

# LOCAL PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday 3rd August 2023 at 7.15pm

Council Chamber, Braintree District Council, Causeway House, Bocking  
End, Braintree, CM7 9HB

**THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Members of the public will be able to view and listen to this meeting via YouTube  
To access the meeting please use the link below:

[www.braintree.gov.uk/youtube](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/youtube)

---

**Members of the Local Plan Sub-Committee are requested to attend this meeting to transact the business set out in the Agenda.**

**Membership:-**

Councillor J Abbott

Councillor K Bowers

Councillor L Bowers-Flint

Councillor G Butland

Councillor J Coleridge

Councillor T Cunningham

Councillor M Fincken

Councillor J Martin

Councillor A Munday

Councillor I Parker

Councillor F Ricci

Councillor G Spray (Chairman)

Councillor T Walsh

Apologies: Members unable to attend the meeting are requested to forward their apologies for absence to the Governance and Members Team on 01376 552525 or email [governance@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:governance@braintree.gov.uk) by 3pm on the day of the meeting.

D GASCOYNE  
Chief Executive

## **INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS – DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

### **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), Other Pecuniary Interests (OPI), or Non-Pecuniary Interests (NPI).**

Any Member with a DPI, OPI or NPI must declare the nature of their interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Members must not participate in any discussion of the matter in which they have declared a DPI or OPI or participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting. In addition, the Member must withdraw from the Chamber where the meeting considering the business is being held unless the Member has received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer.

### **Public Question Time - Registration and Speaking**

The Agenda allows for a period of up to 30 minutes for Public Question Time. Members of the public may ask questions or make a statement to the Council on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties, or which affects the district, and matters listed on the Agenda.

All questions or statements should be concise and should be able to be heard within the 3 minutes allotted to each speaker.

Anyone wishing to ask a question or make a statement is requested to register their interest by completing the Public Question Time registration [online form](#) by midday on the **second working day** before the day of the meeting.

For example, if the meeting is on a Tuesday, the registration deadline is midday on Friday, (where there is a Bank Holiday Monday you will need to register by midday on the previous Thursday). The Council reserves the right to decline any requests to register to speak if they are received after this time.

When registering for Public Question Time please indicate whether you wish to attend the meeting 'in person', or to participate remotely. People who choose to join the meeting remotely will be provided with the relevant link and joining instructions for the meeting.

Please note that completion of the on-line form does not guarantee you a place to speak during Public Question Time. You will receive email notification from the Governance Service confirming whether your request is successful.

The Chairman of the Council has discretion to amend the order in which questions or statements are presented to Full Council.

In the event that a registered speaker is unable to connect to the meeting, or if there are any technical issues, their question/statement may be read by a Council Officer.

Further information on Public Question Time is available on the [Council's website](#).

### **Health and Safety:**

Anyone attending a meeting of the Council is asked to make themselves aware of the nearest available fire exit. In the event of an alarm sounding, you must evacuate the building immediately and follow all instructions provided by staff. You will be directed to the nearest designated assembly point where you should stay until it is safe to return to the building.

**Documents**

Agendas, Reports and Minutes may be accessed via [www.braintree.gov.uk](http://www.braintree.gov.uk)

**Data Processing**

For further information on how the Council processes data, please see the Council's Privacy Policy.

[https://braintree.gov.uk/info/200136/access\\_to\\_information/376/privacy\\_policy](https://braintree.gov.uk/info/200136/access_to_information/376/privacy_policy)

**Mobile Phones**

Please ensure that your mobile phone is switched to silent during the meeting in order to prevent disturbances.

**Webcast and Audio Recording**

Please note that this meeting will be webcast and audio recorded. You may view webcasts for up to 6 months after the meeting using this link: <http://braintree.public-tv/core/portal/home> The meeting will also be broadcast via the Council's YouTube Channel.

**Comments and Suggestions**

We welcome comments to make our services as efficient and effective as possible. If you have any suggestions regarding the meeting you have attended you may send these to [governance@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:governance@braintree.gov.uk)

## **PUBLIC SESSION**

Page

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Declarations of Interest**  
To declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other Pecuniary Interest, or Non-Pecuniary Interest relating to Items on the Agenda having regard to the Code of Conduct for Members and having taken appropriate advice where necessary before the meeting.
- 3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**  
To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Local Plan Sub-Committee held on 30th March 2023 (copy previously circulated).
- 4 Public Question Time**  
(See paragraph above)
- 5 Bradford Street Conservation Area - Character Appraisal and Management Plan** **5 - 81**
- 6 Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area - Character Appraisal and Management Plan** **82 - 185**
- 7 Norwich to Tilbury N2T Grid Reinforcement - Consultation June 2023** **186 - 223**
- 8 Urgent Business - Public Session**  
To consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.
- 9 Exclusion of the Public and Press**  
To agree the exclusion of the public and press for the consideration of any Items for the reasons set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Local Government Act 1972.  
*At the time of compiling this Agenda there were none.*

## **PRIVATE SESSION**

- 10 Urgent Business - Private Session**  
To consider any matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered in private by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

<b>Bradford Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan</b>	
<b>Report to: Local Plan Sub-Committee</b>	
<b>Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023</b>	<b>For: Decision</b>
<b>Key Decision: No</b>	<b>Decision Planner Ref No: N/A</b>
<b>Report Presented by: Julie O'Hara</b>	
<b>Enquiries to: Julie O'Hara</b>	

### 1.1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.2 To seek approval for the Bradford Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan to be adopted as material considerations when Braintree District Council carries out its planning functions. The Conservation Area Review involves proposals to divide present single Conservation Area into two separate areas covering Bradford Street and Braintree and in doing so add and subtract of parts of the Conservation Area. These proposals include the exclusion of the Council Offices from Conservation Area status.
- 1.3 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to review their conservation areas from 'time to time'.
- 1.4 The Council appointed Place Services between 2018 and 2020 to create Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plans (CACAMP) for Great Bardfield, Wethersfield, Kelvedon, Feering and Braintree and Bocking. Halstead Conservation Area Review has recently been commissioned.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The RECOMMENDATION of this report is to:

APPROVE the Bradford Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan for use as a material consideration when Braintree District Council carries out its planning functions and including the addition and removal of parts of the Conservation Area as set out.

Delegated authority is sought to correct minor updating, factual and typographical errors.

## 3. Summary of Issues

- 3.1 The CACAMP provides an analysis of the conservation area which will inform future development and design with regard to the sensitivities of the historic environment and its unique character. The Management Plan seeks to identify issues facing the Conservation Area and to recommend management proposals which address these issues in both the short and long term.

### **Bradford Street Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CACAMP)**

## **4 Summary of Issues**

- 4.1 The Braintree Conservation Area of which this area was a part, was designated in 1969.
- 4.2 The CACAMP provides detail on planning context, history and evolution, designated and non-designated heritage assets, buildings at risk and archaeological potential.
- 4.3 The CACAMP proposes dividing the Conservation Area into two – Braintree and Bradford Street. The boundary lies along Courtauld Road to a little north of its junction with Bradford Street and continues along the rear of properties on Rana Drive. This separation reflects the differing characters and histories of both areas and removes an area which is not considered of sufficient architectural or historic merit to be retained. It would however be still considered part of the CA. One of the areas to be removed includes the Council Offices.
- 4.4 The Bradford Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan divides the area into 5 and gives a detailed appraisal of each. As well as the new boundary with the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area, proposed changes include a sizeable extension of the Conservation Area along Church Lane (Area 2), a small area of the River Mead Development (Area 3), small open green space on St James Road and brick folly (Area 4). Some minor boundary adjustments have been made to the area 2 boundary and the loss of an area west of Friars Lane and elsewhere some boundary adjustments to remove modern buildings.
- 4.5 The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CACAMP) was issued for public consultation initially between 10<sup>th</sup> January and 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022. A virtual webinar event was held via Microsoft Teams on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022 (This meeting concerned both the Bradford Street and the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area and Management Plans). A total of 17 responses were received and these can be viewed at the address below:

[https://braintree.objective.co.uk/portal/ca\\_appraisals/bradford\\_street/bradca?t](https://braintree.objective.co.uk/portal/ca_appraisals/bradford_street/bradca?t)

ab=list

The main issues raised in response to the public consultation are shown below and consultation responses and officer comments are addressed in more detail in Table 2A. Some of the responses were very detailed and however the issues raised include the following:

- Support for producing the CACAMP and protecting historic fabric
- Adverse impacts resulting from traffic such as noise, vibration, pollution, dirt, unpleasant environment, impacts of heavy vehicles and double decker buses. safety issues for pedestrians and those with mobility issues, visual impact of highway signage, footpath surfacing and other highway related issues. Impacts will increase following the Straits Mill Development
- Problems finding parking near homes. Residents wish re- organisation of parking
- Suggested improvements to help parking and traffic issues, such as creating more parking, issuing permits, reduced speed limits (20mph), minimising visual impact of signage
- Problems with setts at crossovers causing difficulty for wheel chair users, buggies, bikes etc
- 2018 Historic England advice advises in “Streets for all” to adopt traffic management appropriate for the area, 20mph speed limits and minimise signage impacts
- Mixed support/objection to the splitting of the Conservation Areas and suggestions of an alternative location for the boundary
- Motives for removal of the Council offices questioned
- Request inclusion of the cricket ground, public gardens and other nearby areas within the conservation area and for other property to be removed
- Management Proposals are too weak and more needs to be done
- More detailed analysis and proposals sought on public realm is needed
- Requested Article 4 Directions, listing of more buildings and adding to the local list
- Request to include a link to Essex County Council maintenance guide “Typical details for historic buildings and conservation areas” and website of Friends of Bradford Street”
- Additional historical detail has been offered for inclusion or CACAMP details questioned
- Six Bells Area should be improved
- Concern over loss of Conservation Area character
- Some queries regarding individual boundary changes
- Need to support residents with advice.

4.6 There have been some mixed responses to the separation of the Braintree and Bocking Conservation Areas with concern that there should be no loss of protection and suggestions for the location of the split. The area to be

protected in this area has increased. Strong concerns about heavy traffic and its impacts, and issues surrounding pedestrian safety and parking difficulties have been widespread. It is appreciated that these concerns are keenly felt and that their resolution would enhance the character of the conservation area. Nevertheless, attempts to resolve these issues on a Conservation Area scale would have far wider implications for planning and transport policy for the town which could not be properly considered within the scope of this exercise. Braintree District does not have jurisdiction over the public highway, so improvements in this sphere would fall to the Highway Authority and require further work separate to this exercise. Some control is exercised by Local Plan policies relating to planning applications for new development and these seek to ensure that it has an acceptable impact on its surroundings in terms of traffic impact, access and parking. The 2023 CACAMP has been altered to give more prominence to the Highways issues.

- 4.7 Issues have been raised concerning mobility problems for wheelchair disabled arising from surface materials in Bradford Street and these should be brought to the attention of the Highway Authority.
- 4.8 A number of responses contain a great deal of detailed historical information and its inclusion within the CACAMP has been sought. While some of this material has been incorporated into the document this is needed as a working document rather than used for historical purposes hence some material has not been used.
- 4.9 There has been comment that the Management Proposals do not go far enough. However, there are no ongoing projects which can be included in this section at present. This does not prevent future actions being considered if funding were to become available.
- 4.10 A summary of these comments and the Council's and Place Service's response in the table below.

Appendix 2A. Summary of Responses Received in response to the Public Consultation on the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan together with Officer Comments and suggested changes

## **5 Options**

- 5.1 Approve the proposals as submitted. This will ensure that Conservation Area boundaries are updated to improve their quality and protection and that its guidance is available for those considering future development. This option is preferred and would provide up to date advice.

- 5.2 Approve amended proposals. Delegated Authority may be given to officers to make specified alterations and issue the revised Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan document or documents. Alternatively, the decision could be deferred for discussion at a future Planning Committee pending further work. This option may involve delay and if substantial heritage advice is required, further costs may be incurred.
- 5.3 Do not accept the proposals. The Conservation Area remains as at present but will contain areas identified as not meriting inclusion, and excluding areas considered worthy of inclusion. This process means officer opinion on areas to be included or excluded have been publicised and could be used by appellants in opposing or supporting their proposals in future. This risk is mitigated by the fact that such opinion is not the settled view of the Council.

## **6 Next Steps**

- 6.1 If approved, the document will be published on the Council's website. Under section 70(8) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council will notify the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Historic England. A notice will also be placed in the London Gazette and a local newspaper.

## **7 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 None as set out for the recommendation other than placing a notice in the London Gazette and a local newspaper. If additional work is required which requires advice from the Council's heritage consultants an additional fee may be necessary.

## **8 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 Local Planning Authorities are obliged under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to designate as Conservation Areas any parts of their own area that are "*of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*". Local Planning Authorities also have a duty under S69 (2), to review past designations "*from time to time*" to consider whether areas are suitable for designation or to remain designated and this exercise fulfils this duty.
- 8.2 The Local Planning Authority is obliged to publish proposals concerning the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas and these shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate. The local authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by person attending the meeting.

## **9 Other Implications**

9.1 None

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

10.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

10.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

10.3 The Equality Impact Assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic. (The consultation did not raise issues to do with this proposal though issues to problems for the disabled in relation to Bradford Street and problems with an elderly woman's use of Braintree town centre).

## **List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 Bradford Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Appendix 1A Bradford Street Public Consultation Responses

## **11 Background Papers**

- Braintree Local Plan 2033
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning Practice Guidance – Historic Environment
- Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, (Historic England Advice Note No 1 (Second Edition) Feb 2019 (based on 2018 NPPF)
- Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd Edition);

# Bradford Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



Client:  
Braintree District Council

Date:  
April 2023





#### Disclaimer

All reasonable efforts have been made to obtain permission for use of images within this report. Materials and images used in this report which are subject to third party copyright or require reproduction permissions have been reproduced under licence from the copyright owner. This is except in the case of material or works of unknown authorship (as defined by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988) or the copyright holder is unknown after all reasonable effort has been made to seek licence to reproduce.

All maps within this document are subject to copyright. © Crown copyright 2019 OS 100019602. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

Any person who wishes to apply to reproduce any part of this work or wishing to assert rights in relation to material which has been reproduced as work of unknown authorship in this document should contact Place Services at [enquiries@placeservices.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@placeservices.co.uk)



# Contents

<b>1.0 Introduction</b>			
1.1 Summary	4	3.4 Public Realm	28
1.2 Conserving Braintree's Heritage	5	3.5 Landscaping and Open Spaces	29
1.3 Purpose of Appraisal	6	3.6 Contribution of Key Un-Listed Buildings	29
1.4 Planning Policy Context	10	3.7 Traditional/ Local Building Materials	33
		3.8 Local Details	33
		3.9 Views	36
		3.10 Setting of the Conservation Area	40
<b>2.0 Bradford Street Conservation Area</b>		<b>4.0 Management Proposals</b>	
2.1 Context and General Character	8	4.1 Positive Management: Shorter Term	41
2.2 Origin and Evolution	9	4.2 Positive Management: Longer Term	45
2.3 Revisions to the Boundary	15	4.3 Funding Opportunities	47
2.4 Designated Heritage Assets	19		
2.5 Non-Designated Heritage Assets	19	<b>5.0 Appendices</b>	
2.6 Heritage at Risk	19	5.1 Bibliography	48
2.7 Archaeological Potential	22	5.2 List of all Designated Heritage Assets	49
		5.3 Legislation and Planning Policy	51
<b>3.0 Assessment of Significance</b>		5.4 Glossary (NPPF)	52
3.1 Summary	23	5.5 Frequently Asked Questions	53
3.2 Character Analysis	24		
3.3 Land Usage	28		

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Summary

The Bradford Street Conservation Area is located to the north of Braintree town centre, following the line of Bradford Street as it slopes gently downhill before bridging the River Blackwater at its northern end. In contrast to the town centre, the Bradford Street area has maintained its strong linear formation and the dense occupation of buildings have allowed for little expansion, retaining a coherent, and largely unbroken, historic character.

Once a bustling high street with shops, inns and small workshops, centred around the woollen cloth trade, the area is now primarily residential. Many of the historic commercial premises have been adapted to form dwellings. The development of Bradford street stalled in the eighteenth to early nineteenth century, resulting in a character dominated by vernacular or Georgian buildings and few late twentieth century infill dwellings. The surviving built heritage of the late medieval-early post-medieval period is exceptional in Braintree, with Bradford Street being particularly noteworthy.

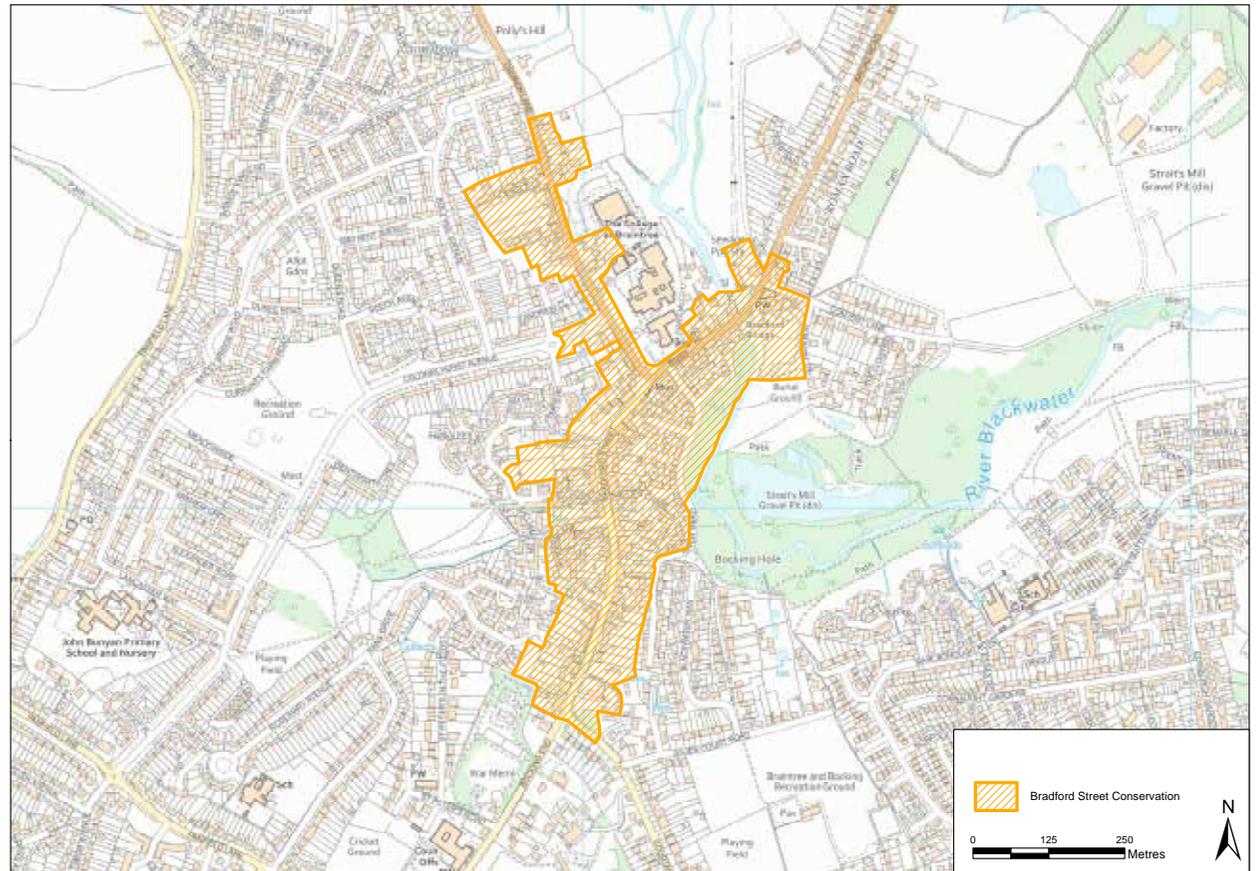


Figure 1 Map of the Bradford Street Conservation Area boundary



## 1.2 Conserving Braintree's Heritage

Braintree Conservation Area was designated on the 19th June 1969. This boundary included the town centre, extending south along London Road and north along Bradford Street, extending upwards to include the southernmost section on Broad Road.

