

# Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area

## Character Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document

February 2015

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Vesey Gardens and High Street



# Foreword

The Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area is a unique place and a valued asset through its special architectural and historic interest. There are a number of statutorily and locally listed buildings in the three principal character areas in the Conservation Area. It is an essential part of Sutton Coldfield's identity and heritage, and as such, will be protected and enhanced.

This Character Appraisal and Management Plan has been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and provides policies to ensure that the Conservation Area will be protected and enhanced while fully contributing to the economic success of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre and the wider City.

The Management Plan sets out the policies for future development in the area and highlights opportunities for improvement. This is informed by the Character Appraisal which identifies what makes the area special and defines its character.

I am committed to ensuring that this asset of Sutton Coldfield endures for the enjoyment of future generations. This can be achieved by continuing to work together with local people, community organisations, landowners/ developers and other public/ private sector partners,

I wish to express special thanks to Sutton Coldfield Civic Society for their support in the preparation of the document.

## **Councillor Tahir Ali**

Cabinet Member for Development,  
Transport and the Economy  
Birmingham City Council

# Introduction

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local authorities to designate conservation areas and from time to time review the designation. It also requires them to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas. The High Street Sutton Coldfield Conservation Area was designated on the 28th of November 1973, in recognition of its unique status within Birmingham of being the only surviving example of the growth of a medieval market town into a small country town and of its later development as a large and prosperous suburb as a result of the impact of the railways.

Conservation Area status gives the City Council additional powers with regard to demolition, minor development and the preservation of trees. It also places a duty upon the City Council to pay special attention in the exercise of its planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Local authorities are required by national planning policy (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 141) to have a suitable evidence base for historic environment and heritage assets. For Conservation Areas this usually takes the form of a character appraisal which is then used to inform a management plan that sets out policies and proposals to aid the preservation and enhancement of the area. The City Council has policy in place to undertake such work in the existing Unitary Development Plan which will be replaced by the Birmingham Development Plan. The current local policy is the Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework Supplementary Planning Document (adopted November 2009), which sets out the vision for the future development of Sutton Coldfield. A key policy within the Regeneration Framework is the preparation of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) specifically for the High Street Sutton Coldfield.

The CAAMP aims to:

- Identify the special interest of High Street Sutton Coldfield Conservation Area and provide a definition of its character.
- Provide a sound basis for the determination of planning applications within the Conservation Area and the formulation of proposals for its preservation and enhancement.
- Identify opportunities and threats to the special character of the Conservation Area and provide proposals to address these potential issues.

The CAAMP is a Supplementary Planning Document (SDP) to the Local Development Framework (LDF), and has been prepared in accordance with policies listed in Appendix C.



Vesey House Grade II Listed



The Royal Hotel Grade II Listed



# 6 Designation

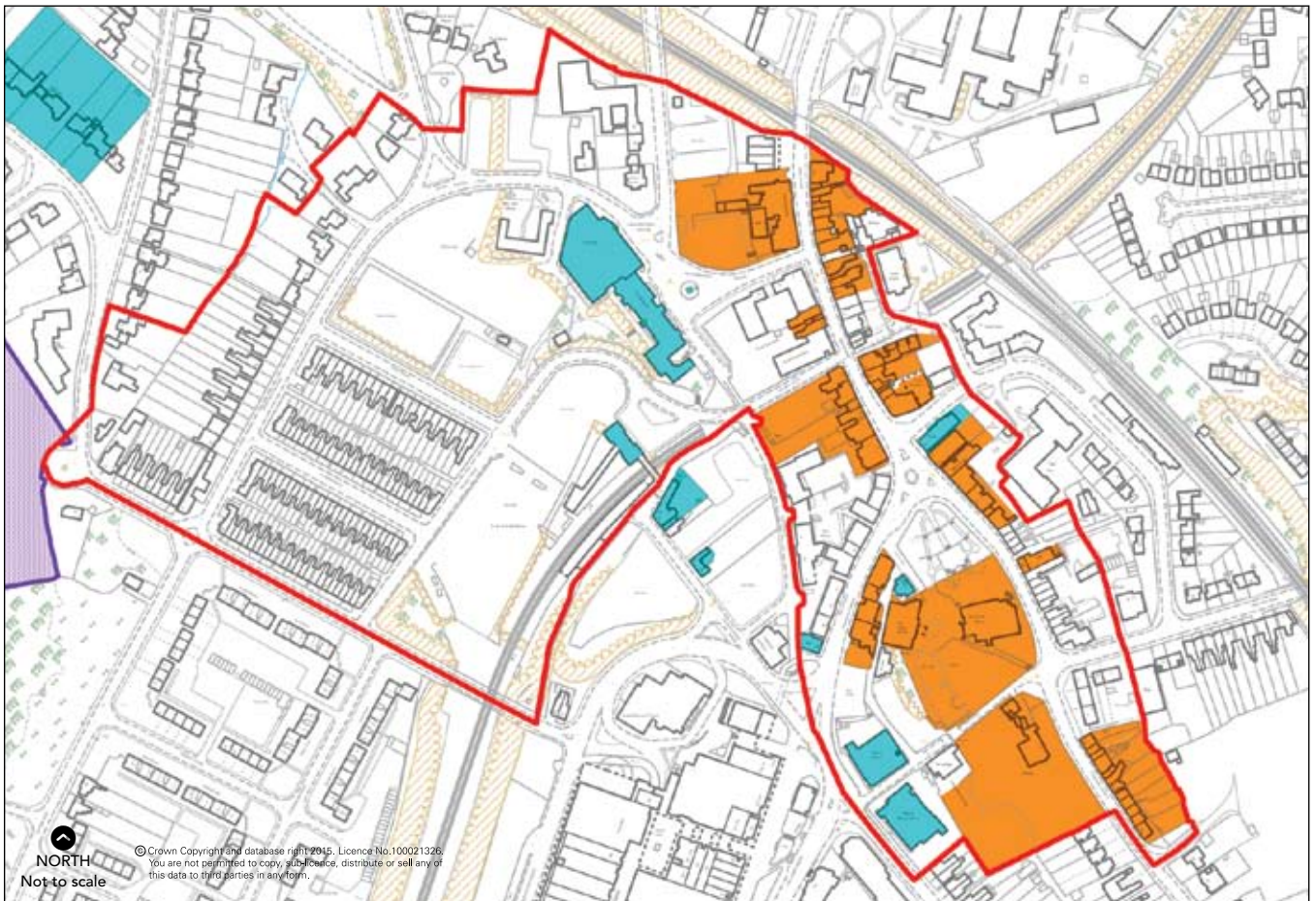
The High Street Sutton Coldfield Conservation Area was designated on 28th November 1973 and extended on 6th February 1975, 14th August 1980 and 16th July 1992. An Article 4 Direction (see Appendix D for further information) was placed on part of the area on 10th April 1984.

As a result of the adoption of this document the Conservation Area boundary has been amended (see justification and boundary on p8).

The Conservation Area covers 16.71 hectares (41.29 acres) some six miles to the north of Birmingham City Centre and is contained within Sutton Trinity Ward in Sutton Coldfield Constituency (Plan 2).

From Coleshill Street in the south-east of the area the Conservation Area boundary runs east along the access road between nos.63 and 65 Coleshill Street and then turns slightly west of north to take in the rear of properties on the east side of Coleshill Street and High Street. It then turns east to follow the London Midland railway line, crossing High Street and Anchorage Road, before

heading west to take in the rear of properties on Anchorage Road and Upper Clifton Road crossing Station Approach. At no.26 Upper Clifton Road it turns west to include nos.2, 4 and 6 Tudor Hill and the junction of Tudor Hill and Park Road. It then runs south-east along Park Road and north and north-east beside Sutton Coldfield railway station up to Reddicroft. It turns south behind the rear of properties



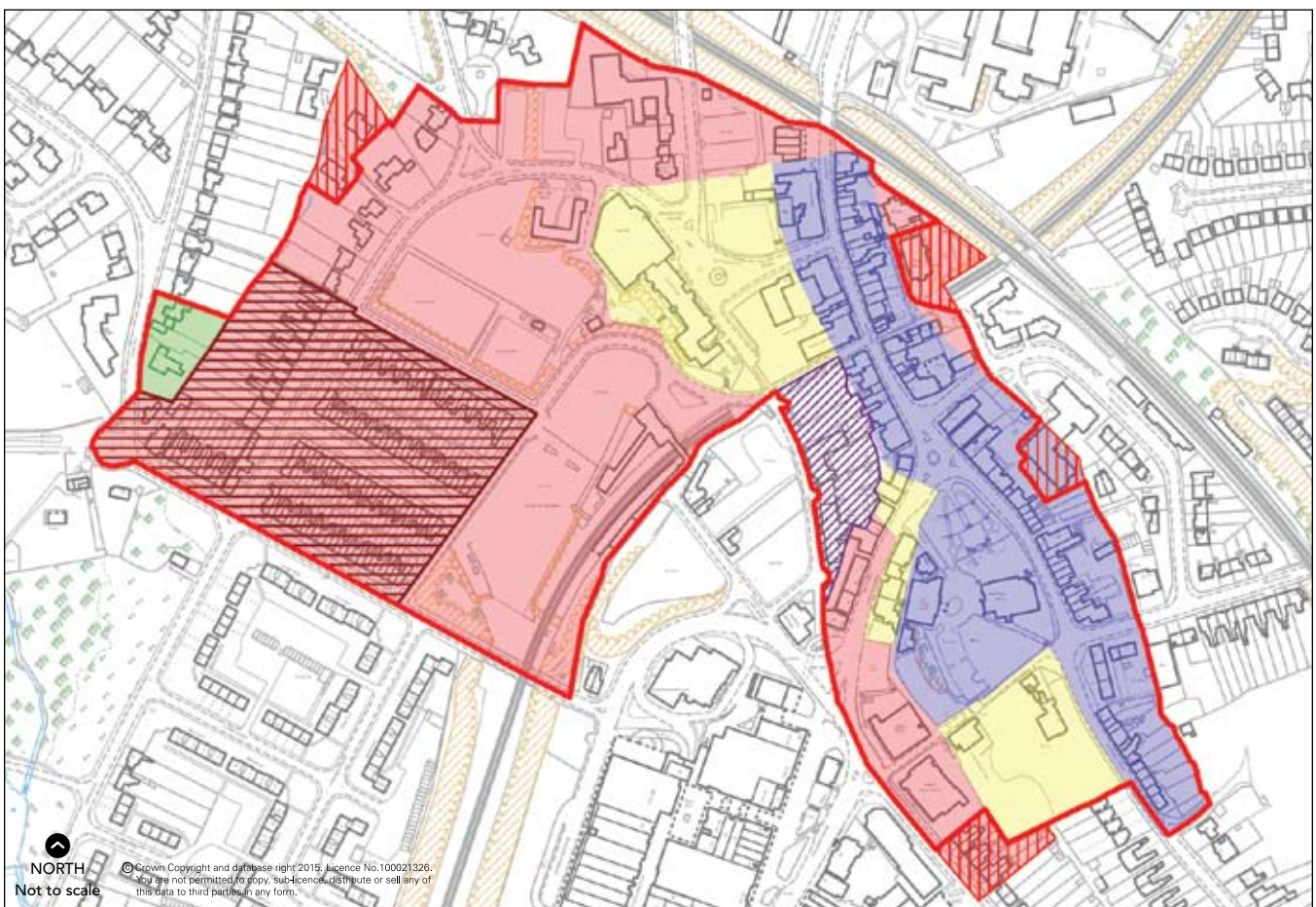
## KEY

- Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area
- Statutorily Listed Buildings
- Locally Listed Buildings
- Registered Parks and Gardens

**Plan 1** Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area Statutorily and Locally Listed Buildings



on High Street and Mill Street, running down across the junction of Mill Street with Brassington Avenue to take in the east side of Victoria Road as far as the Baptist Church Centre, from where it turns sharply north-east to include the Rectory (16 Coleshill Street) and returns to Coleshill Street.



#### KEY

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <span style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 2px;"> </span> Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area              | <span style="background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Extension 16th July 1992   |
| <span style="background-color: #B0C4DE; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Designation 28th November 1973 | <span style="background: repeating-linear-gradient(90deg, transparent, transparent 2px, black 2px, black 4px); border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Article 4 Direction 18th April 1984 |
| <span style="background-color: #FFFFE0; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Extension 4th August 1975      | <span style="background: repeating-linear-gradient(-45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, black 2px, black 4px); border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Extension March 2015               |
| <span style="background-color: #FFB6C1; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Extension 16th July 1980       | <span style="background: repeating-linear-gradient(45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, black 2px, black 4px); border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Exclusions March 2015               |





**Plan 2** Previous designation and extensions

# Conservation Area boundary changes

The Conservation Area boundary has been reviewed and amended to make it more consistent and logical. The following amendments have been made:

1. Extension of the boundary along Reddicroft to include the historic rear plots of 1-11 High Street.
2. Removal of part of Tudor Court, Midland Drive as this was built in 1987 and is not characteristic of the Conservation Area.
3. Removal of Bank House, Westhaven Road as this was built in 1983 and is not characteristic of the Conservation Area.
4. Removal of 3 and 4 Lindenwood as these properties are uncharacteristic backland development built in the 1990's.
5. Removal of nos.1-11 (odds) Victoria Road as they relate to the late nineteenth century development of the lower town rather than the history and character of the High Street Conservation Area.

