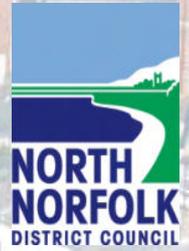
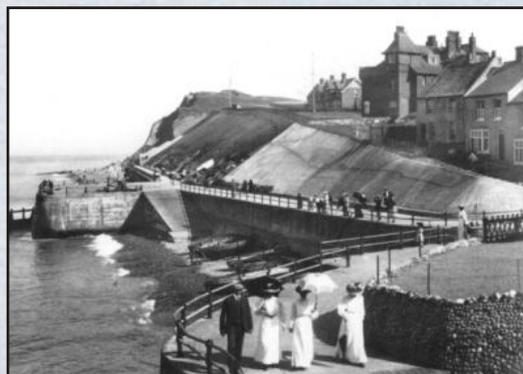


# SHERINGHAM

## Conservation Area Appraisal



# Character Appraisal and Management Proposals



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Please contact 01263 516165 to discuss your requirements.**





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## Foreword

*It is intended that this appraisal and management plan will play a significant role in guiding all aspects of the future management of Sheringham's Conservation Area. In so doing, it is hoped that this document will help to promote co-ordination and commitment across several sectors and in particular at District, Town or County tier of government whilst also promoting the historic environment as an important mechanism for change and enhancement moving forward.*

*In terms of content, this document has been split into two sections. The first section draws upon the information contained within the Sheringham Conservation Area Appraisal to provide a general analysis that not only captures the essential ingredients that makes Sheringham's Conservation Area so special, but also helps to contextualize the Conservation Area within the overall town.*

*The second part of the document incorporates a series of recommendations and proposals for the future management of the Conservation Area which outlined a joint concordat/vision for the management of the Conservation Area proposed. This will need the support of the various agencies and bodies actively engaged in the management of the Conservation Area.*

*The fundamental aim of the appraisal is to set targets and priorities for those future actions that are considered necessary to ensure that the character of Sheringham and its built heritage is safeguarded, both for the benefit of the townsfolk of Sheringham and of visitors alike. The essence of this approach lies in the conception that the Conservation Area and the historic environment cannot exist in 'splendid isolation' and that there is a whole series of issues and influences which affects it. An 'holistic' and partnership approach will be the only way that Sheringham's heritage can be protected for future generations.*

**Philip Godwin, Conservation, Design & Landscape Manager**  
July 2013

## PART 1 CHARACTER APPRAISAL





# 1 Summary

## 1.1 Key characteristics

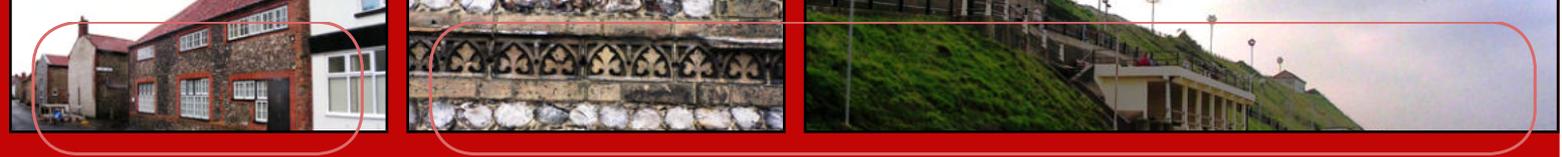
This Character Appraisal concludes that the following are the key characteristics of the Sheringham Conservation Area:-

- The role of the sea and the fishing industry in determining the town's pattern of development.
- Substantial late 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century development as a result of the town's role as a holiday resort.
- Conservation Area bordered on the south side by the A149 coast road and later suburban development.
- Landscape setting: raised ground each side of the town - Skelding Hill and Beeston Hill.
- An historic core centred around the seafront, including High St, Beach Rd and Wyndham Street.
- The main commercial streets, High Street and Station Road run in a linear north-south direction dividing the Conservation Area.
- Residential areas comprising mostly small to medium sized terraced houses on the east and west sides of the Conservation Area.
- Late Victorian/Edwardian "garden suburb" around the Boulevard on the west side.
- Strong tradition of building in brick and flint cobbles, continuing to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 1.2 Key issues

A number of issues affecting Sheringham conservation area have been identified and are listed below. These form the basis for the second part of this document.

- Need to review the Conservation Area boundary.
- Negative impact of traffic and parked cars within the town centre, including road markings.
- Indifferent quality of street furniture.
- Need to improve public parks, open spaces and gardens.
- Poor appearance of Promenade.
- Permitted development resulting in the loss of architectural detail and boundary treatments. Permitted but detrimental alterations and extensions.
- Need to improve the quality of design for new developments.
- Unattractive entranceway into Station Road from the A149.
- Need to adopt a list of Buildings of Local Interest



## 2 Introduction



Sheringham seen from Beeston Hill to the east

### 2.1 The Sheringham Conservation Area

The central part of Sheringham was designated a Conservation Area in 1975. This includes the seafront and historic core of the town, residential streets to the east as far as The Driftway, two of the main commercial streets, High Street and Church Street, and the adjoining St Peter's Road and Waterbank Road. The central part of the conservation area extends inland as far as Co-operative Street, with a narrow projection to the south-east, along the line of Beeston Road.

Following a request from the Town Council in 1995, the conservation area was extended to include Station Approach, the only remaining commercial road until then left outside the area, together with the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century development around the Boulevard to the west, and part of the Esplanade. To the east, parts of Cliff Road and The Avenue were also incorporated. This helped provide some protection for prominent buildings such as the Burlington Hotel, the railway station and the Town Council offices.

In 1999, the NNDC commissioned a report on the Conservation Area, which concluded that the area had suffered serious erosion of character, and that consideration should be given to removing Conservation Area status. The only part of the town which might, it was argued, benefit from being a Conservation Area was the streets between Church Street and Station Approach.

The recommendations of the report were not adopted, and in October 2006, as part of a national government-led reappraisal of conservation areas, the present report was commissioned.

### 2.2 The Purpose of a Conservation Area Appraisal

Conservation Areas are designated under the provision of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. A Conservation Area is defined as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these Conservation Areas. Section 72 also specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development within a Conservation Area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.



In response to these statutory requirements, this appraisal document defines and records the special architectural or historic interest of the Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. The appraisals conform to English Heritage guidance as set out in *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals* (February 2006) and *Guidance on the management of Conservation Areas* (February 2006). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and Conservation Areas is set out within *National Planning Policy Framework* (2012).

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Conservation Area and identify the issues which threaten its significance and unique character (part 1: Character Appraisal).
- Provide guidelines to prevent erosion of character and achieve enhancement (part 2: Management Proposals).

## 2.3 The Planning Policy Context

This appraisal provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the Sheringham Conservation Area can be assessed. It should also be read in conjunction with the wider overarching national policy and guidance as well as development plan policy framework produced by North Norfolk District Council.

### National Policy and Guidance

*National Planning Policy Framework (Communities and Local Government 2012)* - Provides advice for local planning authorities on the conservation of the historic environment.

### North Norfolk Local Policies

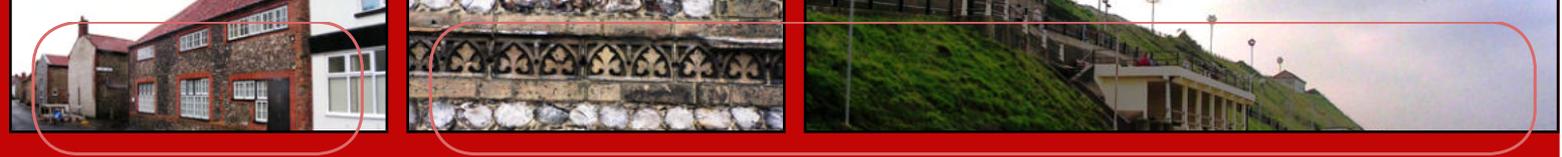
*North Norfolk Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (adopted 2008)*

- Policy EN2: Protection and Enhancement of Landscape and Settlement Character
- Policy EN4: Design
- Policy EN8: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment
  
- Policy SS1: Spatial Strategy for North Norfolk
- Policy SS2: Development in the Countryside
- Policy SS3: Housing

*North Norfolk Local Development Framework Site Allocations (adopted 2011)*

### North Norfolk Supplementary Planning Documents

*North Norfolk Design Guide (2008)* - Provides guidance to those involved in the management of the built environment and with the objective of improving design quality.



*North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment (2009)* - Identifies and describes distinctive Landscape Character Areas and Types throughout North Norfolk. The document Incorporates details on biodiversity and historic landscape features in order to ensure that development proposals reflect the character, qualities and sensitivities of the area.



## 3 Location and Setting

### 3.1 Location and Context

Sheringham is a small town situated on the cliff top, facing almost due north. It is flanked by two areas of raised ground, Skelding Hill to the east, and Beeston Hill, known locally as “Beeston Bump”, to the west. The settlement of Beeston curves around Beeston Hill; this was once a separate village, but it is now largely a suburb of Sheringham.

Along the coast to the west are villages lining the edge of the salt marshes; to the east, the villages of East and West Runton lead to the resort town of Cromer. All are linked to Sheringham by the main coast road, the A149. Inland, to the south west, is the market town of Holt. There are no through roads in the town centre. The coast road was once to the south of the town, although Sheringham’s suburbs now extend inland well beyond it. Sheringham, together with Holt and Cromer, is a service and shopping centre for the surrounding villages. Its main economic role, however, is as a traditional seaside resort, which has shaped much of its present character.

The Conservation Area contains the historic core of the town, the seafront and the commercial centre, together with most of the later 19<sup>th</sup> century residential streets to the west. To the east, the Conservation Area excludes most of the housing, and closely follows one of the main thoroughfares, Beeston Road.

### 3.2 General Character and Plan Form

Sheringham’s clifftop setting reflects the central role of the sea in determining its location and pattern of development. The sea was important first for fishing and sea trade, and by the later 19<sup>th</sup> century for recreation, when Sheringham grew as a holiday destination. While the initial fishing village was along the seafront, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century Sheringham grew along the High Street in a linear north-south direction, and rapidly spread to the east and west, with numerous small roads covering what was once Sheringham Common and the surrounding farmland. The present settlement fills the level ground between Skelding Hill and Beeston Hill, and has spread to the east and south, both along and beyond the main coast road, creating a rectilinear ground plan.

The centre of the Conservation Area is heavily developed, the most common form being terraces and semi-detached small to medium sized houses, and there is little open space. On the east side of the town, particularly along Beeston Road, most houses have small front gardens. The only area which has a more formal layout, with public gardens, is around The Boulevard and The Esplanade to the west, where there are also large villas with spacious gardens. Nevertheless, it is the narrow streets lined by small two-storey houses, often with walls of brick and flint, which are the town’s most distinctive feature. They are a reminder that Sheringham remained a small fishing village for much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 3.3 Landscape Setting

To the east and west of the town, respectively, are Skelding Hill and Beeston Hill; both are part of the Cromer Ridge, a gently undulating landscape formed from glacial material deposited as part of a terminal moraine. There is a clear division between the town and the surrounding countryside, and the hills provide an attractive backdrop, they are also an important recreational area, with a golf course



on the east side. Here can be found different grasses and wild flowers, together with a variety of wildlife, particularly skylarks. The high ground serves as a good vantage point to view Sheringham, providing attractive views of the red-roofed town. Amongst the low lying houses, the Burlington Hotel and St Peter's Church stand out due to their height.



**Skelding Hill, seen from the Esplanade.**

Sheringham Common was once to the south and east of Sheringham. This has been lost to development, along with the surrounding farmland. The outlines of former fields are sometimes preserved where mid-late 19th century side roads follow their boundaries. The only area of common to survive is Beeston Common, which is mainly to the south of the coast road.

There are few views of the countryside from the town centre; only on the slightly higher open ground of The Esplanade can the surrounding low hills be fully seen and appreciated. Despite Sheringham's cliff top location, the sea is only glimpsed from the north end of the High Street or Beach Road. The best views are to be had from the immediate cliff top or from the promenade.



**Looking to the east from The Esplanade, with Beeston Hill in the background**

To the north of the Conservation Area the view is dominated by the A149, and a mixture of much altered Victorian/Edwardian and indifferently designed later buildings, together with the town's main car park.



## 4 Historic Development and Archaeology

### 4.1 The Origins and Historic Development of the Area



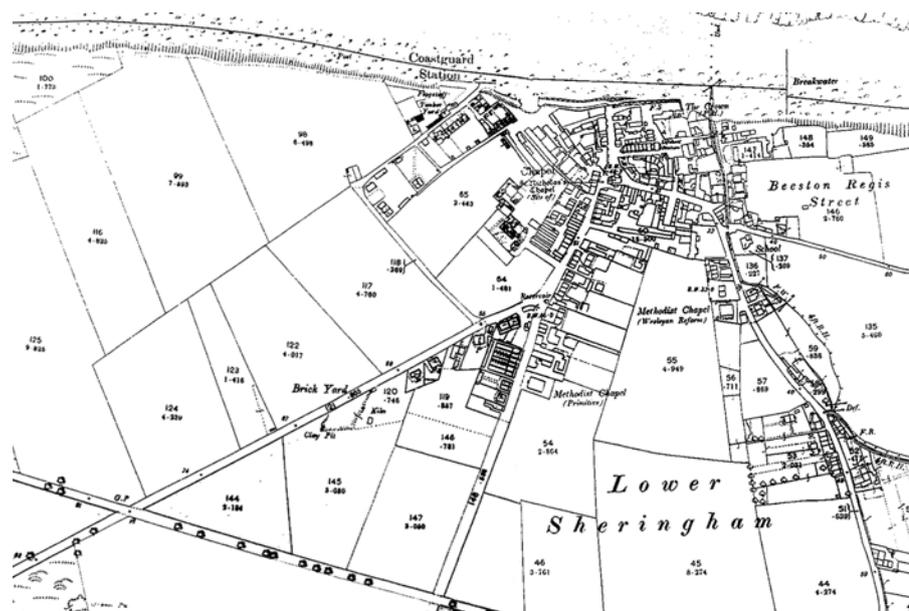
**Detail of the 1838 Tithe Map of Sheringham. There is only a scattering of houses to the south of Wyndham St.**

Sheringham, or Lower Sherringham as it was once known, may owe its origins to the village of Upper Sheringham, one and a half miles inland. Fishermen living in Upper Sheringham probably initially launched their boats from Sheringham Hythe, about one and a half miles to the west of the present town. As this area was lost through erosion, a new settlement grew up on the site of the present town. Here, there was a freshwater stream, and a slope permitting easy access to the beach, probably near to the site of Beach Road and the East Gangway. The original houses on the site are thought to have been rudimentary wooden buildings, but records of a chapel to St Nicholas of 1459 may show that by the 15th century, these were being supplemented by more substantial structures. Up to the mid 19th century, Lower Sherringham was described just as a “fishing station” in trade directories, and the main guide to the village’s fortunes is the size of the fishing fleet. During the 16th century, there were 17 full time and 5 part time boats working from the beach, while by 1883 there were 27 large and 150 small boats. But it was not just fishermen and their families who inhabited the village, there were also related trades, such as boatbuilders, blacksmiths and net makers, along with a few small shops to supply everyday needs. In the early 1700s, Upper and Lower Sheringham each had around 100 inhabitants, but by 1850 Lower Sheringham was considerably larger than the inland village, with a population of 800.



The people of Upper and Lower Sheringham benefited when the Sheringham Estate was purchased by the Upcher family in 1811. Several generations of Upchers supported both communities, helping out in times of hardship. This included gifts such as the town's first lifeboat.

