of the River Colne





16. OS Six inch Revised 1920-1921, Published 1924





17. OS. Six inch Revised 1938 published circa 1946



18. Record of planning applications 1948-1973 [on OS 1:1250 map base 1964]



Colchester's first station was opened on 29 March 1843 by the Eastern Counties Railway (ECR) and was named simply as Colchester. Locally, however, it is also known as Colchester North to distinguish it from Colchester Town station. Colchester Town station is closer to the town centre (hence its name). It is the arrival of the railway that triggered the northward expansion of Colchester during the Victorian period

### 19. Colchester Station & Hotel: 1843



The railway line and a representation of Colchester railway station, built in 1843. The station was rebuilt in 1865, and then extensively remodelled and rebuilt in 1894. (Victoria County History).

In the foreground is Essex Hall, Colchester, also built in 1843, intended to be the railway hotel. It was converted in 1850 into an asylum for the mentally handicapped, subsequently (from 1859) becoming the Eastern Counties Asylum for Idiots, Imbeciles and the Feeble-minded, and then the Royal Eastern Counties Institution for Mental Defectives. Closed and demolished in 1985. (Victoria County History, National Archives, Local newspaper article).

"The Colchester Station is about a mile north of the centre of the town. There is a splendid edifice in the Italian style immediately adjoining the station. It was originally intended for an hotel, but not proving a profitable undertaking, it was given up, and is now converted into an Asylum for Idiots. It is built of white brick, with stone dressings, and has a lofty tower commanding beautiful views of the surrounding country, as will be readily surmised from our little sketch annexed."

Image extracted from page 62 of *"The Eastern Counties Railway Illustrated Guide"*, by . Original held and digitised by the British Library. Copied from Flickr. 1851





John Harper was headmaster of North Street School in Colchester when it opened on November 12 1894 – the first in Colchester funded from local taxation. It cost £8,000. Mr Harper remained as head until his retirement in 1922. He died three years later. John Harper Street which is within the proposed conservation area was re-named after this important local figure.

The direct and historic connection that ran from the Town Centre over the River Colne and north to North Station and Mile End was brutally severed by the construction of Colne Bank Avenue which formed part of the Colchester Northern By-pass [1933] (Colne Bank Avenue- Cowdray Avenue). That route has long been absorbed into the urban fabric of Colchester and any semblance of functioning as a by-pass is now long dead.



**21 John Harper**



The next big highway intervention [1980's) to affect the area was the construction of a new connection from the Avenue of Remembrance to North Station Road just to the south of North Station Railway Bridge. (now part of Colne Bank Avenue.

The geometry of the Albert roundabout was altered for a period to allow buses to cross the junction directly through the centre of the roundabout. That experiment soon ceased.

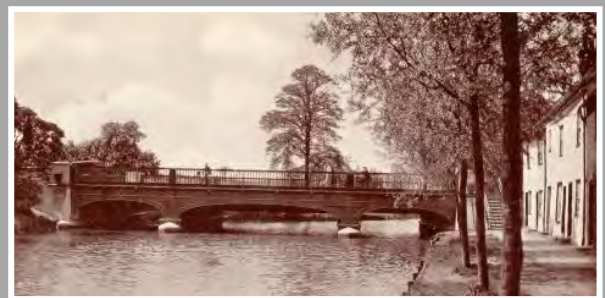
The A134 under North Station railway bridge was widened and extra road lanes formed in the 1990's as part of the Turner Rise retail development which itself replaced a former steeply sloping station car park. Huge quantities of material were removed to create the retail park at a level equivalent to that of the road level at the bridge.

**22. By-pass construction early 1930's**



**23. Experimental roundabout. North Station Bridge [mid 1930's]**

## North Bridge: the proposed conservation area's centrepiece



24. North Bridge at its most picturesque circa 1900



## COLCHESTER CONSERVATION AREA no.4:

### 26. An historic area that has faced constant transition



Postcard view north along North Station Road Circa 1910.  
Tram outside what became the Riverside Hotel



Today



Albert Roundabout came into operation: Photo 1933 with description "Around the Marble Slabs—The Gyrotary *[sic]* system came into operation at the junction of Colne bank



Today: Much enlarged and landscaped



Demolition of 26-32 North Station Road 1965



Today: Interesting and not unattractive modern infill save for the blocky corner turning element



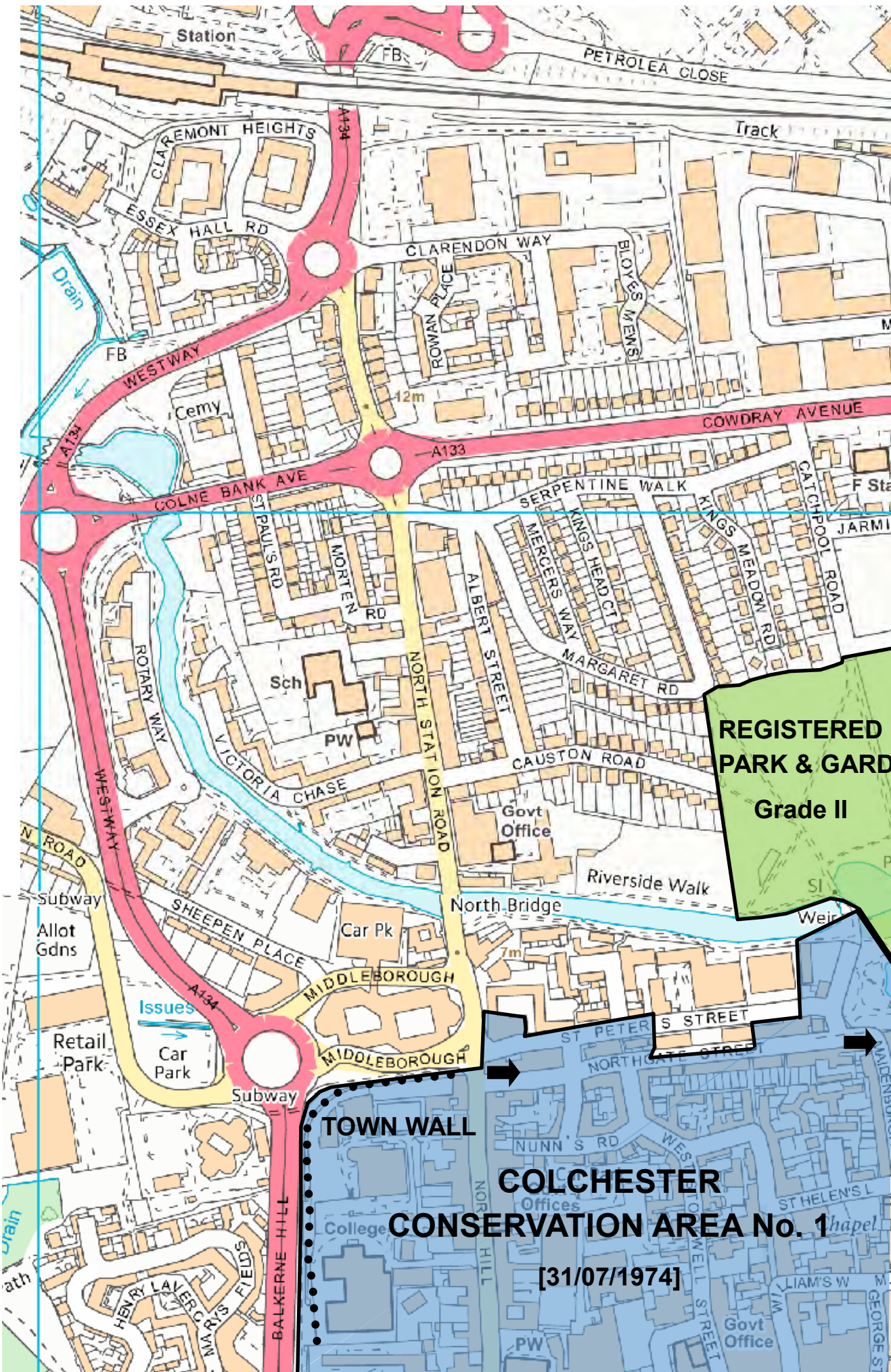
Demolition 1928



Today: Scarcely believable

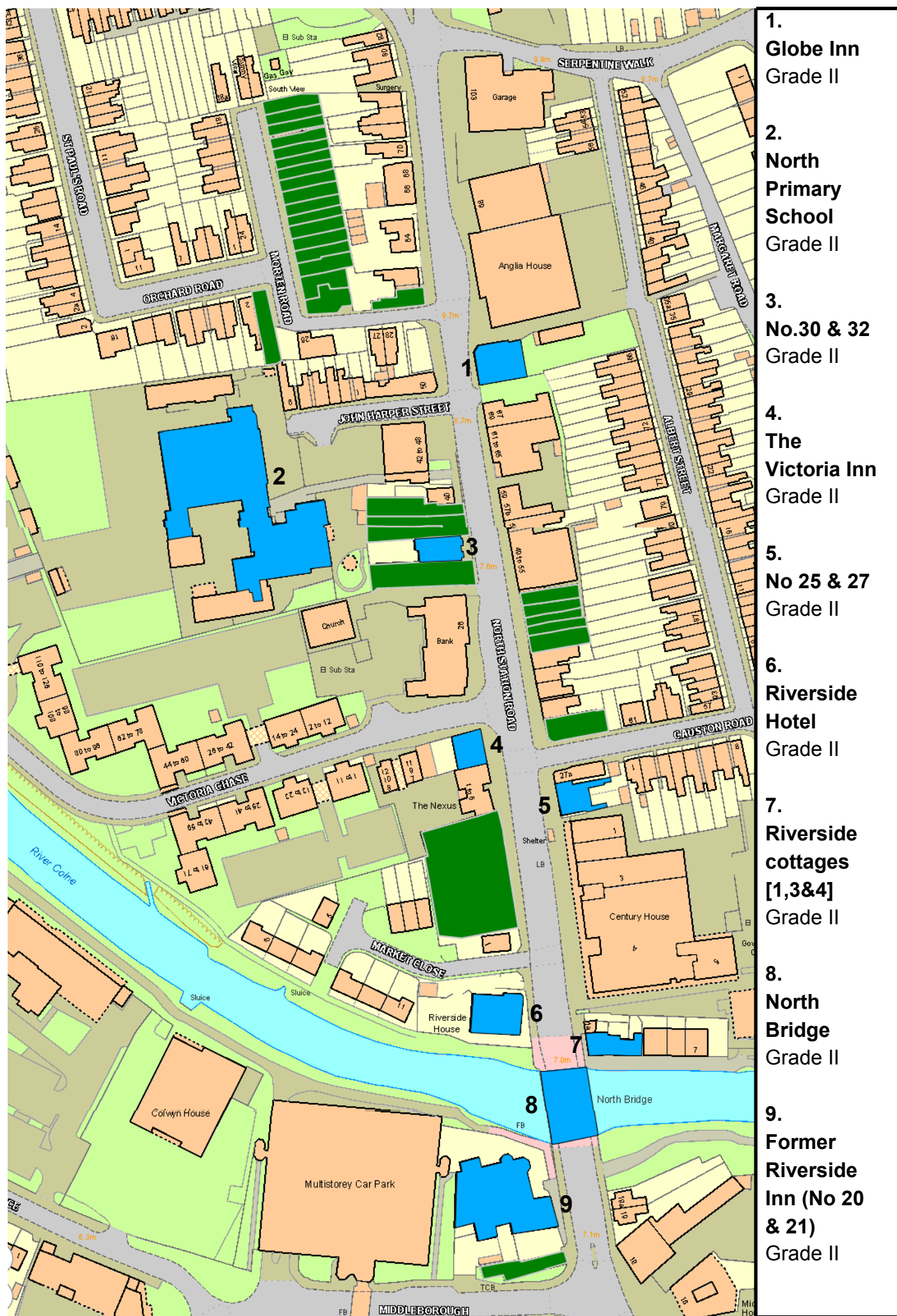


## 1.5 ADJACENT HERITAGE ASSETS





## 1.6 LISTED BUILDINGS [blue]



1. **Globe Inn**  
Grade II
2. **North Primary School**  
Grade II
3. **No.30 & 32**  
Grade II
4. **The Victoria Inn**  
Grade II
5. **No 25 & 27**  
Grade II
6. **Riverside Hotel**  
Grade II
7. **Riverside cottages [1,3&4]**  
Grade II
8. **North Bridge**  
Grade II
9. **Former Riverside Inn (No 20 & 21)**  
Grade II

## 1.7 LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

### 1. 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.

### 2. 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.

### 3. 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.

### 4. 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 stack partly rebuilt. Sash windows early C19. Door and tiling to ground storey modern.