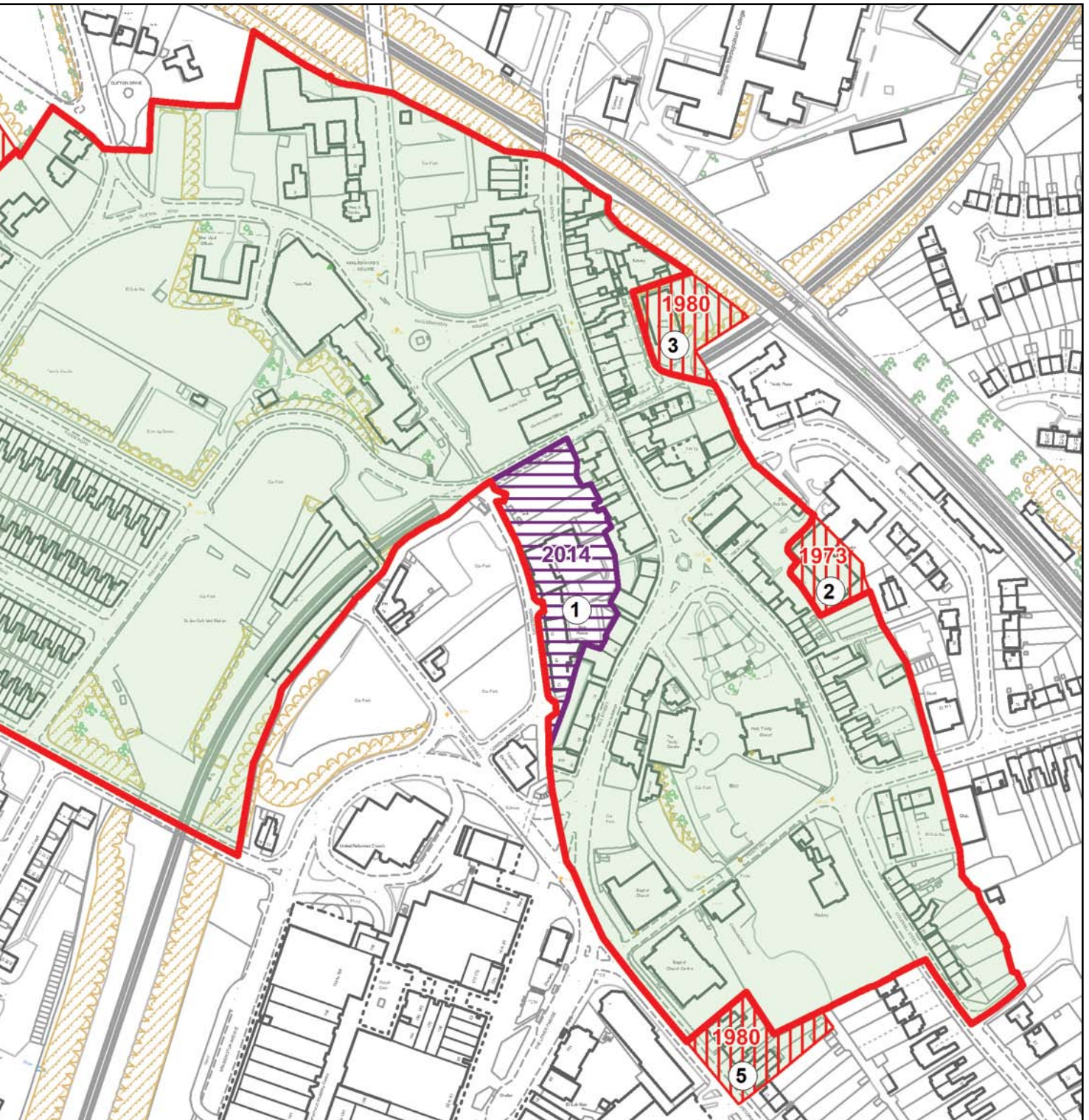
## KEY

-  Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area
-  Existing Conservation Area
-  Proposed Exclusions (With date of inclusion)
-  Proposed Extension



**Plan 3** Proposed boundary changes







# Summary of significance





The High Street Sutton Coldfield Conservation Area is valued for its special architectural and historic interest for the following reasons:

- It contains the only example in Birmingham of the growth of a medieval market settlement into a small country town and of its later development as a large and prosperous suburb.
- It retains significant elements of the early town plan including the linear development along the important roads from Birmingham (High Street, Mill Street) and Coleshill (Coleshill Street), the funnel shape at the junction indicating a market place and the church on a rise above.
- A substantial amount of buildings remain reflecting the development of the area over time, with the earliest surviving structures dating from the fifteenth century.
- It retains a cohesive eighteenth and early nineteenth century townscape with some fine and particularly significant eighteenth century town houses as well as some significant civic buildings.
- Stations, approach roads, bridges, tunnels and cuttings result from railway construction and extension.
- The twentieth century housing included in the area demonstrates the influence of the railway on the rise of suburbia.

As the area has developed over time, three distinct character areas have emerged:

- The Historic Core  
- Mill Street, High Street, Coleshill Street, Trinity Hill.
- The Railway and Civic Centre  
- Station Street, King Edward's Square, Railway Road, part Upper Clifton Road.
- Early Twentieth Century Suburbia  
- Tudor Road, Lyndon Road, Park Road, part Upper Clifton Road (covered by the article 4(2) direction).

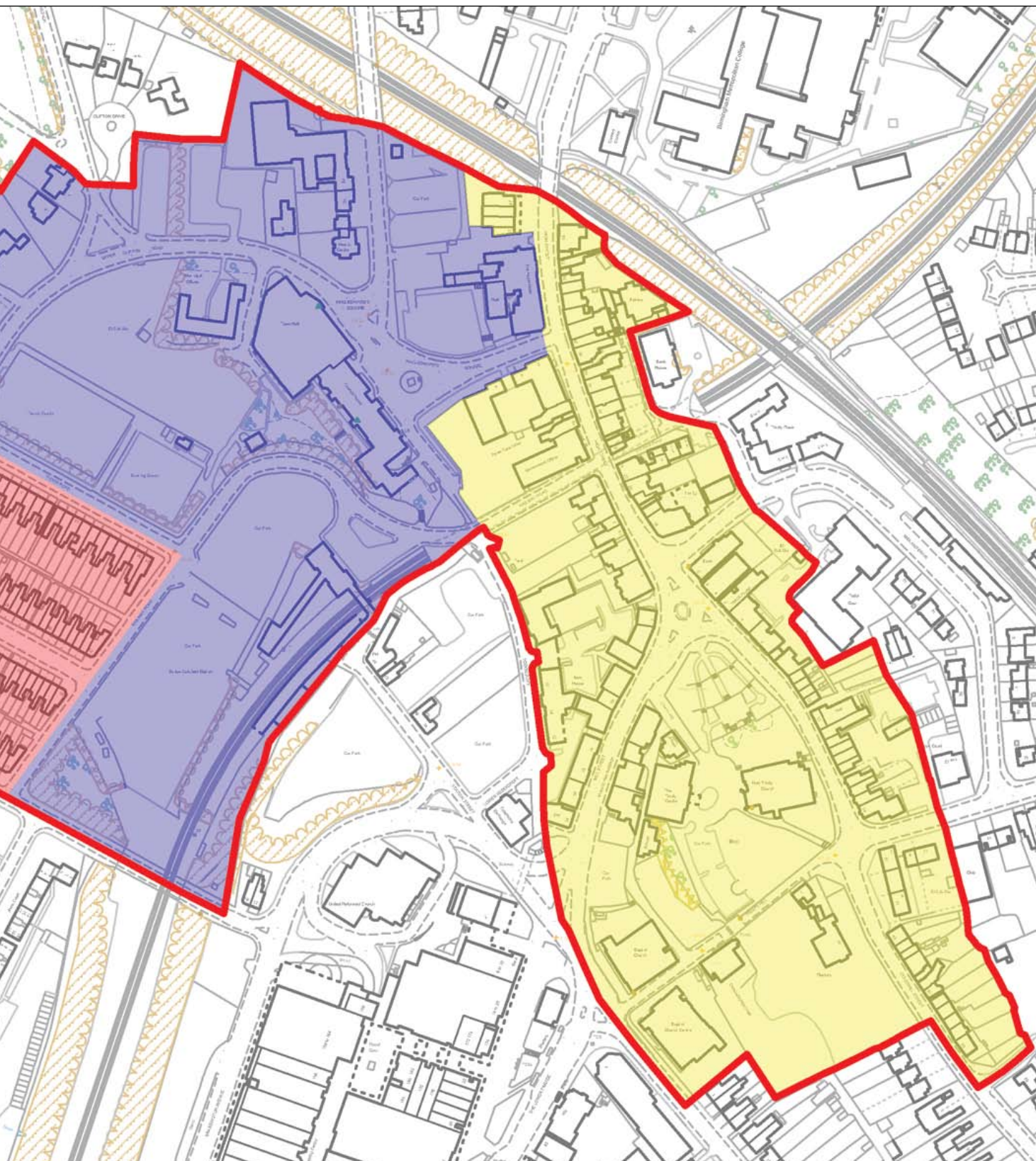
## KEY

-  Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area
-  Early Twentieth Century Suburbia
-  The Historic Core
-  The Railway and Civic Centre



Plan 4 Character areas





# Pressures on the Conservation Area

There has been a loss of historic and characteristic buildings contained within the Conservation Area. Such losses detract from the visual and historical integrity of the local townscape, eroding local distinctiveness and compromising the quality and interest of the area as a whole.

Some late twentieth century development is over-scaled and lacks the harmonious proportions and quality of detail which characterises the traditional buildings. It relates poorly to its context, detracting from the interest and identity of the local street scene and of the Conservation Area as a whole. A failure to respect the historic hierarchies of scale and/or architectural treatment between the front and rear of buildings and building plots and between principal and secondary streets adds to the loss of character. The Three Tuns Hotel has been particularly affected in this manner.

Inappropriate alterations, additions and accretions to existing buildings have had an adverse effect on their character, reducing their positive contribution to the historic and visual interest and integrity of the Conservation Area. Both the Town Hall and Council House have been affected in this manner.

The use of non-traditional, poor quality or artificial building materials and prefabricated standardised components compromises local character and identity and can be intrusive. Unsympathetic or mismatched building materials, colours and textures have an adverse visual effect on local context.

Some buildings are neglected and/or poorly repaired and maintained, diluting their quality and degrading the local street scene.

Erosion or loss of architectural elements and/or detail compromises the quality of historic buildings and the visual interest of the Conservation Area. The loss of the clock tower of the Masonic Hall Buildings and pyramidal roof from the central tower of the Council House are key examples where this has taken place.

Unsympathetic shopfronts erode the character of the townscape. These fail to respect the buildings which contain them in design, proportion and/or materials, disrupting the integrity of the façade and detracting from its quality. Signage can be obtrusive and/or over-scaled, dominating the building and degrading the local street scene.

The height, bulk and blank rooflines of late twentieth century development can intrude on views and detract from the characteristic variety and interest of the historic roofscape.

Buildings on Coleshill Street and High Street (nos.1-33 Coleshill Street and no.2- 8 High Street) suffer particularly badly from the loss of the plot divisions and boundaries at their rear, although this has also happened to a lesser degree elsewhere within the Conservation Area. Loss of definition and enclosure has resulted in a lack of containment and the destruction of urban grain and context. Once ordered yards and gardens have been transformed into incoherent and illegible semi-public space with uncharacteristically exposed subsidiary buildings and secondary elevations. Furthermore uncharacteristic setbacks from the traditional back of pavement building line on High Street and Coleshill Street break up the continuity of the street frontage diluting townscape quality.

Boundary and retaining walls are poorly repaired and/or rebuilt in unsympathetic materials. Late twentieth century boundary walls are generally constructed



Three Tuns Hotel (Grade II Listed) flanked by late 20th Century development



in hard brick types which are uncharacteristic of the Conservation Area and erode townscape quality. New or replacement gates and railings, alterations and replacement of doors and windows and the addition of front porches do not reflect historic character and are often poor in material and detail, detracting from the visual quality of the Conservation Area. This is particularly apparent on the terraced houses in Tudor, Lyndon and Park Roads where the cumulative impact of minor alterations disrupts the historic regularity of the properties and reduces their group value.

Galvanised palisades and chain link fencing lack quality and interest and allow uncharacteristic views from public into private space.

There are a considerable number of gap sites in the Conservation Area. These break up the urban grain and reduce enclosure, containment and legibility. Their use as car parks is intrusive and detracts from the visual integrity and quality of the Conservation Area. For example the setting of the former Town Hall (Masonic Hall Buildings) on Mill Street is eroded by the adjacent gap site. This building is further affected by the scale of late twentieth development on the opposite side of Mill Street.