Early maps show that at the beginning of the Victorian period, Lower Sheringham was still a small settlement, bypassed by the coast road, which was then much smaller and set further inland. The village was largely confined to the seafront, with its main centre between the High Street, Beach Road and Wyndham Street. There was a scattering of houses beyond this, most of which were along the High Street. The traditional source of income for the village was from fishing, but Sheringham was to discover easier ways of making a living as Victorian holiday makers came to enjoy its attractions. Sheringham offered the opportunity of a quieter holiday than its fashionable neighbour, Cromer, although it still lacked some basic facilities. There was, for example, no proper sanitation in Sheringham, and two holiday makers were lost to a typhoid epidemic in 1885.



**Part of the first Ordnance Survey of Sheringham, 1887. The railway is yet to arrive. Houses are being built along Station Road and Beeston Road, but to the west of the town there are still fields.**

On June 16, 1887, the Eastern & Midland railway line to Sheringham was opened, confirming its new role as a holiday destination. The trains brought in visitors, and carried away lobsters and crabs for the London market. Sheringham grew substantially to cater for the holiday makers. Encouraged by a major agricultural recession, most of the farm land around Sheringham was sold for building, and hotels and boarding houses spread along the new streets. High Street and Station Road became the main shopping streets, helping to cater for the holiday trade.



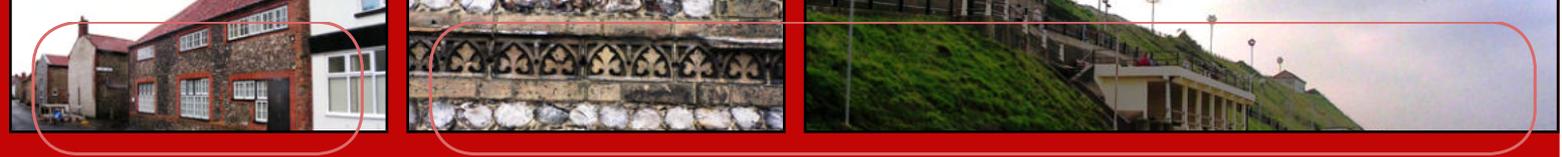
**The Burlington Hotel, which started life as the Burlington Apartments, 1899.**

The Sheringham Gas and Water Co, was set up in 1889, and the newly-formed Sheringham Development Company helped supervise the installation of a modern drainage system in 1891. By 1892, there was even a golf links, although the town had to wait until 1897 for its church, St Peter's, to be completed. A spacious new seafront was laid out on the west side of the town, crowned by the showy Grand Hotel, opened in 1898, and the Burlington Apartments of 1899. The town's third and last major hotel, the Sheringham Hotel, was built on the corner of the Weybourne Road and Holt Road, in 1901.

By 1901, the population of Lower Sheringham had grown to six times that of Upper Sheringham, and it was officially recognised as a town, with a District Council. The fashionable Town Hall of 1912 clearly expresses Sheringham's growing confidence and civic pride.

The town prospered up to the First World War, and remained popular between the wars, a period regarded by some as the resort's "golden age". Rather than relying on its established reputation, Sheringham added to its attractions, with a range of seafront buildings along the Promenade, a zoo, and additions to the town centre such as a new Crown Inn.

During the Second World War, troops were billeted in the town, and a number of houses were destroyed by air raids. Nevertheless, Sheringham survived the war substantially intact, only to face another threat in 1950, when there were plans to demolish much of the town centre and replace it with facilities considered indispensable for a "modern" resort.



Although the redevelopment was never carried out, Sheringham has continued to be a popular tourist destination, and the holiday trade remains a major source of employment. The main postwar change to be observed in and around the town is due to the large numbers coming to Sheringham to retire; perhaps encouraged by its reputation as having the longest-living population in England. This has led to the building of outlying estates, creating pressures on the surrounding countryside.

Since the late 19th century, Sheringham has shown great skill in “reinventing itself”, and developing new tourist attractions. The most successful example from recent years is the North Norfolk Railway. When the town’s station closed in 1967, enthusiasts re-opened the line, running it as a very popular steam railway. The Little Theatre is a similar success story, and a new lifeboat museum being developed on the seafront seems likely to continue the tradition.

## 4.2 The Archaeological Significance and Potential of the Area

Little archaeological work has been conducted in the parish. No excavations have been carried out, with only a few watching briefs recorded. Although some metal detecting and field walking has taken place, most of the known artefacts are the result of chance discoveries. In comparison, a reasonable amount of sites have been identified on aerial photographs. For further detailed information on finds see [www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk).

Sheringham is recorded in the Domesday Book as ‘Silingeham’. This is an Old English placename meaning the ‘homestead of the Scira’s people’. The Domesday entry covers both Sheringham and Upper Sheringham parishes and mentions a church, villagers, smallholders, slaves, ploughs, woodland, pigs, meadow, a horse, cattle, pigs and goats. In 1086 land at Sheringham was held by William of Ecouis.

During the medieval period, settlement in Sheringham was based around a small fishing village. There was a medieval chapel dedicated to St Nicholas, although its location is uncertain. In the south of the parish a well-defined medieval sunken road survives. Coins from Gelderland and Flanders illustrate the continental contacts in this period.

A post medieval watermill in the centre of the parish is marked on Faden’s map of 1797. In the centre of the parish probable post medieval quarries are visible on aerial photographs and are marked on Ordnance Survey maps. They were possibly associated with nearby brickworks.



## 5 Spatial Analysis

### 5.1 Character and Interrelationship of Spaces within the Area

This section has been limited to general observations, more detailed comments are included within the character area descriptions.

The most significant open space for Sheringham is undoubtedly the clifftop and seafront, although much of the original village, showing its relationship to the sea, has been lost, either through erosion or redevelopment. The present seafront has grown around the sea defences, particularly the concrete sea and cliff walls. Thanks to these measures, the clifftop is relatively stable, allowing it to be lined with modest two storey houses facing the sea. However, the high concrete walls present a fortress-like division between the town centre and seafront, rather than an inviting transition between town and beach.



The Promenade below the High St.

There are few, if any, historic open spaces within the town centre. Houses and shops are set close together; and only where roads meet, such as at the junction of High Street, Church Street and Station Road, or where Wyndham Street and Gun Street join the High Street, is there an opening which offers a limited panorama of the town. Most of the open spaces along High Street and Station Road are the product of 20th century redevelopment. Two of the largest open spaces serve mainly as car parks. These are the area on the cliff top between the north end of the High Street and The Mo, and the former railway sidings at the south end of Station Road. While the latter is outside the Conservation Area, it is a significant space for Sheringham. Its position, near to the two main entrance roads to the town, helps reduce the number of visitor's cars on the town's streets; it is also the site for the weekly market.



**The cliff top between the High Street and The Mo**

While much of Sheringham's architecture and layout is derived from its village origins, around The Boulevard, the grid-pattern street plan is recognisably that of a town, incorporating public gardens. Well-sized mature gardens around some of the larger villas add to the character of the area. This planned character can also be seen along The Esplanade, where development, including public gardens, is focused around the main access to the beach.

There are also public gardens at the junction of Station Approach and Church Street, with a putting green surrounded by mature trees. This forms a part of an attractive entranceway to Sheringham from the coast road.

Due to the closely built nature of the housing in the town centre, back gardens and rear yards make little impact on the streetscape. More open areas can sometimes be found down paths leading off High Street and Station Road, such as at Chapman's Close. Due to their secluded nature, however, these have little impact on visitors' perceptions of the town. The houses in the streets to the west, particularly along Beeston Road, often have small front gardens, and there is enough space between some houses to glimpse the gardens at the rear, which helps create a rural, village-like atmosphere.



## 5.2 Key Views and Vistas



**View of Sheringham looking to the east, with the Fishermen's Slope at right**

There are few good views of the sea from the town centre, as this is only glimpsed between buildings at the end of the High Street or Beach Road. The best sea views are from the cliff top or Promenade, and when the tide is out, a wide and attractive expanse of golden sand is revealed. The view from the beach back to the town is, however, less satisfactory. The cliffs are soft, primarily sand and boulder clay, and subject to erosion. As a consequence there are extensive sea defences; some recently renewed concrete sea walls, slopes, and black rock armour. All lack aesthetic appeal, despite a picturesque scatter of fishermen's boats and equipment nearby. Along much of the seafront, the view is limited to the initial line of houses on the cliff top, and most of these once-picturesque houses have been unsympathetically "modernized". At the west end of the Promenade, where inter-war structures along the promenade are set against the green cliff face, there is a more coherent, and pleasing, seaside view.

The central part of the town is on one level, and there are few good views of the surrounding countryside. Only along The Esplanade, on slightly higher ground than most of the town, is there a clear view to east and to west. The hills on either side of the town, do, however, allow for excellent views of Sheringham, particularly from Beeston Hill, where the town is at its best, set within the surrounding countryside and against the North Sea. Along Cliff Road, as it rises towards Beeston Hill, there is a limited but attractive view, looking back to the red-tiled roofs of the town centre.

The only other key views are from the south, approaching Sheringham from the A149 coast road. Most visitors enter the town from the Holway Road roundabout, turning into Station Road. Here, they encounter a mix of road signs, traffic signs and lights, heavily reworked 19th century and indifferent 20th century buildings, and a car park. All these elements combine to provide poor views of the town. A better entranceway is from the coast road to the west, turning into Church Street. Here, both before and after crossing the railway bridge, there are trees and bushes, and for the occasional pedestrian, an interesting view of the North Norfolk Railway's steam engines and railway station.



The approach to Station Road from the west



## 6 Character Analysis

### 6.1 Activity, Prevailing or Former Uses Within the Area

Along the seafront, the slopes leading down to the beach are a focus for the town's traditional fishing industry, now mostly limited to crabs and lobsters. This industry has left a remarkable architectural legacy in Sheringham, and many of the older houses have connections with the sea and the fishing industry. Such buildings are usually of local red brick and flint cobbles from the beach, with red clay pantile roofs. Originally, they often had shuttered windows on the ground floor, and where buildings were not designed for residential use, the windows may originally have been unglazed. The most prominent buildings are the former lifeboat houses; there is a wooden lifeboat shed at the top of the Fishermen's Slope, and a larger brick and cobble lifeboat house on Lifeboat Plain. These both have large entrance doors, and any windows tend to be small, set high up below the eaves where they shed some light on the boat inside. There is a former boat-building shed on Lifeboat Plain, once owned by the Emery family. This has been much altered, but the exterior was similar to that of the lifeboat houses.



**Emery's boatbuilding shed, on Lifeboat Plain. Much altered to serve as a house.**

Also connected with the fishing industry are the sheds used by fishermen to store their gear, usually set either near the seafront, or in yards attached to their houses. Some were made from planks, and have been dismantled, but more substantial examples do survive, such as on the north side of Victoria St. One standard form appears to have been a narrow single storey shed with large window openings, presumably to let in sufficient light for work such as net mending. Several could be built end-to-end, forming a short terrace. There is a brick and cobble terrace of this type near to the Lifeboat House on the Fishermen's Slipway. A similar terrace in Barcham's Yard on the High Street is better preserved. Old photographs show such sheds with a yard in front, where in fine weather, pots, nets and sails could be mended. When whelks were fished, they were cooked in coppers, or boilers, in the fishermen's yards. The best known of these areas gave its name to "Whelk Coppers", a house on the seafront, although little if anything remains of the coppers, as the house was heavily altered in the 1930s.



**What are probably former fishermen's sheds in Barcham's Yard**

Some of the smaller houses were once homes to Sheringham's fishing families. The community aspect is particularly evident at Whitehall Yard, in Wyndham St, where small houses enclose a courtyard on three sides. Such courtyard developments are known from other fishing towns, such as Cromer, where the courtyard normally contained a communal well or tap for water.

Other reminders of the town's maritime past include former coastguards' cottages on the Driftway, and a shop in Beeston Road which once served as a fishermen's chandlers.



**Whitehall Yard, Wyndham St. Early 19th century (?) cottages set around a courtyard.**



By the end of the 19th century, the seafront was at least as important for recreation as for fishing, leading to the construction of a Promenade along most of the seafront of the town. Promenades were a legacy from earlier fashionable spa towns, creating an arena where visitors could socialise, see and be seen, and take the sea air. The stretch of the Esplanade, in front of the Grand and Burlington Hotels at the east side of town would have had a similar function. As the nature of the seaside holiday changed during the 20th century, so did the seafront. Flat roofed cafes and shelters were added, while beach huts replaced the bathing machines and beach tents of the Victorian and Edwardian eras.

Public houses, often originally inns, are amongst the oldest buildings in most towns and villages; at Sheringham, the Two Lifeboats is known to date from 1720. Some pubs have outbuildings which reflect former uses, such as the old hay lofts and stables at the rear of the Lobster. The present front on The Lobster is probably late 19th century, but conceals an earlier building. Such facades may have been an attempt to create a “respectable” image, as pubs and breweries were threatened by the activities of the late Victorian temperance movement. It is worth noting that in Sheringham, there was much support for this movement, due to local evangelists and the Salvation Army. The most recent pub is The Crown, an inter-war building of considerable character, where a late Arts & Crafts style has been used to suggest welcoming environment.



**The Lobster, a brick and cobble building which has acquired a fashionable new front.**

The influx of tourists brought by the railways encouraged the development of hotels and boarding houses. Unlike Cromer, Sheringham never had many large hotels. Within the Conservation Area, the Grand Hotel has been demolished, and only the Burlington Hotel remains; described as apartments in 1899, but a hotel by 1904. Smaller hotels and boarding houses were located along the side roads, particularly around The Boulevard and along Cliff Road, although most are now private houses. The main feature which distinguishes them from ordinary houses is their larger size, and sometimes a



more decorated façade, combining materials such as moulded cement or ornamental brick, with tiled porch floors, and leaded glass lights. Occasionally, the house name is in gilded lettering in the light above the door.

The new town acquired a variety of purpose-built civic buildings. Victorian and Edwardian additions include a church and town hall erected in Church St, a post office (now part of Bertram Watts), and a former police station at 16 St Peter's Road. Later civic buildings have not always been as distinctive, such as the single-storey library building of 1963, which now forms part of the newsagents on Station Approach. In more recent years, it has been common for existing buildings to be converted for civic use, such as the Little Theatre, once Jarrold's shop, and a terrace of fishermen's sheds on the seafront, now opened as a museum.

As late Victorian Sheringham grew, there was a need to accommodate those working in its service industries, such as shop assistants, railway staff and labourers. They required houses to rent – it was not until the inter-war period that house ownership became commonplace. To cater for this demand, small “artisan” houses were built along the new, or developing streets. This probably includes some of the smaller houses along Beeston Road, together with smaller houses outside the Conservation Area, such as the 19th century terraces along New Road.



**A fashionable villa on Montague Rd.**

Larger houses, or villas, were required by the wealthy families who frequented the resort during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, often for use as “summer residences”, or holiday homes. These are centered around the circular gardens where St Nicholas Place and The Boulevard meet. While the upper middle classes appreciated the “picturesque” charms of the former fishing village, they also required rather more sophistication and comfort than smaller town houses could provide. The larger villas were designed to offer the same facilities as the owner's main residence, and could include accommodation for domestic staff. The well-laid out new roads and greenery around the Boulevard, which reflect the fashionable “garden city” movement of the day, created a suitable environment for the new houses.