### 5. 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.

### 6. 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.

### 7. 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.

### 8. North Bridge

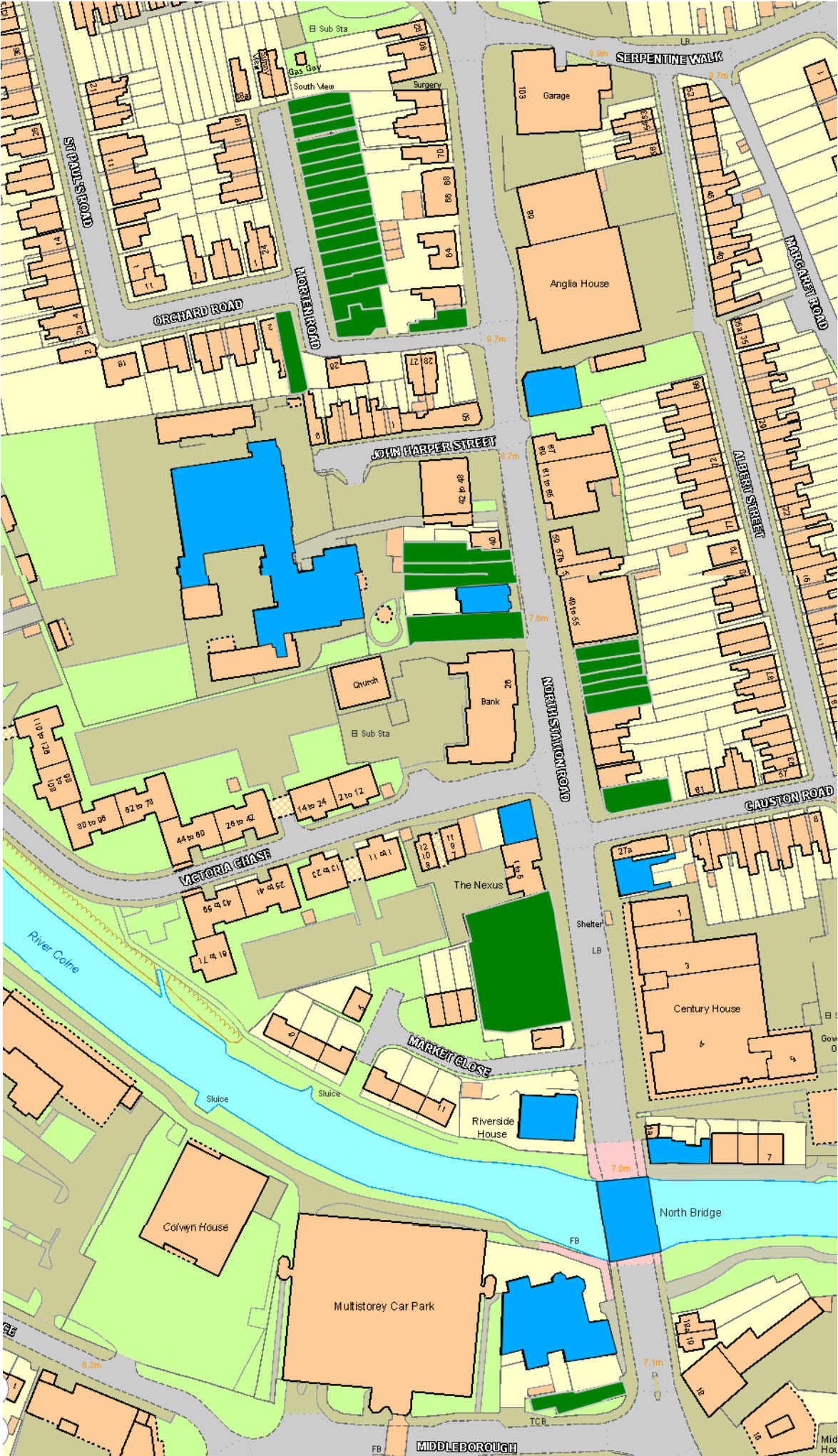
Road bridge. Plaque on west side shows that it was erected in 1843 when R R Dunn, MD was mayor and a plaque on the east side commemorates the widening of the bridge by 17 feet 6 inches by Henry H Elves, JP, Mayor on 22 October 1903. Cast iron bridge on substructure of brown brick in flemish bond having 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.

### 9. 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.



1.8 LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS [green]



## 1.9 LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS :Descriptions

### Colchester Historic Buildings Forum

<http://colchesterhistoricbuildingsforum.org.uk>

#### North Station Road [east side]

##### No 29:

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



##### No.s 39-57

A group of buildings with a strong street value.

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

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

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 39-57 form a group.



##### Nos, 45 & 47

16C structure. Contains moulded beams. [PD]  
[RS] Moulded joists on ground floor of both halves. Probably C16.

[RS]  
[needs investigation]

*Date:* 16th century





## North Station Road [west side]

### No. 28

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



### Nos. 34-36

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).

*Date:* C17



### No. 38

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).



### Nos. 60-62

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 cills. Bay windows. Replacement windows detract. Not original railings. Important site.

*Date* c 1890.



## North Station Road [wet side]

### 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 railway 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

## Morten Road

### Nos. 1-17

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

### No. 25

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





## 1.10 Buildings of Townscape Merit Worthy of Further investigation

### Orchard Road

#### Nos. 12 & 14 .semi-detached pair

2 st. red brick slate roofs, timber marginal sash windows with 6 & 12 pane top sashes. Gabled with timber framed pediment. Slightly projecting oriols gr & 1st adjacent and above front door. Later than Morten Road hints of arts & crafts



#### Nos. 4-10

Terrace of four H-plan arrangement with gabled cross wings at each end. Similar detailing to nos 12 & 14 but altered



**St Paul's Road** (St Paul's Church now demolished and site redeveloped was on the west side of Belle Vue Road.)

A combination of simple polite semi-detached and terraced cottages many with original features..



## 1.11 SUMMARY of SPECIAL INTEREST

A linear street with a strong commercial component with evidence of decay (both commercial and physical) in parts

An eclectic mix and variety of buildings from C15th through to the late 20th century.

Wide but currently unattractive footways with potential for the original avenue plating to be restored.

It is a principal pedestrian corridor into and out of the Town Centre.



It represents a key stage in the expansion of Colchester Town northwards towards outlying villages such as Mile End, following the arrival of the railway to the Town.

One of the first parts of Colchester to experience significant change to its townscape as a result of highway engineering schemes to facilitate the rapid growth in the use of motor cars.



Home to the first primary school in the Town built as a result of local taxation. [1894]. That building remains largely in its original form and is still in use as a primary school.

The area's historic association with the former cattle market at Middleborough.



The grace, delicacy and detailing of North Bridge and the views it affords of the River Colne as it meanders through the Town.



The surprising existence of medieval buildings tucked in amongst Victorian and later development.

The significance of vestiges of built form that illuminate our understanding of how the Town expanded beyond its walled fortification

The insensitive nature of some of the post-war commercial infill development which is redolent of the time when the past was consigned to history and a new optimism and energy demanded a new modern style and approach.



The simple but elegant detailing on Victorian buildings in Morten Road with the use of decorative terracotta tiles, contrasting brick quoins, terracotta decorative plaques, slate roofs and strong walled enclosures.



The predominance of red bricks and slate within Victorian residential streets.

The limited but striking use of gault bricks on prominent corner buildings: Globe Inn and 29 North Station Road. [with its typically quirky gothic tower]



The use of clay plain tiles and dominant chimneys on the pre-Victorian buildings.



### Orchard Road

Pretty semi-detached cottages with elegant marginal window frames





The proposed conservation area has a strong link with the Victorian sense of public wellbeing as evidence by the Colne Bank open air swimming pool [which survives in alternative use] and the Railway Workers Mission hall (which also survives—currently in health related use)



Another key characteristic of the proposed conservation area is the huge potential to encourage the restoration of sensitive shopfronts many of which over the years have been changed for insensitive replacements that mutilate the balance and character of the original building facade.

Some better examples do however survive. Of particular note is the art deco façade and shopfront of no 61-65 [now empty] and the traditional shop-front at no 33.





## **1.12 CHARACTER and APPEARANCE of the CONSERVATION AREA**

### **1.13 TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS**

The proposed conservation area which is centred on North Station Road can best be described as comprising a wide street lined with largely currently commercial development with a number of narrow, largely Victorian residential side streets.

Buildings, on street parking and vehicles currently dominate with very little landscaping other than for the banks of the River Colne that passes under North Bridge and the former open air swimming pool.

Key components within the townscape have already been described in detail elsewhere in this appraisal and the Appraisal Townscape Map.

### **1.14 Heritage at Risk**

Currently there are no properties within the proposed conservation area on the Essex County Council Buildings at Risk Register [2013]. Clearly as the document is now 4 years out of date it may not represent a true current position.

Currently there are no properties on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register [2016].

That said the building condition survey included in this appraisal demonstrates that a number of properties are in need of repairs and/or are vacant which increases the risk of deterioration and potential ultimate loss.

### **1.15 NON-LISTED BUILDINGS of TOWNSCAPE MERIT**

Beyond the nine statutorily listed buildings within the conservation area there are numerous buildings on the local list. [please see local list section of this appraisal]

Certainly as a result of this appraisal it is considered that these may warrant statutory listing and in the case of residential properties the application of an Article 4 Direction removing all domestic 'permitted development' [PD] rights.

## 1.16 FOCAL POINTS, VISTAS and VIEWS

### 1.17 Focal Points

Within the proposed conservation area a number of key focal points exist. These are:-

**North Bridge and adjacent listed buildings :** as viewed from (i) both the west and east from the riverside walks (north and south banks of the River Colne), (ii) northwards from North Hill/North Station Road and (iii) in foreground views of the Town Centre from North Station Road (southwards)

**North Primary School:** as viewed (westwards) from North Station Road along John Harper Street and obliquely from the dog leg in Morten Road.

**Victoria Inn & Globe Inn:** both command prominent corner positions along North Station Road and form clear way markers that aid pedestrian legibility

#### **The War Memorial**

The site on the south-east corner of the Albert roundabout junction is an important marker of the Town's war history. Each tree along the Avenue of Remembrance was originally planted to represent the fallen that died in the Great War. Each tree had a plate at its foot with the name of one of the Colchester war dead. As these plates corroded that record was gradually being lost. In the 1980's the Council built a decorative wall on this site upon which each of the names that had previously been on the plates beneath the trees on The Avenue of Remembrance was engraved onto plaques. The plaques name service and civilian dead from Colchester

#### **Former Colne bank Open Air Swimming**

**pool:** viewed principally from Colne Bank Avenue from which views down into the pool area are possible, although tree canopies provide some of the only natural relief within the proposed conservation area.

**Albert Roundabout:** Viewed from the four points of the compass as by its very nature it is a nodal point. Colchester has a rich history of well landscaped roundabouts and these are an attractive feature of the Town.