Heavy traffic has an immense and adverse effect on the Conservation Area. This is particularly so on Mill Street and High Street (A5127) where the visual intrusion, noise and air pollution caused by a constant stream of vehicles detract considerably from local character, quality and interest. A proliferation of traffic signs clutters



Masonic Hall buildings (Grade II Listed) adjacent to surface car park

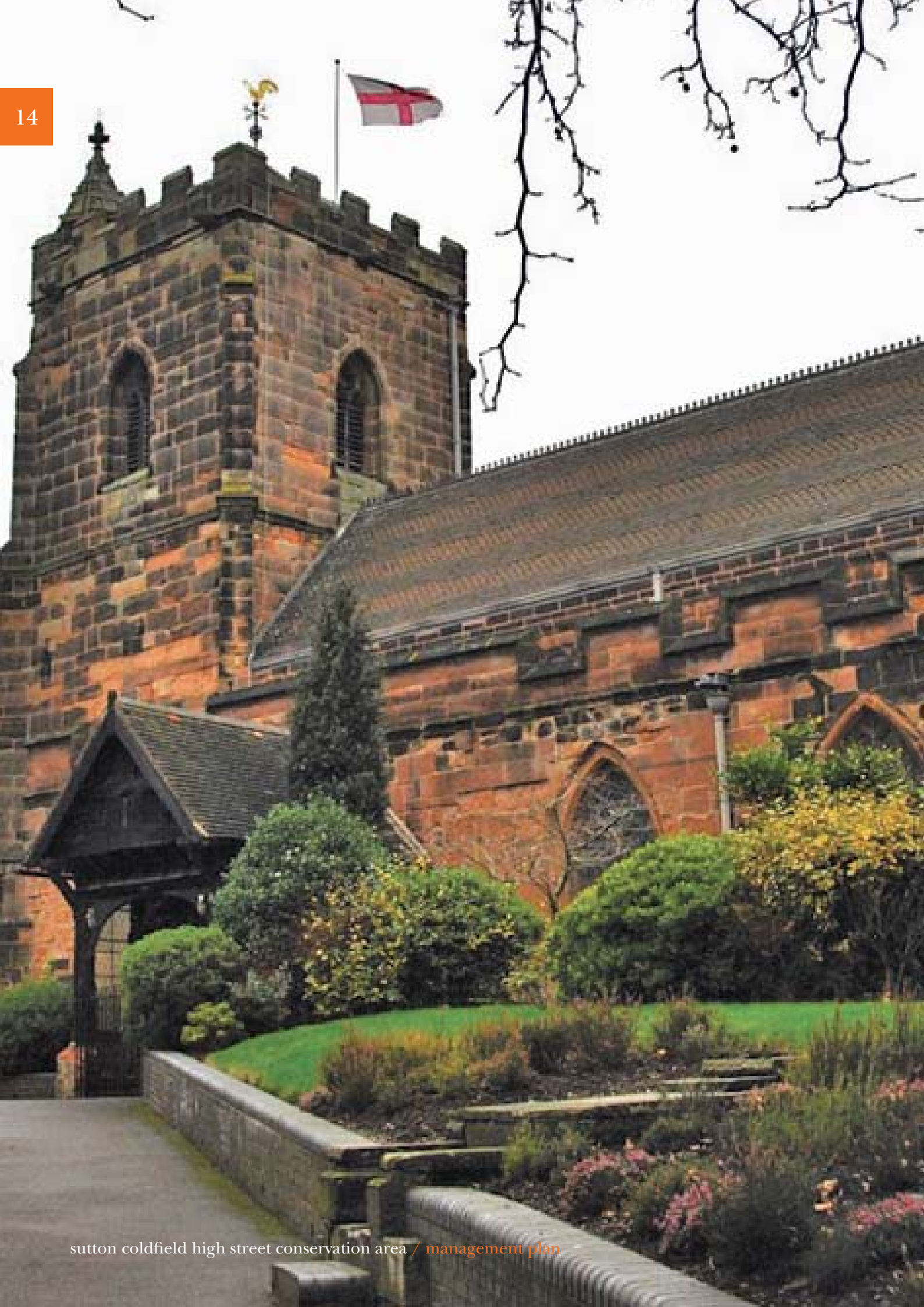
and degrades the streetscape. On the south-west boundary the road system dominates the townscape and severs the area from the rest of the town centre.

Car parking, both public and private, degrades the historic landscape throughout the Conservation Area.

Some of the street and footpath surfaces in the area are in poor condition and in need of repair.

The development of the parish hall in the churchyard of Holy Trinity with its attendant traffic

circulation system and car park has resulted in serious erosion of the historic setting and tranquillity of the church. Hard block paving has replaced the simple grassed burial ground in the west of the churchyard. This relates to the Trinity Centre rather than to the church and is inappropriate and highly intrusive. The spatial incursion formed by the development and the proximity of the Centre to the dominant west end of the church compromise the visual integrity of the ancient building and its relationship with its churchyard.





# Part 1

## Management plan

The Management Plan sets out policy and guidance for the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area. This covers the following areas:

- Guidance.
- Enhancement schemes.
- Street and traffic management.
- Trees and open space.
- Enforcement and remediation strategy.
- Article 4(2) direction.
- Opportunities for positive future change.



# Guidance

## Policy Guidance

This guidance has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and Planning Practice Guidance: conserving and enhancing the historic environment (2014).

It follows the advice set out in Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals (2005) and in Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas (2005) produced by English Heritage and the Planning Advisory Service.

These policies should also be read in conjunction with the existing Unitary Development Plan (2005) which will be replaced by the Birmingham Development Plan. Policies GA4 Sutton Coldfield Town Centre and TP12 Historic Environment of the BDP are particularly relevant.

In forming their proposals applicants must have regard to the information contained in this document.

### Additions and alterations

There will be a presumption against additions and alterations to buildings which adversely affect their character and appearance or that of the Conservation Area.

Developers should ensure that additions or alterations to existing buildings have a positive effect on their character and that of the Conservation Area. The Council will ensure that all additions and alterations are sympathetic to the existing building in scale, proportion, materials and detailing.

The removal or masking of historic architectural details and/or architectural elements will not be permitted. Where appropriate, the Council will expect hidden, damaged or missing architectural details and/or elements to be accurately reinstated.

Where significant alterations and/or additions are proposed the Council will require the design and access statement to be submitted in detail. It should include an analysis of the contribution made by the existing building to the character of the immediate streetscape and the wider Conservation Area and of the preservation or enhancement of that character by the proposed additions and/or alterations.

### Conservation area consent

There will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. This will include buildings of contextual or group value.

Where the demolition of a building which makes little or no contribution to the character of the Conservation Area is proposed the Council will expect the developer to justify demolition in terms of the character of the Conservation Area and submit detailed plans for redevelopment. These should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. In the absence of satisfactory proposals consent for demolition will not be granted.

### Recording

Where consent is granted for significant demolition the Council will expect an accurate archive record to be made prior to the commencement of any works. This will include photographs and/or where appropriate, measured survey drawings and will be provided at the expense of the applicant. The outcome of this work will be provided to the Council and will form part of the public record.



No.8 High Street (Locally Listed Grade A)

### **Change of use**

The Council will not permit changes of use to buildings where the new use would adversely affect their character and appearance or that of the Conservation Area.

### **Maintenance of historic plot boundaries**

Where it survives the historic pattern of plot boundaries on High Street and Coleshill Street should be respected. The Council will resist the removal of boundary lines and the amalgamation of plots.

### **Boundary treatments**

There will be a presumption in favour of retaining traditional boundary treatments such as walls, railings and gates. Blocking or infilling of historic cart or carriage entrances will be resisted. The Council will always encourage appropriate repair and reinstatement.

### **The design of new development**

The Council will expect all new development to achieve a satisfactory relationship with its surroundings, demonstrating a regard for the character of the immediate and/or surrounding townscape and the wider Conservation Area. Permission for new development will only be granted where it preserves and enhances the character of the Conservation Area as a whole.

Existing buildings which are unsympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area will not be regarded as valid precedents for further uncharacteristic development.

The Council will require the design and access statement for all significant new development to be submitted in detail. It should include an analysis of the contribution which will be made by the proposed new building to the character of the immediate and/or surrounding townscape and the wider Conservation Area as defined in the Conservation Area appraisal.

### **Development in the conservation area setting**

New development in the setting of the Conservation Area should, in height, scale and massing, respect and preserve characteristic views within, from and into the area. The Council will not permit new buildings or additions to existing buildings beyond the Conservation Area boundary to intrude on or block views or sightlines.



No.3-5 Coleshill Street Grade II Listed



## Key design principles

The principles below should be applied as appropriate to all new development including extensions, additions and other works to existing buildings.

- New buildings should follow the building line characteristic of the locality or character area. Dominant architectural elements or features which project beyond the street frontage line will not be permitted.
- New buildings should not be significantly higher or lower than their neighbours and should reflect the building heights characteristic of the locality or character area. This will normally limit new frontage buildings to a maximum of 3 storeys.

- The plan form and architectural treatment of new buildings should complement the historic and architectural character of the Conservation Area. In particular, principal elevations must always front the principal street. Buildings behind the principal street frontage should be subordinate in height, scale, massing and elevational detail.
- New buildings should respond appropriately to actual ground level.
- The roof forms and rooflines of new buildings must complement the roof forms and roof lines of the surrounding and/or adjoining buildings. Rooflights should be kept to a minimum, of a conservation specification and located on the rear slope of the roof.

- New buildings should respect the elevational hierarchy found in traditional buildings, in particular the proportion of solid to void. Windows should be set within reveals of sufficient depth to add definition and interest to the façade. Main entrances should be set in the principal elevation.
- Local identity should be reinforced through the use of natural materials traditionally employed in the area. Every care should be taken to match materials in colour, texture and weight. All building materials should be of high quality. The use of man-made materials such as uPVC will be resisted.
- Architectural detail of high quality and which contributes to scale, proportion and legibility will be encouraged. Indiscriminate, fussy and arbitrary use of applied features or detail will be resisted.
- The retention of sympathetic historic shopfronts will always be encouraged. New or replacement shopfronts should be sensitively designed to respect the buildings which contain them in terms of proportion, material and detail. The guidelines set out in the City Council's Shopfronts Design Guide must be followed when designing new shopfronts for an existing building or where older shopfronts are restored and reused.
- Signage must be sited and designed to suit the proportions, design and materials of the host building and the immediate streetscape. Overscaled, unsympathetic and visually intrusive signage will not be allowed.
- Car park or service entrances should be carefully designed to mitigate any adverse visual impact on the local street scene.



Coleshill Street



- Where it is required, space for plant should be treated as integral to the design of any new building and must be included in all design statements. It should normally be provided at basement level. Where plant/service equipment/lifts are unavoidable they must be designed and sited to avoid any adverse visual impact.
- New buildings must preserve views and vistas characteristic of the Conservation Area and respect the settings of key historic buildings.
- New buildings should be accessible to all users, including people with disabilities. Where specialised access is required it must be treated as integral to the design.
- Proposals for improvements in energy efficiency and for sustainable methods of energy supply will be supported where they do not detract from the historic and architectural character of the Conservation Area.



High Street

# Enhancement schemes

## Groundscape

The existing groundscape within the Conservation Area provides an appropriate neutral setting for its buildings and structures. Some street surfaces are in need of sympathetic repair or renewal and granite kerbstones should be restored where they have been replaced in concrete.

Where historic materials such as granite kerbstones, granite setts or blue bricks survive great care should be taken to ensure that these are retained and accurately repaired.

If new paving schemes are proposed the design and materials should provide a simple, neutral and subordinate foreground which relates well to the surrounding buildings.

On High Street, Mill Street and the upper part of Coleshill Street natural stone paving should be used. If this cannot be justified, large reconstituted stone slabs would provide an acceptable alternative.

Elsewhere in the Conservation Area traditional blue brick paving or high quality asphalt are the most appropriate materials. Drainage channels and vehicle crossovers should be marked with stone setts or blue bricks as appropriate and kerbstones should be granite. Work should always be carried out to the highest standard.

## Street furniture

New street furniture must be carefully designed or selected to reflect the modest urban character of the Conservation Area. Care should be taken to avoid spurious 'heritage'. Any additions must be justified and restricted to essential items.

## Clutter

A co-ordinated effort should be made to avoid street clutter through good design and careful siting. Where possible signs and equipment should be fixed to lighting columns, buildings or other existing structures. Larger items such as telephone kiosks and pay and display machines should be sited at the back of footway.

Planters add to street clutter and are not considered an appropriate addition to the public realm. Likewise street trees can add to street clutter. As they are not characteristic within the Conservation Area, excluding along Lyndon Road, they are also not considered an appropriate addition to the public realm.

The design and siting of essential new equipment must be co-ordinated by the Council.

## Views

Key views and street views should be protected and new features within the public realm carefully sited to avoid intrusion on the settings of buildings.





Coleshill Street

# Ongoing management

## Street and Traffic Management

### Alterations to streets and roads

Alterations to the streets and roads within the Conservation Area including changes in the width of footways or carriageways should respect the historic street pattern. The traditional relationship between footway and carriageway should be maintained through the retention of a clearly defined kerbline.

### Introduction of one-way traffic on High Street

Following the construction of the relief road traffic on the High Street will be restricted to one-way only south bound. This will reduce traffic levels and allow the pavements to be widened, improving safety for pedestrians. It will also provide a more attractive environment for business.

## Trees and Open Spaces

### Trees

Existing trees within the Conservation Area should be retained. When felling or cutting back any tree within the Conservation Area it is necessary to give the Council six weeks written notice. In giving notice it is necessary to specify precisely what works need to be carried out.

### Street trees

Street trees are not a traditional feature of the historic core of the area (Mill Street, High Street and Coleshill Street) and are not considered an appropriate addition to the public realm within this area. Street trees are a characteristic feature of Lyndon Road and within this area their loss will be resisted.

## Enforcement and Remediation Strategy

### Enforcement

The Council has a duty to consider taking enforcement action where they believe there to have been a breach of planning control. Given the particular threat to the special character of the Conservation Area that unauthorised development entails, the City Council will carry out an annual review of the Conservation Area and will take appropriate action when it is in the public interest to do so.

### Repair and maintenance

The Council will use its statutory powers to secure the preservation of threatened buildings in the Conservation Area. In the case of statutorily listed buildings these powers include Urgent Works and Repairs Notices and, as a last resort compulsory acquisition. The Council also has the power to secure the preservation of unlisted buildings where it is important for maintaining the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

The Council will provide guidance on the repair and maintenance of traditional buildings in the Conservation Area.

## Article 4(2) Direction

The properties on Tudor Road, Lyndon Road, and parts of Park and Upper Clifton Roads are subject to an Article 4(2) direction (Plan 9). This controls small-scale change through the removal of permitted development rights. For example any enlargement or alteration where the property fronts a highway requires planning permission within this area. A guide for owners and occupiers is contained in Appendix D.





Former Council House (Locally Listed Grade B)

# Opportunities for positive future change

The Management Plan seeks to reverse the downward trend discussed in the previous section by providing guidance on existing planning policy and providing additional policy where necessary. Further to this there are a number of development opportunities within and surrounding the Conservation Area that offer the chance to enhance the area.

## Gap sites

There are a number of gap sites currently within and immediately surrounding the Conservation Area that are currently being used as car parks and as such have a negative impact on the character of the area. Sympathetic redevelopment of these sites will have a positive effect both on the character and vibrancy of the area. Development should be in line with the aspirations for the area outlined in the Sutton Town Centre Regeneration Framework. Appropriate Local Centre uses of these sites include retail, leisure, offices, residential, health and community uses. Proposals should be prepared in line with the design guidance set out in the Management Plan.