No Conservation Area Appraisal document has been produced since the designation of the area; the boundary of the Conservation Area was reassessed in 1979 but no details of any appraisal remain. Braintree District Council appointed Place Services to complete the first appraisal document for the Conservation Area, and reassess its boundary and significance.

As part of the initial assessment of the 1969 Braintree Conservation Area boundary, it became clear that the Conservation Area had two very distinct areas which were worthy of individual Conservation Area status: the Town Centre and the northern part of the town, Bradford Street.

The proposal to divide the former Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area into two separate designated areas was agreed in principal by Braintree District Council in August 2020. The contrast in character and historic development between the town centre and the wealth of historic buildings along Bradford Street means that the Bradford Street area is of sufficient historic and architectural special interest for Conservation Area designation in its own right.

This document forms the appraisal for the new Bradford Street Conservation Area, a distinct and compact conservation area which has a linear plan form, following the line of Bradford Street.

The document is provided as baseline information for applicants to consider when designing or planning new development in Braintree.

This report provides an assessment of the historic development and character of Bradford Street and outlines its special interest. The appraisal will also consider the significance of heritage assets and the contribution that these, along with their setting, make to the character of the area. The understanding of significance will be used to assess the susceptibility of the Character Areas to change, highlighting key assets of importance.

This assessment will consider how Bradford Street Conservation Area developed, their building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, footpaths, alleys, streetscapes, open spaces, views, landscape, landmarks, and topography. These qualities can be used to assess the key characteristics of each area, highlighting potential impacts future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the overall character of Bradford Street. This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research and an analysis of the individual character areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) highlights good design as one of twelve core principals of sustainable development. Sustainable development relies on sympathetic design, achieved through an understanding of context, the immediate and larger character of the area in which new development is sited.

This assessment follows best practice guidance, including Historic England's revised Historic England Advice Note 1 for Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2019) and The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017).

### 1.3 Purpose of Appraisal

This assessment will consider how the character of the Bradford Street Conservation Area came to develop, the forms of buildings, townscape, landmarks, topography and other character defining features of this area. These qualities can be used to assess the area's key characteristics, highlighting potential impact future change and development may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the character of Bradford Street and Church Street. The Conservation Area is relatively compact and well defined, and while there are slight changes in built form from one part to another, the historic special interest, character and architectural qualities are consistent throughout. Therefore, it has not been necessary to subdivide the Conservation Area into separate character areas

The appraisal will describe and record the Bradford Street Conservation Area, defining its significance and the elements that contribute to that significance. This includes the designated and non-designated heritage assets (listed buildings and unlisted buildings) that make a positive contribution to special interest of the Conservation Area.

This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research and analysis of the individual character areas. The Appraisal document should be used as a baseline to inform future development and change with regard to the sensitivities of the Historic Environment and its unique character.

It is expected that applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the best practice guidance outlined in the bibliography. Applications that demonstrate an understanding of the character of a Conservation Area are more likely to produce good design and good outcomes.



Figure 2 Bradford Street, 1900. The old Court House is on the centre left (© The Francis Frith Collection)



## 1.4 Planning Policy Context

The legislative framework for conservation and enhancement of conservation areas and listed buildings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (HMSO 1990).

In particular Section 69 of this act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they consider to be of architectural and historic interest as Conservation Areas, and Section 72 requires that special attention should be paid to ensuring that the character and appearance of these areas is preserved or enhanced.

Section 71 also requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposal for the preservation and enhancement of these areas. National planning policy in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets is outlined in Part 16 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, the NPPF (February 2021).

Bradford Street Conservation Area, which is the subject of this appraisal, is located within the area covered by Braintree District Council. Local planning policy is set out in the Braintree Development Plan. The Braintree Local Plan 2033 is located within the area covered by Braintree District Council. Local planning policy is set out in the Braintree Development Plan. The Braintree Local Plan 2033 is in two parts: **Part 1** which contains strategic policies also covering Colchester City and Tendring Councils and **Part 2** which relates to Braintree District only.

The New Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in October 2017 and adopted by the Council in July 2022.

### Relevant Policies within the Braintree District Local Plan are:

- SP 7 Place Shaping Principles
- LPP 52 – Layout and design of development
- LPP 53 – Conservation Areas
- LPP 54 - Demolition in Conservation Areas
- LPP 55 – Shop fronts, fascias and signs in Conservation Areas
- LPP 56 – Illuminated signs in Conservation Areas
- LPP 57 – Heritage Assets and their setting
- LPP 58 – Demolition of Listed Buildings or structures
- LPP 63 – Archaeological Evaluation Excavation and Recording
- LPP 62 – Cemeteries and churchyards
- LPP 65 – Tree protection

The latest policy position and Development Plan Documents can be found in the Planning Policy section of the Council's website: <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/planning-building-control>.

## 2. Bradford Street Conservation Area

### 2.1 Context and General Character

The Bradford Street Conservation Area is located to the north of Braintree Town Centre. Braintree Town developed around its central marketplace, while Bradford Street formed as a ribbon development along the northern route from Braintree towards Halstead. The road runs north-south with a bend at its centre, sloping downwards before it crosses the River Blackwater at its northern end.

The development of Bradford Street began as a result of the wealth generated by the medieval wool trade. The street has many surviving timber-framed dwellings built by those who profited from the trade, along with former inns, shops and small commercial and manufacturing premises. However, development stalled somewhat in the post medieval period, though many timber-framed buildings were 'gentrified' in the Georgian era, with the addition of classical facades.

Although it was a busy High Street until the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Bradford Street today is primarily residential. Many buildings that were once shops and inns are now converted to domestic use. Indications of the area's once commercial prominence is still legible, through the retention of bay windows and shop fronts, however the street is a distinct contrast from the commercial core of Braintree town centre.

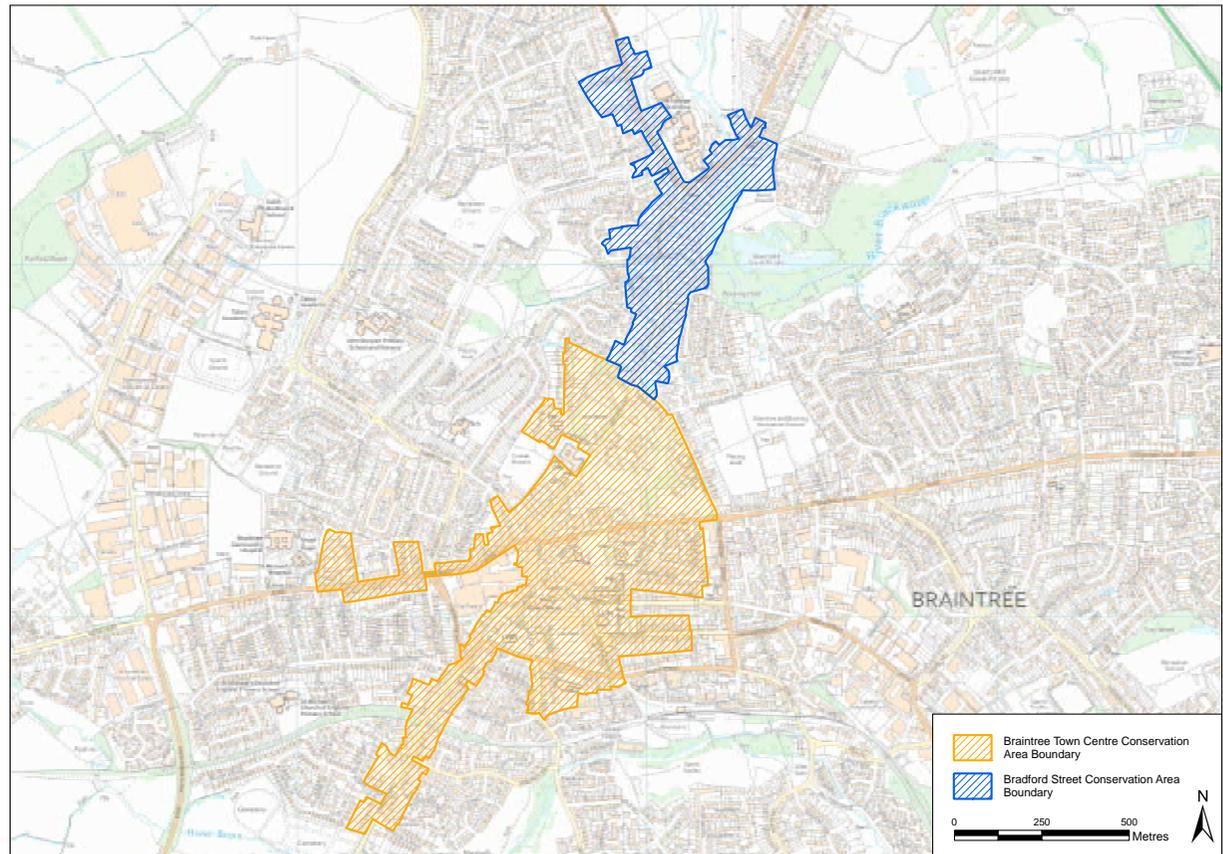


Figure 3 The Bradford Street Conservation Area (blue) shown in relationship to the Town Centre Conservation Area (orange)

## 2.2 Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview of the history of Bradford Street and the surrounding settlement.

### Prehistory (500000 BC – 43AD)

The Historic Environment Record indicates human occupation in the Braintree area from the Bronze and Iron Ages, with settlements at what is now the lower part of the town, near the River Brain. While there is evidence for prehistoric activity in and around Braintree, there is little prehistoric evidence yet found within the Bradford Street Conservation Area.

### Roman (43 – 410AD)

A small Roman town developed during this period which was confined within a triangular area between the main Roman roads of Stane Street (Rayne Road) and the Long Melford to Chelmsford route (London Road). Bradford Street follows part of this Roman road between Chelmsford and Long Melford. Roman funerary traditions dictated that cemeteries were located outside of settlement boundaries and a Roman Cremation vessel was found in a deep soakaway pit in the grounds of the former Kings Head Public House in Bradford Street. This suggests that Bradford Street was not occupied during the Roman period but lay outside of the settlement. The Roman town itself appears to have had two phases of development. The first century town was concentrated in the area of the modern Pierrefitte Way, with perhaps deliberate planning in the initial layout of the town. In the second and third centuries the town expanded into the Rayne Road and George Yard area, with a second phase of road building, truncating the original layout.

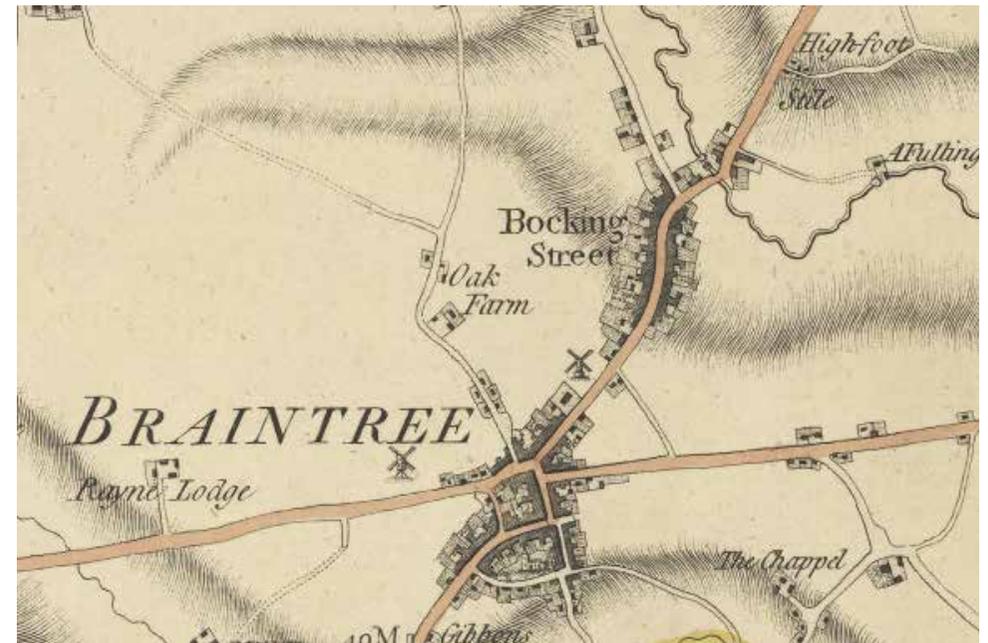


Figure 4 Chapman and Andre Map of Essex 1777, showing Braintree and Bradford Street, which is labelled as 'Bock-ing Street'



Figure 5 A fresco on the wall of the Council Chamber of Braintree Town Hall by Maurice Greiffenhagen, depicting King John granting Braintree a charter authorising a weekly market and an October fair. (Permission kindly given by Braintree District Museum Trust BDM 2005.34.3)

### Early Medieval (410-1066)

Evidence of Saxon occupation in Braintree has been recovered from the area to the south-west of the town, typically avoiding the reoccupation of the earlier abandoned Roman sites. St Michael's Church, situated in this part of Braintree, may have had a Saxon predecessor. In the late tenth century Braintree and Bocking formed part of the estates of the Saxon Thegn, Aetheric, who gifted his lands at Braintree and Bocking to the Bishops of London and Canterbury. The association between land at Bocking and Canterbury Cathedral lasted for many centuries.

### Medieval (1066 – 1540)

In 1199 King John granted Braintree a charter to hold a weekly market. Prior to Braintree being constituted a market-town, it was a hamlet within the hinterland of Rayne and the Parish itself was called Great Rayne. Bradford Street derives its name from the de Bradford Family, who held a manor to the east and whose name may have derived from the 'broad ford' over the River Blackwater at the north end of Bradford Street. A second manor, the Fryers, was centred on the area now occupied by the Old Court Hotel. The earliest known documented evidence of Bradford Street is found in records held at Canterbury, dating to the late fourteenth century.

Henry de Eastry, the Prior of Canterbury Cathedral, is recorded as establishing a Fulling Mill in 1303 in the location of the existing mill at the northern end of Bradford Street. The area had become one of the leading manufacturing centres of wool cloth, specialising in the production of lightweight weaves called Bays and heavier Says weaves.

Braintree was on the medieval pilgrim route between Bury St. Edmunds, Walsingham London and Canterbury. Inns for pilgrims were built in Braintree including the Hospital Chapel of St James', the site of which is believed to be near the former Six Bells on Bradford Street. As with many towns in East Anglia, great wealth was generated from the trade in selling and processing local sheep's wool. A number of Bradford Street's buildings from this period survive, though with later additions. Between Friars Lane and Woolpack Lane is a group of buildings, which include a wool hall. Number 75 Bradford Street is also thought to have a first-floor meeting room where wool was traded in the medieval period.

#### Post Medieval (1540 – 1901)

Protestant Flemish weavers arrived in the Braintree Area during the Tudor period and there remained a Flemish influence on the fortunes of Bradford Street for centuries to come. The wealthier clothiers of Braintree bought property in Bradford Street and often built tenement cottages in their back gardens. There were two periods that generated major wealth, resulting in greater investment in property: the first was in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, and the second in the eighteenth century. It is within these timeframes that many of the historic buildings in Bradford Street were built or re-fronted. However, the wool trade collapsed in Bocking at the end of the eighteenth century and thus so did the investment in property.

This collapse is evident in the number of Georgian buildings present in the street which have remained relatively untouched during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During the nineteenth century Braintree turned its manufacturing skills to processing silk, with the Courtauld and Warner families being prominent in this area of commerce, building large mills in the town centre. The low wages paid to workers during the Industrial Revolution may have prevented further investment in developing the dwellings on Bradford Street, with the result that its ancient buildings



Figure 6 Canes Mill, 1900 (© The Francis Frith Collection)



Figure 7 9 Bradford Street c.1950 taken looking north opposite the entrance to Woolpack Lane (© The Francis Frith Collection)



Figure 8 The Ordnance Survey Map surveyed between 1875 to 1876, published 1881



Figure 9 The Ordnance Survey Map, 1922

were preserved. Yet the market and retail trade of Braintree continued to grow and the introduction of the railway resulted in the establishment of engineering firms, such as Crittall Windows, Lake & Elliot and Bradbury's.

Braintree town centre developed during this new commercial era and has distinct character areas as a result. In contrast, the stalled development of Bradford Street in the eighteenth/early nineteenth century resulted in a character dominated by timber-framed vernacular or Georgian neo-classical buildings, with limited later alterations such as shop windows and a few late nineteenth and twentieth century infill dwellings. Architecturally, Bradford Street is thus more coherent than the rest of Braintree, owing to the dominance of vernacular buildings, render and painted facades and a consistent limited material palette.

In addition, the separation of Bocking and Bradford Street from the railway meant that the influence of the Victorian industrialisation of Braintree never spread to Bradford Street. Forges and large silk throwing mills were located in the centre of Braintree and Bradford Street's tightly packed building grain allowed for little expansion, meaning that the area has retained its strong linear formation.

#### Modern (1901 – present)

In the first half of the twentieth century Bradford Street became increasingly overlooked and forgotten, in terms of change and development. By the 1930s a number of the street's dilapidated buildings were considered to be hazardous and subsequently demolished, despite being included in the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments Survey of 1913.

The destruction of buildings on Bradford Street was narrowly avoided towards the end of the Second World war, when two American bombers collided over Braintree.



Figure 10 The Convent, 1900 (© The Francis Frith)



Figure 11 The view north, midway along Bradford Street c 1902 (©The Francis Frith Collection)



Figure 12 Braintree College in 1955 (© The Francis Frith Collection)



Figure 13 The wreckage of the B17 bomber, number 44-8198, near Bradford Street, 1945

The B-17 'Flying Fortresses' were on a sightseeing trip to Germany two days after VE Day when they collided on 10 May 1945, due to turbulence. The less severely damaged plane limped back to its base, while the tail of the other bomber had been severed from the main fuselage during the collision. The two parts of the plane crashed to the ground and the crew of 11 were all killed. The tail, with the rear gunner inside landed in a field at the end of Woolpack Lane, while the fuselage fell near to the Franciscan convent, at the north end of Bradford Street. By chance the buildings of Bradford Street were undamaged. A memorial to those killed was unveiled at Rivermead in 2015.

It was not until the mid to later decades of the twentieth century that the value of Bradford Street's historic buildings and unique character was understood and appreciated. Change came after the Second World War when Braintree College was built as an independent college to the north-west of Bradford Street in the late 1950s, on land belonging to Boleyn's Farm. The college merged with the Colchester Institute in 2010 and reduced in scale; the eastern portion of the college site is currently under redevelopment.

Although it was a busy High Street up until the nineteenth/early twentieth century, the buildings on Bradford Street have been largely converted to residential use. Adapted houses that were once shops and inns are now valued as exceptional historic dwellings. Hints of the area's historic commercial prominence remain, through the retention of bay windows and shop fronts, however the street's character is distinctly different to the commercial core of Braintree town centre. In the late twentieth century areas behind the buildings fronting Bradford Street were developed for new housing. Some of these cul-de-sacs and housing estates have been designed to have minimal impact upon Bradford Street's appearance. The River Mead area between Bradford Street and the River Blackwater was developed with housing in the late 1990s with the development receiving awards



for ensuring the design and feel was in keeping with the historic Bradford Street.

### 2.3 Revisions to the Boundary

The existing Conservation Area boundary around Bradford Street encompassed the buildings fronting the main thoroughfare, their rear garden areas and the alleys that run from the main street. Although it was a busy commercial High Street up until the early twentieth century, Bradford Street today is primarily residential. Clear visible evidence of the area's historic commercial nature remains, although this typologically contrasts with the commercial core of Braintree Town Centre.

As part of this review, the boundary for the former Braintree Town Centre and Bradford Street Conservation Area has been revised and the former Conservation Area divided into two separately designated areas. This reflects changing methodologies of good practice and provides a clearer strategy which acknowledges the uniqueness of Bradford Street's built environment. In terms of conservation area management, the separate designation for Bradford Street will encourage new development that complements the established grain, density, settlement pattern and character, unique to Bradford Street and Church Lane while making a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area.

#### Boundary Revision Area A

This area is the largest extension and is situated to the north-west of the Conservation Area, along Church Lane. The inclusion takes in the buildings of the historic farmstead of Boleyn's farm, on the north-eastern side of Church Lane. In addition, the eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings on the western side of Church Lane are worthy of inclusion. The extension incorporates seven designated heritage assets within the

Conservation Area in the form of five Grade II Listed buildings and two Grade II\* Listed buildings.