### 1.18 Views and vistas

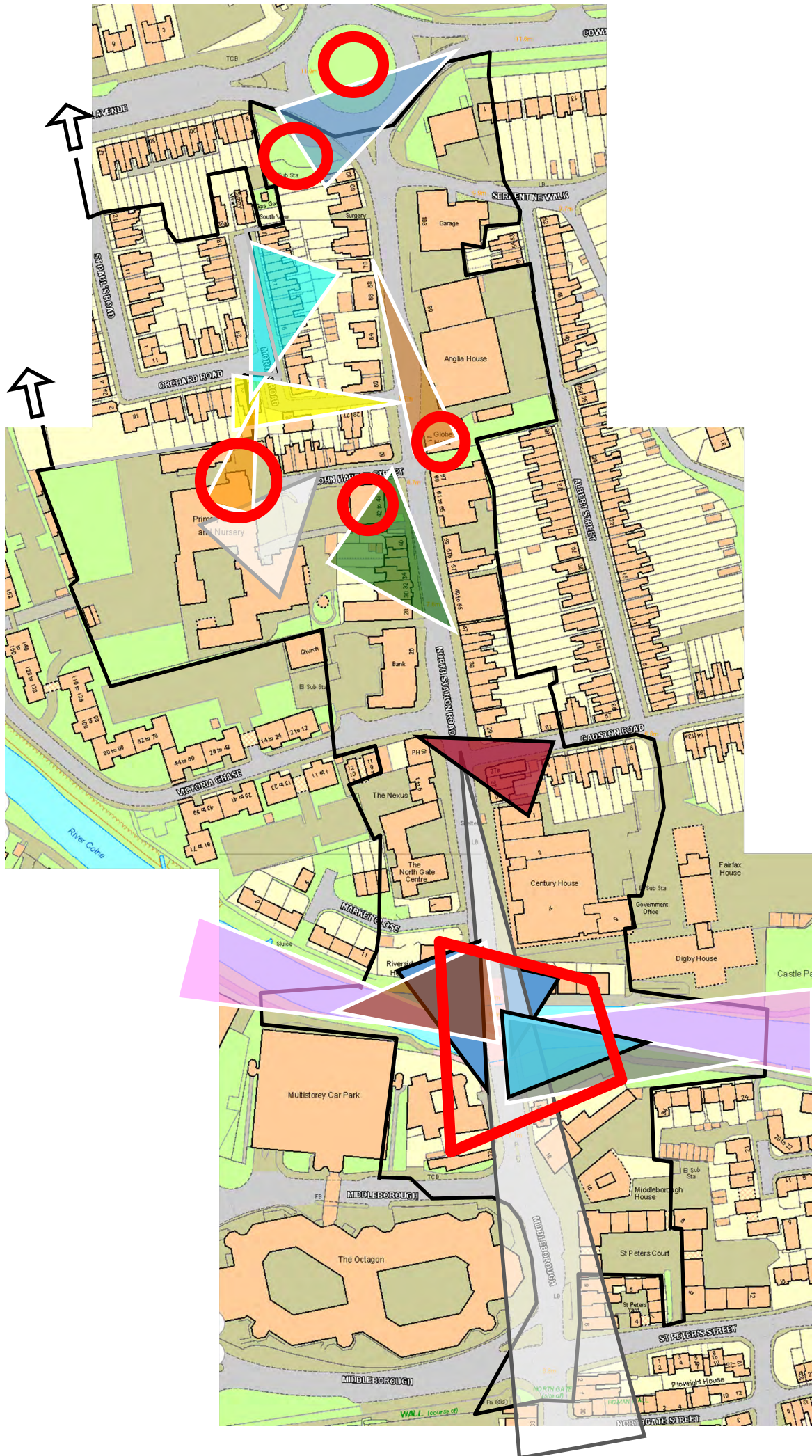
As the proposed conservation area is essentially linear in nature views and vistas are experienced dynamically as one travels along North Station Road. Although there are a number of important long views [as shown on the following diagram] there are a number of important localised views. That are experienced briefly as one passes.

North Station Road is an important thoroughfare in and out of the Town Centre, particularly for pedestrians who are travelling at speeds which allow for the full appreciation of these viewing opportunities.

Views from North Bridge are particularly picturesque and they retain their original charm and hint of Colchester from a quieter bygone era.

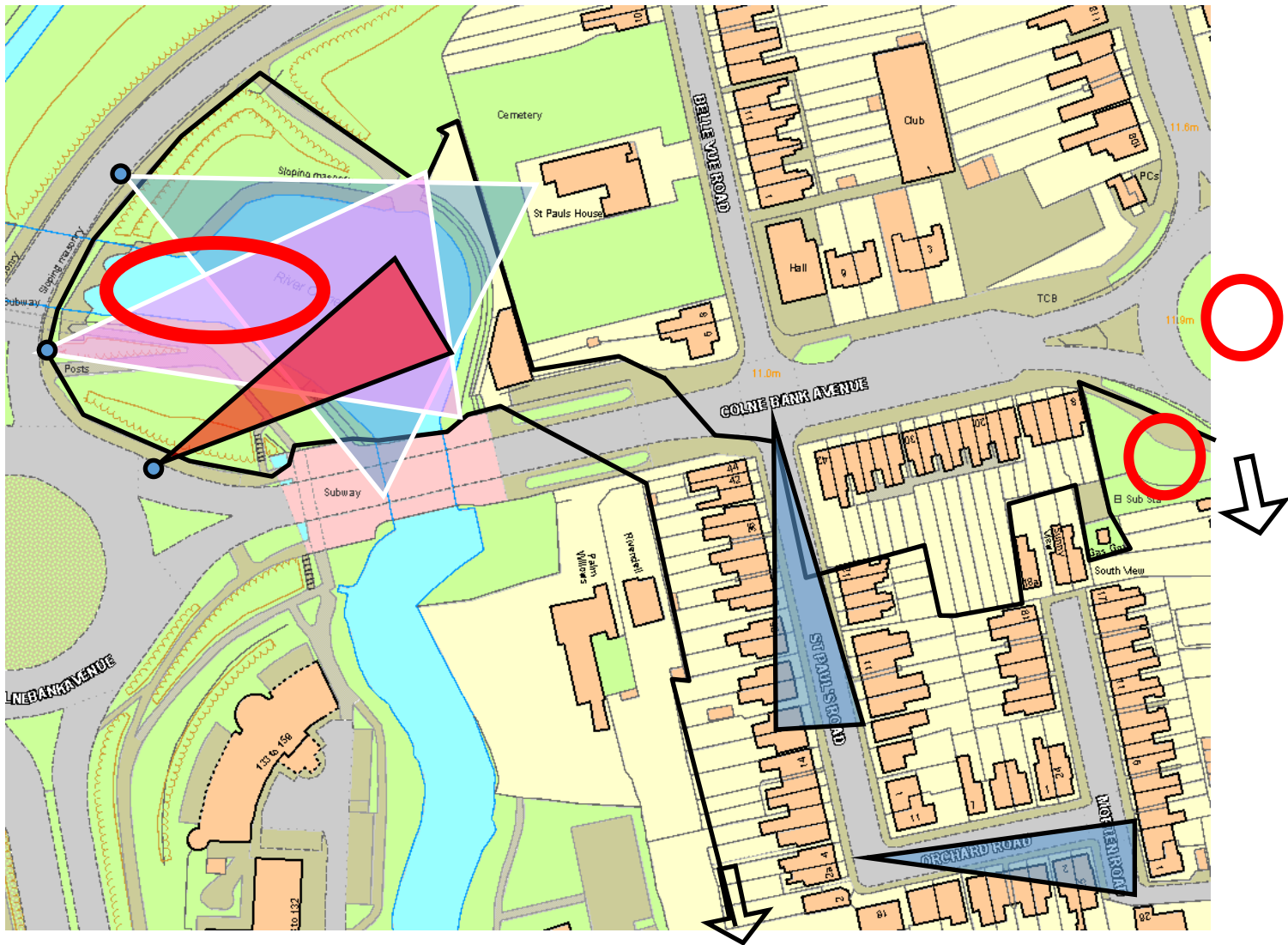


## 1.19 FOCAL POINTS VIEWS & VISTAS (1)





## 1.20 FOCAL POINTS VIEWS & VISTAs (2)



## 26. View Northwards from Middleborough



## 1.21 KEY BUILDINGS [Listed]



**Globe Hotel**



**Victoria Inn**



**Riverside Inn**

Currently being converted to an hotel





Riverside Hotel



Bridge Cottages





**North Primary School**



**Nos. 25 & 27**

**The Good, (listed timber-framed buildings), The Bad (the juxtaposition of the 1970's block) and the Ugly (signage all in one photograph)**



**No. 30/32**



## 1.22 Townscape Analysis Map Areas

5

1

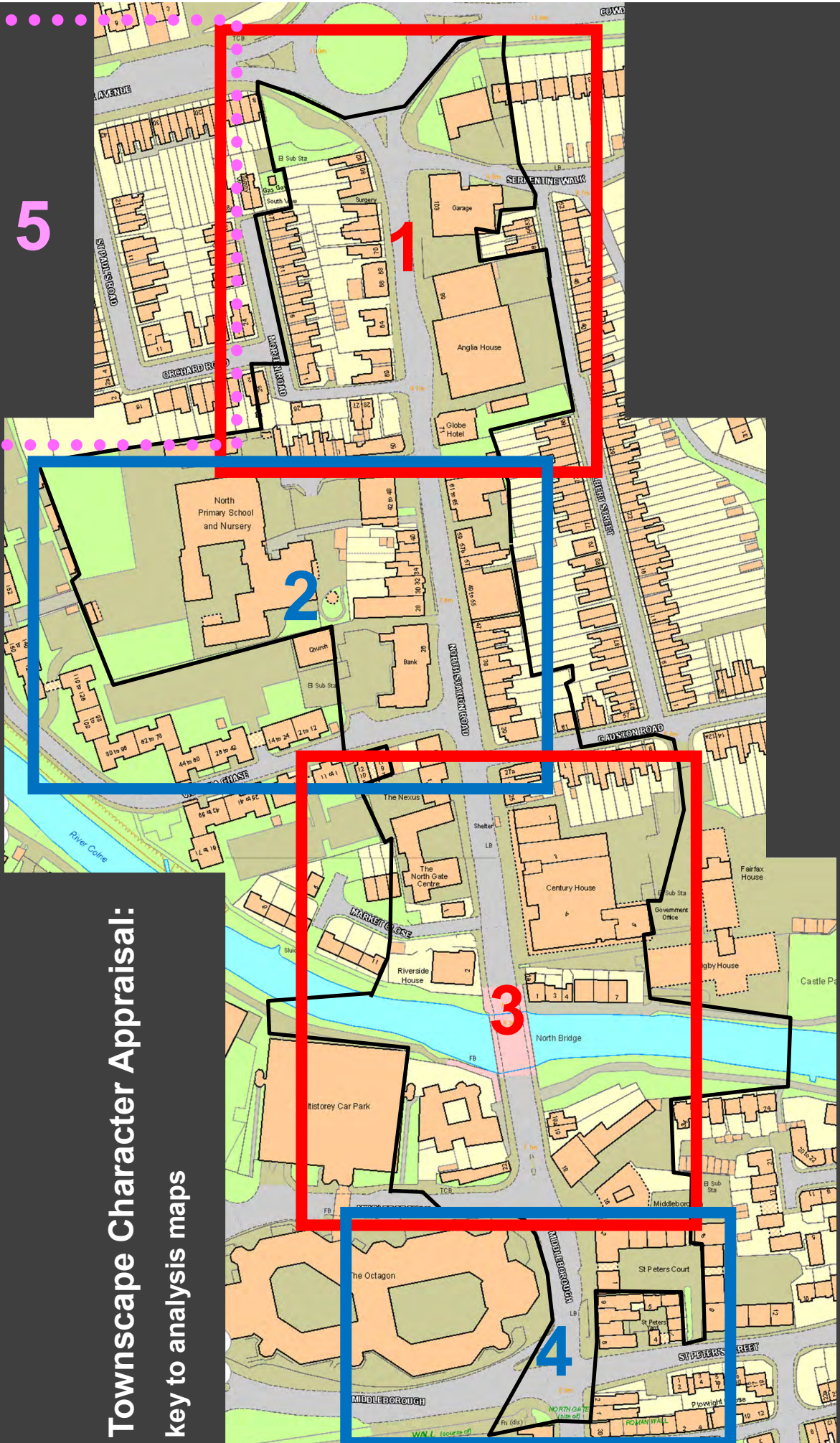
2

3

4

Townscape Character Appraisal:

key to analysis maps



1.23 POSITIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 1





1.24 NEGATIVE TOWNSCAPE ELEMENTS: Area 1



## 1.25 TOWNSCAPE / ENHANCEMENT MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS [Area 1]

### A1.1

Clean War Memorial brickwork and plaques and reinforce landscaping.