- **Mill Street Car Park** - Situated between the listed Masonic Hall and locally listed Old School Buildings. The site has particular importance as it forms part of the view into the Conservation Area from the Lower Parade up Mill Street. The current use as a car park has a negative impact on the surrounding buildings. Future development should address both the impact on the view into the Conservation Area and the impact that the site has on surrounding properties.
- **Land at the Corner of Reddicroft and Railway Road** - In use as a car park under temporary planning approval granted in 2014. The site currently affects the setting of the Conservation Area and

is included within the boundary changes to add further protection to the historic plot boundaries of properties on the High Street. The site is included within the curtilage of 9 High Street which is a Grade II listed building. Future development of the site should respect the historic plot boundary and the impact of the site on both the adjoining listed buildings and the wider Conservation Area.

- **Station Street Car Parks** - Currently in use as car parks. The north-eastern site includes two locally listed buildings: The Station Public House and nos.34-36 Station Street. Although outside of the Conservation Area both car parks currently have a negative impact on the setting of the Conservation Area. The proposed route for the Relief Road also runs through the site. Future development should address the impact that the car parks have upon the setting of the Conservation Area and if possible seek to retain the locally listed buildings.

## Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Relief Road

The adopted Birmingham Unitary Development Plan (2005) and Pre-Submission Birmingham Development Plan (2013) support the construction of a relief road to reduce traffic pressure in the historic core of the High Street Conservation Area. The proposed road will run along an existing highway improvement line to the west of Mill Street and High Street (Plan 5). The route will cross Station Street and have an impact on King Edward's Square and its approaches, but balanced against the benefit to the more historically significant High Street; it is considered that the overall impact of the scheme would be positive.

Mill Street and High Street connect with Lichfield Road and form part of Birmingham's Strategic Highway Network (SHN). The SHN is critical to maintaining good accessibility across Birmingham and it is vital that capacity along strategic routes is protected and enhanced.

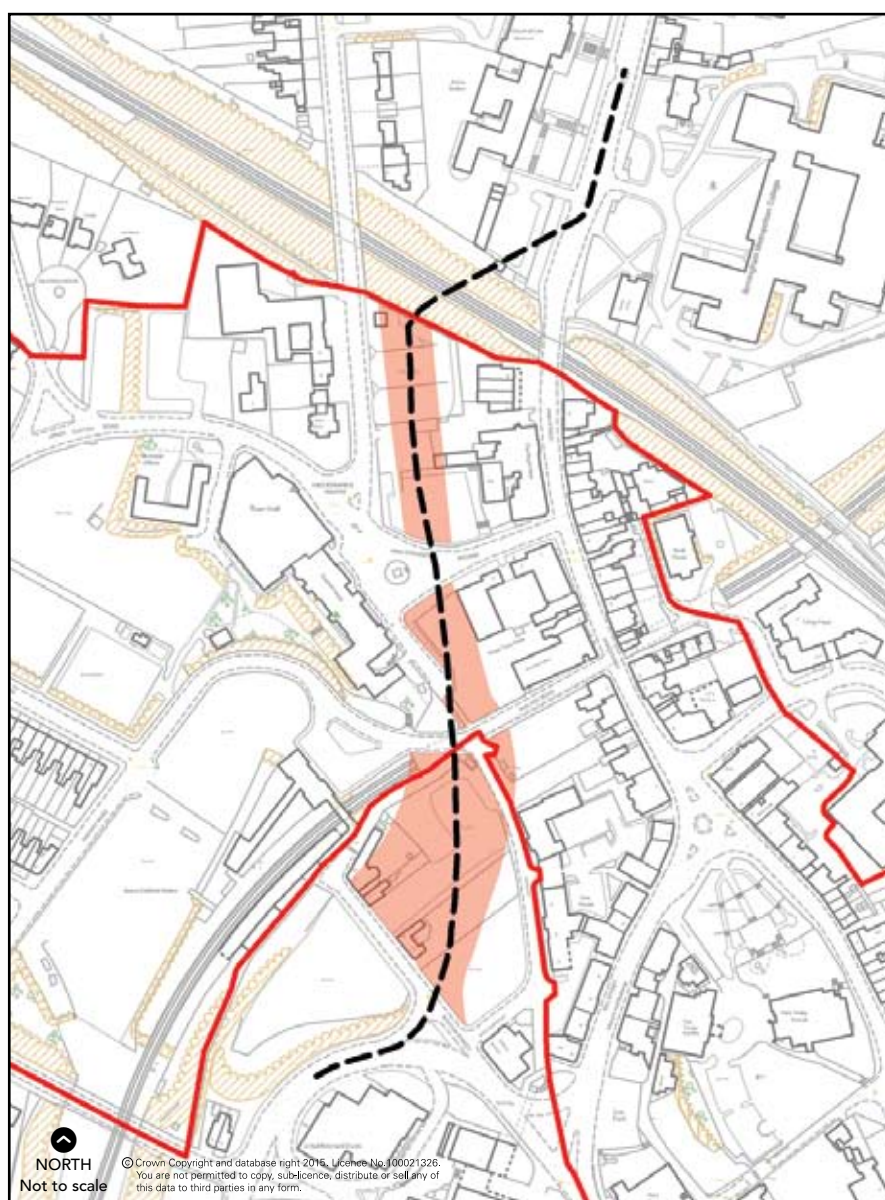
The Sutton relief road will enhance capacity and connectivity of the SHN and support the



environmental enhancements proposed for the High Street. It will provide additional capacity for north bound traffic accessing Lichfield Road and reduce the volume of traffic using Anchorage Road.

Since the expansion of Birmingham Metropolitan College on Lichfield Road, pedestrian movement along the High Street has significantly increased, raising concerns for pedestrian safety and the free flow of traffic. The Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework proposes that, following the construction of the relief road, traffic along the High Street is limited to one-way south bound. This would allow for the pavement along the High Street to be widened and improve the safety and environment for pedestrians. It would also provide a more attractive environment for business.

Overall, the relief road will protect and enhance the High Street Conservation Area and facilitate the regeneration of Sutton Town Centre as a whole. It will promote greater pedestrian movement within the centre and improve connectivity.



#### KEY

- Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area
- Indicative alignment for new relief road
- Existing highway improvement line

**Plan 5 Sutton Relief Road**







## Part 2

# Character appraisal

The Character Appraisal is an assessment of the significance and current character of the Conservation Area. This covers the following areas:

- Townscape character.
- Character areas.
- Conservation area setting.
- Geology and topography.
- Archaeology.
- Economy.
- Development history.

# Townscape character

The built character of the Conservation Area reflects Sutton's growth as a local centre and is defined through a long history of development from the medieval period to the early twentieth century. The widest building date range is found on High Street and Coleshill Street in the historic core of the market town.

Holy Trinity Church, founded in the thirteenth century, is the earliest surviving building and retains its fifteenth century tower, although most of the fabric dates from the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. It remains the only example of church architecture in the area. Other early survivals include nos.57-59 Coleshill Street, a timber frame hall house of late fifteenth or early sixteenth century date and nos.1-3 Coleshill Street, a sandstone construction dated to sometime in the fifteenth or sixteenth century.

Documented seventeenth century survivals include no.1 High Street, and nos.5-7 High Street (Vesey House) built in 1623 and c.1630 respectively. No.20 High Street has been ascribed to the late seventeenth century. No.56 High Street and no.27 High Street (Royal Hotel) provide examples of the range of eighteenth century buildings in the Conservation Area while no.1 Coleshill Street, no.1 High Street and no.36 High Street (Cull's House) reflect the contemporary fashion for hiding older properties behind a polite façade.

Most of the traditional buildings in the area date from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These include public buildings, as exemplified by the former Town Hall on Mill Street (Masonic Buildings) and the Town Hall on King Edward's Square, commercial properties such as the former banks, nos.8 and 14 High Street, and the suburban terraces on Tudor, Lyndon and Park Roads. Mid- to late twentieth century buildings, from the post war

period onwards, do not generally conform to the historic pattern of development in quality, form or type and cannot be said to contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

## Building types

Residential or domestic building types are a definitive characteristic of the area. The most significant range of these is found on High Street and Coleshill Street and includes a variety of eighteenth and nineteenth century townhouses, terraces and cottages. Some are conversions of earlier buildings. Most are now in use as retail shops and offices and only nos.43 to 63 Coleshill Street, removed from the commercial centre, survive as wholly domestic premises. Detached and semi-detached houses on Upper Clifton Road and Anchorage Road and the terraces along Tudor, Lyndon and Park Road reflect suburban expansion in Sutton in the early twentieth century.

Most commercial building types are located in the historic core of the area and are largely mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century in date. No.38 High Street and no.3 Coleshill Street provide early examples of office building and conversion. Two properties built as banks stand on the corners of High Street with Midland Drive, the former London City and Midland Bank at no.8 High Street, now in use as offices, and the former Lloyd's Bank, now in office and residential use at no.14. Purpose built retail shops are represented by nos.4-6 High Street, now an office, and nos.16-18 High Street,

still in use as shops. Two public houses remain, the Gate Inn, no.38 Mill Street, and the Station Hotel, no.44 Station Street. The Three Tuns Hotel, a former coaching inn, and the Royal Hotel, an eighteenth century residence with purpose built hotel extensions, survive at nos.17 and 27 High Street respectively. The former Royal Hotel on King Edward's Square, purpose-built to take advantage of the railway and its proximity to Sutton Park, was a larger and more luxurious example of the type. It has since been in use as the Council House, and is now being converted to residential use.

Surviving municipal or public building types range in date from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. They include both the former Town Hall and the municipal buildings on Mill Street (Masonic Hall Buildings), now largely in use as offices and the present Town Hall on King Edward's Square, still in public use. The former Town School buildings on Mill Street, Trinity Hill and Victoria Road are now occupied by the Baptist Church.

The mid-nineteenth century railway structures on Railway Road, the station and station forecourt and the former goods yard, are an important feature of the Conservation Area and remain in use by the railway. The goods yard is now the station car park.

## Architectural character

The architectural character of the Conservation Area is most closely defined by eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings.

The eighteenth and early nineteenth century buildings on High Street and Coleshill Street in the historic core of the area are domestic in type. They are classically proportioned and ornamented and have pitched roofs and simple, sometimes parapetted, rooflines. Classical facades disguise a number of earlier buildings. The front of no.36 High Street is perhaps the most elaborate of these. Some buildings are more richly detailed than others, but in general the style becomes quieter and more restrained towards the end of the period.

The architectural exuberance of the mid-to-late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century is expressed through the variety and vitality of municipal and commercial buildings in the area. These are generally characterised by a rich use of materials and architectural detail and have varied and interesting roofscapes. Architectural styles range from the mid-Victorian Gothic of the former Town Hall on Mill Street and the present Council House on King Edward's Square through the late Victorian eclecticism of the former banks at no.8 and no.14 High Street to the Edwardian Baroque of the present Town Hall. The Sons of Rest clubhouse on Church Hill is a good representative of Arts and Crafts style in the area.

The brick-built early nineteenth century cottages, nos.57-63 Coleshill Street, have traditional details. They include the refronted fifteenth or sixteenth century hall house at the present nos.57 and 59. In the mid-nineteenth century the earlier sandstone building at



No.36 High Street (Grade II Listed)

the present no.3 Coleshill Street was also given a simple brick front. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century terraces on Coleshill Street display conventional late Victorian or Edwardian domestic elements and details.

Characteristic suburban style in the Conservation Area is exemplified by the early twentieth century terraced housing on Tudor Road, Lyndon Road and Park Road and the houses on Upper Clifton and Anchorage Roads built at the same

time. These are set behind clearly defined front plots and exhibit a variety of late Victorian and Edwardian domestic detail and Arts and Crafts influences.

Throughout the area a hierarchy of elevational treatment is found between public and private space. Architectural display is confined to primary frontages. Secondary elevations and subsidiary buildings are functional with little or no detailing.



## Building materials

Red brickwork of high quality is the principal building material in the Conservation Area. Architectural detail is of stone and red brick. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards these are often combined with blue brick and clay tile to provide colour and texture. From the turn of the twentieth century planted timber and patterned and turned woodwork appear as decorative features. There is also a use of smooth or roughcast rendering to cover either the whole or part of an elevation or to define an architectural element. Holy Trinity Church, constructed in dressed sandstone, is the only stone building in the area.

Traditional roofing materials are clay tile or natural slate. Chimneys are brick with clay or stone pots. Window frames, whether sash or casement, are of wood. Bay or dormer windows are covered in clay tile or slate.

Boundary and retaining walls are constructed in stone or in red or blue brick with stone or brick copings. Gates can be of wood or metal and cast iron or steel railings are traditionally painted black. The cart or carriage entrance gates characteristic of High Street and Coleshill Street are made from timber.

The rough stonework and timber frame which still survive in some of the buildings on High Street and Coleshill Street mark an earlier building tradition, now lost or hidden.

## Height and scale

Development within the Conservation Area is characteristically domestic in scale. Building heights are low, traditionally between two and three storeys. Subsidiary buildings are lower than primary frontages, generally rising to one or two storeys. Some mid-to-late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial and residential properties, such as the former

banks at nos.8 and 14 High Street and the semi-detached villas on Upper Clifton Road, have taller floor to ceiling heights than their neighbours, but conform nonetheless to the overall domestic scale.

The height and scale of municipal and purpose-built commercial buildings is traditionally broken down through architectural treatment and detail. Overall, architectural emphasis within the area is vertical, achieved through elevational hierarchy, gables, pitched roofs and chimneys. Subtle variations in building height and scale on High Street, Mill Street and Coleshill Street contrast with the uniformity of the suburban terraces in the west of the area and reflect the earlier and more organic growth of the town.

## Street pattern

The street pattern in the area forms an irregular but largely coherent and legible framework. It can be divided into two phases, one associated with the historic market or country town, the other with the arrival of the railway. The first of these, still clearly discernible, is the 'Y' shape formed by the junction of Coleshill Street with Mill Street/High Street, the two ancient routes along which the medieval settlement was developed. Trinity Hill, south of the church, provided an early link between them.