Due to the less dense and compact development of Church Lane, there has been some infill development in the twentieth century. The front garden areas of a group of late twentieth century dwellings (numbers 17 to 23) are also included in the revised boundary, to the north of the junction of Church lane and Coldnailhurst Avenue. Nos 17-23 were built in the later 1960s, No 17 dates from 1966. The buildings themselves are of limited architectural interest, but their green hedged property boundaries enhance the character of the Conservation Area. In addition, the grass verges and mature trees at the junction of Church Lane and Coldnailhurst Avenue provide open green space which enhances the Conservation Area's character and these too are included within the boundary.

The majority of the Colchester Institute site is not considered of sufficient interest to warrant inclusion. However, the brick-built boundary wall of the college site pre-dates its foundation and is likely to be nineteenth to early twentieth century in date. The recently approved application for the redevelopment of the Colchester Institute site includes the demolition of the wall and the widening of the footpath (19/01743/FUL). The wall is to be rebuilt, matching the existing wall and set back from its former position. The green space containing mature trees immediately behind and adjacent to the wall will also be retained as a public space. If appropriately built, the new wall should continue to make a positive contribution to the character of the area and form a link between this part of Bradford Street and the historic buildings on Church Lane and its inclusion within the Conservation Area boundary is recommended. The public space and mature trees behind the wall also make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area as part of its setting.

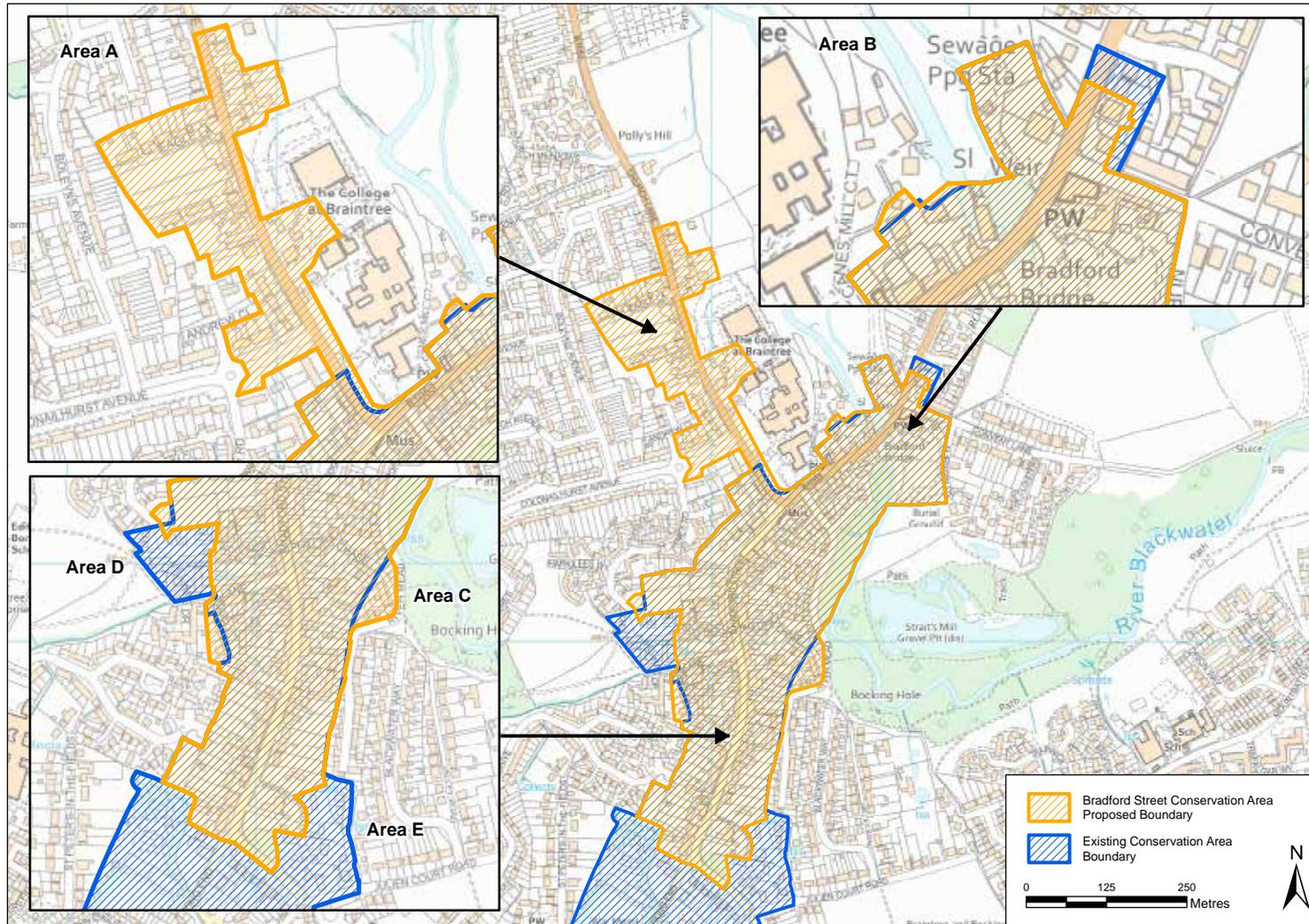


Figure 14 Map showing the changes to the Conservation Area boundary

### Boundary Revision Area B

This area is at the northern end of the Conservation Area where there has been some modern housing developed in recent years. Two newly built houses have been excluded from the Conservation Area, whilst retaining the two nineteenth-century, mock Tudor dwellings at the corner of Broad Road and Convent Lane. The two newly built houses have high quality detailing though they lack historic interest. By their positioning outside of the boundary, they would have a contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area. In addition, the boundary has been revised around the small cul-de-sac development at the northern end of Bradford Street, to the west of the Grade II\* Listed Bradford Mill. The previous boundary cut through newly built dwellings, so the repositioned boundary respects the existing boundary plots.

### Boundary Revision Area C

A small extension to the boundary has been made to include part of the River Mead development. The area was developed with housing in the late 1990s and received design awards for its response to the historic character of Bradford Street. The small area added to the Conservation Area is linked to Bradford Street by Philips Close, which corresponds to a former field or property boundary visible on late nineteenth-century mapping. There are visual corridors within this area, where the rear aspect of buildings and roofs of historic properties fronting Bradford street can be perceived and the sympathetic building forms and materials of the new development can be appreciated

### Boundary Revision Area D

This area is on the western edge of the Conservation Area, where modern development occurred during the late twentieth century. A small open green space



Figure 15 The brick wall, foliage and mature trees at the boundary of the former Braintree Campus of the Colchester Institute. The wall is to be rebuilt as part of application 19/01743/FUL, and the new wall is recommended for inclusion within the Conservation Area boundary



Figure 16 Two rendered, new build dwellings recommended for exclusion in Area B (left hand side of image)



Figure 17, The Folly, St James' Road, now within the boundary.



Figure 18 56 Church Lane, one of the designated heritage assets within Area A now within the Conservation Area

on St James Road has been included within the boundary, along with the brick Folly, on the rear wall of the walled garden and the curtilage of the Grade II Listed house at 87 Bradford Street. The brick folly is of historic interest and is curtilage listed, while the green space around the building provides an enhancement to the Conservation Area. To the south of this green space, the area of modern housing centred on Williams Drive has been excluded as it lacks special architectural interest.

An adjustment to the boundary has also occurred at Gresham Place, at the western end of Friars Lane on its southern side, where the boundary currently runs through the centre of a terraced group of dwellings. The adjustment is proposed to respect the existing boundary plots and include the dwellings. They are of recent construction, but they reflect and respond to the character of the Conservation area in terms of design and materials

### Boundary Revision Area E

The division between the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area and Bradford Street Conservation Area is located at the junction of Bradford Street, Bocking End and Courtauld Road. A group of late twentieth century dwellings, built within the former grounds of the Grade II Listed Little Bradfords, have been excluded from both Conservation Areas. Located on the corner of Bradford Street and Courtauld Road, the new dwellings are within the setting of the Listed building but they lack the special historic interest necessary for Conservation Area designation.



## **2.4 Designated Heritage Assets**

There are sixty-two listed buildings within the Conservation Area boundary. Of these, forty-nine are Grade II listed and thirteen are Grade II\* listed, there are no Grade I Listed buildings and no Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The high density of listed buildings within the Bradford Street Conservation Area is testament to the level of survival of historically significant buildings. All of the listed buildings and structures can be considered as key buildings within the Conservation Area which contribute to Bradford Street's overall significance and character. The designated heritage assets are listed within appendix 5.1 Listed Buildings.

## **2.5 Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of heritage value and significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.

Non-designated heritage assets can be identified during the planning process and through conservation area appraisals and reviews. The local authority may also compile a local list of buildings of heritage value. Braintree has a local list of roughly seventy heritage assets across the District, adopted by the planning committee in 2016 and 2017. Future work to assess the suitability of buildings for local listing would inevitably result in a more extensive list. Only one building in Bradford Street, Queens Meadow, has been included on the current local list.

Several unlisted buildings have been identified during this appraisal as making a beneficial contribution to the Conservation Area's character and can be considered to be non-designated heritage assets. This list is not exhaustive and other non-

designated heritage assets can be identified in future assessments and during the processing of planning applications. Key non-designated heritage assets or unlisted buildings within the Bradford Street Conservation Area are described in section 3.5.

Key non-designated heritage assets or unlisted buildings within the Bradford Street Conservation Area are described in section 3.5.

## **2.6 Heritage at Risk**

At present there are no listed buildings that are severely neglected or at serious risk of decay due to dereliction. None of Bradford Street's Listed buildings are currently included on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register.

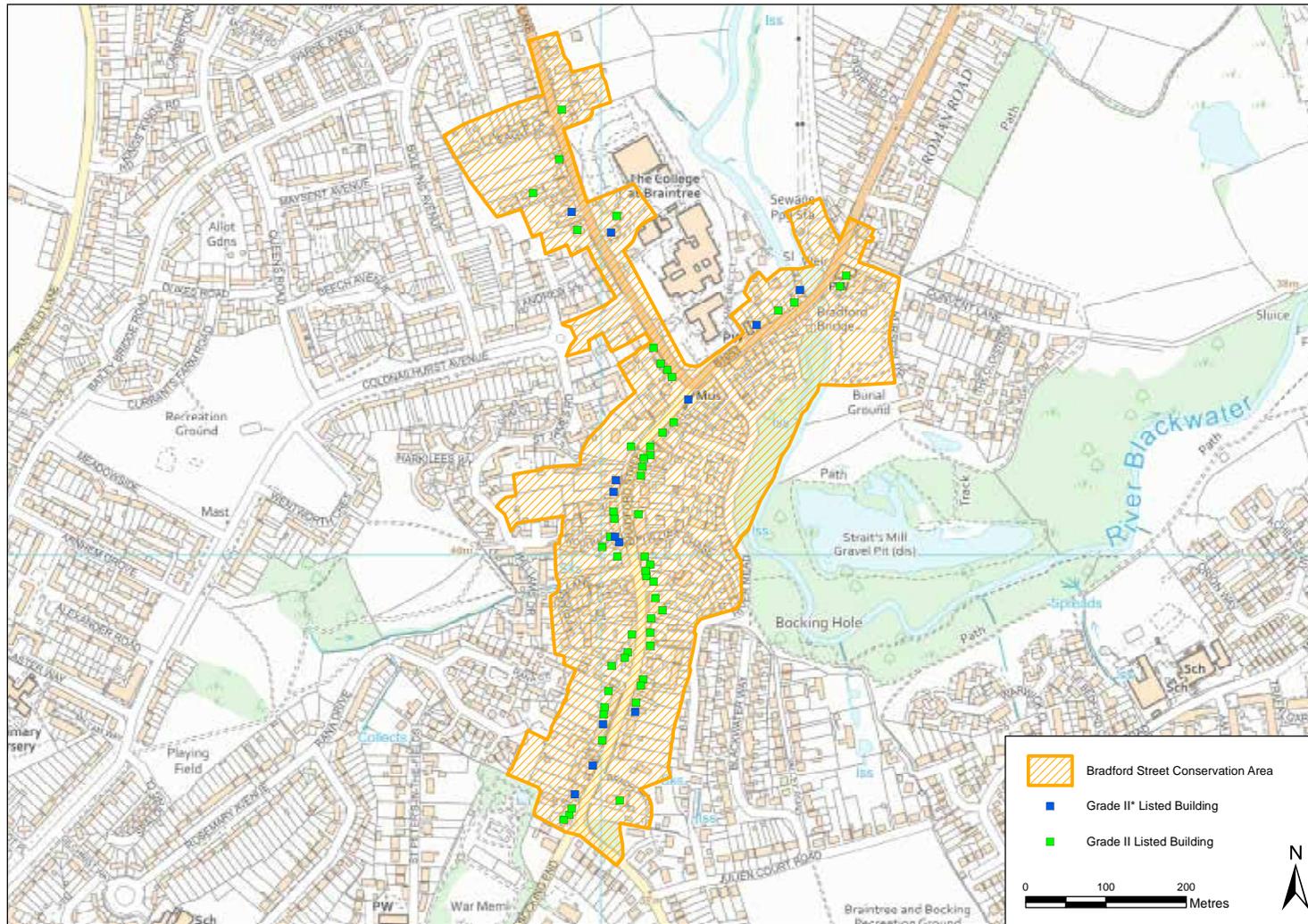


Figure 19 Map showing the listed buildings within Bradford Street Conservation Area

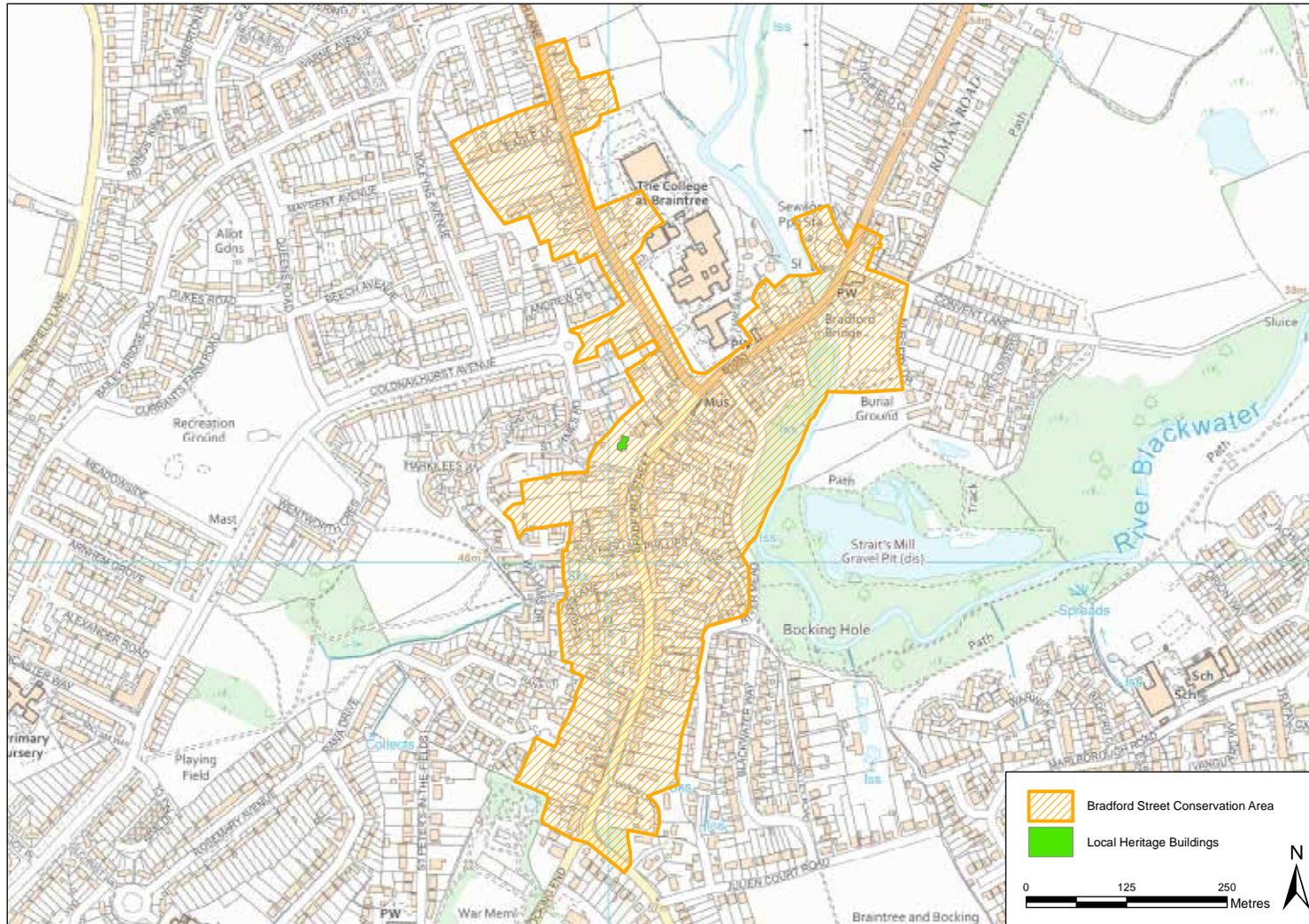


Figure 20 Map showing the location of Local Heritage Buildings within Bradford Street Conservation Area



## **2.7. Archaeological Potential**

Prehistoric settlement and activity would have favoured the low lying, fertile river valleys and floodplains within the Conservation Area for access to food and resources. Palaeolithic flint tools have been recovered from the River Blackwater which crosses the Conservation Area at the northern extent and flows along part of the eastern boundary to the rear of Bradford Street. The potential for prehistoric remains within the lower lying areas of the Conservation Area are high, especially within the river valley and less disturbed areas along Rivermead.

Limited excavations have taken place within the Conservation Area. No evidence of the Roman road has been found along the line of Bradford Street, however a potential roadside ditch was identified closer to the river which may suggest the Roman road had once followed a more direct path from the town. There is potential for further cremations to be preserved along the route of the road.

Whilst medieval and post-medieval settlement evidence is more likely to be sited along the street frontage, the backyard areas will contain evidence for ancillary activity, such as wells, cesspits, yards and middens, as well as small scale industrial activity. The soil-type is conducive to the survival of bone and ceramics, and there is the potential for significant paleoenvironmental deposits associated with the River Blackwater. Waterlogged deposits can also be anticipated within deeper features such as wells and cesspits.

## 3. Assessment of Significance

### 3.1 Summary

#### Bradford Street

While Braintree Town developed around its central marketplace, Bradford Street evolved as ribbon development along the northern route from Braintree. The area has retained its strong linear form and a coherent historic character, within a dense concentration of buildings. There is a concentration of sixty-two Listed buildings within the Conservation Area

The commercial activity that stimulated the growth of Bradford Street in the medieval era was centred around the woollen cloth trade. At least one wool hall, where the commodity was traded, survives within the group of buildings between Friars Lane and Woolpack Lane. Many of Bradford Street's listed buildings originated as a result of the wool trade, housing wealthy merchants. Within the alleyways to the rear of these houses there is a surviving utilitarian and functional character; workshops and warehouses were positioned to the rear of the houses they served.

Generally, buildings on Bradford Street have wide frontages and extend considerably to the rear, forming generous, but narrow burgage plots. Simple double pitched and gabled roofs are common, often running parallel to the street, though seventeenth and eighteenth century gambrel roofs can also be found, with gables facing the street.

A significant phase of development occurred in the Georgian period when a number of earlier timber framed buildings were re-fronted or new dwellings built. There was some nineteenth century development in the form of brick-built cottages and workshops along the alleyways. Over time the development of the area continued to spread north to Convent Hill and north-west to Church Lane, though in these areas there is less density to the buildings. Convent Hill crosses the River Blackwater at



Figure 21 The view south from the entrance to Phillips Chase



Figure 22 The view south from 92 Bradford Street



Figure 23 The view north from the entrance to Woolpack Lane

the site of the eighteenth-century Bradford Mill. At the end of Convent Hill, and close to the northern boundary of the Conservation Area, is the convent of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. The convent building was opened in 1898 to the designs of John Francis Bentley and it has a large garden adjacent to the River Blackwater.