### A1.2

Encourage the owners of 1 Cowdray Avenue [currently occupied by Majestic] to improve boundary enclosure to mask open parking on this prominent corner.

### A1.3

Encourage owners of 100 North Station Road (Kwik Fit) to appropriately enclose part of their open parking area to improve townscape.

### A1.4

Encourage removal of excessive signage on no 80 North Station Road

### A1.5

Encourage local highway authority to improve appearance of pavement between 60 and 82 North Station Road

### A1.6

Serve Discontinuance Notice to remove the three unsightly 48 poster panel hoardings and the landscaping of the site as open space. [this is ultimately a development site]

### A1.7

Discuss with the local highway authority amending the massive highway directional sign to reduce its harmful visual impact on the character of the conservation area without prejudicing highway safety

### A1.8

Encourage local highway authority to use conservation style road linings in CCA4

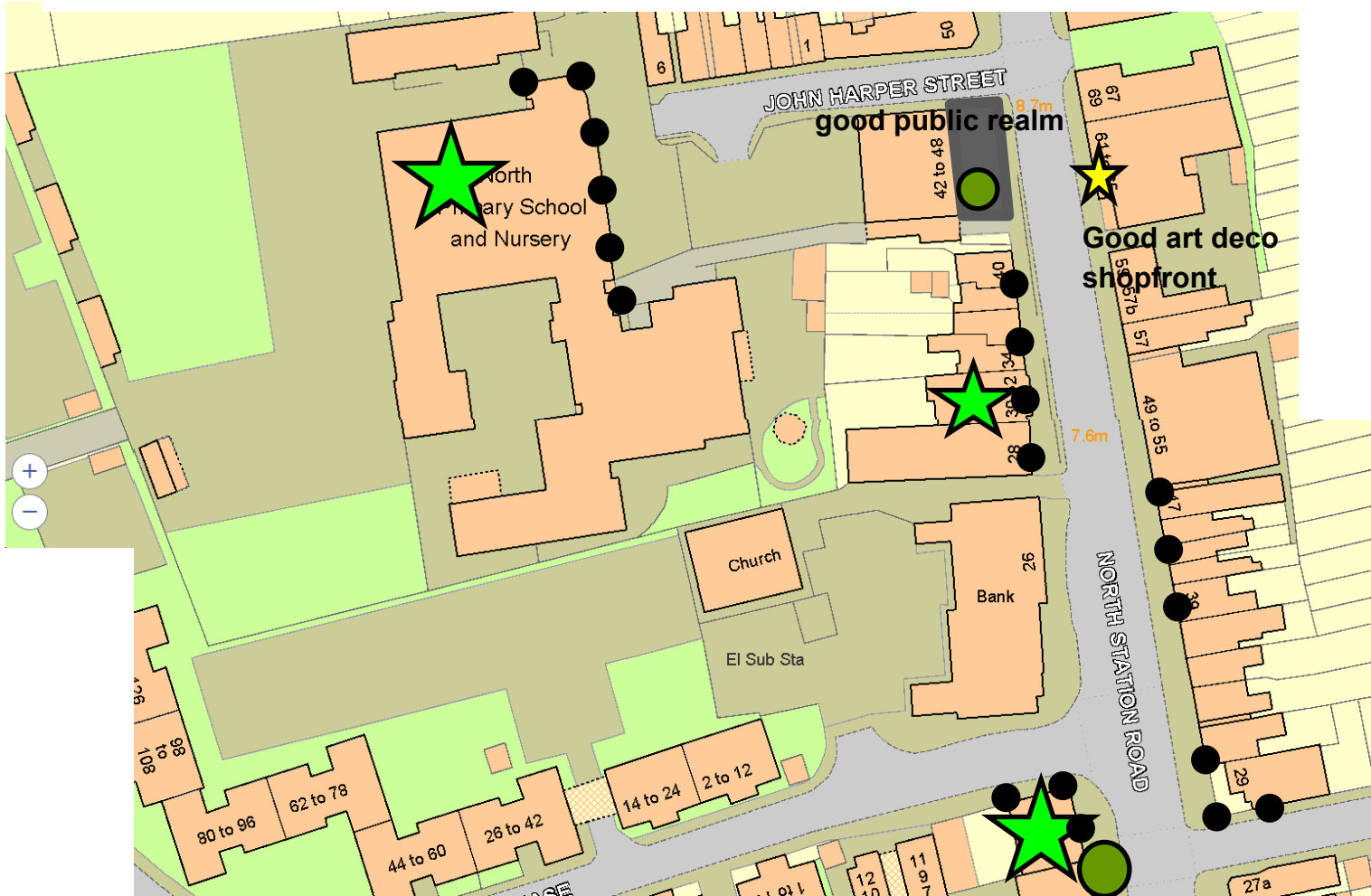
### A1.9

Encourage removal of air conditioning plant on external face of Globe Hotel and the rationalisation of unsightly drainage pipes

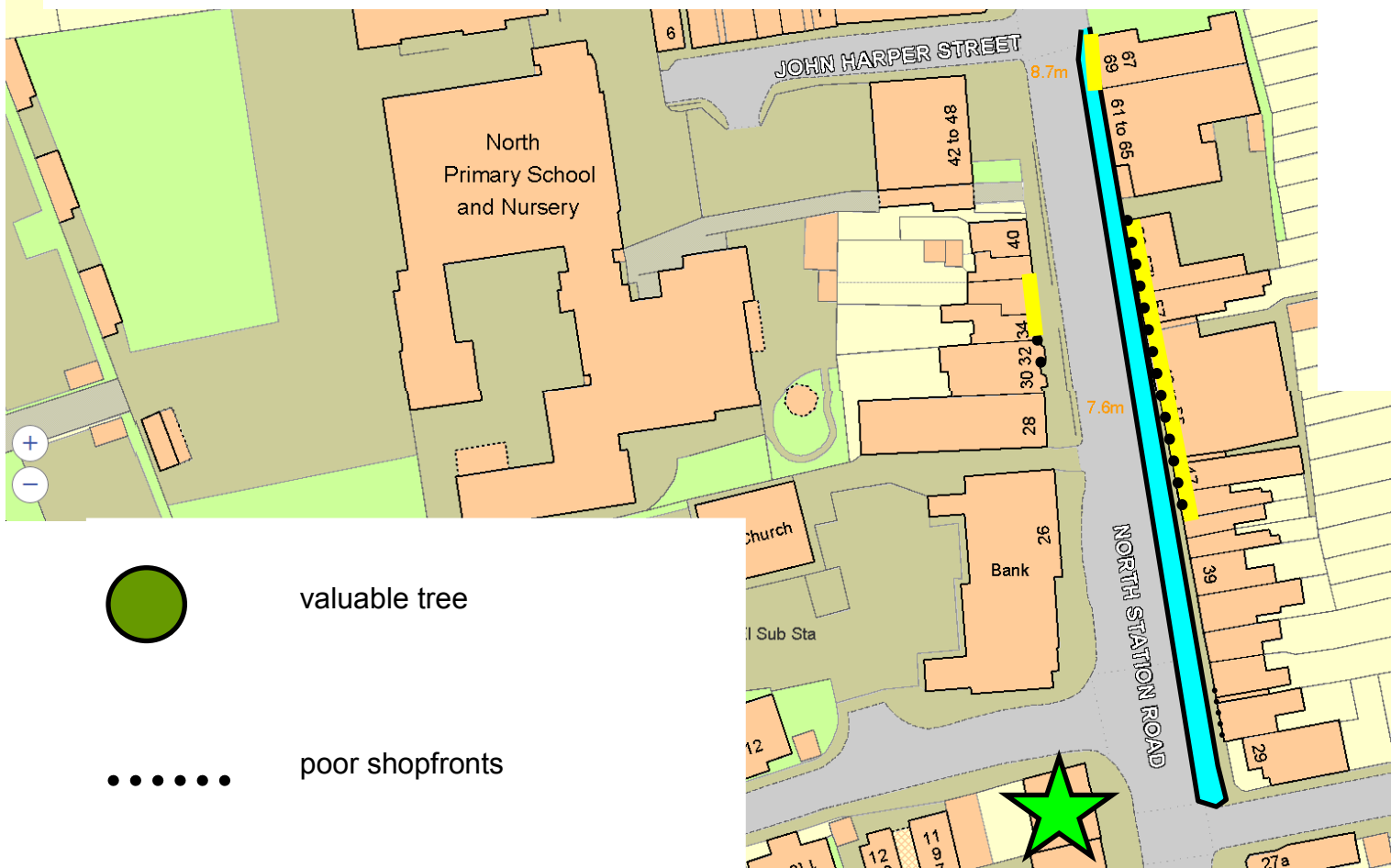




## 1.26 POSITIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 2



## 1.27 NEGATIVE TOWNSCAPE ELEMENTS: Area 2



## 1.28 TOWNSCAPE / ENHANCEMENT MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS [Area 2]

### A2.1

Encourage local highway authority to improve appearance of pavement and quality of public realm between 29 and 69.

### A2.2

Introduce the planting of appropriate tree species into the street o re-establish the original tree-lined character of North Station Road.

### A2.6

Generic objective to enhance shopfronts in line with adopted Shopfront Guidance SPD.

### A2.7

Generic objective to reduce excessive and extraneous shop signage.