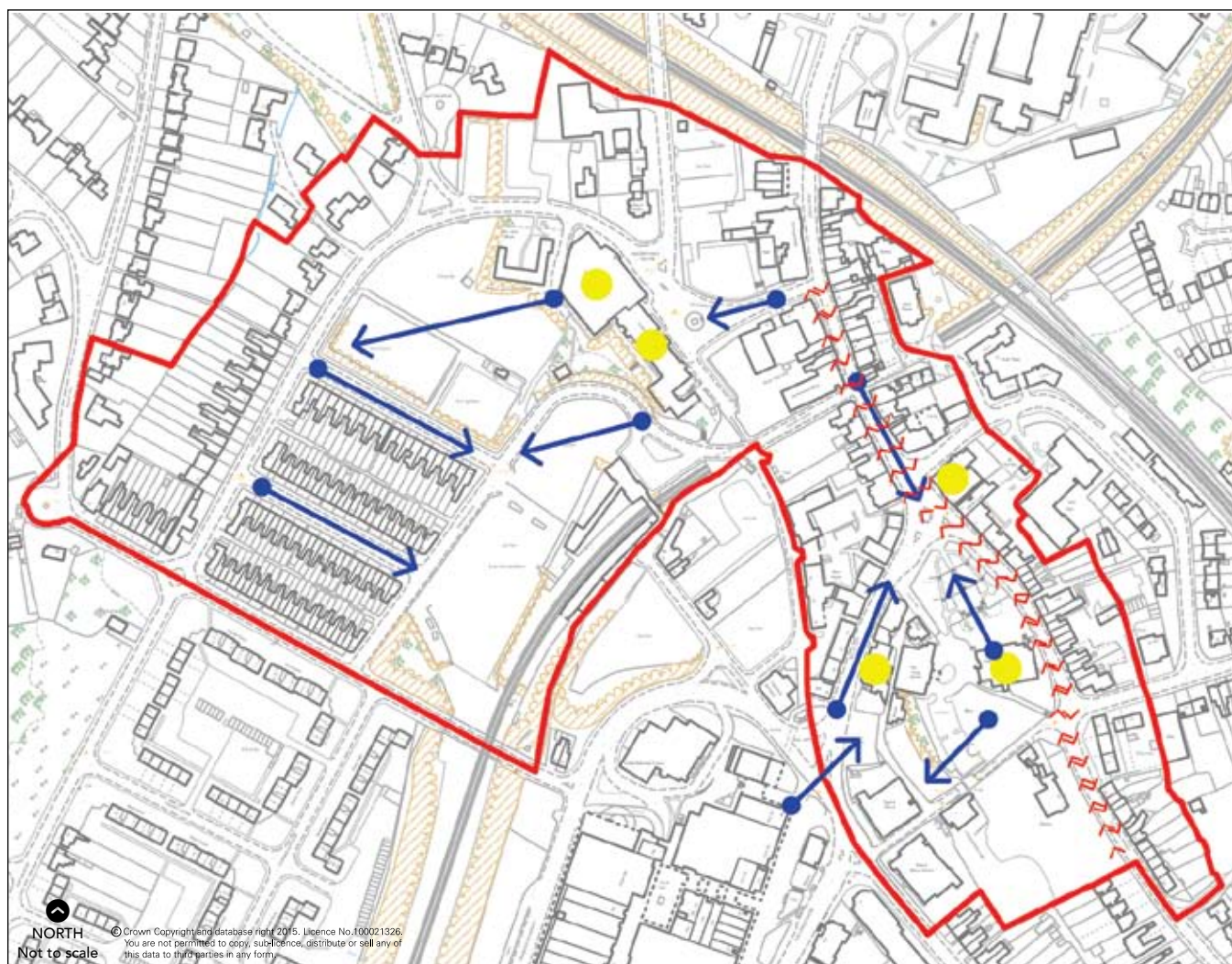
The remainder of the street pattern relates to the mid-nineteenth century arrival of the railways in the town and to the suburban growth which followed them. Development within different landownerships gave rise to an irregular layout which breaks through on to High Street and Coleshill Street, fragmenting the once continuous built frontage.

There is a marked lack of legibility on the periphery of the area where the development of the Ring Road has resulted in a loss of the historic street pattern.

## Views

There are some good views within the Conservation Area, mostly allowed or enhanced by the distinctive local topography. The views down the High Street towards the Church, from the churchyard over Vesey Gardens and the High Street, up Mill Street towards the former bank (no.8 High Street) and across King Edward's Square towards the Council House are particularly important in establishing local identity. There are good sequential views along High Street and Coleshill Street where the narrow building widths and subtly varied roofscapes create a pleasing sense of progression. On Tudor Road and Lyndon Road enclosed straight views are dramatically terminated by the high retaining wall on Railway Road. From the higher ground in the area incidental views through and over the townscape add atmosphere and interest.

Holy Trinity Church and the Council House and Town Hall are key visual and functional landmarks. Set on the high points in the south-west and north-east of the Conservation Area they form focal points of important townscape value. The church tower and the municipal clock tower, both together and as individual features contribute significantly to local identity and sense of place and historical continuity. Holy Trinity Church, high on its hill, provides the most significant views into the area from beyond the boundary. The former Town Hall on Mill Street and the former bank at no.8 High Street, with its corner clock tower, are landmarks of lesser importance, framing and closing views into the area along Mill Street. Monumental retaining walls around Holy Trinity Church and on Railway Road around the station are impressive landmark features which make a distinctive contribution to the local townscape.



## KEY

- Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area
- Landmarks
- > > > Sequential Views
- ➔ Key Views

## Plan 6 Key views

There are fine views out of the Conservation Area from the west side of the churchyard, over the lower town and towards Manor Hill. Further north the topography of the area is emphasised in the long view west from the top of Railway Road. From here Sutton Park is largely obscured by development, although the treeline is visible in the distance. There are similar views from the Council House across the green space of the gardens and over the rooftops of Tudor Road.

**Open space**

There are two concentrations of open space within the Conservation Area, Holy Trinity Churchyard with Vesey Gardens in the south-east and King Edward's Square with the municipal gardens, bowling green and tennis courts in the north-west. As the settings for landmark buildings both are of considerable townscape significance.

The churchyard, with its grass and trees, provides a pleasant green space around the church. Vesey

Gardens, designed in the Arts and Crafts style by the architect Charles Bateman, form an entrance to the churchyard. The formal beds are well-planted and maintained.

King Edward's Square, with the War Memorial at its centre, is a civic space intended to provide a dignified setting for the Council House and Town Hall. The green slopes below the municipal buildings contain well-used tennis courts and a bowling green. Both facilities are well maintained.



## Paving, street furniture and monuments

Street surfaces throughout the area provide an appropriately neutral and subordinate foreground to the buildings. Part of Coleshill Street is laid with paving slabs in grey, buff and pink but otherwise footways are surfaced in buff or grey block pavements or in asphalt. Kerbstones are granite or concrete and block paving or asphalt is used for crossovers. Church Hill and the footpath between Railway Road and King Edward's Square have attractive cobbled surfaces.

There are a few visible survivals of earlier surface treatments. Part of a blue brick drainage channel remains on Midland Drive for example and a remnant of the blue brick pavement and granite kerb on Clifton Street (now demolished) survives below King Edward's Square. The brick ramp at the rear of the Royal Hotel is a relic of the cattle market. None of the early cobblestone carriageway or footway treatments remain.

Street furniture in the area consists almost entirely of standard designs. Lighting columns are functional and unobtrusive, although some could be placed with greater regard for adjacent buildings. In Tudor Road and Lyndon Road they are of a simple traditional design in scale with their surroundings. Street name signs are largely standard aluminium plates.

The various monuments within the Conservation Area foster a sense of identity and continuity. The War Memorial in King Edward's Square and Vesey Gardens, laid out below the churchyard in memory of Bishop Vesey, are visually the most significant. The lych-gate at the corner of the churchyard on Coleshill Street was designed as a memorial to the Riland family.

## Trees

A variety of trees and shrubs in gardens, open spaces and along the railway lines softens and enhances the townscape of the area. The aspect is particularly verdant around the churchyard and the Rectory where trees surround the buildings and overhang the retaining walls, enhancing the view along Coleshill Street and down Trinity Hill. The trees around the Council House provide another green focus for the area, softening and closing views across the open grounds. As Upper Clifton Road falls from King Edward's Square trees on the front boundaries of the house plots enclose and enhance the view along the street.

Street trees are not a traditional feature of the area; the limes lining Lyndon Road provide the only example.

## Traffic and pedestrian movement

There is a considerable flow of traffic through the Conservation Area. The principal traffic flow is on Mill Street and High Street, heavily used as a key route and subject to frequent congestion. There is also significant traffic movement along

Anchorage Road, King Edward's Square and Upper Clifton Road, a busy through route. Heavy traffic on the Ring Road severs the Conservation Area from the rest of the town centre.

Pedestrian flow is heaviest on High Street and Mill Street, much of it related to the movement of students between Birmingham Metropolitan College on Lichfield Road and the town centre core. Narrow pavements and heavy traffic impede the flow. Elsewhere in the area pedestrian movement is relatively light.

There is limited on-street parking on Midland Drive and King Edward's Square and public car parks on Station Street, Mill Street and Anchorage Road. There is a car park for railway users on Railway Road. There is a Residents Parking Scheme in place for Tudor Road, Lyndon Road and Park Road.

The Bike North Birmingham programme is being undertaken between 2012 and 2016. It will link the Conservation Area from Sutton Coldfield Station to the City's existing network of cycle routes, improving access to the Conservation Area by bicycle.



Vesey Gardens





War Memorial, Kings Edward's Square (Locally Listed Grade B)



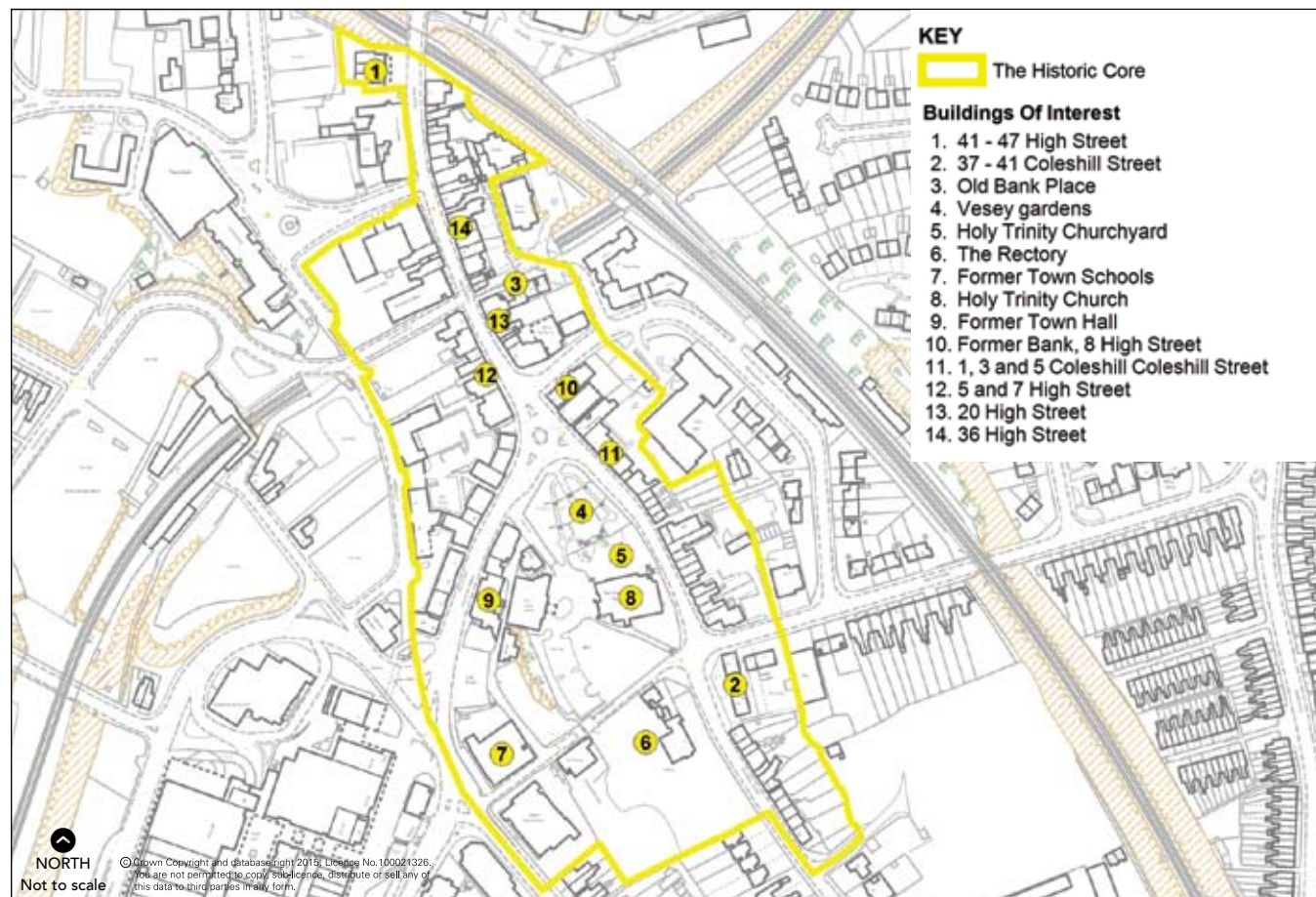
There are three principal character areas or localities within the Conservation Area (Plan 4).