An increase in visitors and residents created a demand for new shops, something which has helped reshape the town's buildings since the late 19th century. The most obvious examples of this are along Station Road. The houses here originally had front gardens or courtyards, or in a few cases, shop fronts set flush with the facade. From the later 19th century, ground floor shops have been added over the gardens/courtyards. Along the High Street, houses have also had shop fronts inserted. There are purpose-built commercial buildings, particularly at the south end of the High St, and along Church Street. While their original shopfronts have usually been replaced, some well-decorated façades survive at first floor level. They reflect the prevailing architectural styles of the day, such as "Old English" and "Queen Anne Revival", showing how shop owners (and even banks) used distinctive architecture as a way of raising the profile of their business in the street.



The Arcade, a fine purpose-built late Victorian commercial building.

## 6.2 Character Areas, the Qualities of the Buildings and their Contribution to the Area

When defining character areas, several approaches are possible. Old maps of the town provide one starting point, helping identify the historic core with its densely packed houses, and the phases of growth of the surrounding 19th and early 20th century housing. These historic divisions are still visible on modern maps, but it is questionable whether they would make sense to any visitor on the ground. For example, while part of the street plan of the historic core survives, it is the much-altered houses along the streets which create most of this area's identity. Without careful examination, there is little to distinguish most of the old, perhaps 18th century, houses in the historic core from late 19th or early 20th century examples further up the High Street. The character areas have therefore been based upon the current primary function of each area, either commercial, seafront (recreation/fishing), or residential.



The division of the Conservation Area into character areas means that some types of building, such as, for example, structures connected with the fishing industry, can be found in the seafront, residential and commercial areas. For this reason, the analysis of building use has been presented as a separate section, rather than incorporated into the individual character area descriptions.

### 6.2.1 Main Commercial Centre

Comprising High Street, Station Road, the adjoining Wyndham Road, Co-operative Street. and parts of the Church Stand Station Approach.

High Street and Station Road are the axis around which much of Sheringham was built. The two roads connect and form an almost straight division across the centre of the town. The roads begin and end in an open space; the seafront at the north end, and the former railway yards, now a car park, to the south. The High Street joins Station Road at the Mary Pym clock tower, the physical, as well as a main social hub of the town. There are few houses which do not have a shop in the ground floor. There is a good mix of shops catering for the everyday needs of townspeople as well as for tourists, although gift shops predominate nearer the seafront. Shops continue a short way up most of the side streets adjoining High Street and Station Road, and also about half way along Church Street. A number of narrow alleys lead off from the main streets, which sometimes provide an attractive view of a terrace of houses, and at other times a less attractive view, such as run-down garages.



The entrance to Station Road from the south; looking towards the sea.

While the late Victorian shop fronts inserted into older houses did not always produce a particularly harmonious façade, the shops did have some good fittings, including cast iron crestings and wooden consoles. Regrettably, few original shop fronts survive today. The present shop fronts seem to have grown by “accretion”, expanding and altering without great consideration to their final appearance or any pleasing visual relationship to their neighbours. This creates a lack of coherence, which is particularly regrettable along Station road, where a once neat street of brick and cobble houses is almost lost under later additions.

Much of the vernacular character and common small scale of the houses in Station road and the northern end of the High St. has been eroded the years, with the introduction of 3-storey houses, and occasional bland “infill” single-storey modern shops. There has also been widespread alteration and replacement of traditional windows and doors.



## High Street

At its north end, where the High Street meets the seafront, the road is narrow. There are small two storey houses on both sides, which together with the Two Lifeboats pub, are survivals from the earlier fishing village.



Old houses at the north end of the High St.

The High Street opens out to the south, where it is joined by Gun Stand Wyndham St. On the east side, the Lobster pub, with its 19th century stuccoed front, “Joyful” West’s fish bar and the well maintained shop “Cream” are a pleasing, pastel coloured group. Their positive effect is reduced, however, by the noise and loud music from luridly coloured amusement arcades on the opposite side.

Gun Street, on the north side of the Lobster, leads to Lifeboat Plain. On the north side is a terrace of old cottages with rendered fronts. Unfortunately these have been altered over the years, to the detriment of their historic character. Facing the cottages is the rear yard of the Lobster. While there are some attractive flint walls here, the centre of the street is taken up with a small area of garden. At the time of visiting, this appeared unkempt, bordered by areas of concrete, with small palm trees surrounded by weeds. Where Gun Street joins Lifeboat Plain, there are larger houses, together with the rear extensions of shops fronting the Plain. These buildings have few features of interest, and fitted with modern and inappropriate windows.

Immediately south of this, the High Street narrows again, then almost imperceptibly increases in width until it meets Church Stand Station Road by the Mary Pym clock tower. Much of the development is 19th century, tightly packed houses, mostly two storeys high with ground floor shops. The houses are semi-detached or set in short terraces along the road; on the south side a few houses have their end gables facing the street. Most probably originally had brick and cobble fronts, while over the years some have been rendered or acquired imitation half timberwork.



**South end of the High St. part of a row of shops with imitation half timberwork.**

On the west side, Poppyfields restaurant still has its original recessed lobby and windows with colonettes, while Thresher's may be Sheringham's oldest shopfront, perhaps mid-Victorian. Nearby, the RNLI shop has a good, probably early 20th century, front with polished stone stallrisers. These are exceptions, however, as most High Street shop fronts are indifferent modern designs, often overshadowed by overly large and brightly coloured fascia boards.

At the south end of the High Street, confidently designed 3-storey late Victorian commercial properties face one another across the road. Those on the west side have elaborate half timberwork and "ice cream" colouring, presenting a jolly face to the street, almost managing to overcome the effect of the particularly poor signage below.

### **Station Road**

Station Road starts at the Mary Pym clock tower, an attractive, although modest, centrepiece for the town. Here also is the Little Theatre, an important civic amenity.

Station Road is less densely developed than the High Street. Regularly spaced terraced or semidetached houses are set back from the road, providing a light and open character. Most were built during the 1880s. With their brick and cobble walls and pantiled roofs, they are typical of the last phase of vernacular architecture in Sheringham. Originally, they had small gardens or courtyards in front, but by the turn of the century, most were covered by single storey shops.



**A brick and flint house in Station Rd engulfed by later commercial development.**

Projecting well forward from the houses, the shop fronts have a major impact on the streetscape. A few retain their original cornices and consoles, but few other early features survive. Today, the shop fronts are an undistinguished and discordant mix of materials and designs.

A few houses do survive in Station Road with their original unaltered fronts, such as the four red brick fronted houses to the north of the Arcade, and a brick and pebble fronted solicitor's office on the west side. These, together with the early 20th century Robin Hood pub, are the most attractive and coherent buildings in the street.



**The legacy of the 1960s. Poor commercial buildings in Station Road.**

A number of unappealing 20th century buildings are interspersed along Station Road. The worst examples are on the west side, two flat roofed blocks next to the Mary Pym, and a third adjacent to New Road. These blocks present an aggressively utilitarian face to the street, indifferent to local character and their surroundings.

### **Church Street(north end)**

Shops are concentrated at the north end of Church Street. To the south, there is a mix of residential and other uses, e.g. council offices, a church and an hotel, marking the point where the genteel and suburban area round the Boulevard meets the more closely-built residences of St Peter's and Waterbank Roads.



**Well designed commercial buildings on the south side of Church St.**

While there are a few brick and cobble houses on the south side, the main character is created by larger Victorian/Edwardian commercial buildings. The three-storey buildings on the north side show the late Victorian tendency to produce unrelated designs for adjacent houses, creating an interesting, but not entirely well-related group. Sadly, most of the shops have poor modern fronts, usually with wide plain fascias. “Nobby’s” and the Salvation Army shop form a particularly unappealing group, with an ugly flat roofed canopy.

On the south side, the majority of houses are late Victorian or Edwardian two-storey buildings, forming an attractive group. The main interruption is a modern 3-storey block of flats with luridly coloured brickwork.

Some of the shops on this side retain their original 19th century fenestration.

### **Wyndham Street.**

Wyndham Street is one of the main streets of the historic core, and some of Sheringham’s first shops were located here. Today, the west end of Wyndham St is undistinguished; on the north side is the yard of the Lobster pub, which has an unpleasant off-road parking area at the east end where bins and unwanted household fittings have accumulated. Opposite the Lobster is a row of much altered brick and cobble houses with shops.



**Off-road parking area by the rear yard of the Lobster. An unattractive accumulation of bins and other material.**



**View of cobbled cottages at the east end of Wyndham Street.**

At the centre and east end of the street, the historic character is more evident. There are brick and cobble houses on both sides, and while these have sometimes acquired large new windows or shopfronts, they still have a distinctive, largely traditional, appearance. Whitehall Yard is a vernacular courtyard development on the south side of the street, probably from the early-mid 19th century, although its original simple character has been affected by alterations & additions such as external porches.

The generally attractive character of the east end of the street is reinforced where it opens out to meet Beeston Road and Beach Road, with an attractive scatter of brick and flint houses.



### **Co-operative Street.**

Until the later 19th century, this was just a track leading down to a farm, bordered by a few houses. Today, the houses appear to be a mix of early to late Victorian, built of brick or brick and cobble, together with a few 20th century houses. The older houses along this street have undergone considerable change. Windows have been blocked off, enlarged and/or replaced by U-PVC, and in some cases, ground floor shops introduced. Some house fronts have been rendered. This process of change has resulted in particularly poor facades at the south-west end of the street, centered around “Kebab Delight”. Two late Victorian brick buildings on the north side of the street, “Dave’s Traditional Fish & Chips” and “Candles-Jewellery-Gifts”, have prominent retiled roofs, indifferently designed modern shop fronts and uPVC windows.

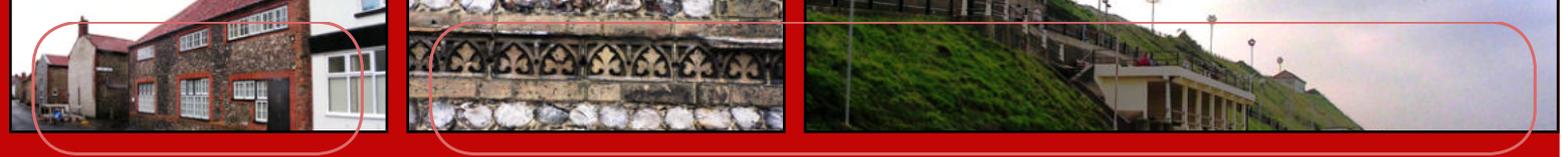
Towards the east end of the street, on the north side there is a short row of disused single storey shops and hard standing for cars and garages; all add to the untidy appearance of the area.

### **Station Approach (north-east side)**

Only the north side of Station Approach is included in the Conservation Area. Between the junction with Station Road and Waterbank Road is a short row of shops which vary between one and two storeys in height. These buildings and shopfronts are at best unremarkable, and relate poorly to one another. One very plain building, the Coffee House, may be 19th century, built with its end gable facing the street, while the newsagent’s is a re-used library building from the post-war period. This row is one of the first things a visitor entering Station Road sees, part of a poor entranceway to the town.



**The entrance to Station Road from Church St.**



To the west of the shops, there is a large modern solicitor's office, the former station hotel then a modern Christian Science reading room. The former hotel is the best of the group, although it is in a poor state of repair. Beyond this the road slopes upwards towards the railway bridge, and an attractive area of greenery (described in more detail in the section on open spaces). Mid-way along the street the Conservation Area expands to include the well-maintained railway station on the south side.

### **6.2.2 Seafront**

The Conservation Area includes the Promenade from the Fishermen's Slope and the Whelk Coppers café in the west to the Beach Road slope in the east. The houses on the immediate cliff top have been included within this Character Area, along with part of the Esplanade and the open area on the clifftop between the High Street and the Mo, including Lifeboat Plain.

Due to the curvature of the seafront, the Promenade is experienced as a series of separate, discrete areas, each one out of sight of the last. These "experienced" divisions have been used to sub-divide the Character Area for the purposes of description.

#### **The Esplanade**

The Conservation Area only covers the beginning of the western Promenade, but includes the Burlington Hotel and a small area of the clifftop gardens together with "Marble Arch", a rather grand toilet block.

The Esplanade and West Promenade were developed from the end of the 19th century, around an access to the beach. Initially this was a set of wooden steps, but by 1905, this had been replaced by a slope and the distinctive "Marble Arch". The Esplanade started as a causeway parallel with the clifftop; at this time two major hotels, The Grand (1898, demolished 1974) and The Burlington (1898) were built.

Originally there was an area of grass on the clifftop, but since the last war, public gardens and a children's play area have been constructed on either side of Marble Arch.



**Marble Arch, looking towards the sea.**

The Esplanade ends abruptly; a pathway leads towards the town at the west end, and a wire fence separates it from a golf course at the other. The area is more open and slightly higher than the rest of the town, with good views of the countryside to east and west.

Following the demolition of the Grand, flats were built along most of the south side of the Esplanade. Their plain designs fail to relate well to their site, or to the historic architecture of Sheringham.

The Esplanade is of grey tarmac, and partly given over to car parking, but the cliff path, between the formal gardens and the edge of the cliff, is more welcoming, with a warm pink gravel surface. The street lights on the south side are of a conventional “highways” pattern. The cliff path has a variety of cheerful “seasidey” lights, where the outlines of sea creatures are formed from coloured bulbs and tinsel.

The Burlington is still a commanding presence, although it is located at the east end of the site. The public gardens and Marble Arch are low lying, with muted colours, and unfortunately their impact is further reduced by parked cars in front. As a consequence, the modern flats on the south side become the main ingredient which shapes visitors’ perceptions of the area.



**View along The Esplanade from the west end.**

The main access to the West Promenade is through Marble Arch and down a slope from the clifftop, or along the Promenade from the west. Surprisingly, most of the west Prom, with its interesting range of inter-war structures, is outside the Conservation Area. Only an untidy area just to the east, including a particularly scruffy part of the cliff wall and poorly maintained café, are included.

### **The Fishermen's Slope**

The Fishermen's Slope cuts through the drab concrete sea walls, and the activities of the fishermen create a colourful focus for the area.

The Slope is contained on three sides by cliff-top buildings. Most are pleasingly small scale and vernacular in style, although the older houses in the streets to the west are screened by larger late 19th/20th century buildings, which spill over from the residential streets to the south. On the west side is "Whelk Coppers", a traditional brick and cobble house largely rebuilt in the 1930s, and now a popular cafe.

To the south and west are buildings originally connected with fishing activity and the sea, including a lifeboat house and sheds, now converted to a museum.



**Fishermen's Slope, looking east.**

A concrete bridge crosses above the Slope, connecting the east and west halves of the Promenade. The original inter-war bridge had sides with recessed panels, but its modern replacement, like the sea walls, is plain and severe.

### **Central Promenade/below town centre**

To the east of the Fishermen's Slope, the Promenade passes below a terrace of six late Victorian or Edwardian houses. Originally, parts of their top storeys were covered by a wooden screen or lattice, showing the fashion for Japanese design which swept England at the end of the 19th century. Regrettably, this screen has now been replaced on all but three of the houses. In front of the terrace, the boundary walls have been supplemented by some ugly scaffolding railings.

The Promenade divides at this point, and a slope rises up to the cliff top with a narrower Prom alongside. This central section lacks interest, almost featureless until it curves round the Mo, to the east.

On the cliff top, the end of the High Street is marked by the "Two Lifeboats" pub and the "Shannocks" restaurant and bar. The Shannocks is a plain and indifferently modernized building, marking the beginning of a visual "low point" along the seafront. Between the Shannocks and the Mo is an open area, created by the 19th century demolition of part of the historic core. Here there is a short access road and car park, bordered by the unappealing rear elevations of the Gun Street and Lifeboat Plain houses.