Wide sterile tarmac pavement



Endless safety railings and  
brash signage



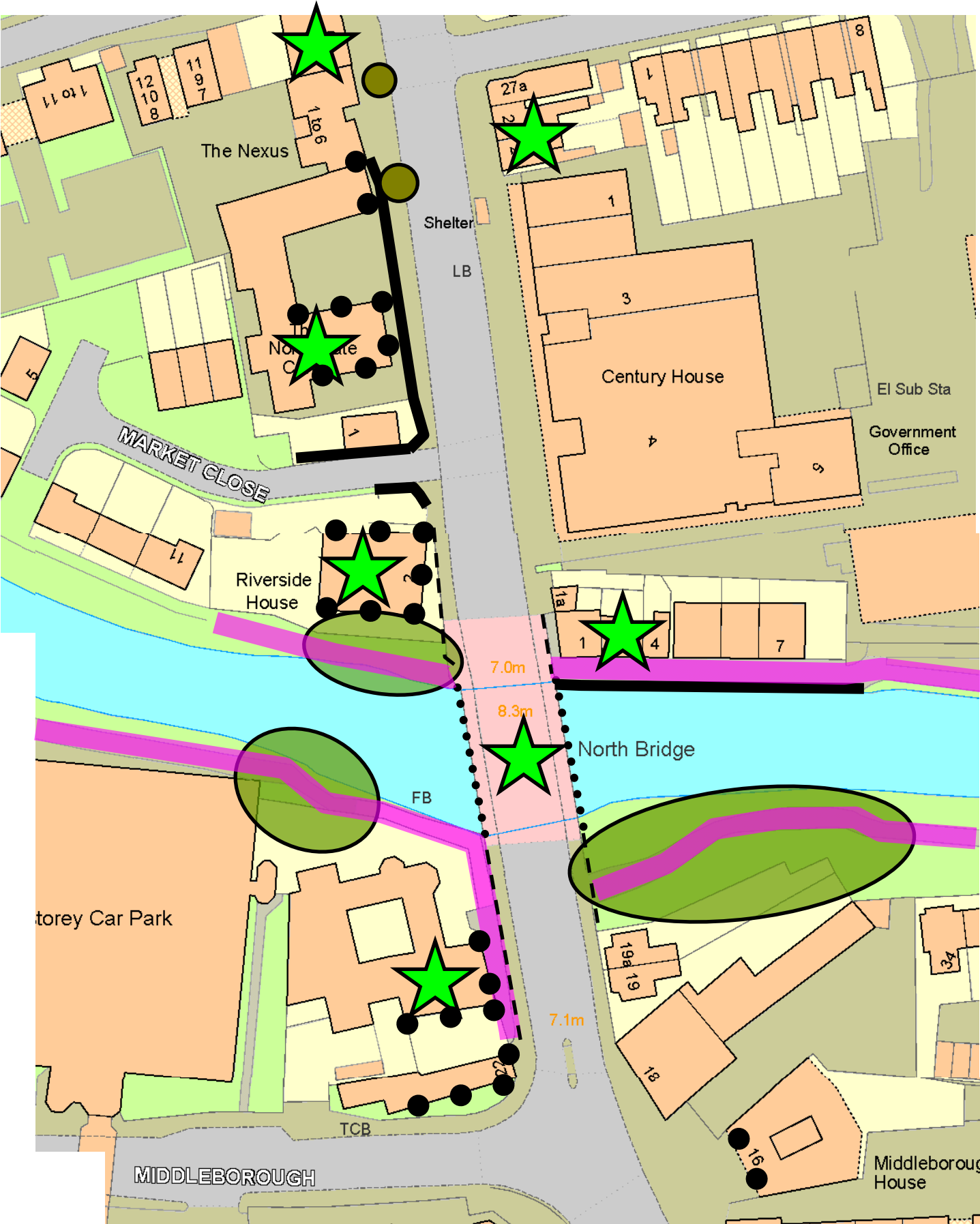
Cluttered street furniture



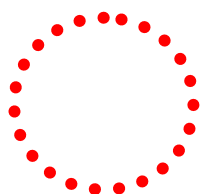
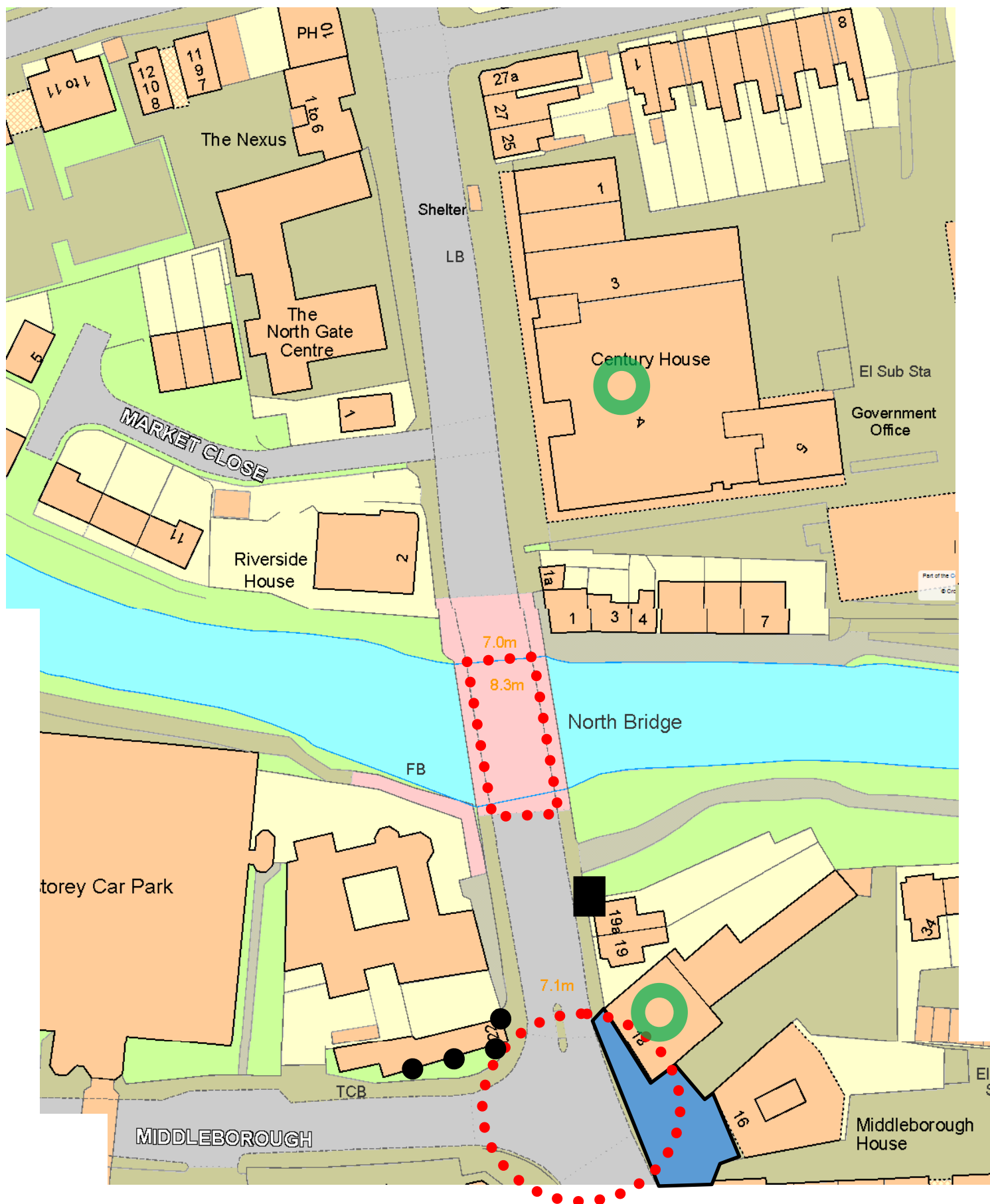
Deformed Birch within  
the pavement



1.29 POSITIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 3



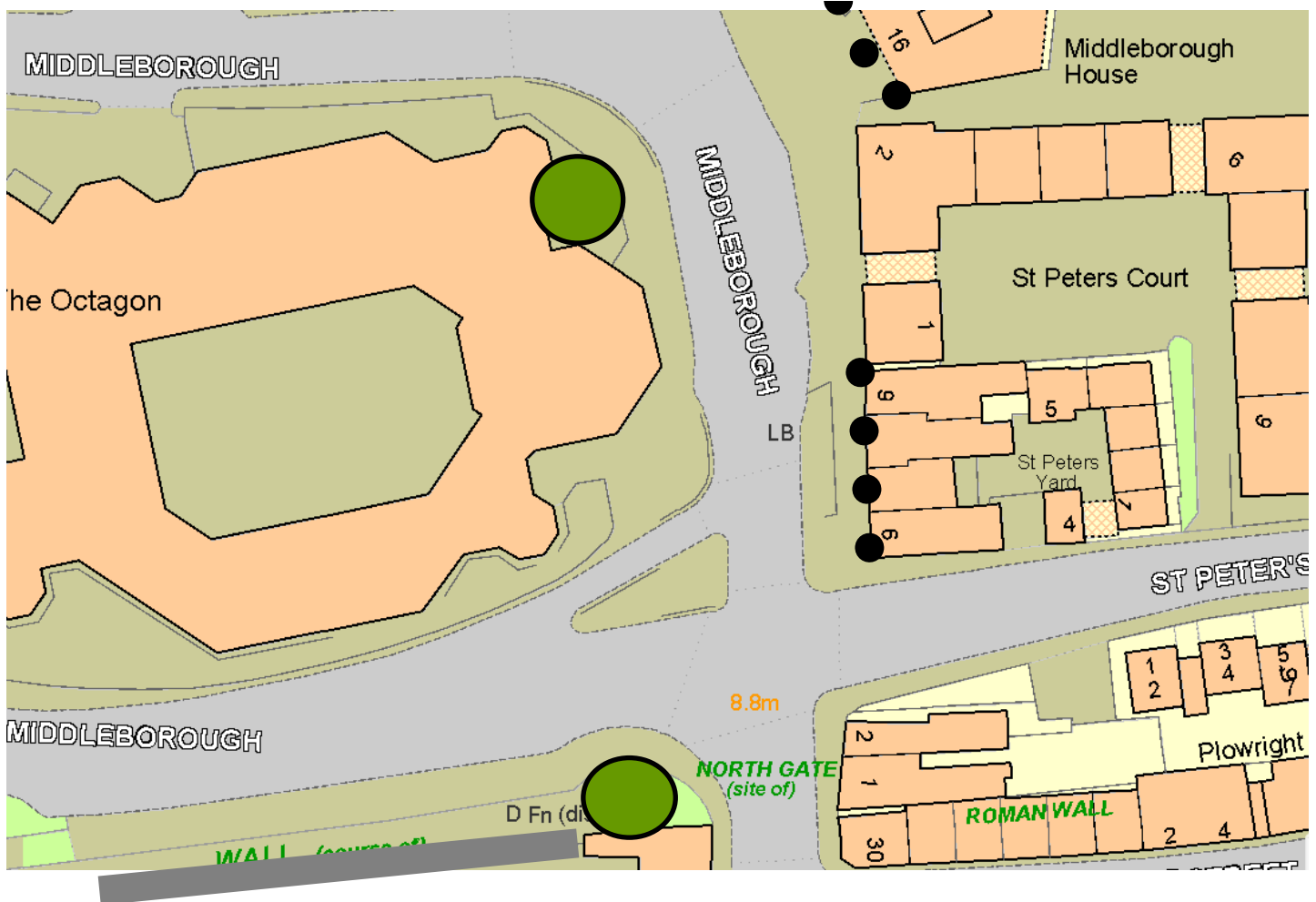
### 1.30 NEGATIVE TOWNSCAPE ELEMENTS: Area 3