Development along Church Lane began in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, with an outlying farmstead and cottages. By the nineteenth century further dwellings and terraced houses, some in long plots had begun to develop. There was a similar pattern to that seen on Bradford Street, with narrow alleys running west from Church Lane behind the houses, though the eastern side remained in agricultural use.

The significance of the Bradford Street Conservation Area is drawn from its coherent historic character and its aesthetic value, with a street pattern and buildings that are centuries old. This historic character has remained unchanged despite successive periods of economic growth and decline. The early buildings, the alteration of buildings, their change in use and the construction of new dwellings provides tangible evidence for the social, cultural, economic and architectural development of the area, which can be easily appreciated and understood.

### 3.2 Character Analysis

#### Bradford Street

Bradford Street was once a busy commercial centre, separate from the town centre and its market. The Street had large dwellings, shops and inns, while small workshops were located behind buildings fronting the main street, accessible via alleyways running off Bradford Street. These rear areas continued to provide space for small



Figure 24 The view north on Bradford Street



Figure 25 A lamp on the Bridge over the River Blackwater



Figure 26 48 Bradford Street



Figure 27 An eighteenth-century door, 37 Bradford Street



Figure 28 Phillips Chase



Figure 29 Former nineteenth century printing works behind 85 Bradford Street



Figure 30 Woolpack Lane



Figure 31 Friars Lane

scale industrial manufacturing into the early twentieth century, in contrast to the more imposing buildings fronting the street. While they have been adapted to residential use, many utilitarian buildings in these areas retain an industrial or modest character. Some alleys such as Phillips Chase to the east and Woolpack Lane to the west have become routes into Bradford Street from areas of modern housing development but they still retain their historic character.

Bradford Street provides evidence for the development of architectural styles and building traditions, with numerous timber framed buildings, Georgian and nineteenth century dwellings and occasionally some twentieth century infill development. Of the earliest building examples, exposed close-timber studding is evident, along with a fine example of a medieval window on the south elevation of the Grade II\* Listed building at number 75 Bradford Street. Jettied first-floors, original decorative pargeted plasterwork and carved timbers can also be found.

During the eighteenth century, brick facades were sometimes added to earlier timber-framed buildings, to give them a fashionable refurbishment. Examples can of this trend be found on Bradford Street, such as the Grade II\* Listed Maysent House at 89 Bradford Street. Originally constructed in the sixteenth century, the building became a substantial coaching inn, called The Queen's Head. Later the building was refaced in the eighteenth century, with plastered brickwork and a parapet, dentilled cornice and quoining were added. There are numerous Georgian pedimented architraves, with columns, pilasters, over-door lights and architraves for doors fronting the street, and a fine example of a shell canopy.

The former commercial buildings of Bradford Street have been adapted in recent decades and the area is now primarily residential, yet the former character has been retained. The change occurred prior to the introduction of modern shopfronts with large panels of glazing and generally, only historic shop fronts, with high-quality

joinery and bay windows, are to be found. Occasionally historic shop windows were inserted into much older buildings in a less than sympathetic way, such as the example at 98 Bradford Street.

### Church Lane and the northern end of Bradford Street (Convent Hill)

Church Lane branches off to the north-west from the northern end of Bradford Street. Although the earliest historic buildings within Church Lane are of similar date to those of Bradford Street, the road's character differs slightly, in that it lacks the same close-packed form of linear development. While Bradford Street formed the historic route to the north, Church Lane provided a north-western route to the outlying historic settlement of Bocking and it takes its name from Bocking's ancient St Mary's Church.

The northern part of Bradford Street is also known as Convent Hill. The road continues north from Bradford Street and crosses the River Blackwater, after which the road name changes to Broad Road. The river has been the site of a mill since 1303, when Henry de Eastry, the Prior of Canterbury Cathedral established a fulling mill at the site. Convent Hill has a less dense form of linear development than Bradford Street, though it shares the historic association with the wool trade and the processing of wool. The existing mill was built in the eighteenth century as a flour mill and the area close to the river retains this historic industrial character. There are late nineteenth century brick built terraced houses on Convent Hill along with modern, rendered, dwellings in a traditional style with plain tiled roofs, which contribute to the area's character.

Historically, Church Lane and Convent Hill lacked the condensed commercial and high-status residential development found in Bradford Street. As a thoroughfare on the periphery of Braintree, Church Lane's commercial activity was initially focussed on agricultural production. The farmstead at Boleyn's Farm was established in 1625



Figure 32 Church Lane



Figure 33 Church Lane



Figure 34 Boleyn's



Figure 35 The eighteenth-century Bradford Mill



Figure 36 Convent Hill, looking north



Figure 40 Close studding 114-118 Bradford Street



Figure 39 The jettied Dragon House, 41 Bradford Street



Figure 42 The Old Court House 31 Bradford Street



Figure 41 Decorative carving 114-118 Bradford Street

when Joseph Saville bought Boleyn's field and began to build the now Grade II\* Listed timber-framed and plastered house. The farmstead was on the eastern side of Church Lane, with agricultural fields to the south and north. Outlying cottages were built along both Church Lane and Convent Hill in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and these can be seen in the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 [Figure 4].

Further development occurred on both routes during the nineteenth century with short terraces of dwellings or modest semi-detached houses. Along Church Lane

two narrower lanes were established running west, Eagle Lane and Faggot Yard, giving access to areas behind the properties fronting the thoroughfare. This is a similar form of development to that seen in Bradford Street, though on Church Lane it is more recent. Historically, the eastern side of Church Lane was in agricultural use and part of the Boleyn's Farm. Its nineteenth century boundary wall survived the sale of the land and the development of the Braintree College in the 1950s. Although it is in need of repair, the brick wall, and the mature trees behind it, make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

### 3.3 Land Usage

Bradford Street slopes to the northeast and divides at a junction to form Church Lane and Convent Hill. This section of the Conservation Area is predominantly residential with few commercial premises. However, the historic commercial function can be easily appreciated in the form and typology of the existing buildings. The building grain is tighter along Bradford Street, becoming slightly more dispersed in Church Lane and Convent Hill. The houses on Bradford Street are generally more generously proportioned.

### 3.4 Public Realm

Buildings in the Conservation Area generally follow the line of the road, with most properties fronting directly onto the pavement and few having land between their front doors and the street. Bradford Street and its pavement vary in width; there are often areas where granite setts have been used in the pavement surface, enhancing the street's character. There is a wide area to the north of Woolpack Lane and Phillips Chase and here in particular the granite setts to the pavements are extensive. The public realm is largely confined to pavements and street signs and parking is generally on the road and pavements. There is little in the way of large public spaces within the historic streets, although the area where Bradford Street divides into Church Lane and Convent Hill provides a modest public space. This is a busy junction with a roundabout, small piazza, bench and flowerbeds in front of the former Six Bells public house (now residential) at 129-135 Bradford Street. The alleys running off Bradford Street are generally pedestrianised. There is also a footpath that runs west from Bradford Street to St James' Road, an area of late twentieth century development. The footpath has grass verges and a visually interesting undulating brick wall, known as a 'crinkle-crankle' wall Figure 46].



Figure 43 Faggot Yard



Figure 44 Eagle Lane



Figure 45 The small public piazza area in front of the former Six Bells at the junction of Bradford Street and Church Lane



Figure 46 The footpath from Bradford Street to St James Street, looking east, with the crinkle-crankle wall on the left



Figure 47 The junction of Bradford Street, Church Lane and Convent Hill



Figure 48 A lamp on the bridge



Figure 49 The River Blackwater



Figure 50 The Gospel Hall, undergoing conversion in 2020

### 3.5 Landscaping and Open Spaces

In the condensed historic development pattern within the Conservation Area there is little in the way of landscaped open spaces, nevertheless there are some spaces of importance. The network of footpaths and alleyways within the Conservation Area are frequently used pedestrian routes, which provide access to the main thoroughfares. The junction of Bradford Street, Church Lane and Convent Hill provides an important open space within the Conservation Area, where the built form opens out. In addition, the banks of the River Blackwater and the weir can be appreciated from the bridge adjacent to Bradford Mill. The Convent here also has an extensive private garden, through which the river flows.

### 3.6 Contribution by Key Un-Listed Buildings

The following buildings within the Conservation Area are identified here as being of heritage value, and some entries are illustrated with photographs. This is not a comprehensive list of non-designated heritage assets and other buildings identified during the planning process, may be considered as non-designated heritage assets in the future.

The former **Gospel Hall** [Figure 50] has recently been converted to residential use having received planning permission in May 2019. It is an early twentieth century building, built for the Assemblies of the Plymouth Brethren. As typical for this twentieth century Christian movement the building is fairly plain and understated. The building retains a high proportion of its original features and is of aesthetic and local communal value, making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

**37A Bradford Street** [Figure 51] is a late nineteenth century, single-storey, mock-

Tudor dwelling, with a plain-tiled roof, plastered exterior and exposed timber studwork. The original leaded windows are particularly fine. It is of aesthetic value and makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area

**Number 22, the Red House** [Figure 53] is a two-storey residential building with a walled front garden facing the street and probably early twentieth century in date. The dwelling has high-quality timber windows and doors and a highly ornate porch. The building, along with the trees and hedges of the front garden, make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

**Number 57 Bradford Street** is a three-storey dwelling, constructed in Gault brick with timber sash windows that feature flat lintels of rubbed brick and is probably early nineteenth century in date. There is a smaller two storey extension on its northern side, which is a later addition, probably dating to the later nineteenth century that has decorative brickwork (now painted over) including mock crenellations above the ground floor level. The building is of architectural, aesthetic and historic interest and makes a beneficial contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

**Number 61 Bradford Street** is a two-storey building and former shop with a rendered exterior, scored to resemble ashlar blocks. There are two fine bay windows to the front, formerly shop windows, and three sixteen pane sash windows at first floor level. The building is of architectural and aesthetic interest and contributes positively to the Conservation Area's character.

**Numbers 58-66 Bradford Street** form a short terrace of two-storey dwellings, with a nameplate on the façade displaying the name May Cottages and the date 1895. They are built in brick with a plain clay tiled roof, many original timber sash windows survive at first floor. Number 58 on the corner of Bradford Street and Philips Close served as a shop and retains a timber shopfront. The dwellings have modest front



Figure 51 37A Bradford Street



Figure 53 22 Bradford Street, the Red House



Figure 52 May Cottages, dating from 1895



Figure 54 Numbers 9-15 Woolpack Lane



Figure 55 Queens Meadow, Bradford Street



Figure 56 The former Six Bells Public House

gardens and all but number 58 have a tiled canopy or porch that runs continuously along the façade. The terrace is of aesthetic value and makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

**Numbers 4, 8 and 10 Woolpack Lane** form a terrace of two-storey, brick-built nineteenth century cottages with a band of decorative ceramic tiles and timber sash windows.

**Numbers 9-15 Woolpack Lane** [Figure 54] are a terrace of nineteenth century, brick-built cottages with original timber sash windows and slate roofs. Together with Numbers 4, 8 and 10, this group provide notable character to the Woolpack Lane

entrance to the Conservation Area and the main thoroughfare of Bradford Street.

The large house at **Queens Meadow** is an early twentieth century dwelling, set back within a large plot, behind an earlier brick wall, which fronts the street. The building is included on Braintree's current local list. It has architectural details of interest, such as leaded windows with decorative surrounds and a rounded brick arch over the door.

The former **Six Bells Public House** [Figure 56] is an early twentieth century building in a prominent location, on the site of an earlier inn. The building has been converted to residential use and retains a distinctive architectural character, despite the addition of modern uPVC windows.



Figure 57 The former Spread Eagle Public House



Figure 58 Number 4, Broad Road



Figure 59 Boleyn's Cottage



Figure 60 Agricultural buildings of the former Boleyn's farmstead

The former **Spread Eagle Pubic House** [Figure 57], and the adjacent buildings at numbers 67-73 Church Lane, are of some antiquity and are included on the Ordnance Survey mapping surveyed in 1875 to 1876. They are rendered with clay tiles and many of the buildings appear to have retained their timber sash windows, although not the former Spread Eagle.

**Boleyn's Cottage** at 58 Church Lane is a distinctive building of some antiquity and formed part of the farmstead complex of Boleyn's farm, bearing a close resemblance to the Grade II Boleyn's Farm at 48 Church Lane (see Figure 28). The building is rendered and has a plain tiled, gambrel roof with the gable facing the road. Like Boleyn's Farm, it may be eighteenth century in date. The cottage is to the north of a pair of weatherboarded agricultural buildings and together with the cottage the group probably once formed the farmyard of Boleyn's Farm. Although the arrangement of the yard has been much altered by the addition of modern dwellings, the cottage and weatherboarded buildings provide clear evidence of the past agriculture nature of the area and make a beneficial contribution to the Conservation Area and the understanding of its development. This is also one of the few sites in the conservation area which is of agricultural derivation in terms of use.

**Numbers 1 and 4 Broad Road and Number 1 Convent Lane** are situated the northern end of the Conservation Area. They form a group of striking buildings at the Conservation Area's entrance and are late nineteenth century in date, built in a mock-Tudor style. They are brick-built, with two of the three having timber studwork and plaster infill to the first floor. They have Tudor-styled chimneys, decorative barge boards, diamond leaded windows and occasionally a Gothic arch to a window.

### 3.7 Traditional/Local Building Materials

Common traditional construction and finishing materials within the Conservation Area include smooth render, hardwood timber framing and red brick in Flemish bond. Brick-built boundary walls are also common with flint occasionally used. Handmade, plain clay tiles with a double camber are frequently used on roofs, with slate used on single storey or ancillary buildings. Render is painted a variety of colours including white, cream or off-white, light blue and pink. More subdued and earthy colours are also found such as rust orange, ochre, terracotta and sage green.

Timber, feather-edged weatherboarding can be found in the alleys and areas behind the main thoroughfares, where historically more industrial activities took place. This is often painted black, with occasional white or light grey examples. In the area of the Bradford Mill (also known as Cane's Mill) adjacent to the Blackwater River, white weatherboarding predominates.

### 3.8 Local Details

The Conservation Area has many character defining architectural details, examples of which are on the following pages. Historic decorative timberwork can be found on bargeboards, door-surrounds, timber wall plates and rails.

There are many fine examples of historic windows within the Conservation Area and there are numerous eighteenth and nineteenth century sash windows with original glass panes. More rare horizontal sliding sash windows can also be found. Bay windows of former shopfronts are also common on Bradford Street. Nineteenth century embellishments include decorative tiles and brickwork. There are also fine examples of eighteenth and nineteenth century iron railings.



Figure 61 A nineteenth century shopfront at 15 Bradford Street



Figure 62 Exposed framing at 35 and 37 Church Lane, dating to the early sixteenth century



Figure 63 Bay window shopfronts added to a refaced sixteenth to seventeenth century building, 54-56 Bradford Street.



Figure 64 An eighteenth-century bay shop window on posts with a canopy in seventeenth century building at 92 Bradford Street



Figure 65 Top row, left to right: Pedimented doorcase with fanlight and columns; Plain Clay Tiles; Flemish brickwork in red brick; Pebble dash with sash windows; Weatherboarding painted black at first floor level. Bottom row, left to right: shell surround on a door; Classical doorcase; Example of pink and ochre render; Flintwork; Gault brick in a Flemish bond



Figure 66 Top row, left to right: Nineteenth century bay window; Medieval window; Decorative bargeboards; Example of slate and clay roof tiles. Bottom row, left to right: Decorative bargeboard; Intricately carved external timber framing; Iron railings; Inset decorative clay tiles; Horizontal sliding sash windows.

### 3.9 Views

This appraisal includes a selection of key views, there may be other views of significance. Any proposals for development within the Conservation Area, or its environs, should consider the views below and any others which may be relevant or highlighted as part of a tailored assessment of that proposal.

Due to its dense, linear development the thoroughfare of Bradford Street affords key views in both directions along its length. The views up and down Bradford Street are significant and moving along the road in either direction provides kinetic views where the historic architectural character and historic significance of the Conservation Area can be experienced and appreciated. To illustrate this, seven key viewpoints are described below, although there are equally important viewpoints elsewhere on the street. A map showing the location of these viewpoints is included on the following page as [Figure 70].

**Viewpoint 1.** The view north from the southern entry point to the Conservation Area, at the junctions of Bocking End, Courtauld Road and Bradford Street is noteworthy. The road slopes gently downwards to the north and the character of the Conservation Area and its historic buildings can be easily appreciated

**Viewpoint 2.** Looking north and south from a central point on Bradford Street, it is possible to view the thoroughfare, lined with historic buildings. The significance and character of the Conservation Area can be appreciated.

**Viewpoint 3.** Similarly, looking north from a central point on Bradford Street the unique historic character of the Conservation Area can be appreciated. The curved route of the street is also evident as Bradford Street slopes gently down to the north, towards the River Blackwater.



Figure 67 Viewpoint 1, looking north from the southern end of Bradford Street



Figure 68 Viewpoint 2, looking south along Bradford Street

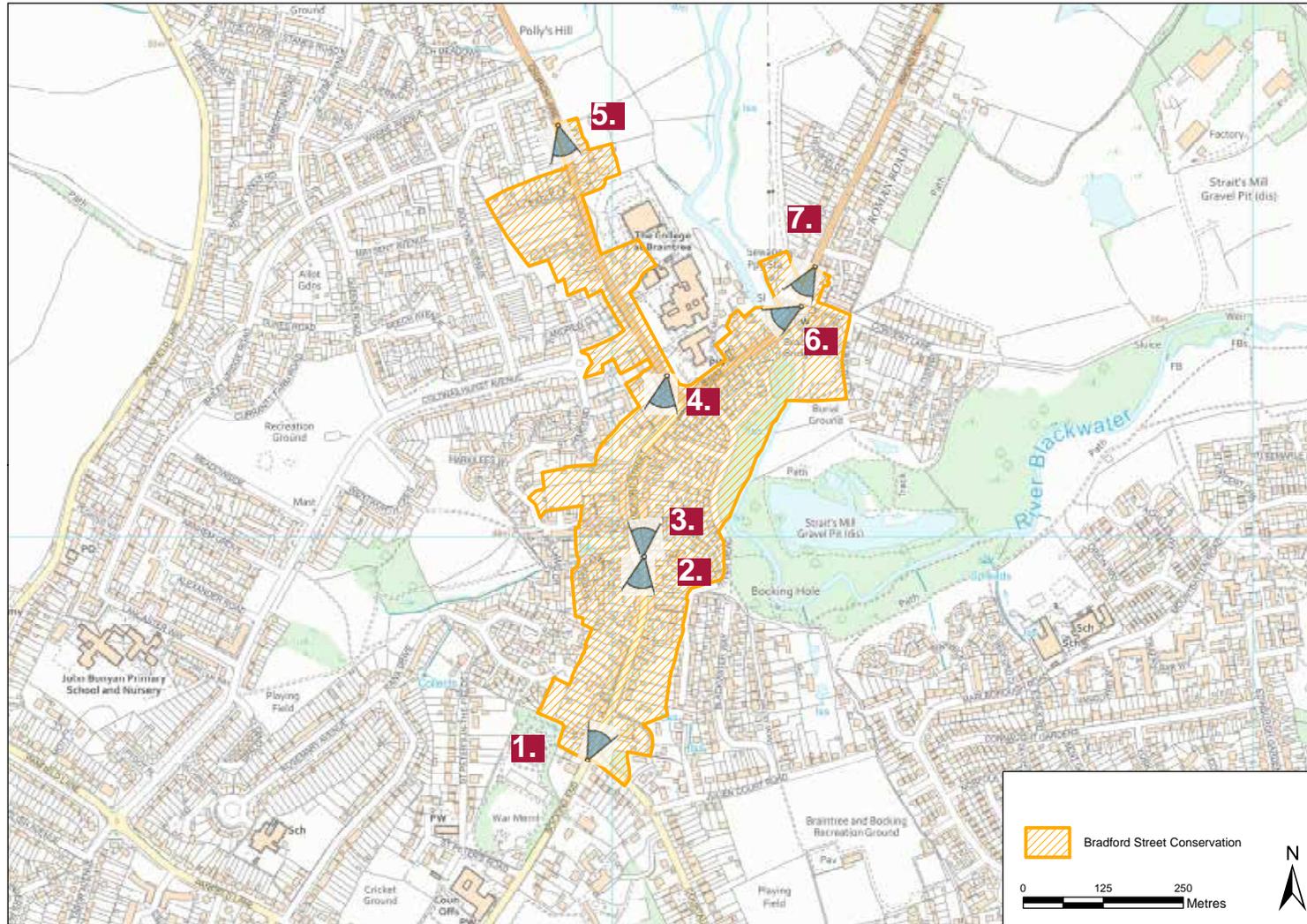


Figure 70 Map showing the location of viewpoints 1 to 7

**Viewpoint 4.** The junction of Bradford Street, Convent Hill and Church Lane is an important and well used intersection. There is the sense of more open, wider space here, compared to the more densely packed buildings of Bradford Street. The view south-west towards Bradford Street is enhanced by the timber-framed Grade II\* Listed building at number 114-118 Bradford Street. There is also the small public piazza in front of the former Six Bells public house, which allows wider views in this area.