**The Two Lifeboats pub. Much altered, but an interesting historic building.**

Amongst all the cars, grey tarmac and road markings, the Crown pub stands out, a cheery 1930s building with buff coloured walls and red pantile roofs. It is, however, surrounded by yet another car park and has some very plain boundary walls.

Most of the street lighting along the Promenade and cliff top has characterless “disc” shaped lamps; these are mixed with metal poles, some set at a slight angle, holding strings of coloured light bulbs. While the coloured lights appear charming at night, during the day, the Promenade is laden with an unsightly mix of poor street lights, metal poles and cables.

### **Lifeboat Plain**



**Lifeboat Plain, looking west towards Gun St.**

Lifeboat Plain is a rectangular area to the south of the aforementioned cliff top car park, behind the Crown pub. It is not a clearly defined space, its boundaries are broken by a road leading to the seafront, Gun St, and lanes leading to Beach Road and Wyndham St. This provides visual interest,



with houses set at different angles. However, the surface of patched grey tarmac, bordered by double yellow lines and car parking spaces, makes the Plain appear more like a wide road than a safe and enjoyable area for pedestrians.

The Plain once had strong connections with the fishing industry, but its present character is more confused. What was once Emery's boat building shed is now a private house complete with car port, and a new front entrance is being added to the former Lifeboat shed, "Oddfellows Hall". The new entrance is very much at odds with the Hall's original vernacular character. The largest frontages are those of the Crown and Wyndham Arms, and some of the smaller houses have shops introduced into the ground floors. Most of the traditional brick and cobble houses have been significantly altered. The uPVC shop front of the "Olde Tea Room", with its curious bay windows is particularly detrimental to the historic appearance of the area.

### **The Mo to Beach Road Slipway**

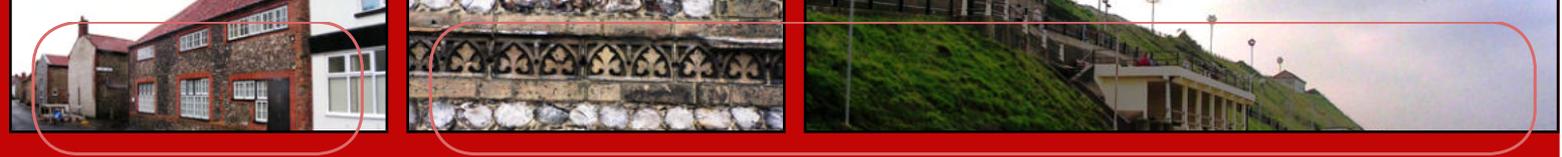
The Mo is a recent addition to Sheringham's seafront, a large building covering a water treatment plant. Although it imitates traditional brick and cobble construction, its large walls appear excessively bland and featureless. Its scale establishes it as a focal point, although its monolithic appearance is at odds with its surroundings. There are plans underway to convert the Mo into a fishing museum, which may also include improvements to its appearance.

A narrow Promenade curves round the Mo to connect with a narrow timber slope at the bottom of Beach Road. Enhancing the view, there is a picturesque scatter of boats and fishing gear here, together with a hut containing a winch. The slope is overlooked by the houses along the cliff top. Most of these are probably from the 19th century, but due to much alteration and additions over the years, have lost much of their original appeal. Seen from a distance, however, they remain an attractive part of the view from the beach.



**Looking from the beach towards the Mo and east end of the Promenade.**

Beyond the slope, the Promenade is outside the Conservation Area. Here there is a very plain inter-war café and an unremarkable flat-roofed pump house and shelters.



## 6.2.3 Residential Area East Side

This comprises Beach Road and Beeston Road along with parts of two adjoining streets to the east, Cliff Road and The Avenue. The majority of houses are small artisans' dwellings, usually semi-detached or in short terraces.

### Beach Road.



**Beach Road, West: The seaward end, with the rear yard of the Mo on the right side**

At the seaward end of the road, the houses appear unkempt. A large rendered house on the east side, once amusements, is set opposite the walled rear yard of the Mo, behind which is a flat-roofed café. There is a stronger character in the centre and south side of the street on the east side, where semidetached or short terraces of houses with large front gardens are set back at the top of a slope. The first pair has a drab rendered front, but the rest form a good group, with brick and flint fronts, set in well-stocked gardens with brick and flint boundary walls. These also have interesting rear elevations, visible from Beeston Road.

On the opposite side of the road, there are rendered houses separated by large rear gardens. Unfortunately, these gardens are behind an unattractive concrete block wall, and contain a good number of parked cars, sheds and unappealing outbuildings.



Some of the attractive houses at the south end of Beach Road.

## Beeston Road

Beeston Road is one of the town's oldest streets, and a small number of houses on the 1838 Tithe Map can still be identified near the south end of the road, although significantly altered. The road follows a shallow winding course, leading south-east away from the town. It has a more open and village feel than the streets nearer the town centre, due largely to the many front gardens.

Most of the houses are two storeys, late Victorian and arranged in short terraces, often with ground floor bay windows. The majority have brick and cobble walls; there is a good group with pebble facings by the entrance to Wyndham St. To the south, after Co-operative St, there is more variation. Amongst the brick and cobble terraces are houses with rendered or all-brick fronts, larger 19th century villas and late 20th century houses. Most roofs are of red clay pantiles or "triple Roman" tiles. In most cases, houses have had their traditional doors and windows replaced, usually by new and inappropriate designs in uPVC.



**Central area of Beeston Road, looking north.**

The road is primarily residential, although there are a few shops, or former shops, particularly around the entrance to Co-operative Street. The most interesting is a former fishermen's chandlers, on the west side. Near to this is a redundant Methodist Church, now converted as a house, with timber and glass extensions.

There are a variety of boundary walls, the best being made of brick and cobbles, or red brick, with "half round" copings. A number have been removed to provide "off road" parking.

### **Cliff Road**

Only the western end of Cliff Road is in the Conservation Area. The road slopes up to the base of Beeston Hill, resulting in an attractive stepped roofline, and looking back as one ascends the slope, there is an interesting view of the town's roofscape.

Houses are, for the most part, evenly spaced along the road. The majority are semi-detached, two storeys high with bay windows, and dormers or gables in the roof space. All have small front gardens with a variety of low boundary walls. There are a small number of modern "infill" houses on the north side.

On the north side, side roads lead to an area of inter-war and post war housing, set outside the Conservation Area. There are some interesting houses here, but the layout is confused, and the main character created by unappealing post-war blocks of flats.

Much of the architectural quality in Cliff Road comes from the decoration of the house fronts. While there are some plain red brick houses; others have well-crafted flint facings of cobbles, fine pebbles or knapped flushwork cobbles. String and eaves courses can be ordinary brick arranged in a dogtooth pattern, or sections of moulded/ornamental brick. Often tiles with a repeating spiral guilloche pattern are used in place of a string course. In a few cases, there are moulded cement details, usually around the doorways, and some coloured glass/leaded lights. Particularly noteworthy is a short row of houses on the south side where the timberwork of the ground floor bays has well carved pilasters.



Set against this visual interest, nearly all the houses have had later 20th century alterations. Most windows and some original doors have been replaced by new patterns, usually in uPVC. A good number of chimneys have been removed, and chimney stacks altered. The roof materials are a mixture of pantiles (some of which may be original), concrete tiles and a thin diamond-shaped (bitumen-based?) tile. Some boundary walls have been replaced by modern materials, including breeze blocks or chain link fences. About one house in five has had its boundary wall removed to create a forecourt where cars can park.



**Early evening in Beeston Road, looking back to the town centre.**

Where the road continues to the east, outside the Conservation Area, the houses are generally larger, and there is a greater proportion of post-war housing, leading up to the modern residential development of Victoria Court.

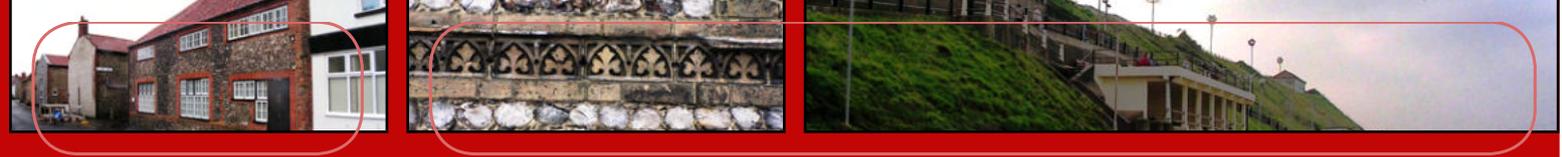
### **Regis Place**

Regis Place is a short cul-de-sac on the south side of Cliff Road. The houses are generally similar to those on Cliff Road; all are from the Victorian period, save for one 20th century example. At the end of Regis Place there are garages and an untidy area of waste land.

### **The Avenue**

Part of the north side of The Avenue, where it connects with Beeston Road, is included in the Conservation Area. The houses here are generally plainer than those in Cliff Road, two storeys with ground floor bays, often semidetached. They have either brick or rendered fronts.

While all the houses were constructed with front gardens, about a third have had the low boundary wall removed, so cars can park in what is now the forecourt.



## 6.2.4 Residential Area West Side

Most of this area is in the area to the north of Church Street. It includes large villas, the best of which are set within the “garden-suburb” influenced streets around the War Memorial, St Nicholas Place, South Street and Montague Road. Some large houses, such as along much of the Boulevard and part of Augusta Street, pick up on the architectural details of the villas, but are less adventurous designs, often semidetached or set in terraces. As the distance from the Boulevard increases, there is a reduction in size from villa to small terraced house; this can be observed along the length of Morris St. Near to the cliff top, The Driftway and Victoria St have small, often “vernacular” brick and flint houses. A few are early in date, perhaps 18th century, but most are late Victorian.

The south part of Church Street has also been included in this Character Area. Here, and in the adjoining St Peter’s Road and Waterbank Road, are Victorian and Edwardian terraced houses. There are some modest brick and flint houses; other, larger houses show details from the Queen Anne and other revival styles. Here, too, are civic buildings such as St Peter’s Church and the Town Hall.

### The Boulevard

The Boulevard is the main avenue connecting the older part of the Sheringham (Church Street), with its newer and more spacious “garden suburb”. It is a short, straight open road, focused on a small garden and war memorial at the seaward end. The majority of houses are late Victorian or Edwardian three-storey semidetached properties, set back from the road, with mature front gardens including some trees; they are pleasing, but generally conservative designs. Houses tend to follow a similar pattern; usually symmetrical, with pitched-roof gables (sometimes paired) facing the street. Red brick is used throughout, often with plain tiles for the roofs, tall chimneys, sometimes with mullion and transom windows and rendered top storeys. What marks these buildings out, apart from their scale, is the high quality of workmanship.

A small number of modern houses are interspersed along the street. Several adapt features and materials used on the older houses, adding them to what is recognisably a “20th century” house, -for example, the gables on St Joseph’s Court. Nevertheless, they sit awkwardly in their largely Edwardian surroundings.

Saplings have been planted along the street. Too small to have any impact as yet, but in due course they will add considerably to the attractiveness of this area. Most boundary walls are low, of attractively patinated red brick.



The corner of Church St and The Boulevard, where large town houses rub shoulders with the town's shops.

### **Augusta Street**

Augusta Street marks the eastern edge of the “garden suburb”. Its marginal location is reflected by the mix of housing; there are detached villas at the south-west end, and small brick and flint houses to the north-east. While this road is of similar width to the Boulevard, the seaward end feels more enclosed, due to the closely packed tall, semidetached or terraced houses on the west side set behind small front gardens. Some roofs are of slate, rather than the plain tiles used for the better villas around the Boulevard.

On the east side, at the north end, there are small two-storey houses, starting with two examples in brick and flint. A handsome flint-faced villa marks the transition between the larger houses to the south, and the smaller vernacular houses beyond.

There are two 20th century houses in the street, which closely copy the surrounding architecture. While they are unremarkable, they blend into their surroundings well.

Most of the low boundary walls around the gardens are attractive, in brick and flint; some walls are rendered, others crowned by mature hedges

### **Morris Street.**

Morris Street is divided by Augusta Street. To the west, it links up with the The Boulevard, and has some well detailed villas typical of the area. There is a good deal of greenery here thanks to the surrounding gardens, with a tall mature hedge on the south side. Most of the boundary walls are low, of brick and flint, although one wall is of concrete blocks.

Beyond Augusta Street, the houses are smaller, mostly semi-detached or terraced. On the south side is a large car park, on the site of a former farm. Its impact is softened by a weathered brick and cobble boundary wall, and trees growing around the edge, as well as set into the nearby pavement. This creates a rural, “open” feel to the centre of the street.



**The east end of Morris Street. A pleasing terrace of houses, but with a very poor backdrop at the end of the street.**

The east end of Morris Street. A pleasing terrace of houses, but with a very poor backdrop at the end of the street.

While these houses are smaller and simpler in design than the villas around The Boulevard, they have some attractive features. A number have tasteful plain tiled roofs- possibly there were originally more, before 20th century re-roofing. Semidetached houses on the north side have tiled porches with half-timberwork, while at the south-east end of the street is a terrace with some striking timber balconies. The houses at the north-east end are taller and plainer, two storeys with dormers. Here, there is a 20th century infill house, which appears plain and denuded, particularly as front gardens have been exchanged for off-road car parking spaces. At the east end, where Morris Street joins West Cliff, there is an uninviting view, including an untidy garage and Temple Court, a modern block of flats.

### **Around the War Memorial**



At the centre of the “garden suburb” is a small circular ornamental garden, now the site of the town’s war memorial. The war memorial is a distinctive and attractive design. Around it is brickweave pavement, along with saplings, planters and small garden plots.



As the main focal point of the area, it is to be expected that the most prestigious villas should be located nearby. St Nicholas Nursing Home, no. 5 The Boulevard and no. 8 St Nicholas Place, are outstanding Arts & Crafts designs from the Edwardian period, and appear well maintained. The smaller villas nearby are less remarkable, and there has been some loss of original windows and chimneys.

Around most of the properties are attractive low brick boundary walls and hedges, although on the north-west side, the effect is spoiled by a tall, utilitarian-looking wooden fence.

Sadly, much of the backdrop to the area is poor. Looking towards the sea there are unsightly modern flats, while the continuation of St Nicholas Road to the west is characterised by the wooden fence mentioned above, and a scatter of modern houses.

### **St Nicholas Place(East side)**

Most of this road falls outside the Conservation area. Only a small area immediately to the west of the war memorial is included, along with the area between the war memorial and the junction with Augusta St/The Driftway, on the east side.

Most of the south side of the street is occupied by St Nicholas Nursing Home. This combines two adjacent villas, and provides a pleasant, nearly continuous frontage. The opposite side is more open, with a villa set back within a garden, then a short 3-storey terrace reminiscent of those in Augusta St.



**St Nicholas Nursing Home**

Most of the houses have low brick boundary walls and hedges, enclosing mature gardens.

Where St Nicholas Place meets Augusta Stand The Driftway, are two out-of-place modern blocks of flats. Both use a harshly coloured brick, and a non-traditional arrangement of windows.



## South Street

North St, South Street and Montague Road are connected forming a “U” shape which joins the west side of the Boulevard.

This street contains a good range of late 19th-early 20th century architecture. All the houses on the south side are detached villas. The Southlands Hotel, with its imaginatively shaped bay windows, and no. 2, a villa on the corner of Montague Road are outstanding. Some houses are built in a late Queen Anne Revival style, with areas of half-timberwork, while at the south-west end of the street, there are houses with completely rendered walls, showing the influence of the garden-city movement. At the centre of the street on the north side are two terraces, one with three storeys the other with two. The terraces are well detailed, and reflect the Edwardian ambience created by the detached villas. The main exception to the high quality of design in the street is a very poor mid 20th century flat-roofed extension on the Beaumaris Hotel.