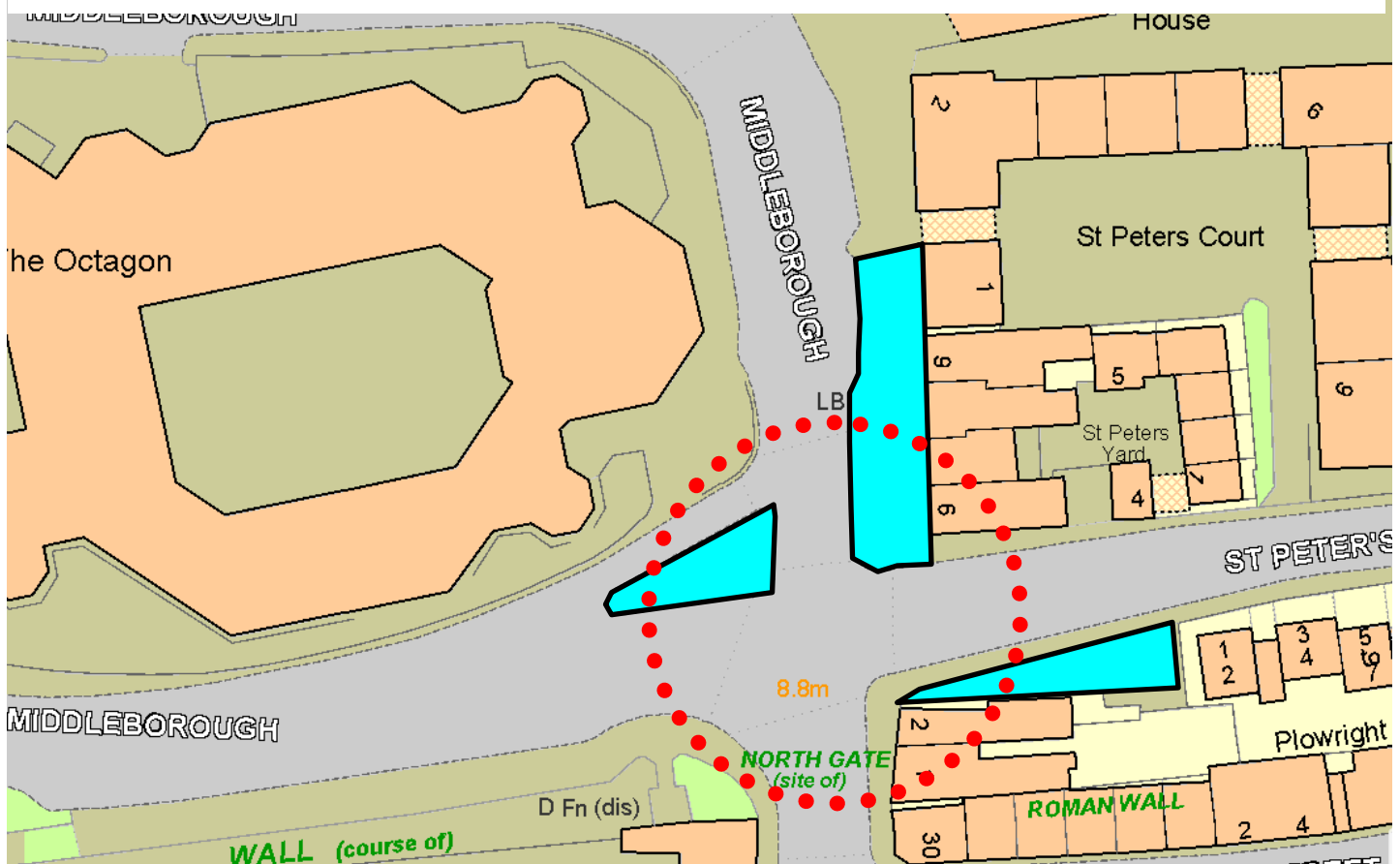
cluttered/unattractive street furniture



### 1.32 POSITIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 4



### 1.33 NEGATIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 4



## 1.31 TOWNSCAPE / ENHANCEMENT MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS [Area 3]

### A3.1

Refurbish the cast iron railing on North Bridge and re-paint.

### A3.2

Encourage the rationalisation of road markings on the bridge and if possible secure the removal of the illuminated bollards provided on the cycle route within the carriageway.

### A3.3

Encourage local highway authority to improve appearance of pavement outside 27a-25 North Station Road and 1-4 Century House.

### A3.4

Encourage the rationalisation of street signage at the Middleborough [N] / North Station Road junction.

### A3.5

Discuss with the local highway authority amending the massive highway directional sign adjacent to no 19a to reduce its harmful visual impact on the character of the conservation area without prejudicing highway safety

### A3.6

Discuss with the owners of 16 North Station Road and the local highway authority introducing appropriate boundary enclosure and pavement improvements to the street to conceal the large open parking area and present an attractive edge to the public.

### A3.7

Generic objective to enhance shopfronts in line with adopted Shopfront Guidance SPD.

### A3.8

Generic objective to reduce excessive and extraneous shop signage.



The distinctive and rather elegant concrete framed building at no 16 and the poor public realm around it



Dominant street furniture





## 1.34 TOWNSCAPE / ENHANCEMENT MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS [Area 4]

### A4.1

Encourage the rationalisation of street signage at the Middleborough [S] / North Station Road junction.

### A4.2

Generic objective to enhance shopfronts in line with adopted Shopfront Guidance SPD.

### A4.3

Generic objective to reduce excessive and extraneous shop signage.

### A4.4

Encourage enhancement area in front of flank wall of the corner property. Consider art works to screen unsightly flank wall

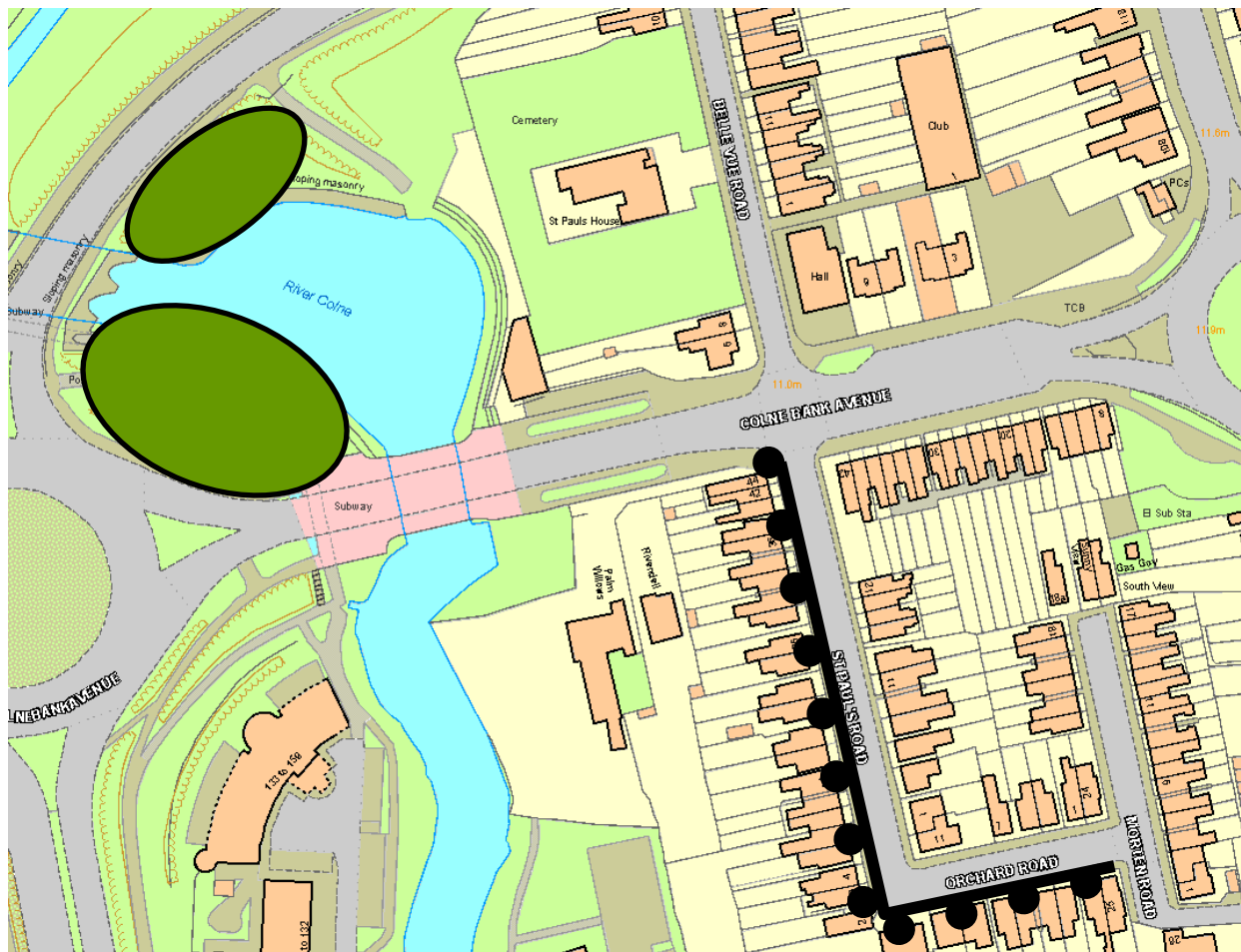


Dominant street furniture

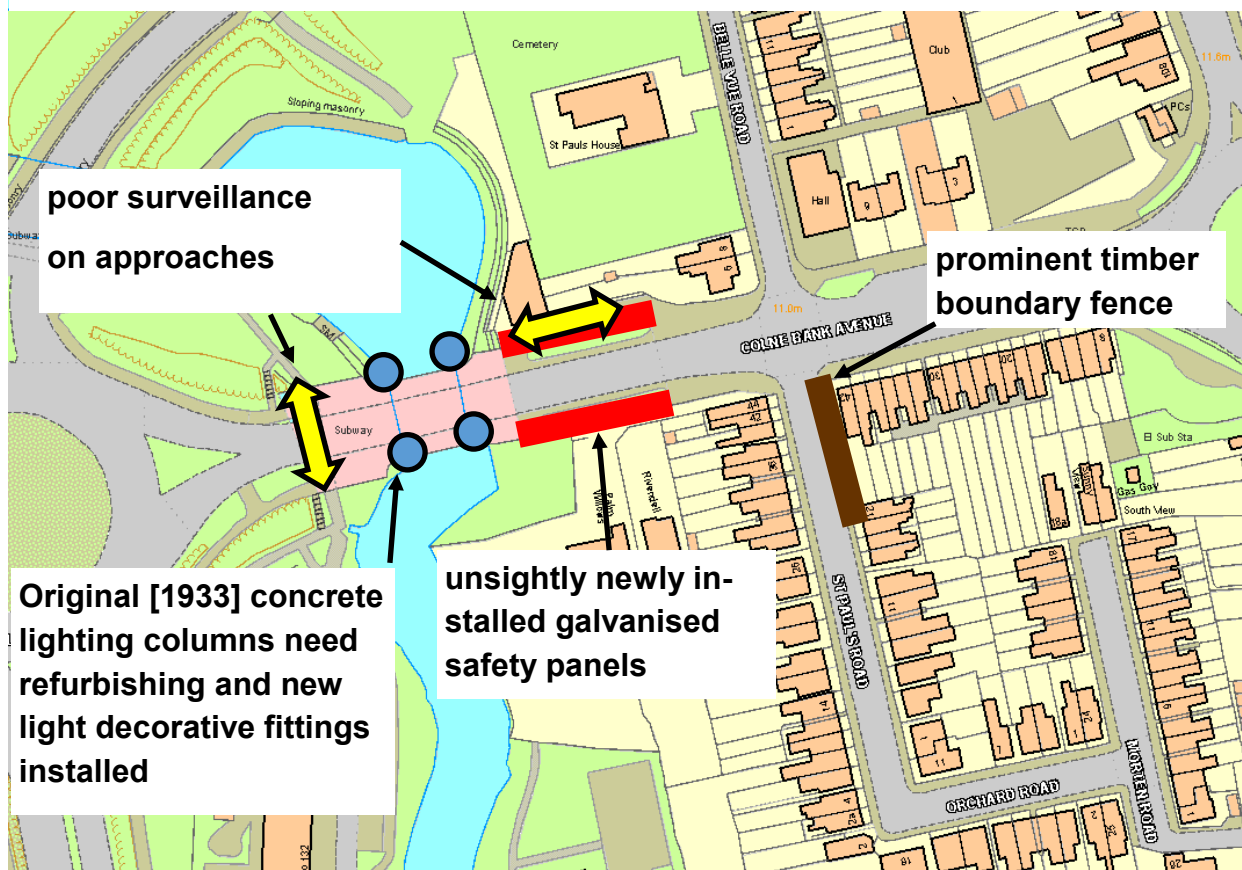


St Peter's Street / Middleborough: ugly side wall

### 1.35 POSITIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 5



### 1.36 NEGATIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 5





## 1.37 TOWNSCAPE / ENHANCEMENT MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS [Area 5]

### A5.1

Explore feasibility of refurbishing original lighting columns on the bridge and adding appropriate light fittings to restore the original character of this art deco feature. The first major highway intervention in Colchester to accommodate the growth in motor car usage [1933]

### A5.2

Explore the feasibility on improving surveillance around the former swimming pool and of enhancing its natural attributes and attractiveness to and habitat Undercroft rooms and the old changing rooms are in use as a gym and canoe centre.