**Viewpoint 5.** The north-western approach along Church Lane provides views into the Conservation Area. The historic character of the area can be easily perceived. The straightness of Church Lane at this point also allows long distance views into the Conservation Area.

**Viewpoint 6.** The River Blackwater at the northern end of the Conservation Area constitutes a natural break in the built environment and provides a sense of space. The bridge over the river characterises this northern entry point into the Conservation Area and also allows an important view of the Grade II\* Listed Bradford Mill.

**Viewpoint 7.** The Conservation Area's distinct character can be appreciated at northern approach. The view into the area at the junction with Broad Road and Convent Lane. The Grade II Listed Convent, the bridge and the mature trees on the banks of the River Blackwater can be seen in views looking south into the Conservation Area.



Figure 72 Viewpoint 2, looking north



Figure 74 The view west, looking over the bridge toward the mill



Figure 76 Viewpoint 7, looking south toward the Conservation Area



Figure 77 Viewpoint 4, looking south west toward Bradford Street at the junction with Church Lane



Figure 78 Viewpoint 5, looking south west along Church Lane

### 3.10 Setting of the Conservation Area

Historically, the setting of Bradford Street, Convent Hill and Church Lane was agrarian in nature, with open fields under cultivation to the north and west. This historic setting with a more open agrarian character partially survives to the north, along Broad Road and Church Lane, although modern residential development has occurred. New development in the twentieth century has also altered the open and rural character of the setting to the west of the Conservation Area, to residential.

To the east, Bradford Street and its backlands were bounded by the River Blackwater in the River Meads area. Modern development here has altered the setting's character, though the design and layout were carefully considered to be more in keeping with the character of Bradford Street. Beyond the new development, the river still forms an important element in the setting of the Conservation Area.

Historically, to the south of Bradford Street there was a short gap in development, before the edge of the market town of Braintree. This area was initially infilled by development, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, generally with civic and community structures and landscapes rather than residential development. These included Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens, Howard Hall (Masonic Lodge), the Bocking War Memorial and the H.M.S Kite Memorial. The tradition of municipal development in this area continued in the 1980s with the construction of Causeway House which accommodate Braintree District Council.



Figure 79 The view north, looking out of the Conservation Area



Figure 80 The Rivermead development, east of the Conservation Area



Figure 81 The War Memorial in the Public Gardens, north of the Conservation Area



## 4. Management Proposals

There are a wide range of issues facing the Bradford Street Conservation Area, many of which share common themes. This section seeks to recommend management proposals which address these issues in both the short and long term.

### 4.1 Positive Management: Short term

The first set of proposals relate to positive management and focus on good practice and improved ways of working with the local planning authority. These are generally low cost and can be implemented within a short timeframe, typically within one or two years.

#### Enforcement

Where the necessary permission has not been sought for alterations, such as advertising signage and building alterations which are not contained within the General Permitted Development Order, the Local Planning Authority's powers of enforcement should be considered. This could assist in reinstating any lost character or architectural features which has resulted in a negative cumulative effect on the Conservation Area, as well as avoiding a precedence being set for similar, uncharacteristic works.

#### General Maintenance: Public Realm and Highways

Through agreement between Local Authority teams and other landowners on standard good practice within the Conservation Area, relevant long-term goals can be set to promote good design within the public realm, such as avoiding excessive road markings or signage and agreeing a standard street furniture. This would help to ensure consistency over time as elements are introduced or replaced. The result

would have a long-term positive impact on the Bradford Street Conservation Area and ensure the preservation of characteristic features.

#### Planning Applications, Heritage Statements, Heritage Impact Assessments and Archaeological Assessments

In accordance with the NPPF (Para.194), applicants must describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by their proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

All applications within the Conservation Area and immediate setting require an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement. Any application without a Heritage Statement should not be validated.

Paragraph 206 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. In order to assess the suitability of a proposed scheme within the Conservation Area or its immediate setting, a full planning application is necessary, so as to be compliant with Paragraph 206. Outline applications lack the necessary detail of design and therefore the appearance and suitability of the development and the impact on the heritage assets cannot be fully understood.

The key views analysed within this document are in no way exhaustive. The impact of any addition, alteration or removal of buildings, structures, tree's or highways on



key views should be considered to aid decision making. This includes development outside the Conservation Area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2019). Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated.

Applicants for new development or alterations to buildings within the Conservation Area may wish to reference the guidance document published by Essex County Council which is available to download at: [http://www.placeservices.co.uk/media/108286/ds17\\_5751\\_place-services\\_historical-buildings-guidance\\_01.pdf](http://www.placeservices.co.uk/media/108286/ds17_5751_place-services_historical-buildings-guidance_01.pdf)

### **Local Heritage List**

A Local List formally identifies buildings and structures of local architectural and/or historic interest, and these are considered to be 'non-designated heritage assets' under the provisions of the NPPF. Local Lists can be beneficial in ensuring the upkeep and maintenance of historic buildings that contribute to the character of the settlements. The exercise of creating a Local List would also facilitate a greater understanding of the area and could be utilised as a public engagement strategy to improve awareness and understanding.

### **Neutral Elements**

The dilution of positive buildings amongst those which are neutral leads to an underwhelming and indistinctive overall character.

Braintree Council should not allow for the quality of design to be 'averaged down' by the neutral and negative elements of the built environment. Where possible, officers

must seek schemes which enhance the built environment and look to conserve and reinstate historic features. It is also considered that poor-quality or unsympathetic schemes should not be allowed, both within the Conservation Area and its setting.

### **New Development**

There are some opportunities within the Conservation Area, and its setting, for development which makes a positive contribution to character. To be successful, any future development needs to be mindful of the local character of the Conservation Area, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.

#### **Successful new development will:**

- Respect important views;
- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings;
- Use materials and building methods which as high in quality of those used in existing buildings; and
- Create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of their setting.

#### **Braintree District Council should guide development in a positive manner by:**

- Engaging with developers at an early stage through the Pre-Application Process to ensure modern development is high quality in design, detail and materials.
- Considering the referral of medium-large scale development schemes to a Design Review (or similar) so that new buildings, additions and alterations can



be designed in sympathy with the established character of the area. The choice of materials and the detailed design of building features are important in making sure it's appropriate to the Conservation Area.

- Seeking opportunities for developers to make a positive contribution to the wider historic environment through Section 106 Agreements.

### Public resources

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publishing of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An introductory summary of the Conservation Area Appraisal in the form of a leaflet or factsheet(s) is a simple way to communicate the significance of the area and ensure members of the public are aware of the implications of owning a property within a conservation area.

In addition, a maintenance guide would assist property owners in caring for their property in an appropriate manner. A single Good Practice Design Guide on standard alterations such as signage, shopfronts, windows, doors, rainwater goods, boundaries and roof extensions, will ensure inappropriate development does not continue to be the accepted norm. A Design Guide should:

- Provide guidance on appropriate design and materials for windows and doors and encouraging the retention or reinstatement of historic glazing patterns and door designs and the use of appropriate materials.
- Provide guidance on the traditional form of boundary treatments and encourage their reinstatement where they have been removed or compromised.

- Provide guidance on traditional roofing materials and encouraging the reinstatement of good quality slate and handmade clay tiles with the removal of unsympathetic modern materials such as interlocking concrete tiles.
- Provide and update guidance relating to signage. This should address appropriate size and design, the extent and amount and associated lighting. All further planning applications and advert consent applications should be required to comply, where possible, with this standard, designed to help to restore the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Poor maintenance leads to the deterioration of the fabric of the built environment and results in a loss of architectural details. Improved awareness of simple maintenance and repair would be conducive with the preservation of the character and built heritage of Bradford Street Conservation Area. At present there is a single interpretation board, within the Conservation Area, aimed at improving understanding and awareness. This should continue to be maintained and updated where appropriate to ensure awareness and establish the identity of Bradford Street as a historic settlement.

The Friends of Bradford Street can provide advice, particularly on issues such as traffic, Neighbourhood Watch and raising the profile of Bradford Street. They can be contacted through their website via the link below:

<https://www.bradfordstreet.co.uk/>

### Shop Frontages

There is potential to raise awareness of the importance of the surviving historic shopfronts and traditional signage and the contribution they make to the special interest of the Conservation Area. Many historic shopfronts have been retained and



the activity in the area changed from commercial to residential. The production of information leaflets or web pages could be considered, which would provide guidance for homeowners on upkeep and maintenance of historic frontages. Article 4 Directions could also be used to prevent loss of historic shop frontages.

### **Tall Buildings**

The former Braintree College building was constructed in the setting of the Conservation Area, at a time when the impact of tall buildings on the character of historic townscapes was little appreciated. As a result, the building has a harmful and dominant presence which is highly noticeable from certain viewpoints. However, the building is due for demolition, which will enhance the Conservation Area's setting. Yet the potential for the future construction of buildings and structures of an inappropriate height within the setting of the Conservation Area still remains. Any such scheme should be considered in terms of the NPPF, the level of harm to heritage assets and the balance of public benefit.

### **Tree Management**

In line with the Town and Country Planning Act, all trees in Conservation Areas are afforded the same protection as a Tree Preservation Order. Trees which have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm, at a height of 1.5m from the ground, may not be felled or lopped unless six weeks written notice has been given to the Council. Six weeks' notice has to be given to the council under S211 of the Act.

It is also considered that any prominent trees, street trees, and trees with amenity value on private land throughout the Conservation Area should be monitored and maintained appropriately. This will ensure the symmetry along tree lined streets and visual rhythm, as well as maintain the green character of the area. Any tree that

makes a positive contribution to the area should be retained, maintained and, if felled (only if dead, dying or dangerous) replaced with an appropriate new tree.

### **Twentieth Century Premises**

There are some twentieth century developments which make a neutral or negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area. There is scope to enhance these sites and buildings through a considered design approach which can guide future improvements. Should opportunities for redevelopment arise in the future, high quality design should be pursued and encouraged through design guidance.



## 4.2 Positive Management: Longer Term

The second set of proposals are also focussed around positive management but either take longer to implement or are better suited to a longer time frame.

### Car Parking

Car parking along Bradford Street generally occurs within controlled bays at the side of the road, although some parking also occurs on areas of wider pavement. The future management of car parking within the Conservation Area could begin with a car parking survey, to establish the varying needs for car parking among residents. Once the level of necessary car parking has been established, a landscape strategy should be created by Braintree District Council in conjunction with local stakeholders.

### Character Appraisal and Management Plan

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed periodically to monitor change and inform management proposals.

### Conservation Area Boundary

The Conservation Area boundary has been revised within this appraisal in accordance with the NPPF (2019) and Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2018). The proposed changes to the boundary are given in detail in section 2.1. The boundary should continue to be assessed as part of future reviews of the Management Plan to ensure it is robust and adequately protects the significance of the area.

### Interpretation: Improved Understanding and Awareness

At present there is an interpretation board, giving a historical description of Bradford Street, towards its southern end. This improves understanding and awareness and effectively establishes the identity of Bradford Street as a historic settlement.

### Opportunity Sites

There are some opportunity sites across the Conservation Area and particularly within its setting, such as the site of the former Braintree College. If sensitively redeveloped, this site may provide the opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### Public Realm

There is an opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through investment to improve the wider public realm. This can be achieved through continuing to improve and rationalise existing street furniture and retaining and curating elements of historic interest. The Conservation Area has bollards, a Listed phone box, pavements with granite setts, a postal pillar box and a second wall mounted post box which enhance the area's character.

A public area that requires some improvement is located outside the former Six Bells Public House, at the junction of Bradford Street and Church Lane.

The small piazza with its bench and flower beds is neglected with weeds appearing through the ground. The site is of some importance visually and is in a significant location at the junction of the main roads through the Conservation Area. Some of the most distinctive buildings can be appreciated from this location, while there are also mature trees over the road at the boundary of the former Braintree College site. The effective management of this area and perhaps some modest changes could



Figure 82 The small public piazza in front of the former Six Bells Public House



Figure 86 A wall mounted letter box, with initials GR for King George VI



Figure 85 A Grade II listed phone box, Bradford Street



Figure 84 Example of granite setts within the pavement



Figure 83 Bollards in Woolpack Lane



allow it to be more effectively used. At present, the space is somewhat neglected and underused. A new scheme that also incorporates some of the open space on the opposite side of the junction, adjacent to the former college boundary could have a beneficial effect on the character of the Conservation Area.

#### **Article 4 Directions**

An Article 4 Direction withdraws certain normal permitted development rights, which ordinarily allow for works of a limited scale to be carried out without requiring approval. They are an important tool that can be used to ensure small and incremental changes within a conservation area do not have an overall detrimental impact on its character. At present there is no Article 4 Direction in place within the Bradford Street Conservation Area and the implementation of this measure should be considered, subject to further analysis. An Article 4 Direction would help to ensure that aspects which contribute to the significance of the Conservation Area are not removed or diluted through the exercising of permitted development rights.

### **4.3 Funding Opportunities**

#### **National Heritage Lottery Fund**

The National Heritage Lottery Fund is the single largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK and therefore is the most obvious potential source of funding. Funding is often targeted at schemes which preserve, enhance and better reveal the special interest of the area whilst also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements change overtime, for up-to-date information on NHLF schemes Braintree District Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.

#### **Section 106 Agreements**

Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements, can be used by the local authority to ensure any future development has a positive impact upon the Bradford Street Conservation Area. These agreements could be used to fund public realm or site-specific improvements.



## 5. Appendices

### 5.1 Bibliography

#### Publications

- Historic England, 2029. Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management
- Braintree District Museum 2008. A History and Description of Braintree Town Hall <http://www.braintreemuseum.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Town-Hall-Booklet.pdf>

#### Webpages

- B52 Air crash over Braintree <https://aviation-safety.net/wikibase/98307>
- British Geological Survey <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer/>
- Historic England Listed Buildings <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>
- Lost Pubs [https://www.closedpubs.co.uk/essex/braintree\\_sixbells.html](https://www.closedpubs.co.uk/essex/braintree_sixbells.html)

#### Archives

- Essex Record Office
- Francis Frith Collection
- Braintree Museum

## 5.2 List of all Designated Heritage Assets within the Conservation Area

LIST ENTRY NO.	NAME	GRADE
1169791	3, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122542	5, BRADFORD STREET	II
1338245	7 AND 9, BRADFORD STREET	II
1170171	11, BRADFORD STREET	II*
1338248	LITTLE BRADFORDS	II
1122543	BRADFORD HOUSE	II*
1122544	NUMBER 19 (INCLUDING OUTBUILDING AT THE REAR)	II
1170198	GEORGIAN HOUSE	II*
1122545	BEECHCROFT	II
1122553	4, BRADFORD STREET	II*
1366144	6 AND 8, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122546	OLD COURT HOTEL, BRADFORD STREET	II
1338267	10-14, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122511	16-20, BRADFORD STREET (FORMERLY THE KINGS ARMS)	II
1122539	BAWN COTTAGE	II

LIST ENTRY NO.	NAME	GRADE
1170235	THE BAWN	II
1122547	GRESHAM HOUSE	II
1338268	24, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122548	DRAGON HOUSE 41 BRADFORD	II
1122512	ANGEL INN	II
1338269	38, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122513	40 AND 42, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122514	STANFORD HOUSE	II
1338270	46, BRADFORD STREET (FORMERLY THE CARDINALS CAP PUBLIC HOUSE)	II
1122515	48, BRADFORD STREET	II
1338271	50, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122516	KING'S HEAD INN	II
1122517	54 AND 56, 56A, BRADFORD STREET	II
1170273	63-73, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122549	75, BRADFORD STREET	II*
1305292	1, WOOLPACK LANE	II

LIST ENTRY NO.	NAME	GRADE
1338246	77-81, BRADFORD STREET	II*
1122487	2, WOOLPACK LANE	II
1170297	83, BRADFORD STREET	II
1338272	68, 68B, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122550	85 and 85a, Bradford Street	II
1170324	WENTWORTH HOUSE	II*
1122551	89 BRADFORD STREET, MAYSENT HOUSE (FORMERLY THE QUEENS HEAD)	II*
1122518	84-90, BRADFORD STREET	II
1306044	92, 92A, 92B, 92C, BRADFORD STREET	II
1391390	94, BRADFORD STREET	II
1338273	98 AND 100, BRADFORD STREET	II
1338278	K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK	II
1306012	102 AND 104, BRADFORD STREET	II
1122519	106, BRADFORD STREET	II
1338274	108, BRADFORD STREET	II
1305938	114-118, BRADFORD STREET	II*

LIST ENTRY NO.	NAME	GRADE
1338247	DIAL HOUSE INN (NOW RESIDENTIAL), CONVENT HILL	II*
1170350	OUTBUILDINGS TO BRADFORD MILL	II
1122552	BRADFORD MILL HOUSE	II
1170364	BRADFORD MILL	II*
1122520	FRANCISCAN CONVENT	II
1305924	1 AND 3, CHURCH LANE	II
1122523	5, CHURCH LANE	II
1122524	BISHOP CAUDEN'S HALL, CHURCH LANE	II
1305901	9, CHURCH LANE	II
1170835	BOLEYN'S, CHURCH LANE	II*
1122525	THE COTTAGE, CHURCH LANE	II
1170825	35-39, CHURCH LANE	II*
1140086	NUMBER 7 COB COTTAGE AND NUMBER 8, FAGGOT YARD	II
1391261	47, CHURCH LANE	II
1122528	56, CHURCH LANE (THIS IS INCORRECTLY NUMBERED ON H.E.'S MAPPING ENTRY IS IN FACT NUMBER 48 CHURCH LANE)	II



### 5.3 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

LEGISLATION/POLICY/ GUIDANCE	DOCUMENT	SECTION/POLICY
Primary Legislation	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions. 72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
National Planning Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (2019) DCLG	Section 16; Annex 2
National Guidance	National Planning Practice Guidance (2014) DCLG	ID: 18a
National Guidance	English Heritage (2019) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance	
Local Supplementary Planning Document	Braintree District Council Local Plan; Policy LPP42 Built and Historic Environment	



## 5.4 Glossary (NPPF)

Term	Description
<b>Archaeological interest</b>	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
<b>Conservation (for heritage policy)</b>	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
<b>Designated heritage asset</b>	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
<b>Heritage asset</b>	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
<b>Historic environment</b>	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
<b>Historic environment record</b>	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
<b>Setting of a heritage asset</b>	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
<b>Significance (for heritage policy)</b>	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.



## 5.5 Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a conservation area?

Conservation areas are designated by the Local Planning Authority as areas of special architectural and historic interest. There are many different types of conservation area, which vary in size and character, and range from historic town centres to country houses set in historic parks. Conservation area designation introduces additional planning controls and considerations, which exist to protect an area's special character and appearance and the features that make it unique and distinctive. Although designation introduces controls over the way that owners can develop their properties, it is generally considered that these controls are beneficial as they sustain and/or enhance the value of properties within conservation areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework regards conservation areas as 'designated heritage assets'.

The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act specifies the general duty of Local Authorities, in the exercise of planning functions (Section 72). The 1990 Act states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

### How are conservation areas designated and managed?

The designation process includes detailed analysis of the proposed conservation area and adoption by the local planning authority. A review process should be periodically undertaken and the Conservation Area assessed to safeguard that it retains special architectural or historic interest. Threats can be identified, and the boundary reviewed, to ensure it is still relevant and appropriate.

This Conservation Area is supported by an appraisal and management plan. The appraisal describes the importance of an area in terms of its character, architecture, history, development form and landscaping. The management plan, included within the appraisal, sets out various positive proposals to improve, enhance and protect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### What are the Council's duties regarding development in conservation areas?