The boundary walls are varied in appearance, some rendered, others made of concrete blocks.



The south side of South St has some particularly fine villas.

## North Street

The architecture of North Street is more low key than South Street. On the south side there is late Victorian/Edwardian terraced housing; two storeys high, most with dormer windows. At the east end, the terrace seems to have been constructed piecemeal, with a variety of designs. These terraced houses are livened up by good moulded details, particularly around the doorways. Two houses have first floor timber balconies. On the north side, there are two late Victorian/Edwardian detached houses, and the rear gardens of villas in St Nicholas Place which add some welcome greenery.

There are a good many inappropriate and prominent replacement windows in the terraced houses. Most houses have low brick boundary walls.



## Montague Road

Montague road connects North and South Street to form the base of a “U” shape. On the east side are two fine villas, on the corners with North & South St respectively, although separated by an uninteresting looking lane and garages. Facing this is an assortment of detached houses. The best are red-brick villas with areas of half-timberwork or render, but their positive effect is watered down by a poor “imitation Victorian” house on the corner (without any boundary wall), and two very plain and dull coloured roughcast houses, e.g. Quarndon Court.

## The Driftway

This is a narrow clifftop road running between August St and Whelk Coppers. At the end of the road, Whelk Coppers is picturesque, and a terrace of white-painted former Coastguards’ houses on the south side further enhances the area. The remainder of the Driftway has a less defined character. After the Coastguards’ cottages, there are garages, a lane leading to Victoria St, then a mixture of 20th century, vernacular and Victorian houses. Several have lost their boundary walls to allow for “off road” parking. On the opposite side, the situation is similarly mixed. There is a series of late Victorian houses, most significantly altered; some present very plain end gables to the street. This is followed by a pair of modern bungalows, behind which can be seen the rear elevation of the Burlington Hotel. While there are some attractive flint boundary walls on both sides of the street, they fail to unify what is, for the most part, a disparate collection of buildings.



The central area of The Driftway, looking west. The coastguard's cottages at right.



**The west end of The Driftway; an inappropriate modern development which fails to reflect the traditional character of the street.**

### **Victoria Street**

Victoria St runs parallel with the Driftway between Augusta Stand the West Cliff slipway. At the junction with the West Cliff, two large late Victorian or Edwardian houses flank the entrance. Behind this, on the south side are two attractive terraces of late Victorian brick and cobble houses with bay windows, small front gardens and low boundary walls. On the north side is a row of three, then two storey, old brick and flint houses. To the west of these are the back gardens and walls of the Coastguards' Cottages in The Driftway. The backs of the cottages form an appealing view, and there are some interesting old brick and flint outbuildings, although some of the boundary walls have been moved to create unattractive parking spaces.

At the centre of Victoria St, where it joins a lane from the Driftway, there is a small “dogleg”, before the street continues along the same alignment. From this point to Augusta St, are more two storey 19th-century houses, with brick or brick and flint fronts and bay windows, either detached or set in short terraces. Most of the flintwork is carefully set pebble facings, rather than larger cobbles. While there has been some inappropriate alteration to the house fronts, the Victorian houses along this street form an agreeable group, modest in size and tastefully detailed.



**Entrance to Victoria St from the West Cliff.**

### **Church Street(west end)**

Church Street, together with the western edge of the Conservation Area finishes at a railway bridge leading to the coast road. Most of the north side of the street is lined with trees, beyond which the backs of the South Street villas can be glimpsed. Where the trees finish, there is a variety of buildings. The best of these is the back of Southlands Hotel, followed by a much modified probably Victorian house, an unappealing single storey shop and corner villa. On the opposite side is a putting green followed by terraced or semidetached Victorian houses with 1 or 2 storey bays, and then the Town Hall. This terrace is badly affected by a prominent new-looking mansard roof added to two houses, and a poor shop front replacing one ground floor bay –which unfortunately bears the name “Sheringham Development Company”.

### **Waterbank Road**

Much of the quality of this tranquil and pleasant 19th century road is created by its well-crafted 2-storey houses. The fronts are of brick, or brick and cobbles, and most have a ground floor bay window. While there are replacement doors and windows, the street retains much of its historic character. Regrettably, two houses has been painted light blue, an interruption to the subtle red and grey colouring of the other facades.



**Brick and cobbles houses in Waterbank Road. The nearest house still has cast iron railings.**

Interspersed with the older houses are a few 20th century houses of “traditional” design. These stand out, due mainly to a brightly coloured red brick; and in the case of the solicitor’s office on the north-west corner, to the awkwardly placed windows. The most incongruous addition to the road is a single storey flat-roofed hall (once a fire station?) on the west side.

There are a variety of boundary walls; the best examples being around the front gardens of the brick and cobble cottages, and two still retain fine cast iron railings. At the south east corner of the street, there are some unsightly sheds, a car parking area and the rear extension of a Station Road shop.

### **St Peter’s Road**



**Former police station, St Peter's Road. Originally with tall chimney's; now only the bases survive.**



Most of the houses in St Peter's Road are strong and distinctive designs, three storeys high, either of red brick or brick and flint, usually with a 2-storey bay window. The fronts are well-detailed, with features in moulded cement ("artificial stone") or to a lesser extent, ornamental brick. Short terraces on both sides of the street have shaped gables. Three buildings in the street are of particular interest. The Town Council offices at the north-west corner combines oriel, bow and bay windows as part of a very original composition. At the other end of the street is the former police station with a rendered top storey, mullion and transom windows and shaped gable. Opposite this is the former railway hotel, with polychrome brickwork.

The street retains a strong late Victorian Queen Anne Revival flavour, but there has been some inappropriate change. The brickwork of two houses has been painted cream, and traditional windows have been replaced. The most obtrusive change is to the bookshop on the east side of the street, where a two-storey canted brick bay has been completely replaced in modern materials. There are small, unattractive off-road car parking areas on both sides off the street towards the south end.

The brick boundary walls are generally of good quality. There is a short area of cast iron railings in front of the former railway hotel.

### 6.3 Key Unlisted Buildings

Key unlisted buildings are marked on the map provided. These have been selected due to their positive contribution to the townscape, rather than any local historical value.

With the exception of the buildings on the West Promenade, only those within the present Conservation Area have been included. All are considered worth including on a Local List –see part 2, Management Proposals. Those marked with an asterisk are considered worth submitting for national listing

Augusta St, 2-6 (Westcliff Gallery): Early 20th century(?) commercial building.

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\*Boulevard: War Memorial

Boulevard, 3(?). (Sheringham Learning Centre): Queen Anne revival villa.

\*Boulevard, 5: Edwardian(?) arts & crafts villa.

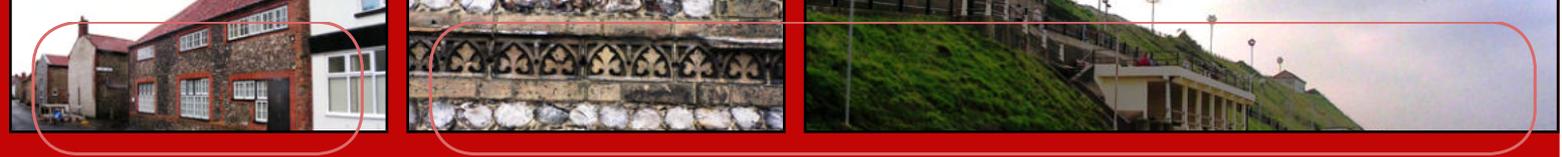
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Church Street. The Arcade: Late 19th century commercial building, some original shop fronts.

\*Church St. St Peter's Church. Gothic revival building 1897.

Church St, 7(?): Former bank with "Old English" timberwork.

Church St, 35: Single storey shop with original ornate fenestration.



\*Church St. Town hall: Edwardian civic building. 1912.

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Esplanade. Marble Arch: Toilet block & bridge. (1905)

\*Esplanade. Burlington Hotel. (1899).

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High Street. The Lobster: Probably 18th century inn, early 20th century front.

High Street. The 2 Lifeboats: Originally inn of 1720, later additions.

High Street, 23-5: Two brick and cobble houses with 19th century shop fronts.

\*High St, 37: Brick and cobble house with early-mid 19th century shop front.

High Street, 39: Late Victorian commercial building with 1920-30s shop front.

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Lifeboat Plain: Former double-deck boatbuilding shed belonging to Emery family.

Lifeboat Plain: Former lifeboat house.

Lifeboat Plain: The Crown Inn (1936).

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Montague Road. Davison House: Edwardian(?) arts & crafts villa.

Montague Road, 2: Edwardian(?) arts & crafts villa.

Montague Rd, 6: Edwardian(?) arts & crafts villa.

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\*South St. Southlands hotel. Edwardian(?) Queen Anne Revival style hotel.

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St Nicholas Place. St Nicholas nursing home: Edwardian arts & crafts villa.

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St Peter's Rd, 16: Former police station. Late 19th century.

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Station Approach: Railway station. (c.1887).



Station Approach: Former station hotel. Late 19th century.

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Station Road: Robin Hood public house. Early 20th century.

Station Road: "Mary Pym" clock tower. (1863, clock 1903).

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Victoria St.20-28: Terrace of 2 storey vernacular houses.

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West Cliff Plain. Whelk Coppers: Originally 1630, rebuilt as a café in the inter-war years.

West Cliff: Henry Ramey Upcher lifeboat shed and former fishermen's shed to west.

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\*West Promenade: Range of inter-war shelters & related structures, RNLI station.

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Wyndham St. Windham

Arms: 18th century(?) inn with probable 19th century front.

Wyndham St. Whitehall

Yard.: Traditional courtyard development of houses. Early 19th century(?).



## 6.4 Local Detail and Traditional Building Styles, Materials and Details



**Traditional brick and flint houses at the east end of Victoria St.**

Sheringham has a strong vernacular tradition of building with flint from the beach and locally-made brick. Flint cobbles were used for thick “rubble work” walls, with brick for dressings at the corners, or quoins, and window and door surrounds. The use of flint would have been encouraged by an 18th century tax levied on brick, which was not repealed until 1850. After the removal of the tax, fashion and ease of construction would have encouraged the building of houses entirely in brick, although in Sheringham flint was still used as a primary building material in the later Victorian period. There is evidence of this in Station Road, where some houses from the early 1880s have exposed end gables which appear to show rubble work construction. Brick was being made locally at this time, so is unlikely to have been an expensive commodity; it seems likely that the persistence of flint walls was due to local builders continuing to use a familiar, or “tried and tested” method of construction.



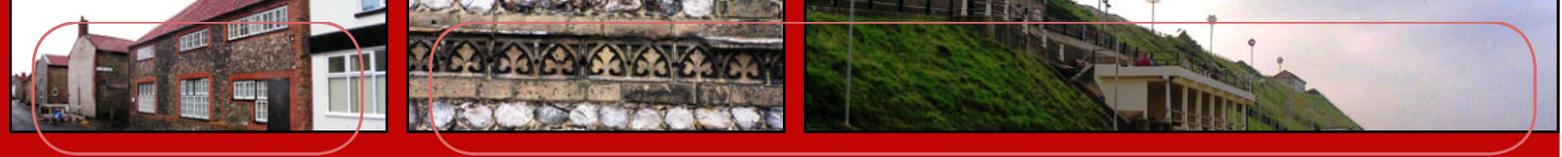
**Solicitor's office in Station Road. This combines flint 'rubble work' construction with new elements such as ornamental brickwork below the eaves. This flint pebble front is particularly attractive.**

While the flintwork of vernacular houses can be well coursed, it may not have been regarded as having any special aesthetic appeal. To create a more showy front, small flint pebbles could be used, or a complete brick front added.

It is possible that some brick and flint houses, such as the Two Lifeboats acquired rendered fronts during the late Georgian period. This practice is known from nearby towns such as Cromer. The hood above the doorway of the Two Lifeboats may also date from this time, although the pub has been altered over the years, and it may be a more recent introduction.



**The Lobster pub. An 18th century building with a late Victorian or Edwardian facade.**



The late 1880s, with the arrival of the railways, seems to mark the end of the transition from vernacular, to formal, (or polite) architecture in Sheringham. Flint starts out as a primary building material, and is gradually reduced to a facing material, used for decorative panels set within the brickwork. The aforementioned brick and cobble houses in Station Road show evidence of this transition, introducing elements from formal architecture, such as ornamental brick, stone (or imitation stone) dressings and sash windows.

Slate would probably have been introduced as a roofing material at this time, although the majority of Victorian slate roofs have been replaced with pantiles or “triple Romans”. Few houses, such as in Augusta Street, still have slate roofs.

Pre-Victorian houses would probably have had small side-opening casement windows, and a locally made panelled door. These would have been positioned for convenience, reflecting the arrangement of rooms inside; a common feature is the first floor windows positioned immediately below the eaves. During the 19th century, double hung sashes were the most common form of window, but casement windows continued to be used in Sheringham for smaller vernacular houses, such as at Whitehall Yard, believed to be early-mid 19th century. By the 1880s, brick and cobble houses were fitted with sash windows from the outset. These tend to be set symmetrically, a legacy of classical house design. Today, most of the windows in the older houses have been replaced by sash windows.

By the 1890s, new houses in Sheringham were reflecting the architectural fashions of the period, which was marked by an interest in traditional brick buildings and their details. This led to styles such as the Queen Anne Revival, which is well illustrated by the villas and larger terraced houses around the Boulevard and North & South Streets. Where practical, these houses are assymetrical in overall design, for picturesque effect. There are prominent, sometimes shaped gables, tall chimney stacks, and plain tiled roofs. The Queen Anne style often used brick for decoration, with fine cut and rubbed brick arches over windows and exaggerated, “aedicular” door surrounds in ornamental brick. At first floor level can be areas of roughcast render, while bays may be covered by hanging tiles. The timberwork includes balustrades, and windows have multiple glazing bars included more for artistic effect than any practical consideration. There is also some imitation half timberwork at first floor level and within gables; not originally a part of the Queen Anne Revival or other urban styles, it may be have been acquired from the Old English style used for country houses.



**House in St Peter's Road. While the general character is Queen Anne Revival, some imitation stonework details around the porch may be inspired by the Gothic Revival.**

Elements of the same style can be seen on smaller terraced houses and commercial properties within the town centre. Laurel Villas (1895), in St Peter's Road, has shaped gables, ornamental brickwork and windows with cut and rubbed brick arches, while on the opposite side of the road, a similar building incorporates flint facings. Flint has now become a part of self-consciously picturesque architecture.



**Church St, the Westcliff Gallery, with Bertram Watts just beyond.**

Queen Anne may also have inspired the design of the former police station in St Peter's Road, with its rendered top storey, mullion and transom window frames and originally, some ornate tall chimneys. Other examples of the style include the ornamental brick window surrounds of Bertram Watts in Church St, and elements of the Arcade opposite, particularly the attractive oriel bow window. Half timberwork makes a strong appearance in the town centre, although some buildings, such as the group on the corner of High St/Church St, do not seem to reflect any specific style. It is probably safest to suggest that such buildings show the influence of Arts & Crafts styles, where elements of vernacular architecture (often from outside the area) were incorporated into the design.

Gothic Revival architecture had fallen out of fashion by the 1890s, except for religious buildings. A few details on houses, such as stone columns and foliate capitals may, however, be inspired by this movement. The best example of a Gothic Revival building is, of course, St. Peter's Church, which also makes good use of flint.