### A5.3

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



## 1.38 EXTERNAL WORKS ASSESSMENT for ENHANCING BUILDINGS WITHIN CCA4

71 Globe Hotel Listed  <b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>	Reinstate sash windows to match existing where currently replaced by C20 interventions and overhaul historic sashes refurbish and redecorate all historic joinery. Remove/reroute external air con units and parking sign on north side of building
67,69 Radio Centre  <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Make good render and repaint in mineral paint. Replace doors with more appropriate timber doors, first floor windows with 4 pane box sash windows. Replace fascia with wooden 'canted' style fascia of appropriate depth to run the width of property with applied lettering.
59 Col Electrical 59b café  <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b> [note refurb appears under way]	Render and repaint frontage, replace 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor windows with 6/6 and 3/6 paned box sash. New cantilever blind included in box set in fascia. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering. Render and repaint frontage, replace 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor windows with 6/6 and 3/6 box sash. New cantilever blind incorporated into fascia design. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering.
57 Ocean Supermarket  <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Replace 1 <sup>st</sup> floor window with tripartite sash. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering. New cantilever blind incorporated in fascia. Remove first floor signs.
55 Yummy <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Refurbish, repair and repaint all box sash windows. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering
53 Peri Grill 51 Pizza House 49 Pizza Hut  <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Refurbish, repair and repaint all sash windows. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering Refurbish, repair and repaint all box sash windows. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering. Refurbish, repair and repaint all sash windows. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering. Replace shopfront with more appropriate design – no 33 is good example. Remove first floor signage.
47 Beauty Spot Local list <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Refurbish, repair and repaint box sash window.
45 Bar BQ Local list <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Refurbish, repair and repaint box sash window. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering. Remove first floor signage.
43 residential Local list <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Refurbish, repair and repaint all box sash windows. Render with 2 coat lime render and paint with mineral paint finish. Retain existing plaster finish. Repair/paint pentice boards on ground floor and string course above.
41 residential Local list <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Refurbish, repair and repaint all box sash windows. Render with 2 coat lime render and paint with mineral paint finish. Retain existing plaster finish. Repaint pentice boards on ground floor and string course above. Repair/cover exposed wiring at ground floor.
37 Convenience store <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Replace first floor windows to 4 pane box sash. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering. New cantilever blind box included in fascia. Remove first floor signs
35 Chinese cuisine <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Replace first floor windows with 4 pane box sashes.



27a Col Shooting Centre  <b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>	Re-roof with clay cambered peg tiles. Replace 1 <sup>st</sup> floor windows with appropriate single glazed rebated balanced painted timber casements. Remove boarding in ground floor window and replace with open weave internal retractable shutters. Replace shopfront with traditional 3 pane shopfront window. Remove first floor Dutch blinds on front a side of building. Strip render and repair timber frame as required. Re-render on timber lath with 2 coats of lime render and repaint with mineral paint.
27 Afro Chic Listed  <b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>	Reroof with clay peg tiles. Replace 1 <sup>st</sup> floor windows with appropriate single glazed rebated balanced painted timber casements. Remove first floor Dutch blinds. Strip render and repair frame as required. Re-render with 2 coats of lime render on timber lath and repaint with mineral paint. Replace shopfront with traditional 3 pane shop window.
25 Happy Days Diner Listed  <b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>	Reroof with clay peg tiles. Repair and refurbish 1 <sup>st</sup> floor sash window. New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering. New cantilever blind included in fascia. Remove first floor signage. Remove metal grill. Strip existing render and repair timber frame as required. Re-render with 2 coats of lime render on timber lath and repaint with mineral paint. Replace shopfront with traditional 3 pane shop window.
1A Empty lean-to  <b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>	Discussions will be held with owner of 1A North Station Road and 1 Riverside Cottage to purchase and demolish this building to remove an ugly 'lean to' attached to a listed building. The lean to former shop is in separate ownership from the listed building. The listed building owner will be invited to purchase the land to increase their garden size with the land being enclosed from the road by walling to improve the setting of the Listed building, while greatly improving the streetscene. Alternatively, it is planned to landscape this area for public use including small scale seating.
Riverside Hotel Listed  <b>HIGH+ PRIORITY</b>	Refurbish/repair existing historic windows. Replace attic and top-vent EJMA windows with appropriate single glazed box sash. Replace back and front doors with appropriate historic type. Remove and reroute existing external flues/extractors. Strip elevations and repair frame/brickwork as necessary Render with 2 coat lime render and paint with mineral paint finish.
North Bridge Listed  <b>HIGH+ PRIORITY</b>	Improvements and refurbishments to finish off deck to replace concrete with York flags and enhance the setting of the Listed structure There is the opportunity to work with ECC who are planning major structural work on the North Bridge. There will be an economies made if the refurbishment of the bridge can be carried out by the same contractor. This will add quality and value to the rudimentary work planned by Essex County Council
28 Raj Palace Local list  <b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>	Replace 1 <sup>st</sup> floor windows with two 6 pane traditional timber casement window
30-32 Listed <b>HIGH+ PRIORITY</b>	Replace 1 <sup>st</sup> floor windows with two 6 pane traditional timber casement window. Ground floor right hand window to be replaces with canted bay to match left window
34 Charcoal Grill Local list <b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>	New timber, canted fascia to run width of property with applied lettering.
36 Dolphin Fish bar Local list <b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>	Replace 1 <sup>st</sup> floor window with 8/8 timber sash. New 3 pane traditional shopfront with 2 mullions

6 Middleborough Local list  <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Replace two ground floor windows and upper floor window with tripartite box sashes. Repair and repaint barge board and door
Drinking Fountain Middleborough Listed  <b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>	Improve the setting of the Listed structure, and interpret it's history. The fountain has an interesting story as it was moved from the old cattle market and located adjacent to the Roman Wall when the cattle market was developed in 1970s. The provision of water would restore the original function.
Land corner of Middleborough and St Peters Street  <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Improve setting of the Roman Gateway – Paving and lighting with artwork panel Develop ideas on the artwork screen of gap site building in area D and tidying of site. Work with Colchester Institute Arts degree students and the wider community to investigate possibility of providing an art wall to enhance the entrance to the roman city.
31 North Hill <b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>	Replace 1 <sup>st</sup> floor window with suitable timber painted box sash

Majestic Wine	Redevelopment land for mixed use development
Kwik Fit Exhausts	Redevelopment land for mixed use development
National Tyres	Redevelopment land for mixed use development
Land corner of Morten Road	Redevelop land for mixed use development
Standard Tyres	Redevelop land for mixed use development
Middleborough office	Redevelopment land for mixed use development



## 1.39 JUSTIFICATION for CONSERVATION AREA STATUS

In undertaking this Appraisal and assessing significance the Council has followed advice in Section 12 of the NPPF and Historic England: Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance. 'Significance' lies in the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because its heritage interest, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Archaeological interest includes 'an interest in carrying out an expert investigation at some point in the future into the evidence of a heritage asset may hold of past human activity and may apply to standing buildings or structures as well as buried remains. The determination of the significance of the proposed conservation area is based on statutory designations and/or professional judgements against four values:

- **Evidential value** :[what does it tell us about past human activity]; and,
- **Aesthetic value** :[how it stimulates the senses and intellect]; and,
- **Historical Value**: [how it connects what once happened with what happens today]; and,
- **Communal value**: [how it touches the lives of people today through the lens of their contemporary values]

Taking these as our starting point the significance of the proposed conservation area can be summarised as:

### **Evidential**

With its strong collection of listed buildings including hostelryes, houses and shops it tells us much about how people lived. It reminds us that the area was once outside of the walled Town of Colchester and represented the transition between Town & Countryside. The Town's main cattle market was situated adjacent to the proposed conservation area and that only disappeared in the later half of the 20th century. It tells us something about local government in that North Bridge represented the upstream extent of the Borough Council's traditional Fishery rights. The Council remains the owner of the bed of the River Colne and still controls the fishery rights. Something that is important to the world famous Colchester Oyster Industry. (Colchester holds an annual Oyster Feast). It also provides very strong evidence that the impact of non-horse driven transport transformed the appearance of the town and its economic life. It also demonstrates that the need to accommodate the motor car swept much traditional life away along with parts of the old built form of the town.

### **Aesthetic.**

Within the proposed conservation area you find 15-17th century buildings now sitting beside 20th century buildings [and in some cases this relationship is not always an easy one]. Being on what was historically (but less so today) a principal road entrance into the Town there survives a number of traditional garages that retain dilute art deco references. These are potentially future redevelopment sites. Some of the newer infill & redevelopment is sensitive and/or of interest in that they are of their time. Elsewhere others are poor examples even of their time.

Just yards off the main spine that is North Station Road is a real hidden gem in the shape of Morten Road with its polite urban cottages which display some outstanding decorative terracotta tile work. There is a real sense of the influence of the arts & crafts movement.

The interface between CCA1 and proposed CCA4 is an important gateway point into the ancient walled town or Colonia at the North Gate is currently unwelcoming due to poorly maintained buildings and the busy highway complex and overscaled offices that have usurped the historic cattle market of Middleborough. The community planting around the fountain is a sign of community aspiration that the area will improve. The historic drinking fountain could be the focus to these improvements that seek to bring buildings back into use and vacant upper floors could also provide much needed homes and active surveillance of the street. The planned improvements to this cluster could mean 3 or 4 new dwellings will be brought into use.

- Drinking Fountain- Grade 2 Listed structure improve its setting with interpretation, new tiled paving surround and lighting
- 31 North Hill – replacement window in wall of building constructed above town wall.
- Land corner of St Peters Street, Improve setting of the Roman Gateway – Paving and lighting

The North Bridge area is a vignette of rural Essex is a green oasis on the edge of Middleborough - an area of large scale office buildings set in an aggressively engineered highway network. The listed bridge is in a poor state of repair and its upgrade will greatly enhance the area as it forms a hub at the heart of a key group with the adjacent riverside cottages (also listed) and the listed Riverside Hotel and Riverside Lodge (grade II). Removal of the empty shop premises attached to the end of the later C17 terraced riverside cottages will deliver much needed private space to facilitate the optimal viable use of the cottage. This will also enhance the street scene and setting of the listed building by reinstating appropriate enclosure through brick boundary walling.

The removal of this unsightly and opportunistic shop could alternatively be used as landscaped space such as a communal garden. Repair of the listed Riverside Hotel could create a series of new homes in this attractive riverside location as opposed to the poorly maintained and marginally viable hotel that currently operates. The replacement of the aggressive masonry painted elevations with ochre or ghostly limewash and reinstated windows will restore a cherished view that has long since been lost to a cycle of poorly conceived alterations. The synergy with the on-going repairs carried out to the Riverside Lodge (later C17 and brick with Gothicised elevations) will create a memorable group of listed vernacular buildings and a foretaste of the pleasures of North Hill to the south. All of this becomes possible with the support of lottery funding.

- Bridge and parapet refurbishment to finish off deck to replace concrete with York flags and enhance the setting of the Listed structure
- Riverside Hotel

Further north medieval buildings form a distinctive cluster with gabled narrow frontages evoking the pre-industrial town and potentially fine timber frames suffocating in dense cement jackets and probable weak crown post roofs labouring under the weight of crinkly concrete tiles. With investment these listed buildings could be allowed to tell their story of medieval life outside the walled town. The cycle of inadequate investment and marginal uses will otherwise continue on a familiar downward spiral. However, repair and reinstatement of lost detail of these buildings could deliver two new dwellings are brought back into economic use and improved business users that wish to locate here because it is historic rather than cheap and not so cheerful.

Elsewhere Victorian Gothic flourishes can be found.