### 1. The Historic Core - Mill Street, High Street, Coleshill Street, Trinity Hill

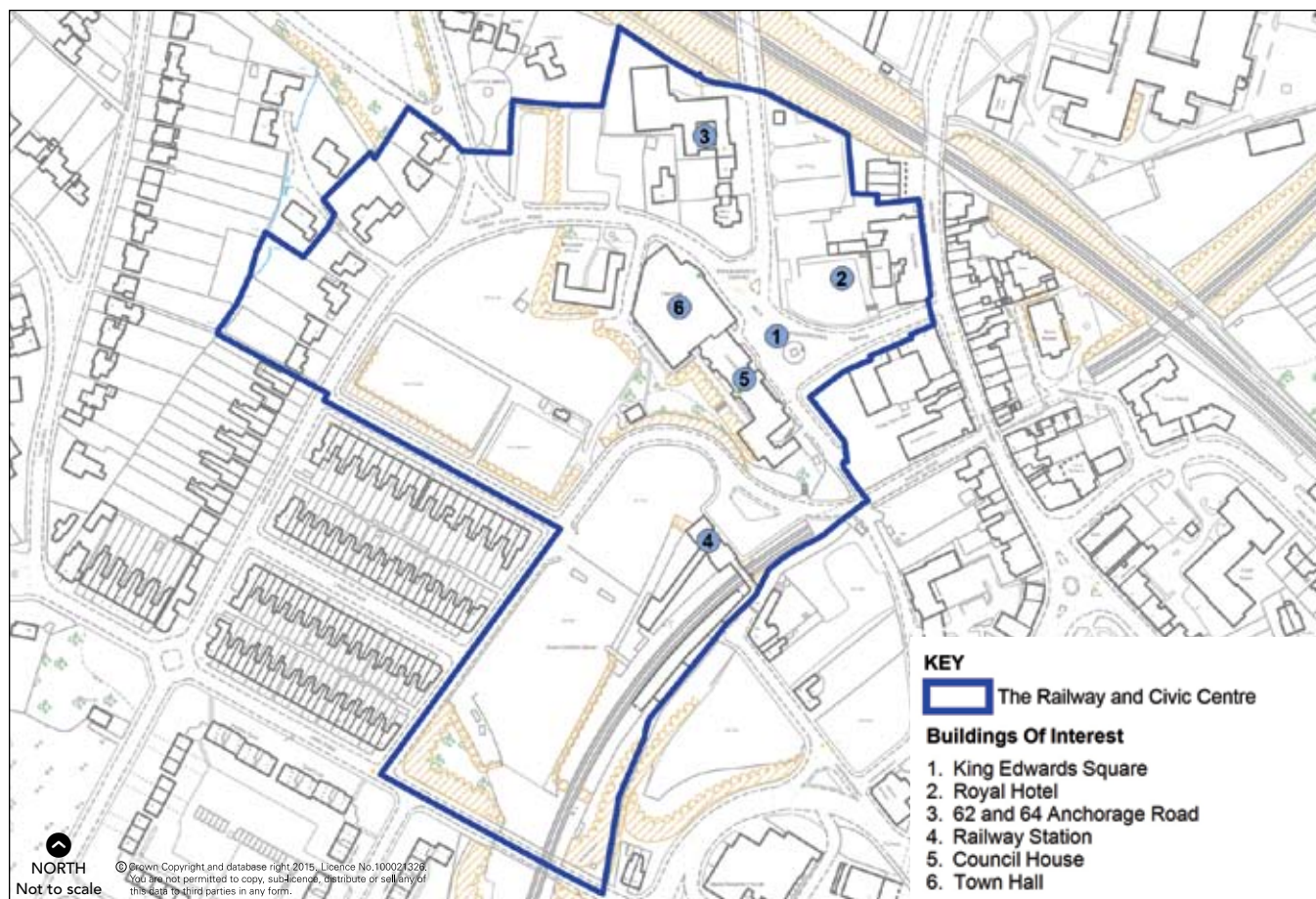
The traditional fabric of the historic core is associated with Sutton's development from a medieval market settlement into a small country town. It dates mostly from the early eighteenth to the early twentieth century and is more varied in type than elsewhere in the Conservation Area. It includes, for example, the church, municipal buildings, schools, banks, houses and hotels, although few of these properties are now in their original use. A limited range of building styles and materials articulates a generally cohesive and coherent street scene.

Traditional buildings rise to between two and three storeys in height and are defined by a clear elevational hierarchy. Plinths and steps reflect historic changes to road and pavement levels. Gables, dormer windows and chimneys add to a varied and interesting roofscape. The streetscape has a tight urban grain with most buildings occupying relatively narrow frontages on shared or divided plots. Some retain the cart or carriage entrances and open passages which traditionally provided the only means of access to the yards and crofts at the rear, reflecting the early layout of the town. A strong building line is set at the back of pavement, or, on Trinity Hill, at the edge of the roadway,

and follows the curve of the street. It is sometimes defined by walls or railings. Nos.41-47 High Street and nos.37-41 Coleshill Street follow road improvement lines and uncharacteristic setbacks disrupt the urban grain and reduce the sense of enclosure. Buildings face the street and are highly legible; on High Street and Mill Street they turn or address the corners. Rear elevations and subsidiary buildings, visible from public or semi-public space, provide a modest and irregular counterpoint to the public frontages. Side and rear boundaries are traditionally defined by walls. Old Bank Place provides the only surviving example of the modest backland housing built in the early nineteenth century.



Plan 7 The Historic Core



**Plan 8** The Railway and Civic Centre

On the west side of Coleshill Street and on Trinity Hill the grain is looser with detached buildings set back in their plots. The High Street opens out towards the planted spaces formed by Vesey Gardens and Holy Trinity churchyard above. The Rectory (established 1926, formerly Coleshill Lodge), set in a large well-treed garden, has a leafy suburban quality. The former Town Schools stand in or against their playgrounds, now used for parking. High retaining walls on Coleshill Street and particularly on Trinity Hill provide a strong sense of enclosure.

Holy Trinity Church forms a landmark of considerable visual and historical significance and is a key feature of the area. The former Town Hall (Masonic Buildings) on Mill Street and the former bank at no. 8 High Street with its exuberant clock tower are important landmark buildings. Nos. 1, 3, and 5, Coleshill Street, nos. 5-7 High Street, no. 20 High Street and no. 36 High Street provide notable examples of the range of town houses in the area which make a particular contribution to local distinctiveness.

## **2. The Railway and Civic Centre - Station Street, King Edward's Square, Railway Road, part Upper Clifton Road**

Characteristic buildings in this area are mostly associated with the railway and the civic centre and date from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century. There is a pleasing mix of architectural style and detail. Building heights are two or three storeys with a clear elevational hierarchy.

King Edward's Square was never formally planned. It is irregularly shaped and poorly contained with little presence on the High



Street. The War Memorial at its centre provides some dignity. The wall around the former bowling green (now a car park) at the Royal Hotel is an important local feature. Upper Clifton Road curves gently down towards Park Road. Detached houses sit back in irregular plots and front boundaries are marked by walls and planting. There are pleasant green views across the Council House grounds. As the road rises towards King Edward's Square the plots are defined by retaining walls. These, with the trees set behind them, create a powerful sense of enclosure. Additions and extensions to the two substantial semi-detached houses, nos.62 and 64 Anchorage Road, both

now in office use, compromise the original spaciousness of the plots around the junction and disrupt the suburban grain. The ground falls from King Edward's Square towards Station Street and the railway station on Railway Road and allows views over the lower town. The footpath between the square and the road has an attractive cobbled surface and is pleasantly enclosed. The station forecourt is contained by substantial walls and there are good views up towards the Council House and across its grounds and in the other direction towards Sutton Park. The booking office is a low building at a higher level than the station platforms, emphasising the topography of the area. Surviving buildings

on Station Street, laid out in the mid-nineteenth century, reflect the domestic scale and close urban grain which originally defined its townscape.

The municipal clock tower on King Edward's Square provides the major local landmark. The Council House, set at the highest point in the Conservation Area, is a landmark building, of particular significance as a focal point in views up from the south and south-west. The retaining walls on Railway Road which contain the former railway goods yard and the Council House grounds are impressive landmark structures which make a distinctive contribution to local character.



#### KEY

  Article 4(2) Direction

#### Buildings Of Interest

1. 2 Tudor Hill
2. 91 Park Street
3. 34-36 Upper Clifton Road
4. 73-89 Park Road
5. 21-63 Park Road
6. 1, 3 and 5 Upper Clifton Road
7. Corner Shops

**Plan 9** Article 4(2) Direction

### 3. Article 4 Direction - Tudor Road, Lyndon Road, Park Road, part Upper Clifton Road

Buildings in this area date almost exclusively from 1899 to 1910. No.2 Tudor Hill (built 1864), no.91 Park Street (built 1892) and nos.34-36 Upper Clifton Road (built 1933) form the only exceptions. The speculative development on Tudor, Lyndon and Park Roads provides an excellent example of early twentieth century terraced housing, enclosed and completed by the semi-detached villas on the west side of Upper Clifton Road. The regularity of the terraces and the consistency of their materials, elevational treatment and details are fundamental to their character.

The terraced houses are two domestic storeys in height with shallow pitched roofs and uniform, occasionally stepped, rooflines. There is a regular rhythm to the elevations with canted bay windows and a single door at ground level, the window arrangement at first floor level varying from group to group. On Park Road (nos.73-89) and particularly on Tudor Road tall gables provide rhythm and vertical emphasis and are an important element in the street scene. Regularly placed chimneys emphasise uniformity. On Lyndon Road and Park Road the houses are arranged in blocks with subtle variations in elevational treatment and detailing. Eave lines unite the terraces, with brick detailing on Lyndon and Park (nos.21-63) Roads. The two uniform terraces on Tudor Road are simply decorated; decorative detail on Lyndon and Park Roads is more ornate. The terraced houses sit on a consistent building line behind shallow front plots. The boundary at the back of pavement is traditionally defined by brick or stone walls with hedging behind. The close regular grain of the narrow building plots is slightly larger on Tudor Road.

Nos.1, 3 and 5 Upper Clifton Road complete the terraces. They are larger in scale, generally different in building style and address Upper Clifton Road. There are corner

shops on Lyndon (nos.49 and 52) and Park (nos.21, 69 and 71) Roads. On Railway Road (nos.49 and 52 Lyndon Road and no.21 Park Road) these address the corners and match the terraces in height and architectural treatment. Nos.69 and 71 Park Road conform to the larger scale of development on Upper Clifton Road.

The villas on the west side of Upper Clifton Road are of a larger domestic scale than the terraces and are generally two storeys in height with an attic storey. Architectural treatment is varied but there is a common vertical emphasis, augmented by gables and chimneys. The houses are set

on a consistent building line on narrow building plots. The front plots are traditionally divided from the street by brick or stone walls now mostly removed for parking.

Views along Tudor and Lyndon Roads are closed on the east by the impressive retaining wall around the former railway goods yard and by Upper Clifton Road on the west and there is a pleasant green view over the grounds below the Council House from Tudor Road. The west end of Park Road looks towards Sutton Park while at the east end the view is closed by the railway bridge. No.2 Tudor Hill completes the view into the Conservation Area from around the park entrance.



Tudor Road



# Conservation Area setting

Except at the south-west corner where it meets Sutton Park, the Conservation Area is surrounded by development.

On the north and west the area is surrounded by good quality late nineteenth and early twentieth century suburban housing. Anchorage Road Conservation Area, designated in 1992, lies above the Midland railway line which marks the northern boundary. The fine-grained character of the High Street is quite clearly distinct from the much larger and later development on Lichfield Road just beyond the railway bridge.

The south-west boundary is defined by Park Road and the redeveloped housing on the southern side stands in clear contrast with the terraces on the north.

On the south the Conservation Area is confined by the Inner Ring Road and the twentieth century redevelopment of the Parade. Raised ground levels on the west side of Station Street reduce the visual significance of the railway embankment.

On the east side of the area the houses and cottages on Coleshill Street are distinct in form and scale from the suburban development to the south and east. Farther north the eastern boundary is defined by large grained twentieth century development.

## KEY

 Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area

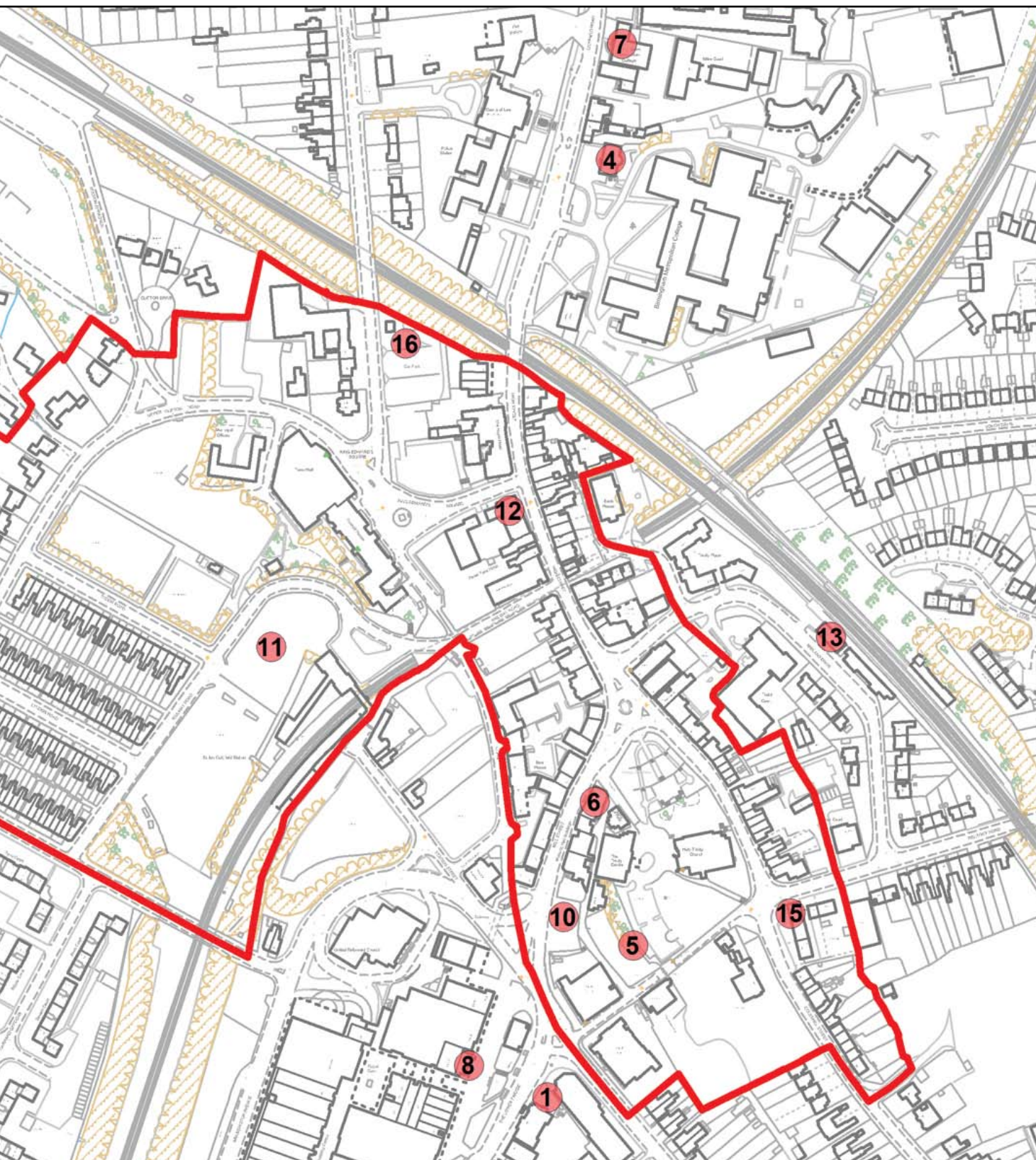
## Buildings Of Interest

1. Water Mill
2. Manor House
3. Parsonage
4. Moat House
5. St. Mary's Hall
6. Old Grammar School
7. New Grammar School
8. The Dam
9. Park Entrance
10. Almshouses
11. Old Terminus
12. Clifton Street
13. Town Station
14. Park Street
15. Jubilee Dispensary
16. Cattle Sale Yard