The Local Authority must follow the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). These set out in clear terms how development proposals within Conservation Areas should be considered on the basis

of whether they preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area. Applications which fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area are likely to be refused as a result. An authorities Local Plan also typically includes a specific policy on Conservation Areas.

### How can I find out if I live in a conservation area?

Boundary maps of conservation areas can be found on your Local Planning Authority website. Some authorities have an online interactive map search allowing you to search for a property. You can also contact your local planning authority directly to find out if you reside within a conservation area. Braintree District Council has an interactive Conservation Areas map which can be found by following the link below:

<https://www.braintree.gov.uk/planning-building-control/conservation-areas>.

### Do I need permission to alter a property in a conservation area?

Many conservation areas have an Article 4 Direction which covers the painting, rendering or cladding of external walls. Alterations or extensions to buildings in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. Your Local Authority will provide advice as



to how to proceed.

### **Do I need to make an application for routine maintenance work?**

If routine works of maintenance are to be carried out using authentic materials and traditional craft techniques, on a like-for-like basis, you are not likely to need to apply for permission. The use of a contractors with the necessary skills and experience of working on historic buildings is essential. Inappropriate maintenance works and the use of the wrong materials will cause damage to the fabric of a historic building. It is recommended you contact the local planning authority for clarification before commencing any works.

### **Will I need to apply for permission for a new or replacement garage, fence, boundary wall or garden structure?**

Any demolition, development or construction in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. A replacement boundary, garage, cartlodge or greenhouse will need to be designed with the special historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area in mind. Your Local Authority will provide advice as to how to proceed with an application.

### **Can I demolish a building in a conservation area?**

Demolition or substantial demolition of a building within a conservation area will usually require permission from the local planning authority.

### **What is an Article 4 Direction?**

Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, certain minor works, such as domestic alterations, can normally be carried out without planning permission. However, some conservation areas are covered by an Article 4 Direction, which brings certain types of development back under the control of a local planning authority. This allows potentially harmful proposals to be considered on a case by case basis through planning applications. Article 4 Directions are used to control works that could threaten the character of an area and a planning application may be required for development that would otherwise have been permitted. Historic England provides information on Article 4 Directions on their website.

### **Can I remove a tree within a conservation area?**

If you are thinking of cutting down a tree or doing any pruning work, the local planning authority must be notified 6 weeks before any work begins. This enables

the authority to assess the contribution the tree makes to the character of the conservation area and, if necessary, create a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect it. Consent will be required for any works to trees that are protected. Further information on TPOs can be found on Historic England's website.

### **How do I find out more about a conservation area?**

Historic England's website has information on conservation areas and their designation. Further information on the value of conservation areas and what it means to live in a conservation area can also be accessed via their website.

Historic England has also published an advice note called Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management which sets out advice on the appraisal of conservation areas and managing change in conservation areas.

In addition, local planning authorities have information on the conservation areas within their boundaries available on their websites. They will have information pertaining to when the conservation area was designated, how far it extends and the reason for its designation.

Place Services  
County Hall, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)3330 136 844  
E: enquiries@placeservices.co.uk

[www.placeservices.co.uk](http://www.placeservices.co.uk)

 @PlaceServices



## Appendix 2A

### Summary of Responses

These are responses received to the Public Consultation on the Bradford Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan together with Officer Comments and suggested changes.

<b>Section/ Paragraph of 202</b>	<b>Representation Summary</b>	<b>Officer Response</b>	<b>Proposed Alteration</b>
S1.1- 1.2	<p>These chapters refer to 'Bradford St in Braintree', Bradford Street is not historically part of Braintree. It is within the ancient parish of Bocking and its historical development is quite distinct and separate from that of Braintree, which is the rationale for splitting the conservation area (CA).</p> <p>The historic boundary between the two parishes is Rayne Road/Coggeshall Road. It might be appropriate to extend the Bradford Street conservation area further south to include Bocking End. It would then include the Church of St Peter's in the Fields, Bocking and the more open character of the former Courtauld houses and gardens around it, that extended down Bradford Street. The character is more similar to that of Bradford Street than that the densely built-up medieval streets of Braintree town centre.</p>	<p>Today Bradford Street is considered part of Braintree Town despite its separate origins and was considered thus during the last Conservation Area appraisal, where the boundary encompassed both Braintree Town Centre and Bradford Street. The rationale behind the separation of the Bradford Street and Braintree Town Centre Conservation Areas was submitted to and approved by the Local Authority in 2020. The proposed separation acknowledges the differing origins of the settlements but is also based on the perceivable difference in built form and development pattern, with Bradford Street having a dense, linear form of ribbon development. This characteristic is not apparent in Bocking End or in the area around St Peter's Church</p> <p>The Conservation Area boundaries are not intended to replicate Parish boundaries and the area of Bocking Road is better suited for inclusion</p>	No alteration

		into the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area Boundary.	
1.1 para 3	Bradford Street has changed from mixed use to residential. The change in land uses means it lacks the amenities and environment normally found in residential areas and has a hostile environment due to traffic. Residents need to go beyond the historic house plots for amenities, services and open space.	This is the introductory paragraph to the Conservation Area Appraisal. The recommendations for a coherent parking strategy are made later in section 4.2 <i>Positive Management: Longer Term</i> of the appraisal document.	Alter Section 4.2
1.4 p6	<p>The Historic photograph looking North demonstrates how much of the attractive character of the street has been lost in the later 20th and early 21st centuries.</p> <p>Open areas and front gardens lost Railings – surviving ones are important to the Conservation Area but not mentioned Lost soft edge between the pedestrian and vehicle area. Their granite replacement diminishes character and encourages speeding. Poor pavements which are unsuitable for wheelchairs and those with impaired mobility.</p> <p>Speeding makes this dangerous for pedestrians, hence importance of traffic calming and speed warning signs.</p> <p>Views of tree tops above the roof line shows the importance of controlling development outside the Conservation Area</p>	<p>Change is inevitable. It is the management of change and preservation against harm that is intended by heritage designations. Conservation Area status cannot preserve an area and its powers do not control all development.</p> <p>It is not possible to describe each single beneficial feature in the Appraisal document. If a feature of historic interest is not mentioned in the document it does not mean it is not protected along with the rest of the Conservation Area. The impact on the Conservation Area and any positive attributes such as railings, that may be affected by any future Application would be assessed during, the decision making process for that application.</p> <p>Recommendations for the management and improvement of the public realm, including pavements and open spaces are made on section 4.2 <i>Positive Management: Longer Term</i> of the Appraisal document</p>	No alteration

	Church Street should be Church Lane	Agree	Replace "Street" with "Lane"
S1.5 para 5	"This Conservation Area is supported by an appraisal and management plan" . This is the first Appraisal and there appears to be no management plan on the council website.12	S1.5 Paragraph 5 is describing the current document, which is written with the intention for its use in the future and this is on the Council website	No alteration
S1.5 S8	<b>Article 4 Directives.</b> There are none in place and this has permitted generally poor quality plastic windows/doors.	The use of Article 4 is described and recommended in the <i>Long Term Positive Management Proposals</i> section, 4.2 but has not been proposed. Implementation of an Article 4 is undertaken as a separate process to Conservation area Appraisal, requiring evidence gathering to justify its introduction and its own public consultation.	No alteration
S1.5 para 9	Too many inappropriate repairs have harmed the Conservation Area which is why Conservation Officer advice is essential.	Hence the sentence "It is recommended you contact the local planning authority for clarification before commencing any works".	No alteration
S1.5	Support splitting the Conservation Area both areas have different characters and pressures.  <b>Area 1- Church Lane-</b> this proposal is good to protect the historic buildings and character extending along Church Lane.  The proposal to rebuild the historic boundary wall to the College site seems unnecessary and undesirable. It will not have the same character as the original a wall. A wider margin to the road would reduce sense of enclosure.	The wall to the former College site is thought has C19th origins as a boundary wall for Boleyn's Farm. It survived the sale of the land and the development of the Braintree College in the 1950s and makes a beneficial contribution to the historic interest and character of the area. However, it is in poor condition and substantial repairs were necessary and these were/are to be undertaken as part of the development of the College site.	No alteration
2.1 p11	The A131 is not just the road to Halstead but more importantly the road to Bury St Edmunds. East of the	The importance of Braintree on route to Bury St Edmunds is described on Page 13 (Medieval).	No alteration

	<p>bridge at the north end of Bradford Street the river is known as the Blackwater, north of the bridge in Bocking Church Street it is the Pant. The precise point of change may relate to a boundary. Bocking was a separate administrative District until 1934.</p>	<p>Braintree's interactive mapping labels the river both sides of the bridge as River Blackwater.</p>	
2.2 p12	<p>The Canterbury/Bocking connection still exists as St Mary's church is a 'Peculiar' of Canterbury, and not subject to the diocese.</p> <p>Aetheric did not give land at Braintree to Canterbury, only at Bocking.</p> <p>Bays and says were not produced till the 16th century.</p> <p>The workers lived in Church Str, the merchants in Bradford Str near the main road and Braintree market.</p>	<p>The Conservation Area Appraisal presents a short summary of the history of the area, for planning purposes. As such not all historical information can be included. For those seeking a more detailed historical account of the area further personal research would be required.</p>	No alteration
2.2 p 13	<p>The chapel of St James was in Bocking, not Braintree.</p> <p>As well as no 75 possibly being a wool hall, so too is nearby 67-69 which is a first floor hall built 1353. The Courtaulds largest mill was in Bocking, not Braintree, near St Marys church, where they employed over 1000 people, difficult to believe now</p>	<p>Our research found references to the effect that that the Hospital Chapel of St James' is believed to have been near the former Six Bells on Bradford Street.</p> <p>The Conservation Area Appraisal presents a short summary of the history of the area, for planning purposes. It is not possible to provide an in depth account of the historic development of individual buildings or industries. The intention is to give an overview so as to demonstrate the architectural and historic special interest of the designated area as a whole. For those seeking a more detailed historical account of the area further personal research would be required.</p>	No alteration

2.2 p13 -14	<p>The first major Courtauld Mill was on the river in Bocking Church Street from c. 1820 (the mill of Joseph Savill, the last bays (cloth) manufacturer who lived at Boleyns in Church Lane ) and finally closed in the 1980s. They expanded to Halstead from 1825. The mill at Rose Hill on the River Brain (not in the town centre) where George Courtauld worked in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century was not taken over by the Courtaulds (and extended) until 1843. It was used as both a throwing and weaving mill. The small mill (c.1818) at Pound End, South Street, which is in the town centre but of course lacked water power is presumably covered by the town centre appraisal.</p> <p>New Mills in South Street (the edge of the town centre) dates from the 1860s, and was built by Daniel Walters. Warner &amp; Sons moved to Braintree in 1895, buying Daniel Walters' business. As pointed out these developments had to be peripheral – the town centre was too closely packed.</p>	<p>The Conservation Area Appraisal presents a short summary of the history of the area, for planning purposes. It is not possible to provide an in depth account of the historic development of individual buildings or industries. The intention is to give an overview so as to demonstrate the architectural and historic special interest of the designated area as a whole. For those seeking a more detailed historical account of the area further personal research would be required.</p>	No alteration
2.2 p16	<p>The Francis Frith website dates College photograph to c. 1955. I think it opened in 1958. Braintree Museum has an archive relating to the college. 18</p>	<p>The Council's consultants believe that the date of 1955 came from the source of the photograph (Frances Frith) and thus was referenced in the photo caption.</p>	No alteration
2.2 p17	<p>One characteristics of buildings in Bradford Street is the number of houses with attic/loft windows, often interpreted as weaving lofts. These contrast with the terrace in Rayne Road, where they appear to be original.</p>	<p>Potential origins of attic conversions duly noted, <b>although no reference has been provided.</b> The Conservation Area Appraisal presents a short summary of the history of the area, for planning purposes. It is not possible to provide an in depth account of the historic development of individual buildings or industries. The Area's historic links to the weaving industry and the impact on the Area's</p>	No alteration

		character are described in the appraisal, such as on P13.	
2.2 p17	Backlands were developed in the late 19th and 20th centuries not just for housing but for factories, their site now all built on	The historic industrial development of the backlands off Bradford Street and the distinctive character these areas often still remains, is described in detail in section 3.2 <i>Character Analysis, Bradford Street</i>	No alteration
2.3 p18	Object to the northern parts of Courtauld Road/Bocking End and the Causeway being removed. They are long established attractive approaches/exits from the town centre. Conservation Area rules have kept them free from unsuitable development.	There was no loss or reduction of the area protected by conservation area designation as a result of the split between Braintree Town Centre and Bradford Street and these areas are contiguous.	No alteration
2.3 p18	Why have public gardens not been included within the Conservation Area	The Public Gardens are included with the Braintree Conservation Area	No alteration
2.3 p18	Support implementation of minor back area alterations. Any split into town and Bradford Street should be applied such that they are contiguous and without losing any area from the Conservation Area.	Support noted	No alteration
2.3 p18	Support separation of the Braintree and Bradford Street Conservation Areas. The appraisal has been done well and includes interesting historical information.	Support noted	No alteration
2.3 p18	Support inclusion of Victoria Street in the Conservation Area. Bradford Street is unique and deserves protection. There are some magnificent historic buildings in Braintree which must be protected and treasured.	Support noted	No alteration

2.3 p18	A comprehensive document No objections to the changes proposed.	Support noted	No alteration
2.3 p18	Wondering why Council offices excluded  No objections provided both areas are preserved properly.	<b>The split between Braintree Town Centre and Bocking Street reflects changing methodologies of good practice and provides a clearer strategy which acknowledges the uniqueness of Bradford Street's built environment.</b>  This area does not have special architectural or historical interest to merit its inclusion within the Conservation Area.	No alterations
2.3 p20	Nos 17-23 were built in the later 1960s, No 17 dates from 1966.	Precise dates for late C20th dwellings noted with thanks. More specific date added to text. It is not possible to provide an in depth account of the historic development of individual buildings in the Appraisal. Instead, it gives an overview of the historic development of the area.	Amend the date
2.3 p22 Boundary Revision Area 3	Object to boundary change to include dwelling house within Conservation Area. At present only the garage lies in the conservation area and this status has complicated improvements to the property and will compromise or risk other such applications.  The boundary should exclude the garage and garden if it is to be moved.  Although important to protect conservation and surrounding areas, this is best done through consistent decision making  An examples of poor decision making is placing a Gigaclear cabinet in a prominent position in Rivermead. A planning inspector commented that Rivermead is experienced a single entity where buildings inside and	The situation where a boundary runs through trough the centre if a building or property is far from ideal. Area 3 was proposed for inclusion partly due to the visual corridors within this area, where the rear aspect of buildings and roofs of historic properties fronting Bradford street can be perceived. The area proposed is linked to Bradford Street by Philips Close, which corresponds to a former field or property boundary visible on late nineteenth century mapping. In terms of financial implications of being within a Conservation Area, research by Historic England indicates that inclusion within a Conservation Area Boundary increases property values.	No alteration

	<p>out of the Conservation Area made a positive contribution.</p> <p>Support changes to Areas 1,2,4,5.</p>	<p>Circumstances behind the Gigaclear positioning does not affect the proposed boundary change.</p> <p>Areas of support noted.</p>	
2.3 p22 Area 4	<p>This area excludes an area of no architectural interest. Does that mean it was included in error or protection of the area failed. It would be useful for the document to dig into this to find what failed to prevent it from happening again.</p>	<p>Areas excluded were minimal and were designed to remove buildings that lack historic interest and to ensure the repositioned boundary respects the existing boundary plots.</p>	No alteration
2.3 p22 Boundary Revision 5	<p>The Folly is presumed to be curtilage listed, as part of a walled garden belonging to Wentworth House 87 Bradford Street</p>	<p>Agreed it is in curtilage of GII* Listed building at 87 Bradford St</p>	Alter text to refer to refer to its curtilage listed status
2.3 Boundary Revision 5 P23	<p>These mid 20th century (not late, cf p 20) houses are characteristic of their time and should not be excluded from the CA. Alterations to them could affect the character of the CA. There have been attempts to develop all three of them and no 17 separately.</p>	<p>The C20th buildings may be characteristic of their time, but I disagree that make a positive contribution to the historic character and special interest of the Conservation Area and they are of no historic or architectural interest.</p>	No alteration
2.5 P24	<p>Although work has been done on a Braintree local list, I am not aware that it has been adopted by the Council. It is important that this work is completed.</p>	<p>Some work has been undertaken and a limited list was adopted in 2016/17, but further studies would be extensive and require funding commitments.</p>	No alteration
2.6 p25	<p>Not many buildings fall in this category (heritage at risk), but the corner shopfront at no. 58 is now in very poor condition and should be identified as in need of improvement in this key unlisted terrace.</p>	<p>None of Bradford Street's Listed buildings are currently included on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. The importance of Bradford Street's historic shop fronts is stated in section 4.1 <i>Positive Management: Short term</i>, page 54, along with the recommendation for guidance for homeowners on upkeep and maintenance.</p>	No alterations

2.7 P25 Archaeological Potential.	Disagree with “No evidence of the Roman road has been found along the line of Bradford Street” as evidenced with Chronicle 30 August 1927, page 7. A copy of a 1927 clipping provided shows evidence for a Roman Road	There is a difference in opinion in this matter.  The archaeological archive research found that the general view was that No evidence of the Roman road has been found along the line of Bradford Street. Without further work this matter does not appear to have been resolved sufficiently to alter the CACMP.	No alterations
3.1 p28	The lamps on the new bridge are by McFarlane's of Glasgow, I believe, paid for by the Courtaulds, and echo the design of their lamps on the Thames Embankment	Agree to amend text to refer to the lamp	Amend the text to refer to this lamp
3.2 P33	<p><i>“The river has been the site of a mill since 1303, when Henry de Eastry, the Prior of Canterbury Cathedral established a fulling mill at the site.”</i></p> <p>In 1303 the prior had a new fulling mill constructed at a cost of £28 0s 8d on this plot of land purchased from William le Parker. To ensure that there was no question over ownership of the mill, seven residents of Bocking, including the lord of the manor, Henry de Bocking, made Quitclaims to the prior and convent of Canterbury renouncing any right to the watermill, pond and sluices. Most are undated but the one to Henry was made on a Sunday in the octave of Holy Trinity in the 31st year of the reign of King Edward, ie 9th June 1303. A rural society after the Black Death, L R Poos, 1991</p>	A description of the history behind the medieval mill and its founding by Henry de Eastry, the Prior of Canterbury Cathedral in 1303 is given in the Medieval History section on P12. Its repetition on page 33 in the Character Analysis section is not necessary	No alteration
3.4 p34	<i>“The farmstead at Boleyn’s Farm was established in 1625 when Joseph Saville bought Boleyn’s field ..... “</i>	The source used in the Appraisal was Historic England’s Listing description for Boleyns	No alteration

	This statement is questioned and the reference for this statement is sought. Reference is provided that it was purchased by Thomas Saville Jnr of John Stow.	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1170835?section=official-list-entry">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1170835?section=official-list-entry</a>	
3.4 p36	The treatment of the public realm is not very analytical. It doesn't identify problems such as parking or paving, or the sad telephone box	Section 3.4. Public Realm on Page 36 referred to here, provides a description of the public spaces as part of the character analysis.  The potential management solutions for the public realm issues are dealt with on page 54, section 4.2 <i>Positive Management: Longer Term</i>	No alteration
3.6 P38	37a was a doctor's dispensary	Noted. It is not possible to provide an in depth account of the historic ownership of individual buildings in the Appraisal. Instead. Page 38 presents the beneficial contribution to the Area's character made by key unlisted buildings, including number 37a.	No alteration
3.6 P38	No. 9 Eagle Lane, a 16th century house should be added to the local list.	Further studies and an assessment in line with guidance from Historic England would be required as part of a wide-ranging, fully funded project to identify locally listed buildings.	No alteration
3.6 p.41.	Queen's Meadow is the site of the Nottage Mansion, and the house was built by William Julien Courtauld and later lived in by Lord Braintree (Valentine Crittall).	Section 3.6 provides an assessment of the contribution made by Key Un-Listed Buildings. It is not possible to provide an in depth account of the historic ownership of individual buildings in the Appraisal.	No alteration
P47 Viewpoint 3 caption	The image is looking north not south (correct in the text).	Amend the text	Refer to image looking north
3.10 p51	The war memorial is the Braintree and Bocking War memorial.	To be amended	Refer to the war memorial as the

			Braintree and Bocking War memorial
4.2 p58	Support proposed Article 4 direction	The use of Article 4 is described and recommended in the <i>Long Term Positive Management Proposals</i> section, 4.2 but has not been proposed. Implementation of an Article 4 is undertaken as a separate process to Conservation area Appraisal, requiring research to justify its introduction and its own public consultation.	No alteration
Section 4 Management Proposals In general	<p>The appraisal makes too weak a response to the challenges of the area which will be ineffective. The Friends of Bradford Street are concerned that this lacks serious detail and direction. Main points are as follows</p> <p>The Friends of Bradford Street are concerned that this lacks serious detail and direction. Main concerns are</p> <p><b>1 Traffic is too heavy and fast.</b> Residents complain about speeding frequently.</p> <p>Single decker buses would be more practical than double decker buses in relation to the weight restriction on bridge</p> <p>Introduce a 20mph speed limit and radar activated smiley faces ideally showing registration plates</p> <p>Residents fear exiting onto Bradford Road given poor visibility due to parked cars.</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that highways issues have a substantial impact on residents in this part of the Conservation Area. However, it is not within the remit of the Conservation Area Appraisal to recommend the enforcement of speed limits or weight restrictions. These are matters that fall within the jurisdiction of Essex Highways and require consideration of issues beyond Heritage matters. There is project in place at present to include within the CACAMP relating to Highway improvements nor can Braintree District compel the Highway Authority to spend funds in this area.</p> <p>Nevertheless, further text relating to highway issues has been included in Management proposals to further raise issue of traffic, speed and parking, though the Conservation Area Appraisal is not the route through which such changes to traffic management can be made.</p>	Further wording has been added to the CACAMP concerning Highways matters.