Being part of the evening economy many of the shops and restaurants in North Station Road flaunt a certain amount of brash and garish signage. Whilst this does little to enhance the area it does demonstrate a resilience to the post-2008 economic crisis which in the grander scheme of things has meant that important buildings have not fallen into complete disrepair following an extended period of vacancy. The framework for revival and restoration therefore remains intact

**Historical:** North Station Road represents a timeline going back some 600 years charting the growth of urbanism and the expansion of Colchester. Being on an important route in and out of the Town of Colchester it has seen dramatic change and it provides strong evidence as to how the arrival of the railway to the Town in 1843 sparked a period of expansion that has not stopped since. In this one street you can explain the morphology Colchester.

It is a key location that also charts the impact public transport and later growth of car travel. North Bridge was widening to accommodate trams. It now contains part of a dedicated bus corridor. It was one of the first parts of the borough to experience major highway works in 1933 with the construction of the first by-pass [Colne Bank Avenue]

It has long been a commercial area and continues to fulfil that function.

It also demonstrates how the Victorian philanthropic movement influenced social change within the town. The first publicly funded primary school (survives) the first public swimming pool [open air] (survives but in alternative use) & The Railway Workers Mission with its strong connection to the railway.

**Communal:** It reinforces our typical [and perhaps now much rarer to find in reality] view of the traditional local shopping centre. It also reminds us of how modern society has moved on in terms of improved social mobility and opportunity and recreational facilities. It is also a reminder of how some enlightened Victorians (perhaps not always motivated by altruism) started to change how society was organised with an increasing sense of social responsibility.

Many children still attend North Primary School providing a direct connection with the past and a very strong foot in the present.

It also demonstrates not just how an expanding urban area is organised and what price is sometimes paid to accommodate economic growth but also how an area can adapt and yet keep its special character whilst evolving new traits.

**Conclusion:** The area is on the cusp of potential largescale change and it is clear that there has been little recent investment in property maintenance and many sites represent redevelopment opportunities.

This appraisal has recognised that whilst planned change can be potentially be accommodated if approached sensitively the area is vulnerable and does have special historic and architectural merit worthy of greater statutory protection.

The Council believes that the fact that it functions as a major pedestrian corridor into and out of the Town Centre is something that can bring new energy, investment, public spend and a bright future for this largely commercial area on the edge of the Town Centre.

Being a conservation area will draw attention to its charms and character and will allow the Council to encourage owners of properties to invest in them. The Council will seek to deliver externally funded enhancement projects to reinforce this desire to re-establish itself as an attraction for visitors and residents alike.

The defined proposed Colchester Conservation Area no 4 boundary is a logical extension of the adjacent part of Colchester Conservation Area no 1 which was the first in Colchester.

Forty-four years have passed since the designation of CCA1 and much has happened in terms of the historic, architectural, economic and social life of the Town.

Much has been lost, altered and/or replaced—the natural cycle of urban expansion, decay and renewal.

From Roman times the corridor now occupied by North Station Road was a major access into the Town from the north. North Bridge has in a number of guises been the stepping stone to link town and countryside.

The arrival of the railway to Colchester in 1843 triggered gradual urban expansion northwards into open countryside. North Station Road charts that growth and is a fascinating mosaic of buildings from across six centuries. It has despite all the economic pressures faced since the financial crash of 2008 managed to retain a strong and vibrant commercial character—This must in part be due to its obvious function as a conduit along which people pass in and out of town—many by foot having used buses or trains.

Despite much change, some of which has not been particularly sympathetic it is still easy to visualise its past more picturesque character.

The area was important in the recreational life of people of the Town in that it once housed the Town's public open air swimming pool which remains as something of a lost gem as it gradually reverts to nature.

The route also has strong links with the growth of the railway in that it housed one of the earliest Railway Worker Missions and Colchester's first publicly funded school was built in what is now John Harper Street. That school remains in almost all its original form when viewed externally.

It has also been in the vanguard of highway engineering solutions to accommodating growth and the motor vehicle, not always to its advantage from a townscape perspective, but it is important because of that fact.

The Council will build on existing initiatives to promote better interpretation of the history of the area and to sensitively signpost other attractions, destinations and nodes in the wider vicinity



1.39 Proposed Colchester Conservation Area Boundary: 2018





North Station Road & environs CA  
[Morten Road, Orchard Road, St Pauls Road (S),  
John Harper Street & former Colne Bank  
open-air swimming pool]

PART TWO:  
the Management Proposals



## 2.0 'DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT' PROPOSALS

### 2.1 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The designation and appraisal of any conservation area is not an end in itself. The purpose of this document is to present proposals to achieve the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area's special character, informed by the appraisal, 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 the first section 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 areas."*

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

It is recognised that within the proposed conservation area there is likely to be demand for new development in the shape of 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 Adopted Core Strategy (2008, 2010 & 2014) defines this area as being within urban Colchester where the majority of growth is to be concentrated in part because of its highly sustainable location.

### 2.2 STATUTORY CONTROLS

Designation as a conservation area brings a number of specific 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 line with Policy DP14 of the Adopted Development Policies Document (2010).

### 2.3 BUILDINGS of TOWNSCAPE MERIT

The Townscape Appraisal Map identifies three 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 DP14 referred to previously.

Any application for the demolition of Buildings of Townscape Merit will need to be accompanied by a reasoned justification (similar to that required for a listed building) stating why the building should be demolished.

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;
- 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.

#### **MP2:**

The Council will 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.

#### **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.

## **2.4 EROSION of CHARACTER and ADDITIONAL PLANNING CONTROLS**

As a consequence of this appraisal the following alterations are considered to 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
- Painting of original brickwork
- Removal of decorative terracotta tiles
- Removal of clay plain tiles or real slates
- Use of concrete roofing materials
- Removal of traditional shopfronts
- Excessive shop signage and internally illuminated box signs and projecting signs
- Non-traditional shop blinds/canopies[ie not canvas]
- Use of non-matching bricks (colour and texture), bond and mortar in wall repairs
- Installation of uncoordinated street furniture
- Use of road markings other than conservation type (especially yellow lines and bus stops)
- Parking in front gardens
- Enclosed parking and servicing areas on the street frontage
- Poor design
- Excessive road signage

Certain minor works and alterations to unlisted buildings, in use as a single family dwellings, can normally be undertaken without planning permission from the Council.

Unauthorised works (*works required planning permission that have been carried out without such approval*) if undertaken can have an adverse impact on the character of a conservation area. The Council will take appropriate enforcement action, where it is expedient, to remove unauthorised work, signage and uses in the Conservation Area.



**MP4:**

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 preserved. Untidy sites may be the subject of the service of S215 Notice/s by the Council.

**MP5:**

In safeguarding the physical wellbeing of listed buildings within the Birch Conservation Area the Council will where appropriate serve appropriate Legal Notices on property owners to ensure that Urgent Works are undertaken where this will prevent ongoing decay from poor maintenance and/or a Repairs Notice to make buildings weather-tight

## 2.5 TREES

Within conservation areas, anyone intending lopping or felling a tree greater than 100mm, in diameter at 1.5 metres above the ground must give the Council six weeks written notice before starting work. This 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 a further detailed arboricultural survey is required to make a proper assessment of the public amenity value of the many trees within the conservation area. With the future of St Peter's Church currently in the balance (as it faces demolition) particular attention needs to be given to the amenity value of trees within the curtilage of the church and the necessity of safeguarding them with a TPO as the site faces the threat of future possible development..

**MP6:**

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.

## 2.6 SETTING and VIEWS

The setting of the conservation area is very important and development that impacts in a detrimental way upon the immediate setting and longer views, into and from the conservation area, will be resisted. The important views are identified on the Views Analysis Map. The Council will ensure that all development serves to respect 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.

## 2.7 SHOPFRONTS

The Council will seek to encourage the retention of traditional shopfronts on the basis that this complies with the Councils Adopted Shopfront Guidance SPD.

Traders will be encouraged to replace unsympathetic shopfronts with one's that 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.

There will be a presumption against the removal of traditional shopfronts

## 2.8 SHOP SIGNAGE

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 approved in the conservation area. All fascia and projecting sign advertisement displays should be non-illuminated lettering applied to a flat non internally illuminated surface. External illumination or halo effect illumination may be appropriate.

**MP10:**

Control will be exercised in respect of proposed retail [and other commercial] signage displays on premises to ensure that that character of the conservation area is enhanced.

Excessive and extraneous signage will be resisted where it will harm visual amenity or result in unnecessary visual clutter or over-illumination.

## 2.9 HIGHWAYS

Within the '*negative impacts*' and '*action plan*' sections 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 places. 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]

**MP11:**

The Council will seek to ensure, where compatible with highway safety objectives, that any future highway works will bring positive improvement to the setting of the conservation area

**MP12:**

The Council will pursue the issues identified in the action plan to restore the character of the conservation area that has been lost through excessive street signage, poor pavement maintenance and inferior public realm

**MP13:**

The Council will encourage enhanced subtle legibility and sensitive signposting to direct travellers to key visitor attractions along and beyond the route



## 2.10 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.

Where ever possible the Council will seek to secure external funding for enhancement projects and initiatives that will help it to deliver on the management proposals set out here or allow the Council to go beyond these.

It is recognised that in a time of economic restraint and austerity money is not always as available. The Council believes that an holistic approach to improving the wellbeing of the Town 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 Town Centre is an Air Quality Management Area [AQMA] but it is also a major tourist attraction. Perhaps environmental enhancements in North Station Road (a principal pedestrian corridor) might 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 and so on.....

### **MP14:**

The Council will prepare planning briefs as planning guidance for opportunity sites identified in this document.

### **MP15:**

The Council will seek to secure external funding from appropriate sources to facilitate enhancement projects in the conservation area with the aim of lifting its current special historic and architectural merit through investment in repairs and public realm works

## 2.11 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 and

### **MP16:**

The Council will seek to promote close collaborative working with owners on all issues relevant to the management of the area, including proposals for development and enhancement, within and adjoining the conservation area.

### **MP17:**

The Council will explore how to deliver enhanced interpretation for the new Colchester Conservation Area No.4.



North Station Road & environs CA  
[Morten Road, Orchard Road, St Pauls Road (S),  
John Harper Street & former Colne Bank  
open-air swimming pool]

PART THREE: Monitoring & Review

### 3.0 MONITORING and REVIEW

The following actions are to be taken to ensure that this appraisal and management proposals are accepted and acted upon by the local community

#### 3.1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

This document if approved for consultation by the Council's Local Plan Committee will be subject to six weeks public consultation over a period to be agreed early in 2018.

Representations will be considered in the preparation of the final draft for Adoption by the Council.

#### 3.2 DOCUMENT REVIEWS

This document should be reviewed every five years after formal designation.

A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area and boundaries and an assessment as to whether the current boundary needs to be amended;
- An updated 'Heritage Count' comprising a photographic record of the area's buildings;
- An assessment of whether the management proposals and action plan detailed in this document have been acted upon, including proposed enhancements;
- A Buildings at Risk survey identifying any buildings whose condition threatens their integrity;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and proposed actions and amendments;





## 4.0 REFERENCES

- 1 CBC GIS map base
- 2 CBC GIS heritage information layer
- 3 Colchester Adopted Core Strategy (2008-2014)
- 4 Colchester Adopted development policies (2010)
- 5 VCH records Victoria County History pages 47-50 A History of the County of Essex Vol 10
- 6 Colchester & Ipswich Museum Service Archive
- 7 British History On line
- 8 Colchester HER
- 9 ECC Buildings at Risk
- 10 EH Heritage at Risk
- 11 Colchester History Forum Locally Listed Buildings Archive



**27. Anchor within the public realm at Seatrade House: This anchor is from the Lightship Colne which was stationed at many locations around the British Isles warning of dangers to navigation. In 1991 she was berthed at the Hythe where she remains a the headquarters of Colchester Sea Cadets.**

## 5.0 USEFUL CONTACTS

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proposed

## **Colchester Conservation Area no. 4**

### **North Station Road & Environs**

**a character appraisal & management proposals**