Plan 10 Conservation Area setting







# Geology and topography

High Street Sutton Coldfield Conservation Area lies across a ridge of free draining Bromsgrove Sandstone orientated north to south. This falls away to the Sutton Plateau on the west (Wildmoor Sandstone, Kidderminster Formation), towards the Birmingham Fault, running from north-east to south-west on the east and into the valley of the Plantsbrook, a tributary of the River Tame, to the south.

To the north the ridge continues along Anchorage and Lichfield Roads. The sandstones (Bromsgrove Sandstone, Wildmoor Sandstone) of the river valley and of the lower ground surrounding the Birmingham Fault are overlaid with an alluvial deposit of clay and silt. Glaciofluvial sand deposits help form the highest point in the Conservation Area, along Anchorage Road and at its junction with Upper Clifton Road and King Edward's Square while Holy Trinity Church stands on a lower rise to the south-east.

The topography of the Conservation Area and its immediate setting has been progressively reshaped by building development, by the engineering works associated with the railways and by the construction and improvement of roads. Its distinctive form is still clearly discernible however and it makes a major contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

## KEY



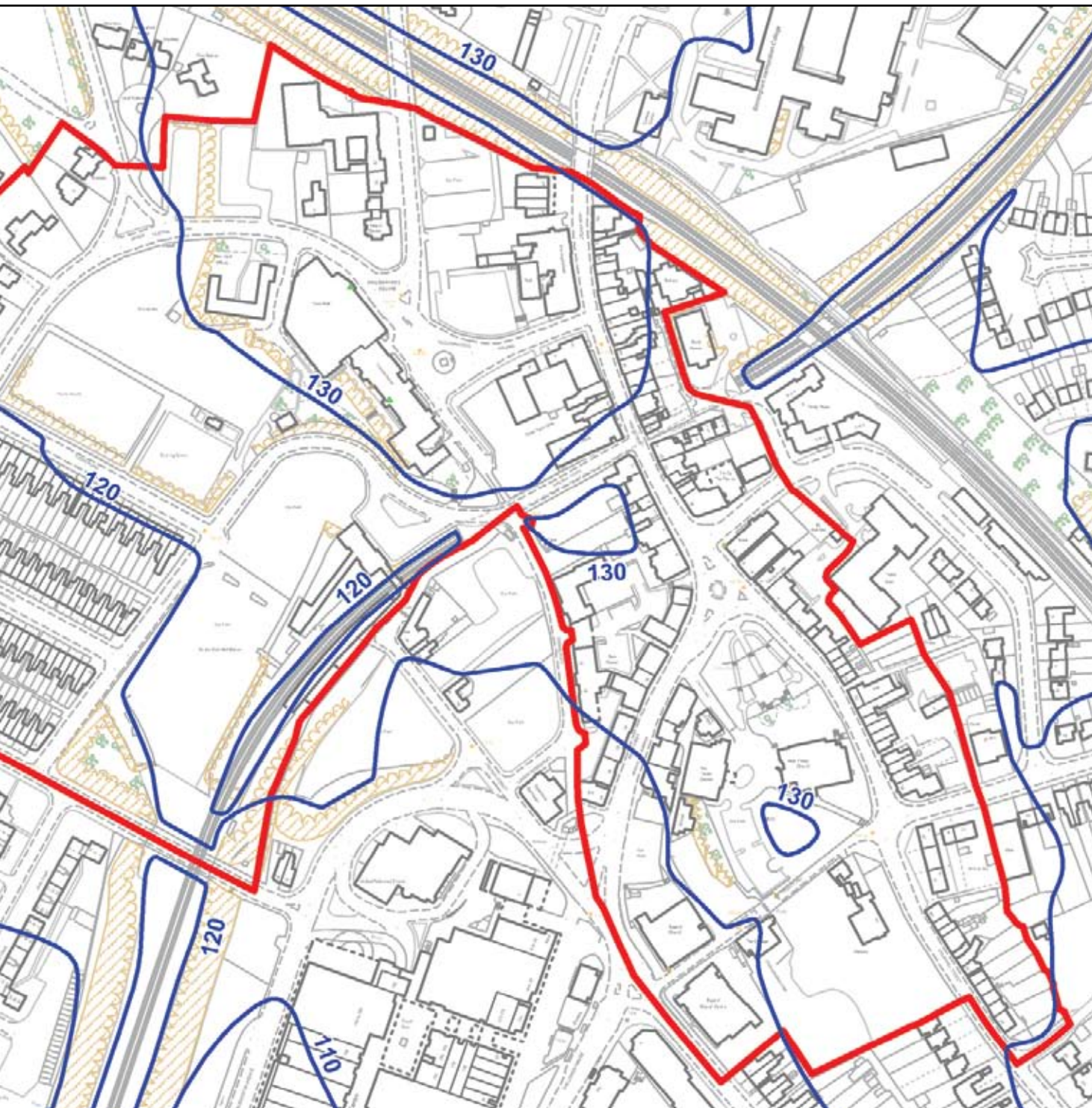
Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area



Contours



Plan 11 Contours





# Archaeology

## Background

Although relatively little archaeological work has taken place within the Conservation Area, small-scale excavations, watching briefs and geophysical survey have revealed archaeological remains of medieval and post-medieval date. The results of this work, combined with site inspection, enable the definition of areas of varying archaeological survival and potential.

## Discoveries so far

A Palaeolithic hand axe was found during construction work at the corner of Rectory Road and Coleshill Street. Archaeological excavations within the Conservation Area have revealed a medieval oven at the corner of Rectory Road and Coleshill Street; medieval timber and stone structures to the rear of Coleshill Street; and a medieval cobble surface at the corner of High Street and Midland Drive. Timber structures found in Mill Street and features located by geophysical survey in the garden of the present Rectory are undated but are probably medieval. There is no archaeological evidence of significant industrial activity in either the medieval period or later: post-medieval remains found in excavations and watching briefs include later structures to the rear of nos.16-17 Coleshill Street; the accumulation of garden soils at the corner of Coleshill Street and Rectory Road; stone footings in Mill Street; eighteenth and nineteenth century pits to the rear of High Street; and eighteenth and nineteenth century burials in Holy Trinity churchyard.

## Archaeological potential

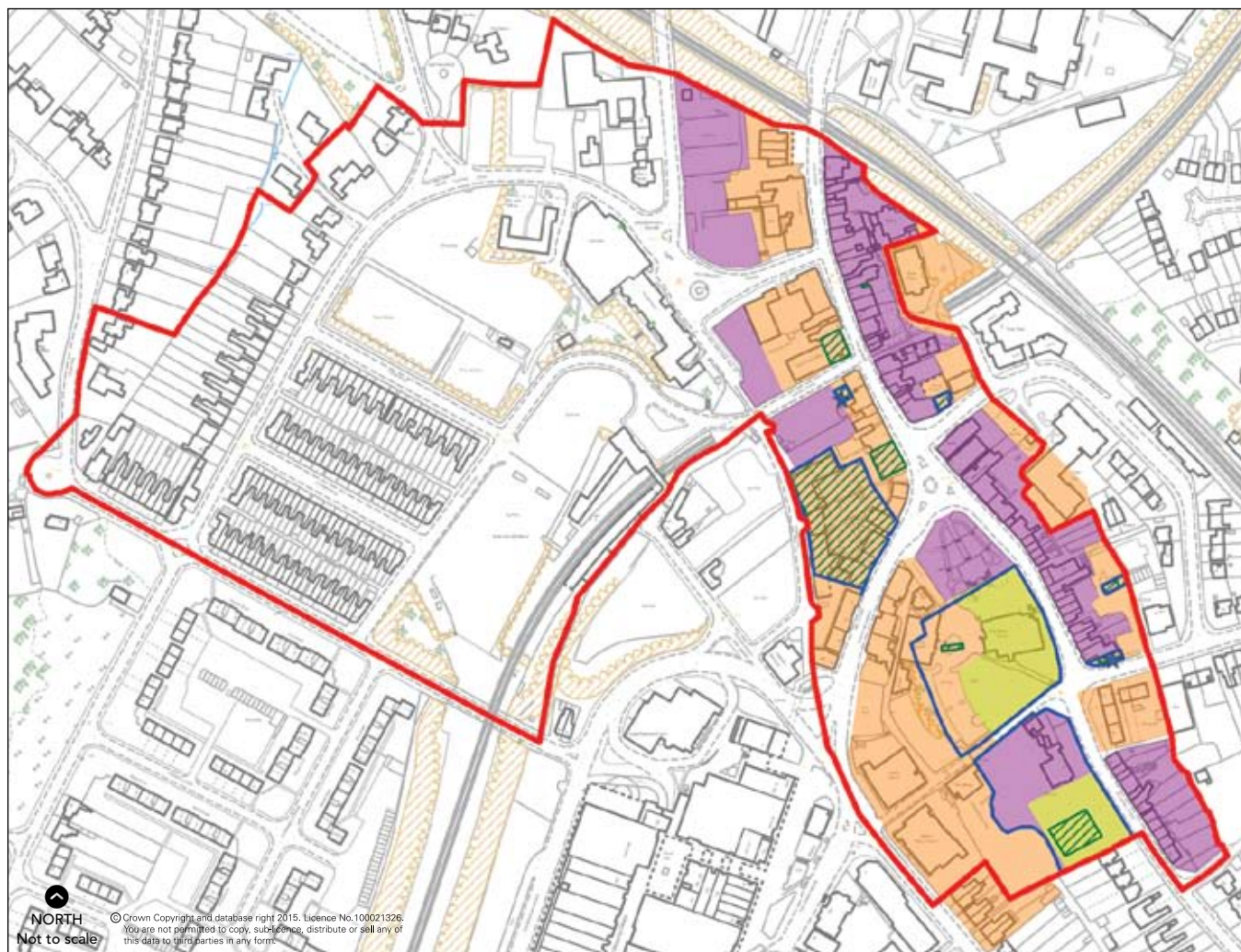
Archaeological work that has taken place so far has demonstrated the survival of below-ground archaeological remains outside and between existing buildings in various parts of the Conservation Area. There are known but as yet unexcavated remains in the garden of the former Rectory (probable buildings) and Holy Trinity churchyard (post-medieval

burials) and the probable survival of archaeological remains elsewhere in the Conservation Area is shown on Plan 12.

The archaeological remains are likely to be medieval or post-medieval in date, and are likely to include remains of timber buildings, constructed with posts, ground beams or ground beams resting on stone plinths, as at nos.16-17 Coleshill Street; pebble surfaces like that at no.33 Coleshill Street; and pits in rear yards. In addition to pottery, bone and other objects, surviving archaeological features and deposits may contain biological remains such as the charred rye found at Coleshill Street/Rectory Road and pollen, seeds and insects where conditions preclude bacterial decay. Deposits containing this type of material may also survive in the valley floor of the Plants Brook.

The deposits investigated by excavation so far are generally shallow and therefore vulnerable to truncation or removal by terracing to create level sites for buildings and yards. Where terraces have been cut into the slope they will have tended to truncate archaeological remains, but on ground sloping down, the terraces will be accumulated or dumped deposits which bury and preserve archaeological remains. The existing archaeological evidence together with observation of visible terracing has been used to assess survival (Plan 12). Terracing is particularly apparent into the slope going up from the western side of High Street, therefore

archaeological remains are likely to survive best further back from the frontage, in the land adjoining Anchorage Road, King Edward's Square and Reddicroft. The site at the rear of nos.5a to 11 High Street is likely to contain particularly well preserved archaeological remains. Conversely, on the eastern side of High Street the original level seems to have been retained along the frontage and land behind it has been built up to counteract the slope, with consequent survival of a sequence of archaeological deposits as shown in the excavations behind nos.16-17 Coleshill Street. Similar good survival can be anticipated around the Rectory; along the east side of Coleshill Street, except where development has taken place recently; and in Vesey Gardens. Both sides of Mill Street and the north side of Victoria Road have been affected by recent development or past terracing or quarrying.