Decorative features, derived from the fashionable architecture of the day were widely available to the late Victorian builder. Inexpensive machine made products such as ornamental brick and imitation stone can be found on even the smallest houses. Along streets such as Cliff Road, otherwise unremarkable terraces can have Queen Anne doorways, Gothic Revival column capitals and ornate string and eaves courses. There is also some flint facing; one pair of semidetached houses on Cliff Road combines panels of pebbles, flushwork flint and galleting.



**Sheringham Town Hall, a 'Free Style' design of 1912**

Some late Victorian buildings do not fall easily into any particular style. The Town Hall is a remarkable design which makes good use of its awkward corner location, and might be considered to be “Free Style”, a late 19th century term used for buildings without any specific architectural influence. The Westcliff Gallery, with its unusual dormers with segmental pediments and scrolls, may take inspiration from “Artisan Mannerist” buildings of the late 17th and early 18th century.

Some of the villas around The Boulevard, particularly at the west end of South St, are completely rendered, with pitched roofs of plain tiles extending down below first floor level. This is a late Arts and Crafts style, owing much to the architects and designers of the Garden City movement, such as Parker and Unwin. The style continued during the inter-war years, as shown by the Crown pub.



**RNLI Station. One of a good group of inter-war structures on the East Promenade**

The inter-war architecture along the West Promenade is of particular interest. Most of the structures are flat-roofed, showing the influence of the “International Modern” style. This was much favoured for seaside architecture, the most notable English example being the De la Warr Pavilion at Bexhill. The clean lines of these buildings evoke the decks of a cruise liner, and the architecture of sophisticated continental resorts, both popular with wealthy holiday makers during the 1920s-30s. It was intended



that such buildings should use the latest technology, and be constructed entirely from reinforced concrete, but it is likely that at Sheringham the walls are of rendered brick. A flat-roofed block of houses set on the cliff top to the east of the Conservation Area is believed to be of similar construction.

Post war architecture in Sheringham is unremarkable. Some neo-Georgian houses along Vincent Road, are good “period pieces”, although their surroundings are poor, so that it would be hard to justify their inclusion within the Conservation Area. The Little Theatre has been built in a contemporary style, but most additions to the townscape are weak imitations of traditional architecture. Where they make an attempt to reflect their surroundings by having red brick and flint walls, the brick is usually too bright in colour, and the flints overly large and uncoursed.

## 6.5 The public Realm

The remains of several traditional kerb treatments survive in Sheringham. A few streets still have most of their red granite kerbs, particularly on the west side of the town. In Co-operative Street are some Staffordshire blue clay kerbs, while along The Driftway and Victoria St, granite blocks mark the edge of the road.



Grey granite blocks marking the edge of the street in The Driftway. These can be square in shape or rectangular.



**Red granite kerbs in st Nicholas Place. Most of the granite kerbs in sheringham are narrow, as seen on the right hand side.**



**Blue clay kerbs on the south side of Co-operative Street.**

The main shopping streets have modern concrete kerbs. These are, for the most part, combined with footpaths of concrete flag stones and sections of red concrete brick. At certain points, particularly at road corners and dropped kerbs, there are areas of red brickweave. Along Station Road, the pavement has been relaid with good quality concrete paving slabs and matching kerbs, which makes the paths appear less “dated” and more attractive. There are also areas of red clay pavers marking convenient points for pedestrians to cross the road.

Unfortunately, the pavements often do not extend up to the bases of the shops, leaving an area of “negative space” between the edge of the pavement and the shop front. Shop owners have filled this space with paving, or in some cases, concrete. The various surface treatments create an untidy appearance which undermines the positive effect of the new paths.



Station Road showing the new pavement with concrete infill beside it.

Most side roads have concrete kerbs with tarmac paths; in some cases the tarmac is combined with gravel. The tarmac paths in some side roads are heavily patched and unattractive, and where there are older concrete kerbs, such as in Lifeboat Plain, the surfaces are crumbling.



Good quality cast iron road signs survive in the town, painted with black lettering on a white ground. These can be relatively inaccessible, positioned quite high on the side walls of buildings, so that they sometimes lack paint and are rusting. Circular plaques have been affixed to some buildings, commemorating historic events, such as the German bomb dropped in Whitehall Yard during the First World War. Unfortunately, the plaques are of plastic, and some have been smashed.

The street lights are a standard “highways” design, in aluminium. They have no great aesthetic value, and are too tall for their setting. On the cliff top, the lights are lower, but no more attractive. Most have “disc” shaped lanterns, although on the Prom, these are supplemented by lights with globe-shaped covers and a single “Victorian-style” lamp.



There is a refreshing lack of road signs in the commercial area, although there is an extraordinary collection by the main entrance to the town on the Coast Road, and a number around the Mary Pym. At the south end of Station Road and around Ottendorf Green, green-painted metal planters bear the design of a ship's wheel, chains and an anchor. While well-intentioned, for half of the year they have no plants, and contribute little of value to the townscape.

Most of the benches in Sheringham are either of wood (such as at Ottendorf Green) or with concrete sides and timber for the seat. A few of the concrete-sided benches copy the original "Festival of Britain" design.

The dominant and shaping force within the public realm is traffic. All the roads are used by cars, and parking is allowed on the west side of Station Road and on both sides at the south end of High St. Where there are no parking bays, there are the inevitable and very obtrusive double yellow lines. Local traders doubtless appreciate the parking spaces, but the presence of so many parked cars, together with the road markings creates a poor and pedestrian-unfriendly environment for the town centre.

In some side streets, off-road car parking spaces have been created that directly adjoin the road. These are frequently unsightly, interrupting the traditional pattern of the street. A number also have poor surfaces, such as heavily patched areas of concrete.



An unappealing accumulation of off-road parking spaces at the north end of Waterbank Road.

## 6.6 Green spaces, Ecology and Biodiversity Value

Sheringham conservation area is surrounded on three sides by housing, so that the only area where a semi-natural environment exists is on the seafront, although there is little opportunity for a varied ecology. The beach is composed almost entirely of pebbles, so that there is little or no vegetation, while most of the cliffs are covered by concrete walls. Seagulls and other birds constitute the main form of wildlife in this area. Their nesting sites are farther afield, probably in the cliffs outside the conservation area.



On the west side of the town, trees make a strong contribution to the streets around the Boulevard. The majority of trees line the sides of the roads. In some cases they are saplings which have been planted in recent years, so the full effect will not be appreciated for some years. Around the war memorial, there are prominent mature trees set in private gardens.

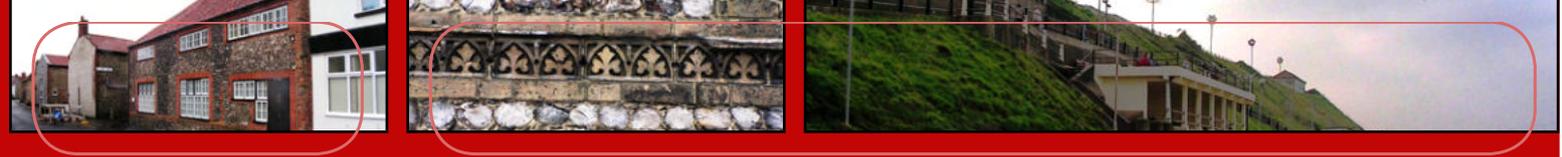
At the south end of Church Street there are several significant groups of trees. A screen of trees shields the backs of the South Street Villas from view, and also extends a short way along the side of the railway. On the opposite side of the street is the putting green, with a fine row of trees on the north side and at the junction with Station Approach. There are also trees on the south side of Station Approach, along the boundary of the former railway station (now North Norfolk Railway). The trees here form a part of the most attractive entranceway into the town, and considerably enhance the area.



**Morris St car park. Trees combine with an attractively weathered brick and flint wall.**

The Morris Street car park has trees on three sides. Together with an attractive brick and cobble wall fronting the street, these enhance what would otherwise be a grim area set to the rear of the High Street shops.

There are three main public gardens in Sheringham, on the Esplanade, the Putting Green on Station Approach/Church Stand Ottendorf Green. The last mentioned is outside the conservation area. The putting green is a pleasant place to relax, a combination of trees, and flower beds, set against the red brickwork of the St Peter's Road houses. Ottendorf Green and the Esplanade are less successful, and suggestions for their improvement have been included in part 2, Management Proposals section 2.6. Front gardens play a small part in enhancing the back streets, particularly along Morris St, Victoria



Street, Beeston Road and Cliff Road. Along Beeston Road, some of the larger mature gardens give a pleasant rural feel to the area. There is, however, an unfortunate trend to remove boundary walls and pave over front gardens to create off-road parking areas.

## 6.7 The Extent of Loss, Intrusion or Damage (negative factors)

The main negative factors affecting Sheringham are covered in detail in part 2, Management Proposals. These are considered to be:-

- The presence of large numbers of cars parked in the main shopping streets, detract from the appearance of the area and encourage road markings, "highways" style street lighting etc.
- The accumulation of unrelated and indifferent quality street furniture.
- Poor quality modern design, a category which includes new shop fronts, shop signage, extensions to existing buildings and new houses.
- Erosion of the architectural character of the town's older housing through permitted development, including replacement of traditional windows, removal of chimneys, boundary walls etc.
- The poor appearance of the seafront, particularly the sea wall and an untidy mixture of lights, including street lights and strings of coloured lights. Poor maintenance of the cliff wall.
- The unappealing character of public gardens, particularly on the Esplanade.
- Poor quality entranceway to the town from the coast road, including an accumulation of signage and a very unattractive roundabout.

## 6.8 General Condition

The majority of buildings in the conservation area are well maintained. There has been some minor erosion of the red brick on some fronts, and some deterioration of stone/moulded cement details.

At the west end of Co-operative street, a group of houses have cracked and detached areas of render.

The main cause for concern is the use of inappropriate materials, such as cement for pointing brickwork, the painting of brickwork and the replacement of wooden windows with uPVC. Some original features have also been altered or removed, particularly chimney stacks and boundary walls.

Such changes detract from the traditional character of the town. These issues are covered in more detail in part 2, Management Proposals.



## 6.9 Problems, Pressures and the Capacity for Change

Sheringham is recognised as a high quality environment which attracts new residents from outside the area, particularly those of retirement age. This creates a demand for more housing, particularly for affordable or starter homes. In response to this, the North Norfolk Local Development Framework has identified infill sites within the town for housing development. It is anticipated 600-700 new houses will be built in Sheringham between 2001-2021. No large-scale housing schemes are anticipated, and it is therefore expected that any encroachment into the countryside will be minimal.

Sheringham is a popular seaside holiday destination, catering for families and the elderly. This has resulted in a proliferation of small gift shops and cafes, sometimes replacing shops catering for the everyday needs of the local community. Traditional shops such as those selling hardware and food are often part of the appeal of the town for visitors and for locals, and many of the new shops do not have such a distinctive character, thus reducing the unique identity of Sheringham.

The North Norfolk Local Development Framework has identified an area to the east of the Mary Pym clock tower as a possible site for new retail development. As the identified area includes some poor quality post-war commercial buildings, it offers a good opportunity to improve the appearance of the conservation area.



Traditional shop where the signage adds to the pleasant 'seaside' ambience of the town.



Two modern shops surrounded by excessive signage.

More general problems affecting the conservation area are covered within part 2, Management Proposals.



## 7 Community Involvement

Involving the community is an important part of the appraisal process. Community involvement and the public consultation will be carried out as such:-

- Delivering leaflets key locations, public venues and businesses
- Making contact with key community groups and providing briefing sessions
- Holding a public exhibition and open meeting
- Publishing the draft appraisal on the council's website, accompanied by an electronic comments/feedback form
- Use of media and press releases
- Evaluation



## 8 Recommendations/Conclusion

See also relevant sections within part 2, Management Proposals.

### 8.1 Suggested boundary changes

Three suggested boundary changes are put forward within this report:-

- The inclusion of the West Promenade and the area of the Esplanade, both currently outside the Conservation Area.
- Removal of Beeston Road, Beach Road, Cliff Avenue, Co-operative Street and The Avenue from the Conservation Area, with the exception of small areas of good quality housing at the junction of Beach Road and Beeston Road.
- Removal of the Beach Road Slope and the area of the Promenade to the east.

More detail is given within part 2 Management Proposals, section 2.1.

### 8.2 Summary of issues - SWOT analysis

The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified during the appraisal process.

#### Strengths

- High quality surroundings, including the beach and the countryside on the east and west sides of the town
- Low level traffic through the conservation area, as it is not sited on any main thoroughfare
- Important tourist attractions, particularly the North Norfolk Railway, Little Theatre & Fishermen's Heritage Centre.
- A strong tradition of building using local flint & brick, giving a distinctive identity to the town
- A range of historic buildings making positive contribution to the townscape
- The common scale of the town's buildings, with occasional higher structures such as the Burlington Hotel serving as interesting focal points.

#### Weaknesses

- Car parking in the main shopping streets
- Unappealing entranceway to the town from the coast road



- Poor quality modern developments, including new shop fronts
- Erosion of architectural character through permitted development
- Dull appearance of promenade, sea walls and area on the cliff top near to the Crown Inn
- Indifferent quality of street furniture and public gardens

### **Opportunities**

- Encourage the use of the town's large car parks so that the number of visitors' cars within the town centre can be reduced
- Redevelopment opportunities to enhance the conservation area (see part 2 Management Proposals section 2.7)
- Possible further enhancement of the public realm

### **Threats**

- Continued erosion of architectural character through permitted development
- Poor quality new development, particularly replacement shop fronts
- Inappropriate minor additions to buildings, such as satellite dishes
- Lack of maintenance for public spaces, leading to subsequent deterioration

## PART 2 MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

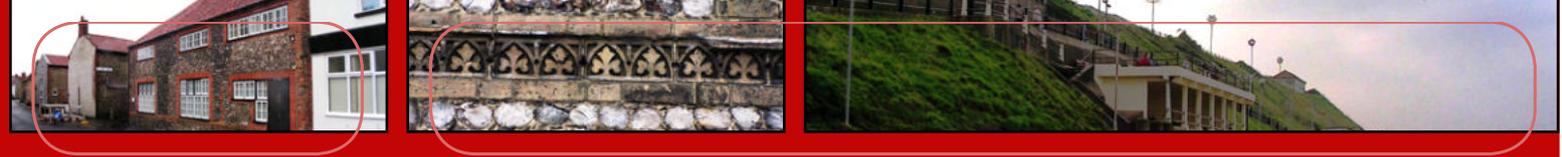




## 1 Introduction

*Part 1* of this document has identified the special positive qualities of the Sheringham Conservation Area which make it special and distinctive and which should be conserved and enhanced.

*Part 2* the management proposals, considers the negative features which have been identified. It also provides recommendations for improvement and change.



## 2 Issues and Recommendations

### 2.1 Review of Conservation Area Boundary

An earlier Conservation Area report recommended the removal of Conservation Area status from Sheringham, remarking particularly on the poor appearance of Station Road. While it is difficult to disagree with the conclusions in this report, it should be remembered that the purpose of Conservation Areas is not just to conserve, but also to promote enhancement. This provides some justification for keeping poorer streets such as Station road and Station Approach within the Conservation Area. Balanced against this, it can be argued that the inclusion of low quality environments within a Conservation Area devalues the quality overall.

In general, the residential side roads have retained their character better than the main streets, although once again, traditional features of houses such as windows and doors have often been lost. There is also a tendency to remove boundary walls to create off-road parking areas.

The present Conservation Area includes the Beach Road slope and a small part of the Promenade to the east. Apart from the timber fishermen's slope, there seems little here to justify Conservation Area status. It is recommended that the seafront area around Beach Road be removed, so that the "Mo" marks the new eastern edge of the Conservation Area.