	<p>2. Pavements – crossover areas with setts cause great difficulty for buggies, wheelchair users, bikes shopping trolleys. One person’s wheelchair broke down on them.</p> <p>3. Parking – many must park far from their homes and residents want a reorganisation. No easy solutions. New planning decision should require more than adequate parking provision.</p> <p>4. Some buildings qualify for Listing on age grounds. Friends of Bradford Street are willing to work with the Council to progress listing.</p> <p>Welcome the production of the appraisal.</p> <p><b>Other Highway matters raised</b></p> <p>Impact of heavy traffic has not been properly considered and includes the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Causes dirt to accumulate on houses</li> <li>• Noise, vibration, odours and pollution deters on street conversations. Causes difficulty exiting onto Bradford Street Impacts will worsen as new development is completed.</li> <li>• Can prevent wheelchair access, safe exit from car for wheelchair users.</li> <li>• Makes this architecturally important place unpleasant to live in and unhealthy for pedestrians.</li> <li>• Heavy vehicles cause houses to shake causing structural damage.</li> <li>• No apparent process to monitor compliance with the weight restriction by Essex County Council</li> </ul>	<p>Again, there are, at present no proposals for improving parking, altering pavements or introducing particular street furniture which can be included within the management proposals Again, these are within the jurisdiction of the Highway Authority as outlined above. If such schemes were to be considered, Braintree District would welcome consultation. Officers can bring the issue of pedestrian safety at crossings to the attention of the Highway Authority.</p> <p>The nomination of buildings for listing is a separate process to the CACAMP and would require separate consideration and funding. It would not be appropriate to commit to this exercise through CACAMP process. It is possible for members of the public to nominate buildings for listing through the Historic England website.</p> <p>The 2023 CACMP identifies the piazza as being an area which would benefit from improvement. A design guide is mentioned on p 43 of the CACAMP 2023 under the heading “Public Resources”. At present a Design Guide and Bin Storage Supplementary Planning Guidance are in preparation. It should be noted that Historic England provide detailed advice on maintaining an older building on their website. They also provide a free copy of a Guide for Owners of Listed Buildings. One representation refers to the need for advice and this will be found at the above locations, and advice is also available from Conservation Officers acting for the Council.</p>	
--	---	--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern that double decker buses are not covered by weight restriction and construction traffic for new development at Straits Mill will be permitted to use Bradford Street.</li> <li>• In constructing Straits Mill Convent Lane can be used for 3 months for construction traffic thereby causing hazard for pedestrians on the narrow path opposite and taking no account of the listed building whose entrance has been damaged by construction traffic before.</li> <li>• Development of Straits Mill and other big developments will result in gridlock from 3000 vehicle movements from 2500 houses. Need to look at the bigger picture for people's well being.</li> </ul> <p>Parking;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a problem and spills onto other streets</li> <li>• Occurs on yellow lines</li> <li>• Means obscured visibility for emerging vehicles</li> <li>• Remove yellow lines to provide more parking</li> <li>• Parking review with residents and Friends of Bradford Street should be undertaken</li> <li>• Parking should be provided for residents/visitors eg on college site.</li> <li>• Introduce parking permits, weight/size restrictions on traffic, traffic calming to deter its use as a cut through.</li> <li>• Parking and turning should be provided for deliveries on new development.</li> <li>• Improve safety at pedestrian crossings, including improve lighting, road markings contrasting surface materials, warning signage, paving</li> </ul>	<p>The revised 2023 CACAMP has been updated to refer to the adopted plan. There are references to the College which will be removed.</p> <p>Several representations refer to locations which have been subject to specific development proposals. Decisions made on development proposals are made in consultation with the Conservation Officers if located within the Conservation Area and their setting where that is appropriate, and a decision is made according to the particular circumstances of each case according to Local Plan Policies and government advice.</p> <p>Although one representation states that residents in those areas where the Conservation Area has been extended have not been consulted, letters did go to these residents and a public meeting was held as set out in the committee report.</p>	
--	--	---	--

	<p>(suitable for mobility impaired), create reduced carriageway width, safe pedestrian crossing places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Streets for all” Guidance (Historic England 2018) regarding Highway and Public Realm works in Historic Places advises to adoption of traffic management strategies e.g. 20mph zones and minimisation of visual impact of layouts and signage.</li> <li>• Previous attempts to improve the traffic situation, including approaches to councillors and Essex County Council have failed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Public realm Improvements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-landscape the ‘piazza’ at the junction with Church Lane including historical information/ interpretation/ art</li> <li>• Introduce scheme to green the street eg. trees hanging baskets</li> <li>• Reference could be made, as a maintenance guide to Conserve typical details for historic buildings and conservation areas published by Essex CC 2010</li> <li>• Replace modern Streetlights with cast iron as recommended in other Conservation areas</li> <li>• Provide advice on Greener parking spaces, as does the RHS</li> <li>• Provide design/strategy guidance to minimise visual impact of bin storage</li> <li>• Reinstate granite setts removed by utility company</li> <li>• Replacement slabs are cheap and nasty</li> </ul>		
--	--	--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cobbled areas are from 1970s and there are issues with them today.</li> <li>• Chestnut trees by the college need improvement</li> </ul> <p><b>Other issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the plan, this is generally a good document, nicely put together</li> <li>• Bradford Street is unique and warrants the highest level of protection in in-perpetuity.</li> <li>• The document is not up to date eg on the Local Plan and College Redevelopment</li> <li>• The early history is weak. Bradford Street belonged to Bocking Hall not Braintree</li> <li>• Proposals are too generic and need more work.</li> <li>• the bibliography could be added to</li> <li>• it needs proof reading</li> <li>• the residents in the proposed CA extensions have not been advised of them</li> <li>• Strongly support preservation of look and feel of Bradford Street but homeowners need more support in this aspect</li> <li>• Areas such as the College site and its wall are critical.</li> <li>• Should not allow removal of historic terrace to building new unsympathetic housing next to Doctor's surgery</li> </ul> <p>Allowing new builds where in area that is ill equipped to deal with it</p>		
--	---	--	--

	<p>Important to preserve Bocking Mill and river Blackwater for biodiversity which important to heritage sites.</p> <p>Why was permission given for a 25m high lattice tower and associated compound granted permission when the Conservation Officer considered it would harm the Conservation Area.</p>		
--	--	--	--

<b>Braintree Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan</b>	
<b>Report to: Local Plan Sub-Committee</b>	
<b>Date: 3rd August 2023</b>	<b>For: Decision</b>
<b>Key Decision: No</b>	<b>Decision Planner Ref No: N/A</b>
<b>Report Presented by: Julie O'Hara</b>	
<b>Enquiries to: Julie O'Hara</b>	

### 1.1 Purpose of the Report

1.2 To seek approval for the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management to be adopted as material considerations when Braintree District Council carries out its planning functions. The Conservation Area Review involves proposals to divide the Braintree Conservation Area into two by separating off Bradford Street as a separate Conservation Area. In doing so, parts would be added and subtracted from both Conservation Areas. These proposals include the exclusion of the Council Offices from Conservation Area status.

1.3 Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to review their conservation areas from 'time to time'.

1.4 The Council appointed Place Services between 2018 and 2020 to create Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plans (CACAMP) for Great Bardfield, Wethersfield, Kelvedon, Feering and Braintree and Bocking. Halstead Conservation Area Review has recently been commissioned.

## 2. Recommendations

2.1 The RECOMMENDATION of this report is to:

APPROVE the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan for use as a material consideration when Braintree District Council carries out its planning functions and including the addition and removal of parts of the Conservation Area as set out.

Delegated authority is sought to correct minor updating, factual and typographical errors.

## 3. Summary of Issues

- 3.1 The CACAMP provides an analysis of the conservation area which will inform future development and design with regard to the sensitivities of the historic environment and its unique character. The Management Plan seeks to identify issues facing the Conservation Area and to recommend management proposals which address these issues in both the short and long term.

### **Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CACMP)**

- 3.2 The CACMP provides detail on planning context, Braintree town centre character, history and evolution, designated and non-designated heritage assets, buildings at risk, archaeological potential, opportunities for enhancement and management proposals.
- 3.3 Braintree Conservation Area lies in the town's central area on high ground sloping down to the river Brain at its southern section, visible from high land further south at Rifle Hill allowing wide views of Conservation Area landmarks.
- 3.4 It also falls to the north east towards Bradford Street and the River Blackwater. Braintree developed around the crossing of two routes across the county, north-south and east-west. The Conservation Area is architecturally varied and features many timber framed mediaeval and post- mediaeval buildings, clustered tightly together at the centre of the town. Buildings which survive from this early period provide an understanding of the layout of the medieval town, which was concentrated around the marketplace. Braintree grew in all directions in later centuries meaning that the outer limits of the conservation area contain buildings from the Victorian period to the present day.
- 3.5 These proposals involve dividing the Conservation Area into two – Braintree town centre and Bradford Street, with some additions and removals from Conservation Area status as shown in the CACAMP. Their joint boundary lies along Courtauld Road to a little north of its junction with Bradford Street and continues along the rear of properties on Rana Drive. Division of the Conservation Area into two is a recognition that both areas developed as separate settlements, and have differing characters and histories.
- 3.6 Other than this main alteration, a number of other enlargements of, and removals from Conservation Area status have been put forward. Areas shown for removal include a small area which includes the Council Offices as well as George Yard car park, shopping area and environs. Other boundary adjustments are shown removing smaller areas of more modern development at St Michael's Road, rear of London Road and Silks Road, Coggeshall Road. Boundaries have been extended to include areas on St Peter in the Fields, St Peters Road, Rayne Road, Sunnyside, Victoria Street, Woodfield Road, and

Mountfield Road.

- 3.7 The Conservation Area is divided into 6-character areas: London Road, Commercial Core, The Mills, Victoria Street - Mount Road - Woodfield Road, Rayne Road and The Parks and gives a detailed assessment of each. It also looks at opportunities for enhancement and management proposals.
- 3.8 The Braintree Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CACAMP) was issued for public consultation initially between 10<sup>th</sup> January and 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022. A virtual webinar event was held via Microsoft Teams on the 19th January 2022 (This meeting concerned both the Braintree Town Centre and the Bradford Street Conservation Area and Management Plans). A total of 6 responses were received concerning the Braintree CACAMP and these can be viewed at the address below:

[https://braintree.objective.co.uk/portal/ca\\_appraisals/brca/brainca?tab=list](https://braintree.objective.co.uk/portal/ca_appraisals/brca/brainca?tab=list)

- 3.9 A range of issues were raised through the consultation and the main issues relating to Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area are summarised below. Comments received during the public consultation exercise and the officer responses can be viewed in Appendix 1A.
- Concerns about hygiene relating to specific commercial bins, the appearance of a particular property, parking on a pedestrian area, town centre seating, previous authority advice on plastic windows
  - Disagreement on the choice of materials and colour used in the town centre pedestrianisation and the environment created
  - Electricity arrangements for stallholders should be improved to avoid wire trip hazards
  - Oppose removal of Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens from the conservation area.
  - Concern that the council wish to build on the area to be excluded.
  - Unaware of changing rooms in Weavers Park
  - Include the Cricket Pitch in the conservation area.
  - Should provide more trees and planters.
  - Concern that the town centre now covers Woodfield Road
  - Support attention being given to shopfronts
- 3.10 A summary of these comments and the officers' response in Table 1 Summary of responses Appendix 1
- 3.11 It is important to note that areas outside the Conservation Area can be important as setting and where development proposals must be carefully assessed so as not to harm the significance and appreciation of this area.

- 3.12 A revised version of the Braintree Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan was produced, and incorporating alterations as specified in Table 1 as mentioned above.
- 3.13 The 2023 CACAMP document formatting and design has been updated to match the Bradford Street CACAMP.
- 3.14 The recommendations set out in this report will help the Council to deliver the following Corporate Objectives by encouraging a higher quality of development:
- A sustainable environment and a great place to live, work and play;
  - A well connected and growing district with high quality homes and infrastructure;
  - Residents live well in healthy and resilient communities where residents feel supported.

## **4 Options**

- 4.1 Approve the proposals as submitted. This will ensure that Conservation Area boundaries are updated to improve their quality and protection and that its guidance is available for those considering future development. This option is preferred and would provide up to date advice.
- 4.2 Approve amended proposals. Delegated Authority may be given to officers to make specified alterations and issue the revised Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan document or documents. Alternatively, the decision could be deferred for discussion at a future Planning Committee pending further work. This option may involve delay and if substantial heritage advice is required, further costs may be incurred.
- 4.3 Do not accept the proposals. The Conservation Area remains as at present but will contain areas identified as not meriting inclusion, and excluding areas considered worthy of inclusion. This process means officer opinion on areas to be included or excluded have been publicised and could be used by appellants in opposing or supporting their proposals in future. This risk is mitigated by the fact that such opinion is not the settled view of the Council.

## **5 Next Steps**

- 5.1 If approved, the document will be published on the Council's website. Under section 70(8) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council will notify the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Historic England. A notice will also be placed in the London Gazette and a local newspaper.

## **6 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 None as set out for the recommendation other than placing a notice in the London Gazette and a local newspaper. If additional work is required which requires advice from the Council's heritage consultants an additional fee may be necessary.

## **7 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 Local Planning Authorities are obliged under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to designate as Conservation Areas any parts of their own area that are "*of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*". Local Planning Authorities also have a duty under S69 (2), to review past designations "*from time to time*" to consider whether areas are suitable for designation or to remain designated and this exercise fulfils this duty.
- 7.2 The Local Planning Authority is obliged to publish proposals concerning the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas and these shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate. The local authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals expressed by person attending the meeting.

## **8 Other Implications**

None

## **9 Equality and Diversity Implication**

- 9.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
  - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
  - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 9.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 9.3 The Equality Impact Assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic. (they do raise issues re age but not to this proposal re Bradford

Street problems for the disabled and Braintree problems with an elderly woman's use of the town centre). Although mentioned in representations, this is not something which this document addresses

## **10 List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 Braintree Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CACAMP)

Appendix 1A Braintree CACAMP Summary of Public Consultation Responses,

## **11 Background Papers**

Braintree Local Plan 2033

National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Practice Guidance – Historic Environment

Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, (Historic England Advice Note No 1 (Second Edition) Feb 2019 (based on 2018 NPPF)

Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd Edition);

# Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan



Client:  
Braintree District Council

Date:  
July 2023



Essex County Council



#### Disclaimer

All reasonable efforts have been made to obtain permission for use of images within this report. Materials and images used in this report which are subject to third party copyright or require reproduction permissions have been reproduced under licence from the copyright owner. This is except in the case of material or works of unknown authorship (as defined by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988) or the copyright holder is unknown after all reasonable effort has been made to seek licence to reproduce.

All maps within this document are subject to copyright. © Crown copyright 2019 OS 100019602. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

Any person who wishes to apply to reproduce any part of this work or wishing to assert rights in relation to material which has been reproduced as work of unknown authorship in this document should contact Place Services at [enquiries@placeservices.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@placeservices.co.uk)



# Contents

<b>1.0 Introduction</b>			
1.1. Summary	4	3.2.3. The Mills	52
1.2. Conserving Braintree's Heritage	5	3.2.4. Victoria Street, Mount Road and Woodfield Road	60
1.3. Purpose of Appraisal	6	3.2.5. Rayne Road	66
1.4. Planning Policy Context	7	3.2.6. The Parks	72
		3.3. Setting of the Conservation Area	79
<b>2.0 Context and Character</b>		<b>4.0. Opportunities for Enhancement</b>	
2.1. Origin and Evolution	10	4.1. Access and Integration	80
2.2. Revisions to the Boundary	15	4.2. Car Parking	80
2.6. Designated Heritage Assets	19	4.3. Inappropriate Modern Development	80
2.7. Non-Designated Heritage Assets	20	4.4. Maintenance	81
2.8. Heritage at Risk	22	4.5. Neutral Contributors	81
2.9. Archaeological Potential	22	4.6. Public Realm	81
		4.7. Shop Frontages	82
<b>3.0. Assessment of Significance</b>		4.8. Vacant Buildings	82
3.1. Summary	24	<b>5.0. Management Proposals</b>	
3.2. Character Areas	25	5.1. Positive Management: Shorter Term	83
3.2.1. London Road	27	5.2. Positive Management: Longer Term	85
3.2.2. Commercial Core	36		
		5.3. Funding Opportunities	87
		<b>6.0. Appendices</b>	
		6.1. Bibliography	88
		6.2. Legislation, Policy and Guidance	89
		6.3. List of All Designated Heritage Assets	90
		6.4. Glossary (NPPF)	92
		6.5. Frequently Asked Questions	93





## 1.2 Conserving Braintree's Heritage

Braintree Conservation Area was designated on the 19th June 1969. This boundary included the town centre, extending south along London Road and north along Bradford Street, extending upwards to include the southernmost section on Broad Road.

No Conservation Area Appraisal document has been produced since the designation of the area; the boundary of the Conservation Area was reassessed in 1979 but no details of any appraisal remain. Braintree District Council appointed Place Services to complete the first appraisal document for the Conservation Area, and reassess its boundary and significance.

As part of the initial assessment of the 1969 Braintree Conservation Area boundary, it became clear that the Conservation Area had two very distinct areas which were worthy of individual Conservation Area status: the Town Centre and the northern part of the town, Bradford Street.

The proposal to divide the former Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area into two separate designated areas was agreed in principal by Braintree District Council in August 2020. The contrast in character and historic development between the town centre and the wealth of historic buildings along Bradford Street means that the Bradford Street area is of sufficient historic and architectural special interest for Conservation Area designation in its own right.

This document forms the appraisal for the new Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area, which encompasses the commercial centre of the town and small areas of historic, residential development which emanate from the town's centre.

The document is provided as baseline information for applicants to consider when designing or planning new development in Braintree.

This report provides an assessment of the historic development and character of Braintree Town Centre and outlines its special interest. The appraisal will also consider the significance of heritage assets and the contribution that these, along with their setting, make to the character of the area. The understanding of significance will be used to assess the susceptibility of the Character Areas to change, highlighting key assets of importance.

This assessment will consider how Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area developed, analysing the conservation area's building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, footpaths, alleys, streetscapes, open spaces, views, landscape, landmarks, and topography. These qualities can be used to assess the key characteristics of each area, highlighting potential impacts future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the overall character of Bradford Street. This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research and an analysis of the individual character areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) highlights good design as one of twelve core principals of sustainable development. Sustainable development relies on sympathetic design, achieved through an understanding of context, the immediate and larger character of the area in which new development is sited.