#### KEY

- Sutton Coldfield High Street Conservation Area
- Archaeological remains known to survive
- Archaeological remains likely to survive
- Archaeological Investigations up to 2009
- Archaeological remains affected by truncation
- ★ Historic Environment Record

#### Plan 12 Archaeology



# Economy

Sutton Coldfield Town Centre is defined as a sub-regional centre within the West Midlands conurbation, with an economic hinterland extending into Staffordshire and North Warwickshire. Despite the affluence of its suburbs however, the town has failed to keep pace with comparable local centres, such as Solihull on the south-east edge of Birmingham and Tamworth some nine miles to the north-east.

The town centre can be divided into three areas, each with its own distinct character. These are:

- The central core, constrained by the ring road and focused on the Parade and the Lower Parade and with retail as the principal use.
- The parade of small shops, restaurants and specialist outlets on the Birmingham Road which includes the cinema at the junction of Holland Road.
- Part of the High Street Sutton Coldfield Conservation Area, comprising Mill Street, High Street, part Coleshill Street, King Edward's Square and part Upper Clifton Road, largely given over to private and local authority office use.

The three areas complement one another in terms of appropriate town centre uses but have a poor physical relationship. This is very largely caused by the severance created by the mid- twentieth century ring road system and the heavy traffic which dominates the local environment.

The Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted by Birmingham City Council in November 2009. It identifies and seeks to address the physical deficiencies of the town centre and proposes a strategy for regeneration. It aims to better integrate the three central areas, improving their physical connection, and, by building on their individual strengths, to create a diverse range of activities which will promote Sutton's success as a local centre.

## Land use

Uses within the Conservation Area are largely those associated with office and residential provision. There is some retail activity, although this has declined considerably since the redevelopment of the lower town, the central core, in the 1970s and the succession of plans for a relief road. On High Street and Mill Street it is also constrained by the hostile pedestrian environment created by constant heavy traffic and narrow pavements. Retail premises are now largely occupied by professional or specialist service sector companies. The rationalisation of the financial services industry in the 1990s has led to a loss of banking provision in the area, with the redundant buildings now occupied for office, professional and financial services and residential use. The railway station on Railway Road is on the busy Birmingham cross-city line, which was opened in 1978, which provides a service for commuters. The former goods yard is now in use as a car park.

Office use is concentrated for the most part on High Street, Mill Street and Coleshill Street and in the area around King Edward's Square and occupies both converted and purpose-built accommodation. Retail and service uses are mostly found on High Street and Coleshill Street. There are long established residential areas west of the railway station and on Coleshill Street. More recently the upper floors of the former Lloyd's Bank (14 High Street) have been converted to residential accommodation with

new build flats (1-12 The Florins) on the plot behind (all 2003). Besides the Anglican church on Coleshill Street there are two other places of worship in the area, both in reused buildings. The former Town Schools on Mill Street, Trinity Hill and Victoria Road, are now occupied by the Baptist Church (1983) and the Cottage on Trinity Hill, previously a warehouse, is now in use as a Christadelphian Hall (1975).

Sutton Coldfield town centre is an established suburban office location and the provision of office space at a scale sympathetic to its character will continue to be encouraged within the Conservation Area.

## Land ownership

The local authority is the largest landowner in the Conservation Area, with most of its property on Station Street, King Edward's Square, Upper Clifton Road and Anchorage Road. This is largely due to the fact that lands have been acquired along the line of the proposed relief road. The remainder of the area is divided into a variety of ownerships, ranging from the Church of England and Network Rail through relatively substantial and smaller commercial holdings down to individual householders.

## Vacancy

Vacancy and under-occupation in the Conservation Area is relatively low.



High Street



# Development history

## 1086 to 1528 - A Medieval Market Town

- The medieval settlement of Sutton Coldfield first developed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries at the junction between the major route north from Birmingham to Lichfield and the road from Coleshill to Warwick.
- Holy Trinity Church was founded on the rise just south of the junction sometime during the first half of the thirteenth century.
- The market was formally recognised in 1300, although it had probably been taking place informally prior to this.
- There is evidence that the linear settlement was at least partially planned, particularly evident on the east side of High Street and Coleshill Street, where there are generous house plots regularly laid out with large crofts at the rear, running down to the glebe lands at the valley bottom.
- There is little doubt that Sutton functioned as a town by the later medieval period. However, the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century seems to have been a period of decline.

## 1528 to 1850 - Gentrification and Civic Pride

- The town experienced a renaissance in the sixteenth century under John Harman, alias Vesey (1462-1540), who founded a grammar school in 1527, established two annual fairs and a weekly market, and was instrumental in persuading the King to bestow borough status on the town in 1528. The first public buildings were built in the town, the sites of which are still used for civic buildings.

- The population grew throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While the local economy as a whole remained largely agricultural, a variety of craftsmen, tradesmen and gentlefolk lived in the town.
- Up to the 1630s buildings in Sutton town were constructed in the local sandstone and in timber frame - the present nos.1-3 Coleshill Street exemplifies the sandstone type, and the present nos.57-59 Coleshill Street the timber frame type. The present nos.5-7 High Street (Vesey House) built 1630 is the first known example in the town of a house constructed in brick.
- Following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the town grew in line with national trends with a surge in building activity lasting well into the eighteenth century with a shift from vernacular to classical building forms. Timber frame and local stone gave way to fashionable brick.
- John Snape's 1765 plan of Sutton Coldfield provides the first cartographic evidence for the town. It shows Mill Street and the present High Street and Coleshill Street as built up, with an almost continuous frontage along the east side of the present High Street.
- Following a period of sustained local opposition the first turnpikes routes through Sutton parish were established under an Act of 1807. As part of this Mill Street was widened.
- The Town Hall (now the Masonic Buildings) was opened in 1859.

## 1850 to 1938 - Railways and Commuter Suburb

- The mid-nineteenth century saw the beginnings of suburban development, fuelled by commuter migration from industrial Birmingham.
- In 1862 the London and North Western Railway opened a branch line from Aston. The line's approach involved the construction of a substantial embankment with a bridge over Park Road. In 1884 the company opened its extension from Sutton to Lichfield - the line was closed in 1972 but reopened in 1978 as part of the Birmingham cross-city line.
- The railway also increased the numbers coming from Birmingham to enjoy Sutton Park. The Royal Hotel (now the Council House) was opened in 1865 to attract visitors. The Midland Railway opened its line through Sutton in 1879. Sutton Town Station closed in 1925 and Sutton Park Station in 1965.
- In 1884 Sutton Coldfield was made a municipal borough and suburban growth kept pace with a still rising population.
- Between 1899 and 1910, Tudor Road, Lyndon Road, Upper Clifton Road, Park Road and Anchorage Road were built up (within the present Conservation Area). New housing development also took place on Coleshill Street.
- Developments and extensions were also made in this period in the High Street. The Town School was rebuilt. The Royal Hotel was converted for use as a Council House, and the Vesey Memorial Gardens laid out in 1939.

### 1938 to Today - Ring Road, Conservation and Changes of Use

- By the 1930s traffic had become a serious problem in the centre of Sutton, particularly as the A38 passed along the Parade, Mill Street and High Street.
- A town centre relief road was completed in 1977 following prolonged discussions. On Station Street, at its southern end, the route joined a proposed inner ring road (Brassington Avenue, Victoria Road). In 1972 the A38 Sutton Coldfield bypass opened and relieved some of the traffic from the town centre.
- Delay and uncertainty over future plans and the constant pressure of traffic resulted in a general deterioration of the fabric in the historic core and the loss of a number of traditional buildings to road improvement and redevelopment.
- A Conservation Area was first proposed in 1968 and centred on the High Street. High Street, Sutton Coldfield Conservation Area was designated by Warwickshire County Council in November 1973. In 1974 Sutton Coldfield became administratively part of Birmingham following the implementation of the 1972 Local Government Act.
- In 1984 a Town Scheme to improve the appearance of the historic landscape on High Street and Coleshill Street was implemented.
- The late twentieth century saw significant development in the area with properties purchased for the road schemes, some properties cleared and new development within the historic core. There was a general loss of

the variety of uses traditionally associated with the town, with most of the buildings in the historic core now in use as office accommodation or converted to residential use.

- In 2014 Sutton Coldfield's Royal status was reaffirmed.

A more detailed development history is available as part of the evidence base for this document.



Sutton Coldfield Town Hall (Locally Listed Grade A)



# Appendix A

## Statutory and Locally Listed Buildings

### Statutory Listed Buildings

Address	Grade
1 Coleshill Street	II
15 (Church House) Coleshill Street	II
16 (The Rectory) Coleshill Street	II
3 and 5 Coleshill Street	II
43 and 45 Coleshill Street	II
47 and 49 Coleshill Street	II
51 and 53 Coleshill Street	II
55 Coleshill Street	II
57 and 59 Coleshill Street	II
61 Coleshill Street	II
63 Coleshill Street	II
Holy Trinity Church Coleshill Street	I
11 High Street	II
14 High Street	II
16 and 18 High Street	II
19 (Three Tuns PH) High Street	II
2 and front railings (former YMCA) High Street	II
20 and front railings High Street	II*
22 and 24 High Street	II
27 (Royal Hotel) High Street	II
3 (includes 1) High Street	II
36 (Cull's House) High Street	II
36a and 38 High Street	II
4 and 6 High Street	II
42 High Street	II
44 High Street	II
46 High Street	II
48 and 50 High Street	II
55A and 7 (Vesey House) High Street	II
52 High Street	II
56 High Street	II
9 High Street	II
Masonic Hall Buildings Mill Street	II
1 to 5 (consecutive) Old Bank Place	II

### Locally Listed Buildings

Address	Grade
Sons of Rest Church Hill	A
8 High Street	A
Council House King Edward's Square	B
Town Hall King Edward's Square	A
War Memorial King Edward's Square	B
Gate Public House 34 Mill Street	B
Railway Station Railway Road	B
Baptist Church (former Town School) Trinity Hill	B
Baptist Church Centre (former Town Boys School) Victoria Road	B

# Appendix B

## Wider planning policy framework

### National legislation and guidance

- Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (part viii).
- Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999.
- Planning and Compensation Act 1991 (Section 23).
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
- National Heritage Act 1983.
- Birmingham and Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Issued and adopted by Central Government in April 2012 this sets out national policy on planning around a variety of issues and supersedes the majority of Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements. Of particular relevance to the CAAMP is Section 12 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'.

### Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Guidance (1995)

The guidance sets out the principles of good shopfront design and the criteria against which planning applications will be assessed.

### Planning practice guidance

#### Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (2014)

The guidance provides advice on enhancing and conserving the historic environment.

### City Council policy context

The CAAMP has been prepared in accordance with and as a supplement to the following planning policies:

#### The Birmingham Plan - Unitary Development Plan 2005

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) contains policies and proposals that currently guide development and land use across the City and is the existing Development Plan for Birmingham. The plan was reviewed in 2008 and the Secretary of State agreed to save the majority of policies until they are replaced by Development Plan Documents currently being prepared as part of the Local Development Framework. As such the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan supplement the saved UDP policies until such time as they are replaced. Of particular relevance are Chapter 3 'Environment' and Chapter 9 'Sutton Coldfield'. Paragraph 3.27 contains the specific policy setting out the City Council's intent to produce Character Appraisals and Management Plans for all of the Conservation Areas within the City.

#### The Submission Birmingham Development Plan (2013)

Once adopted the Plan will become part of the City's statutory planning framework guiding decisions on development and regeneration activity over the period to 2031. The Plan recognises Birmingham's historic development and its rich and varied environment which contributes to the unique essence of the City. Policies in the Plan seek to value, protect and enhance the historic environment.

### Shopping and Local Centres Supplementary Planning Document (2012)

The Shopping and Local Centres SPD provides detailed policies to both encourage new investment into centres and to protect and enhance their vibrancy and viability. The CAAMP has been prepared in accordance with the policies outlined within the adopted SPD.

### Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework Supplementary Development Document (2009)

Adopted as an SPD in November 2009 the Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework provides planning and development guidance to maximise the potential of Sutton Coldfield as a major strategic centre. In particular it aims to build upon the heritage of the Old Town, as such the CAAMP has been prepared in accordance with and as a supplement to the policies that it sets out.

### Regeneration through Conservation Supplementary Planning Guidance (1999)

Adopted in March 1999 Regeneration through Conservation sets out the City Council's strategy for conservation of the built environment with a particular focus on the opportunities for regeneration that conservation can create. Of particular relevance is the stated aim of producing character appraisals of conservation areas.



# Appendix C

## Article 4(2) Direction

An Article 4(2) Direction applies to residential properties only and removes Permitted Development rights from front and significant elevations. This means that any minor alteration which would normally not require planning permission will need consent.

There is no planning fee in these circumstances.

Alterations such as the installation of replacement doors, windows and porches, the creation of hard standings and the removal of original boundary treatment, perhaps insignificant as individual alterations, have taken place in Sutton Coldfield under Permitted Development.

The cumulative effect of these alterations, together with the removal of other architectural details has had a negative impact on the character of the area. In order to prevent further erosion, Permitted Development rights have been removed by placing an Article 4(2) Direction on the residential properties in the conservation area.

The Article 4(2) Direction means that minor alterations will require planning permission, if they front a highway, waterway or open space.

These include:

- Any enlargement or alteration to a dwellinghouse.
- Any alteration to the roof of a dwellinghouse.
- Construction of an external porch.
- Creation of a hardstanding for off street parking.
- Installation or alteration of a satellite antenna.
- Erection, demolition or alteration of a gate, fence or other means of enclosure.
- Exterior painting of dwellinghouse.

# Appendix D

## Equality analysis

The SPD has been prepared with due consideration to the City Council's responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As such an equality analysis has been undertaken; this indicates on the basis of the currently available information that the proposals outlined within this document will not have an adverse impact upon persons within the protected categories. This equality analysis will be continue to be updated as part of the SPD monitoring process.

With regards to the three individual elements of the Public Sector Equality Duty for the City Council the main impact of the SPD is to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. Specifically the policies within this SPD seek to ensure that new developments are accessible to all users, including people with disabilities.



The Rectory (Grade II Listed)