To the west, only a small part of the Esplanade and West Promenade are within the Conservation Area, together with just half of the cliff top gardens. The main area of the West Prom, which is outside the Conservation Area, is of particular interest as it contains a collection of good inter-war buildings. It is recommended that the remainder of the ornamental gardens on the cliff top, together with the boating pond and an inter-war shelter be included in the Conservation Area. The West Promenade, up to and including the RNLi building should as a matter of priority, be given Conservation Area status.

### 2.2 Alterations to Unlisted Buildings and Article 4 Directions

There is serious cause for concern over the inappropriate changes to the town's older buildings. This affects everything from the old brick and flint houses to inter-war terraces. The replacement of traditional windows and doors with new designs, usually in u-PVC is so widespread that in many streets, replacement windows are found on around 90% of houses. Within the Character Area descriptions in this report, the decision was made to comment only upon the most obtrusive examples. Less common, but equally damaging, has been the removal of doors, chimneys and boundary walls. Larger houses with a strong and distinctive appearance, such as the villas around the Boulevard, may still retain much of interest even when subjected to such alterations, but with smaller, more modestly detailed houses, the changes are much more noticeable and destructive to their character.

Where houses are not in commercial use (e.g shops) or multiple occupation, such alterations can normally be carried out without planning permission from the Council. Development of this kind is called "permitted development" and falls into various classes which are listed in the Town and Country Planning (GPO) Order 1995. Powers exist for the Council known as Article 4(2) directions, which



withdraw some of these permitted development rights in the interests of preserving and enhancing the character of the conservation area. These Directions should be considered for all the residential streets within Sheringham conservation area.

It is late in the day to try and protect traditional windows, but Article 4(2) directions could be used to check the removal of boundary walls and the painting of brick and brick/cobble house fronts in the residential streets around the centre.

Particularly in the area of Beeston Road, terraced houses have had large dormer windows inserted. These interrupt the traditional roof pattern, and would be better placed at the rear of the property.



**Roofs in Waterbank Road, with altered chimneys and new dormers.**

While it is not a major problem at present, a number of houses have satellite dishes on their front elevations, and one villa in St Nicholas Road has an obtrusive line of solar panels on the lower part of the roof. Article 4(2) Directions might also be a way forward with such issues.

A list of the streets where Article 4(2) Directions might be applied is given as an appendix in part 7.

Some protection for important buildings would be afforded by the adoption of a local list, and buildings suitable for such a list have been identified elsewhere within this report. A few buildings might also be nationally listable, which would give greater protection against inappropriate change.

Alongside this new legislation, efforts should be made to raise public interest in the town's built heritage. Exhibitions could be held, and leaflets could be produced about the town's architecture, perhaps produced in collaboration with the local Preservation Society. These could include information about good repair, and the value of traditional building materials. There is already a good deal of interest in Sheringham's past, which could serve as a starting point for looking at the town's buildings.



## 2.3 Buildings of Local Interest

At present, there are no nationally listed buildings in the Sheringham conservation area. PPG15 (paragraph 6.16) gives provision for local authorities to draw up lists of locally important buildings which make up a valuable contribution to the local scene or local history, but which do not merit national listing.

A provisional local list has been prepared (see key unlisted buildings in section 6.3). Buildings have been selected primarily because they are substantially intact and/or good examples of a particular style or type (eg. the former police station). As a consequence, smaller and much altered early brick and cobble buildings may be underrepresented.

A supplementary document with photographs of these buildings has been included with this report.

## 2.4 New Development

New buildings within Sheringham have generally been less than successful. They can be overlarge for their setting, introduce an obtrusive new roof pitch and/or use materials which jar with their surroundings, such as unpleasantly coloured brickwork. Along the Esplanade, the decision to allow so many blocks of utilitarian-looking flats has much reduced the appeal of what was once an elegant seafront.



**New houses mix uncomfortably with older properties on The Boulevard.**

The town's shops are one of the main elements that shape visitors perceptions of Sheringham; these form an almost continuous façade along the main streets of the town. Despite this, there seems to have been no attempt to co-ordinate the appearance of new shop fronts. Where streets such as Station Road once had a coherent architectural character, this has almost been lost under a variety



of highly coloured shop fronts and large fascia boards. There is no immediate solution to this problem, apart from a comprehensive (and costly) refronting exercise, so a long term strategy should be developed to create a more attractive and coherent frontage along the main streets.



**Completely refronted building in High St. Only the pantiled roof gives any clue that this is one of the older houses in the street. There is little of architectural or aesthetic interest left.**

Guidelines should be established to assist in the design of new houses and shop fronts, based around the distinctive character of Sheringham. This guidance could be made available as booklets, obtainable from the Town Council, local library, etc. These guidelines should be produced after consultation with local architects, Town and District Councillors the Chamber of Trade and the local community. The Conservation, Landscape & Design Section at the District Council should be involved at all stages of the consultation. This could be included as a Supplementary Planning Document within the Local Development Framework.

## **2.5 Tree Management**

There are at present no Tree Protection Orders in place in Sheringham conservation area. Anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree in a conservation area is required to give six weeks notice to the local planning authority (subject to a range of exceptions including small trees or dead, dying or dangerous trees).



## 2.6 Public Realm and Green Spaces

### Traffic management and road surfaces

One of the main negative factors affecting Sheringham is undoubtedly traffic, particularly private cars. Despite the car parks at the edge of the town centre, (e.g. Station Yard and Morris St), parked cars still line the main streets. This in turn encourages road markings, road signs and the “highways” style street lights. Consideration should be given to reducing the number of car parking spaces along the main commercial streets and limiting parking to delivery and service vehicles. While it would doubtless be controversial, a further measure would be to make Station Road and High Street pedestrian zones, save for the aforementioned service/delivery vehicles. The residents of the side streets could be encouraged to enter and leave the town by the Station Approach/Church Street or the Beeston Road access points.

A stronger case can be made for pedestrianising the cliff top area between the High Stand the Mo and also Lifeboat Plain. The removal of road markings such as double yellow lines, and the replacement of the grey tarmac with a material such as golden gravel and/or setts would considerably enhance this grim part of the seafront. There would be little use in enhancing the surfaces here, however, if there was still vehicle traffic entering and leaving the adjacent car park. As part of any enhancement programme, it is suggested that the car park be redeveloped. This would be a good opportunity to introduce a building or structure to enhance this central seafront location. The car parking area in front of the Crown could also be redeveloped to provide a more attractive seating area for its patrons.

Much could be done to make Lifeboat Plain a more pedestrian-friendly space, such as better surfaces, and the removal of the road markings and parking spaces in front of the former lifeboat station.

The new pavements introduced along Station Road are a considerable improvement on the older mix of paving slabs with areas of red brickweave. This should be continued along High Street and Church St. It is regrettable that the main commercial streets of Sheringham have lost many of their granite or blue clay kerbs; these are an attractive feature and should be retained where they still exist.

### Lighting & street furniture

The lighting along the main streets is too tall and utilitarian-looking. A new design should be introduced and adopted as standard throughout the town - a mix of styles, such as along the clifftop and Promenade, should be avoided.

At present, the pavement is also home to a variety of planters, benches, litter bins and posts for hanging baskets. These have been added to the town over the years, without (it would seem) any overall vision or governing design scheme. This could be avoided if a design plan for the town could be agreed, rationalizing the designs of street furniture and its locations. It should be remembered that sometimes, a minimum of street furniture is more visually attractive and useful. The designs of any new furniture, such as benches could express the character of the town, incorporating the town's crest or a local motif, e.g. a whelk shell.



## Public gardens



**The gardens on the Esplanade. Far too many brick walls and very unappealing railings.**

Although Ottendorf Green is outside the Conservation Area, it is of major importance at the main entrance to the town. The Green has an assortment of shrubs, a Victorian-style letterbox and signage. Part of this area was recently taken for a siding for the North Norfolk Railway, and there has been some redesign of the area, with golden gravel paths and relocated seating. This has improved the site, although more could be done to enhance the area, and further screen the adjoining car park from view.

Along the Esplanade, the gardens are well positioned, occupying the space to the west of the “Marble Arch”. Unfortunately, the gardens seem to have been laid out with a strong sense of economy. There are as many (unappealing) low brick walls as there are areas of planting. Behind this, there is a long shelter constructed from concrete blocks. This garden would benefit from a completely new landscaping scheme, and more elegant shelters. The positive effect of the gardens would be greatly enhanced if they were not obscured by parked cars. It is recommended that these car parking spaces be removed.

To the west, the boating pond is a pleasing feature, together with the inter-war shelter. It is understood that this shelter has been subject to much vandalism and repairs may no longer be carried out. It would be regrettable if the threat of vandalism had to be the main factor when considering the design of shelters and landscaping in the Esplanade.



## The Promenade



The Promenade with its mix of street lights and poles.

Any approach to the seafront has to consider the appearance of the sea walls. Without jeopardizing the safety of the town, ways could be investigated to make them more aesthetically attractive. Some of the sea walls are so high that they isolate visitors from the sea views, particularly by the access slopes at the top of the High St. More generally, the walls have a flat-topped angular outline, this could be softened by the use of round topped capping stones, as seen on the Victorian sea walls at Cromer.



The lighting is a mixture of styles, and mixed with metal poles used for holding strings of coloured lights. It might be possible to reduce the visual “clutter” by introducing new lights which also served as attachment points for any decorative lights. Ways should also be sought to reduce the amount of grey concrete visible along the Promenade, although any coloured surfacing should be introduced with caution. Without proper maintenance, this might rapidly appear scruffy and unkempt.



**Untidy area at the beginning of the West Promenade.**

Perhaps the worst area of the Promenade and cliff walls is between Whelk Coppers and the beginning of the West Promenade. An indifferently maintained café sits next to grimy concrete sea walls, and an overgrown and poorly maintained cliff face. It is understood that there are ownership problems with this part of the cliff; due to the very negative impression this part creates, it is suggested that compulsory purchase be investigated.



On a more positive note, the West Promenade, with its imaginative array of inter-war buildings should be celebrated, with proper repair, distinctive lighting and better quality railings to replace the lengths of scaffolding. This should be an arena for beach activities and events; at present the West Prom lies almost forgotten at the west end of the town.

### **Entranceways to the town**

Although it falls outside the Conservation Area, special attention should be paid to the entranceway to Station Road from the coast road. It would be hard to imagine a more utilitarian and less attractive roundabout, surrounded by an accumulation of traffic lights, road signs and planters. To the south, the buildings are run-down, particularly the former garage on the east side. This is the most prominent entrance to the town, and yet the least inviting. Consultations should take place with the Highways Dept. at Norfolk County Council, representatives of the District Council including the Conservation, Design & Landscape Section, to establish what improvements are possible. Some traffic signage can be discretionary, and it should be established what is really needed, and what signs can be combined to reduce their numbers.



**The unattractive roundabout at the main entrance to the town.**

While the North Norfolk Railway's old station is extremely attractive, the present railway station is less welcoming to visitors. There is a good wooden fence and gate with a traditional railway ambience, but in front of this, the short tarmac approach road is poor. A spartan-looking metal shelter, metal street lights and concrete planters which resemble parts of a road block complete the picture. There is a need for better surfacing and better lights. If planters are needed, they could be more attractive and discreetly placed.

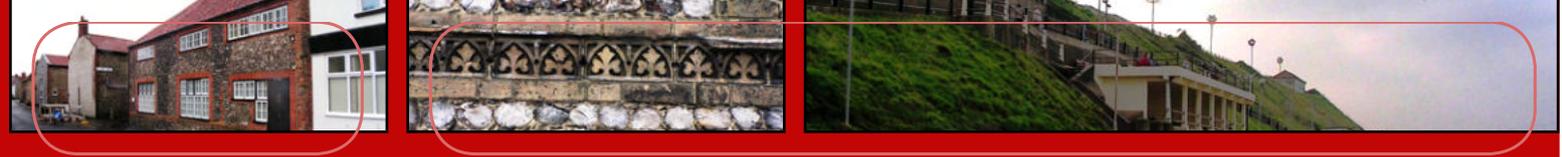
## **2.7 Development Opportunities**

Several sites in the town have been identified as suitable for developments which could enhance the character of the town:-

- The car park on the cliff top between the end of the High Street and the Mo.



- The flat roofed 1960s buildings to the south of the Mary Pym clock tower, on the west side of Station Road.
- The former fire station in Waterbank Road.
- 20th century flat roofed shops on the corner of Station Approach & Station Road.
- The car parking area beside Upcher Courton the Esplanade. While this already has permission for development, it is hoped that any development here will enhance the area, and improve upon the design of the adjacent modern flats.



### 3 Monitoring and Review

As recommended by English Heritage, this document should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption. It will need to be assessed in the light of the emerging Local Development Framework and changing national government policy. A review should include the following:

- A survey of the conservation area including a full photographic survey to aid possible enforcement action;
- An assessment of the recommendations of this document and whether they have been acted upon, and how successful this has been.
- The identification of any new issues which need to be addressed, requiring further actions or enhancements;
- The production of a short report detailing the findings of the survey and itemising necessary action;
- Publicity and advertising.

It is possible that this review could be carried out by the local community under the guidance of a heritage consultant or NNDC. This would enable the local community to become more involved with the process and raise awareness of the issues in particular the problems associated with enforcement.

The success of this document will be dependent on its adoption by local residents, regular monitoring and an effective enforcement strategy to ensure that recommendations are achieved.

## APPENDICES





## Useful Information, Appendices and Contact Details

### References

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Cox, P., The Village Becomes A Town: 1890-1910. (Courtyard Publishing, Sheringham 2001)

Craske, Stanley & Roy, Sheringham: A Century of Change. (Poppyland Publishing, 1985)

### Contact details and further information:-

North Norfolk District Council  
Conservation, Design and Landscape  
Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer  
NR27 9EN

Tel. 01263 516165

Fax. 01263 514802

email: [conservation@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:conservation@north-norfolk.gov.uk)

[www.northnorfolk.org.uk](http://www.northnorfolk.org.uk): The Conservation and Design webpages offer links to all main heritage and conservation bodies for advice, guidance and information.

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Norfolk County Council  
Building Conservation Team  
County Hall Martineau Lane Norwich, NR1 2SG

Tel: 01603 222706

Fax: 01603 224413

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Sheringham Town Council:  
Town Hall, Church St.

(01263-822213)

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### **Proposed Article 4 Directions**

Directions should cover:-

- Replacement of traditional windows and doors (where still present)
- The painting of flint /brickwork
- Removal of boundary walls, chimneys
- Installation of dormer windows on the front elevation (where this is not a regular feature in the street)
- Solar panels on the front elevation
- Change of roofing material

### **The following streets should be considered for Article 4 Directions:-**

Residential area (west side)

- Alexandra St
- Church St(south)
- Montague Rd
- Morris St



- North St
- South St
- St Nicholas Place
- St Peters Rd
- The Boulevard
- The Driftway
- Victoria St
- Waterbank Rd
- West Cliff

#### Residential Area (east side)

- Beach Rd\*
- Beeston Rd\*
- Cliff Road\*
- Gun St
- Wyndham St(east end) including Whitehall Yard

\*if these streets are to be retained in the Conservation Area.



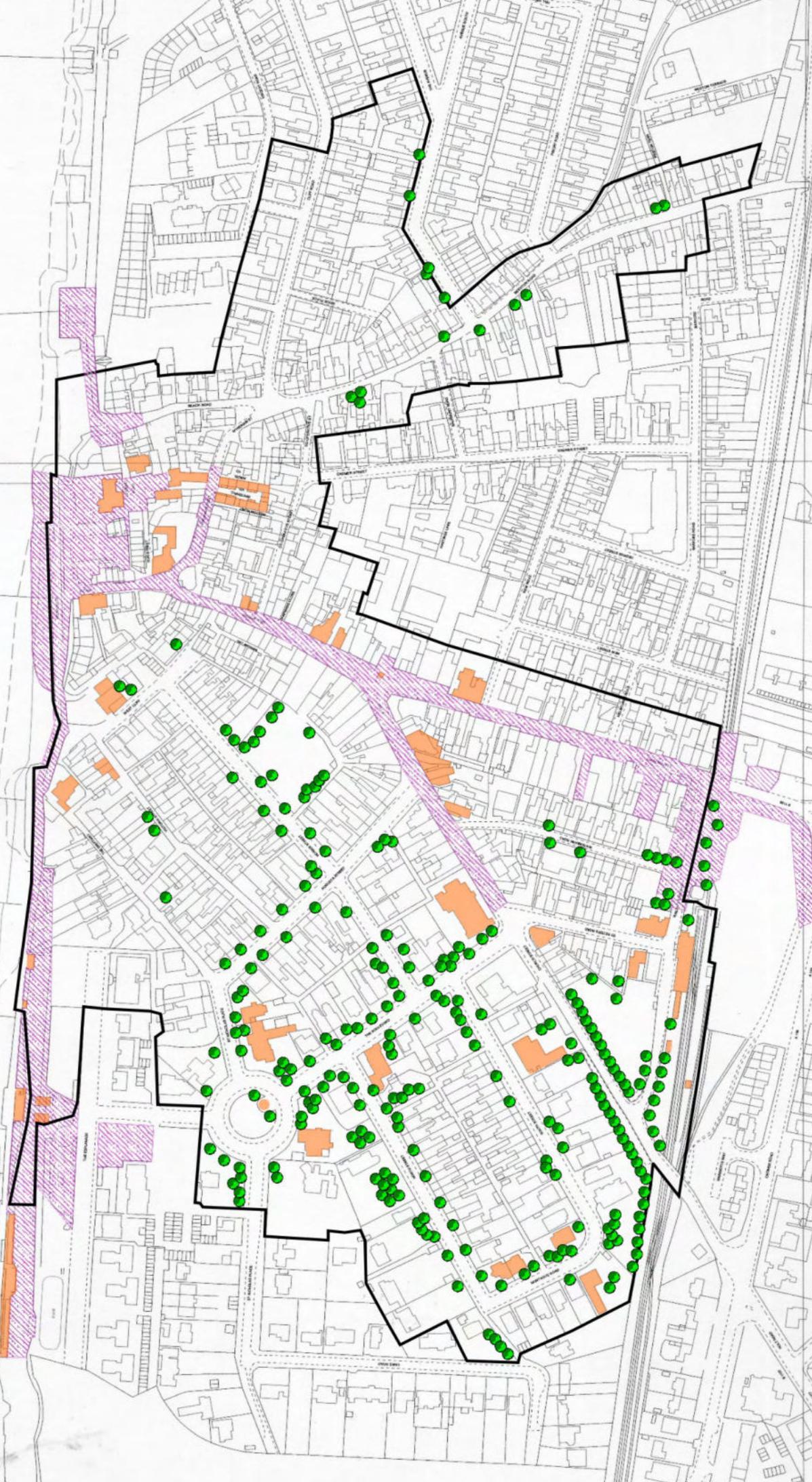
## Maps

Conservation Area Boundary

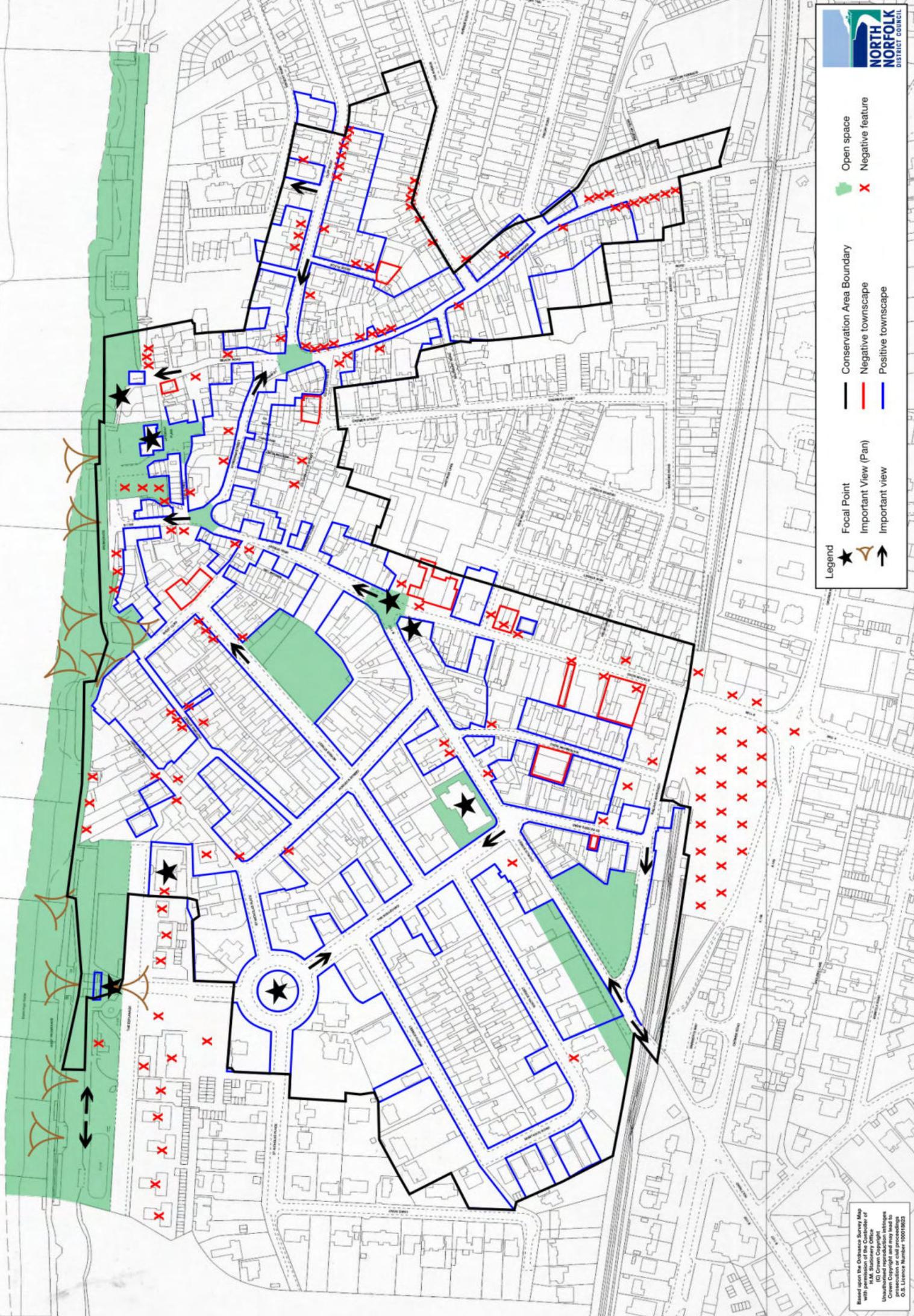
Locally important building

Important tree in landscape

Area for improvement

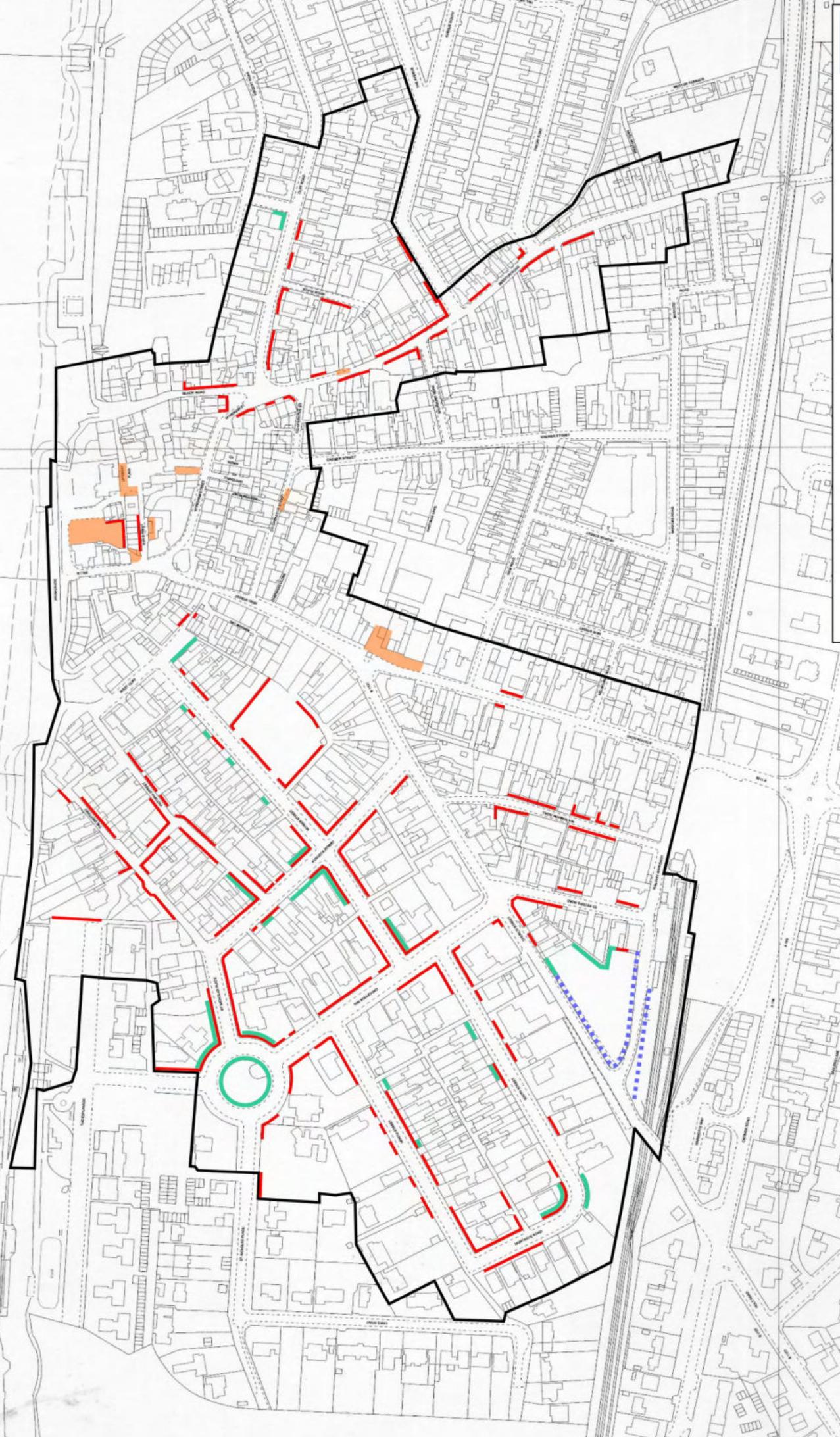


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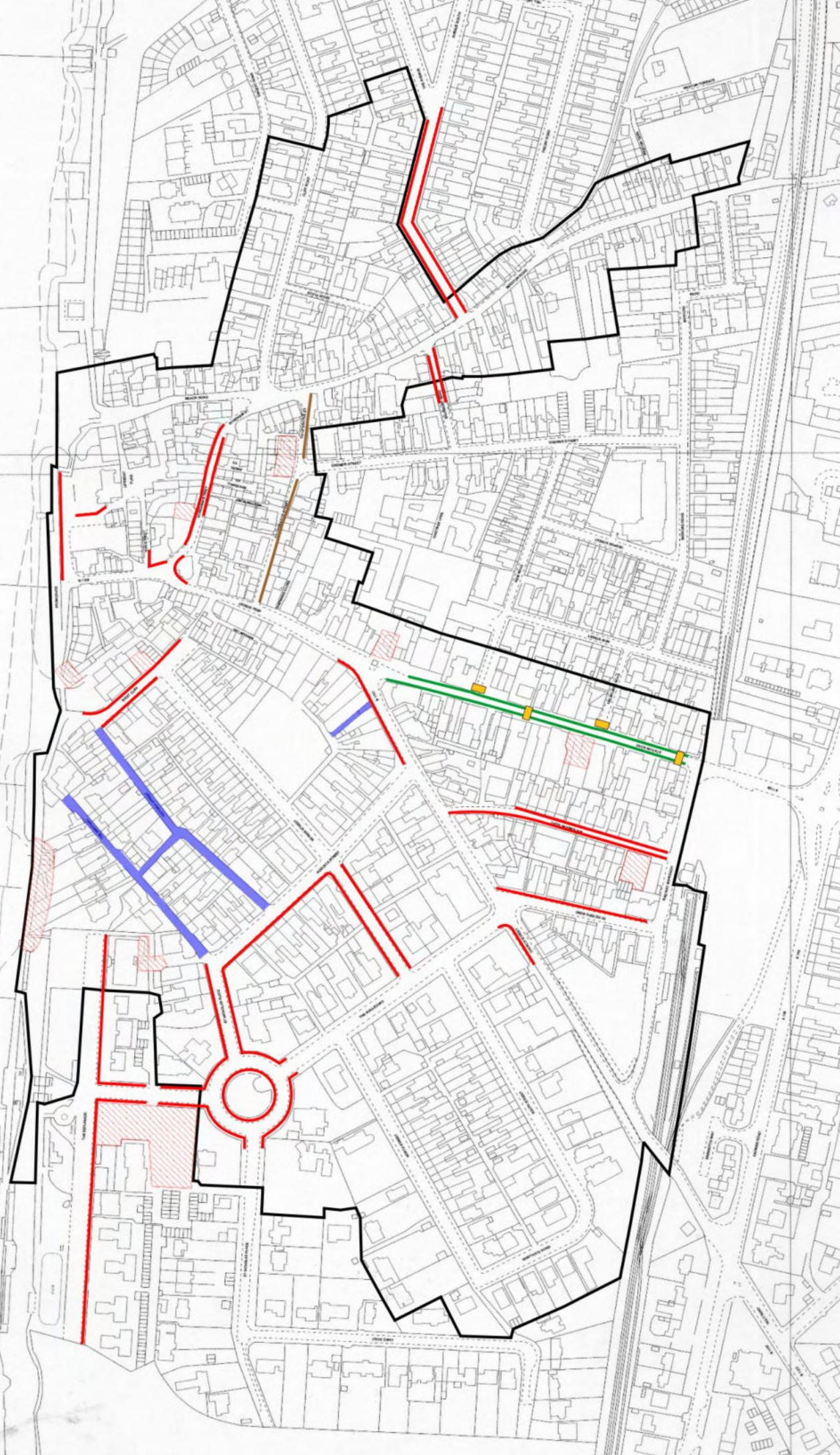
- Legend**
- ★ Focal Point
  - ↗ Important View (Pan)
  - ↔ Important view
  - Conservation Area Boundary
  - Negative townscape
  - Positive townscape
  - Open space
  - ✕ Negative feature

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- Legend
- Conservation Area Boundary
  - Good fence
  - Boundary wall
  - Hedge
  - Wall with hedge above
  - Poor repair surfaces

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- Legend**
- New paving
  - Red/grey granite kerbs
  - Blue clay kerbs
  - Red clay paver
  - Conservation Area Boundary
  - Neglected area
  - Granite Blocks

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## Map 5