This assessment follows best practice guidance, including Historic England's revised Historic England Advice Note 1 for Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2019) and The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017).

### 1.3 Purpose of Appraisal

This document is to be used as a baseline to inform future change, development and design with regard to the sensitivities of the historic environment and its unique character.

The appraisal recognises designated and non-designated heritage assets within the area which contribute to its special interest, along with their setting. It will consider how different Character Areas within Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area came to be developed, their building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, footpaths, alleys, streetscapes, open spaces, views, landscape, landmarks, and topography. These qualities will be used to assess the key characteristics of each area, highlighting potential impact future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the character of Braintree Town Centre. This assessment is based on information derived from documentary research and analysis of the individual character areas.

This appraisal will enhance understanding of Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area and its development, informing future design. Applications that demonstrate an understanding of the character of a Conservation Area are more likely to produce appropriate design and positive outcomes for agents and their clients. It is expected that applications for planning permission will also consult and follow the best practice guidance outlined in the bibliography.



Figure 2 Braintree High Street, looking south



## 1.4 Planning Policy Context

The legislative framework for conservation and enhancement of conservation areas and listed buildings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (HMSO 1990).

In particular Section 69 of this act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate areas which they consider to be of architectural and historic interest as Conservation Areas, and Section 72 requires that special attention should be paid to ensuring that the character and appearance of these areas is preserved or enhanced.

Section 71 also requires the Local Planning Authority to formulate and publish proposal for the preservation and enhancement of these areas. National planning policy in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets is outlined in Part 16 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, the NPPF (February 2021).

Bradford Street Conservation Area, which is the subject of this appraisal, is located within the area covered by Braintree District Council. Local planning policy is set out in the Braintree Development Plan. The Braintree Local Plan 2033 is located within the area covered by Braintree District Council. Local planning policy is set out in the Braintree Development Plan. The Braintree Local Plan 2033 is in two parts: **Part 1** which contains strategic policies also covering Colchester City and Tendring Councils and **Part 2** which relates to Braintree District only.

The New Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in October 2017 and adopted by the Council in July 2022.

### Relevant Policies within the Braintree District Local Plan are:

- SP 7 Place Shaping Principles
- LPP 52 – Layout and design of development
- LPP 53 – Conservation Areas
- LPP 54 - Demolition in Conservation Areas
- LPP 55 – Shop fronts, fascias and signs in Conservation Areas
- LPP 56 – Illuminated signs in Conservation Areas
- LPP 57 – Heritage Assets and their setting
- LPP 58 – Demolition of Listed Buildings or structures
- LPP 63 – Archaeological Evaluation Excavation and Recording
- LPP 62 – Cemeteries and churchyards
- LPP 65 – Tree protection

The latest policy position and Development Plan Documents can be found in the Planning Policy section of the Council's website: <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/planning-building-control>.



## 2. Context and Character

Braintree is the principal town in the Braintree District in the north of Essex. It is located 10 miles northeast of Chelmsford, and 15 miles west of Colchester. The Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area encompasses the core of the town, which developed close to the River Brain, outside of the Conservation Area's southern boundary. The River Blackwater is to the north of the Conservation Area, flowing through Bocking and the Bradford Street Conservation Area.

The topography of the Conservation Area is largely flat, with the centre of the Conservation Area, the marketplace, located at the highest point. There is a gradual sloping downwards toward the basin of the River Brain in the southern section of the Conservation Area, which is most notable on London Road and Notley Road. From this the landscape rises on Rifle Hill, outside of the Conservation Area, affording wide views of the town's landmarks, in particular the New Mill complex and the water towers. A further fall in land level occurs in the north eastern section of the Conservation Area, toward Bradford Street, Bocking and the River Blackwater. Braintree developed around the crossing of two routes across the county, north-south and east-west. However, Braintree is now bypassed by the A120 and A131. A ring road system along Rayne Road and South Street prevents congestion within the retail centre of the Conservation Area, parts of which are pedestrianised or subject to one-way traffic restrictions. Braintree features two train stations located in the southern side of the town, both outside the Conservation Area boundary, which connect the town to Chelmsford and London Liverpool Street as part of a branch line.

The Conservation Area is architecturally varied and features many timber framed mediaeval and post- mediaeval buildings, clustered tightly together at the centre of the town. Buildings which survive from this early period provide an understanding of the layout of the medieval town, which was concentrated around the marketplace, still in use today. As Braintree expanded in later centuries it grew in all directions,

meaning the outer limits of the Conservation Area typically feature more recent buildings from the Victorian period to present day. The pinwheel appearance of the town's urban layout in eighteenth century is still legible however, with more recent additions to the town discernible as sections of infill.

A comparison between Braintree's current layout and its form on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map [Figure 6] shows that limited change to the town's road and street plan has occurred since the eighteenth century. This means that there are many good surviving examples of vernacular architecture, intermixed with successful Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian buildings; the eclectic, varied architecture within the Conservation Area is an important reminder of the changing fortunes of the town and indicative of its long and significant history. Braintree Conservation Area is large, and its size is revealing of the varied special interest of the Town Centre. Featuring individual sections of commercial, industrial and residential architecture, the zoning of Braintree Town Centre is evidential of its phasing and evolution, emphasising its historic interest.

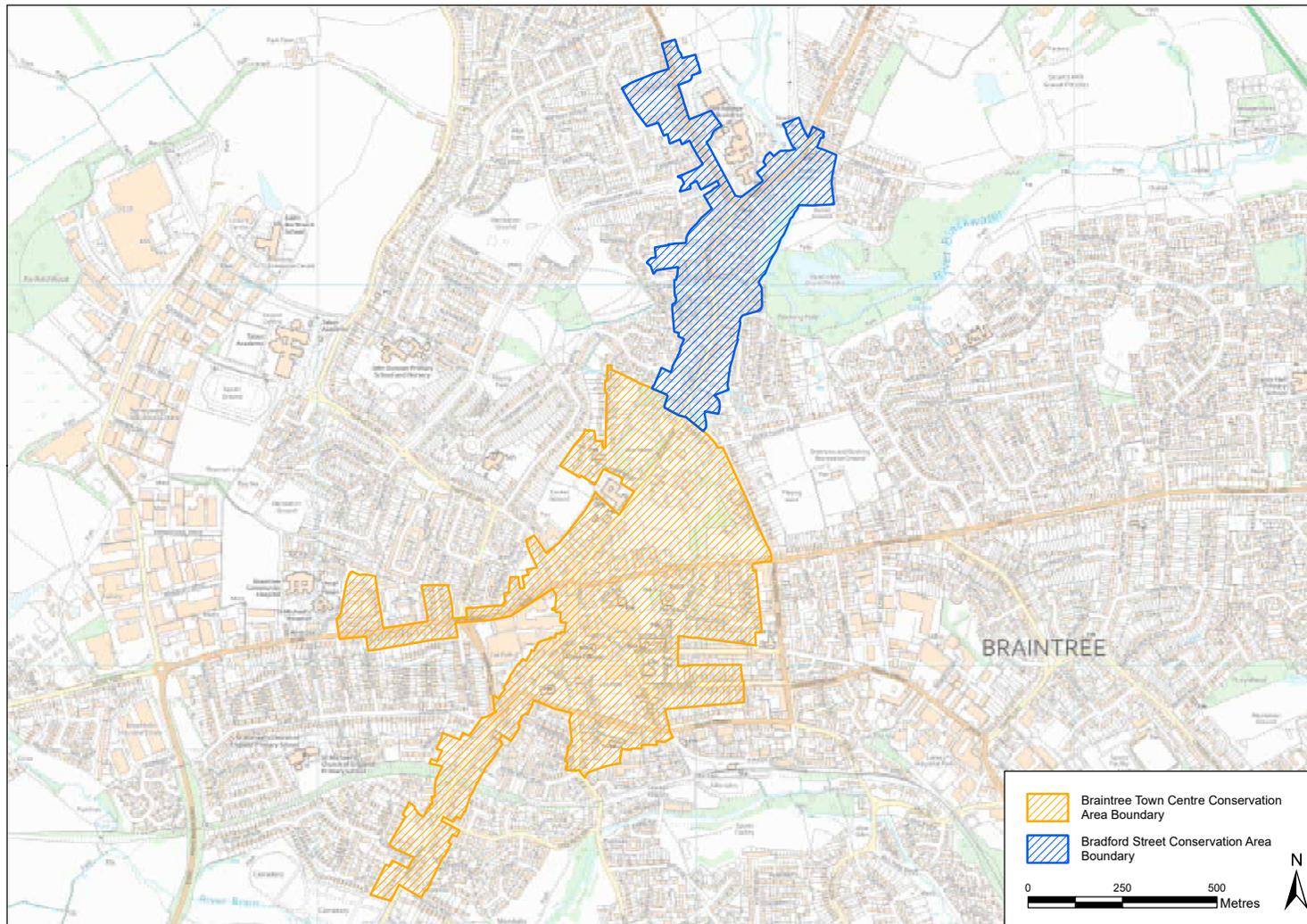


Figure 3 The Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area (orange) shown in relationship to the Bradford Street Conservation Area (blue)



## 2.1 Origin and Evolution

The following section provides an overview of the history of Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area and the surrounding settlement. Braintree and Bradford Street, Bocking (not to be confused with Bocking Churchstreet, to the north) grew as independent settlements, coalescing in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century as Braintree expanded. Where Braintree grew as a nucleated town, centred around a marketplace, Bocking is typical of a medieval linear settlement, focussed upon Bradford Street with a small extension north onto Broad Road and Church Lane. Although now one, the two areas have different origins, which has led to the creation of Bradford Street Conservation Area, details of which are described in section 2.3, Revisions to the Boundary.

### Prehistory (-500000 BCE – 43 AD)

The history of Braintree began thousands of years ago; archaeological evidence suggests there has been some form of human activity in the area since the Mesolithic period (approximately 450,000 to 8,000 BC). A considerable amount of Bronze Age artefacts have been discovered in the locality, including Bronze Age hoard of seventeen objects uncovered in Rayne. It is thought that the Chapel Hill area, south east of the Conservation Area and close to the River Brain, was a settling place for Bronze and later Iron Age people. Known as Trinovantes, a powerful Celtic tribe, these Iron Age people were farmers, living in scattered huts along the Brain River Valley.

### Roman (43 – 410 AD)

Julius Caesar led the first Roman expeditions to Britain in 55 and 54 BC. Although

Caesar did not gain control of the island at that point, a later invasion by Aulus Plautius established Roman rule in Britain in 43 AD. The Romans quickly moved across East Anglia, gaining control of Colchester and moving west, taking over Celtic towns and setting up military camps. Braintree was located on an important crossroad, where the east-west route between Colchester and St Albans met the north-south road which connected London to Long Melford.

People soon began to settle near to this cross point, developing into a small settlement south west of the crossroads, where the town centre is today, away from the Iron Age settlements. The location gave the new settlement a triangular formation. In the first century AD the Roman town was concentrated in the area around the modern day Pierrefitte Way, in the second and third centuries it expanded into what is now Rayne Road and George Yard. This important crossroads would have had a fort to protect it, however no evidence has yet been found to suggest its location.

The Roman route which connected Colchester to St Albans is part of a Roman road called Stane Street, linking Colchester and Braughing in Hertfordshire. Present day Rayne Road and Coggeshall Road roughly follow the same path.

Roman occupants of Braintree would have lived in timber framed houses, like the ones shown in the artist's interpretation in Figure 5. The drawing is based on findings from an excavation on Rayne Road, in which four individual buildings were identified, each with defined plots. Although we do not know what the buildings were covered with, we do know that they were timber framed, set upon wooden cill-beams and likely covered in thatch. A Roman Cremation vessel was found in a deep soakaway pit in the grounds of the former Kings Head Public House in Bradford Street, outside the Town Centre Conservation Area. Roman funerary traditions dictated that cemeteries were located outside of settlement boundaries; the location of the



Figure 4 An artist's interpretation of Roman building remains found on Rayne Road

uncovered cremation vessel suggests that Bradford Street and the northern section of Braintree was not occupied during the Roman period.

### Early Medieval (410 – 1066 AD)

The Roman Army withdrew from Britain c.410AD, after which Braintree was vulnerable to new invaders. One of these groups was the East Saxons, who give their name to Essex. Fearing attack, the Saxons often built their settlements away from Romano-British settlements, as they did in Braintree, creating a new settlement to the east of the Roman crossroads in what is now the Chapel Hill area, east of the town centre. Although no detailed written records from the Saxon era survive, Braintree and Bocking is mentioned in a will left by Aetheric the Thane, a Saxon nobleman. After his death in 998AD, Aetheric's ownership of the area to the north of the old Stane Road was passed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the area to the south to the Bishop of London.

### Medieval (1066 – 1540 AD)

By the middle of the 11th century there was a considerable community on the Bishop of London's land in Chapel Hill in the southern section of modern Braintree. A community remained in the location of the old Roman settlement, yet this was smaller in size. The larger community in Chapel Hill was referred to as Raines, thought to be derived from the Celtic name for the river Brain, or an amalgamation of two words which meant 'near the river'. Braintree appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 as Branchetreu and referred to the rough location of the Romano-British town, west and south west of the crossroads, not Chapel Hill. There have been many spellings of the town's name before Braintree was the accepted name. It is thought to derive from 'Branoc', a given name and 'treo', an Old English word for tree. In 1199 King John

granted Braintree a charter to hold a weekly market, which still continues today. The presence of a market shifted the focus of the area back to the crossroads and location of the Roman town, away from Raines and Chapel Hill. The first markets were held to the east of the crossroads, in the area known today as Little Square. Drury Lane, the buildings, gants and alleyways in this section of the town are thought to be a reflection of the market's layout. The routes in and out of the town established by the Romans have remained throughout the centuries, the plan of the town visible on the 1777 map of Essex [Figure 6] remains largely intact today. Soon after the market was granted, the Parish Church of St Michael's was founded and the chapel in Raines declined, falling into ruin in the nineteenth century, no trace of the chapel remains in the present day.

Well connected to Norfolk and Suffolk, Braintree flourished as a market town in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, becoming a stopping place for pilgrims on their journey from London to the shrine of Saint Edmund at Bury. Inns were built to accommodate the Pilgrims resulting in further expansion of the town. The town grew out from the marketplace, along Bank Street and then the High Street. In the early fourteenth century Braintree's cloth trade began to flourish, bringing great wealth to a number of families in the town. Many of the wealthy clothiers lived in Bocking, building great homes on Bradford Street which survive to this date.

Creating cloth was a lengthy process, beginning with a clothier who delivered raw wool to a succession of skilled workers, who worked in their own homes. Spinners mostly lived in surrounding villages, whilst the weavers lived and worked in Braintree and Bocking. The area became one of the leading manufacturing centres of wool cloth, specialising in the production of bays and says, hand woven woollen cloth; bays are lightweight whereas says are typically heavier and feature more complex twill diagonal weaves.



Figure 5 Mural from Braintree Town Hall, depicting the process of producing cloth



Figure 6 Extract from the 1777 Chapman and Andre Map of Essex



Figure 7 Looms at The Courtauld Factory ©Essex Records Office

### Post-Medieval (1540 – 1901 AD)

The peak of the cloth trade was in the middle of the seventeenth century, although the trade was prone to bouts of downturn caused by breakdowns in trade between England, Spain and Portugal, who were the biggest importers of the cloth. Fortunes were fickle, as shown by the history of the Savill family who, despite having been one of many wealthy employers a century before, were left as the only wool clothiers in the Braintree and Bocking at the turn of the nineteenth century. John Savill sold the family's last cloth mill to the silk manufacturer Samuel Courtauld in 1819. From this point onwards silk became the primary textile output of the town, bringing Braintree into the industrial revolution.

Machinery and mechanised procedures allowed the silk production in the town to flourish, whilst the switch to crape, popularised by Queen Victoria as her black mourning fabric of favour, brought great fortune to the Courtauld family. Samuel Courtauld & Co, as the company became known, also pioneered the production of man-made textiles, patenting Rayon. The notoriety of Braintree also attracted Warner & Son to the town, who operated in the New Mills area for almost a century. The Warner Textile Archive is now located in the mill complex, providing public access to the extensive archive of material held by the company, including patterns and information on manufacturing techniques.

Philanthropic and well connected in north Essex, the Courtauld family were highly influential within Braintree and the wider area. Much of their legacy can be seen in the building stock and plan of the Town Centre Conservation Area; the Town Hall, Manor Street School, Bocking Memorial Gardens and St Michael's Almshouses are just a selection of the buildings commissioned by the Courtauld company for the benefit of the town.

Another important employer in the town centre was the Crittall Manufacturing Co who began in Bank Street, when Francis Crittall took over the lease of a small forge in 1849. His son, Francis Henry took control after his father's death, rapidly expanding the business into what is now the George Yard shopping area. A need for space meant the firm established a large factory in Silver End and the workers housing that followed.

The Bank Street forge remained, which, coupled with the establishment of Joseph Bradbury & Sons and Lake & Elliot Ltd engineering firms, greatly altered the appearance and focus of the town at the beginning of the twentieth century. Remnants of the town's industrial past can be seen in the New Mills complex, at the southern edge of the Conservation Area, the Victorian water towers and the rows of workers cottages on Victoria Street, Manor Street and Rayne Road.

### Modern (1901 – present)

The success of the industrialisation benefitted the town at the turn of the twentieth century. In the first few decades, leisure and social facilities were created, including the Memorial Gardens which were opened in 1901. Braintree's first cinema, The Picture Palace, opened on Fairfield Road in 1912 and was replaced in the 1930s by the current building, now a pub. Another cinema operated on the High Street and was called Central Picture House; the building is now a shop.

Braintree Town Hall was opened to the public in 1928, part of a phase of building in the between war years in the town centre which also saw the expansion of Braintree's suburbs. Examples of houses built in this period are on the southern area of London Road and on St Peter's close, which were further developed as the town's population expanded. Essex was badly hit during the Blitz, with leftover bombs not dropped on



Figure 8 Workers at the Crittall factory, 1950s



Figure 9 The site of the original Crittall works, George Yard



Figure 10 Braintree Town Hall, opened in 1928



London landing on Essex towns. One of these landed in the centre of Braintree, on Bank Street. Miraculously the White Hart Hotel and Crittall factory were spared, particularly important as the Crittall factory was used for munitions during the war.

Braintree continued to expand in the latter half of the twentieth century, including the development of Pierrefitte Way, which marks the western edge of the Conservation Area. George Yard was heavily redeveloped following the closure of the Crittall site, as were the supermarket sites on South Street and Coggeshall Road. The density of buildings within the Town Centre means the changes have often been concentrated in specific areas, such as the Manor Street site which is currently under development, creating new homes, a hotel and retail space.

## 2.2 Revisions to the Boundary

As part of this review, the Conservation Area boundary has been revised to reflect changing methodologies of good practice and provide a clearer strategy which acknowledges the practicalities of Braintree's unique built environment. This review is in line with the NPPF guidance on Conservation Areas (paragraph 191).

The most significant alteration is the division of Braintree Town Centre and Bradford Street, creating two Conservation Areas. This has been considered due to the distinctions between Bradford Street and the rest of the town centre. Separating the areas allows for the special interest and alternate development history of each area to be fully realised, an appraisal document for Bradford Street has been created as part of this review of Braintree Conservation Area.

A map which marks the original and new boundary is on page 17 [Figure 14], written

descriptions and accompanying photographs are included in the following section.

### Boundary Revision Area A

Bradford Street [Figure 11] has been removed from the Braintree Conservation Area, creating two designated conservation areas: Braintree Town Centre and Bradford Street. Historical maps and documentary evidence indicate that the two areas grew independently and there is a distinctly different appearance and character between the two Conservation Areas. Bradford Street is predominantly vernacular and Georgian in appearance with development concentrated along the spine of the road. Rendered, timber framed buildings dominate the streetscene, with limited use of brickwork. The land use of Bradford Street is almost exclusively residential, with almost all former commercial units converted to domestic use. In comparison, the Town Centre has a nucleated centre and features examples of industrial, retail, municipal and commercial buildings. The Town Centre is far more varied architecturally, featuring differing building styles including later nineteenth and twentieth century architecture which are almost entirely absent in Bradford Street.

### Boundary Revision Area B

The boundary of the Conservation Area has been extended on Rayne Road, to include examples of mid to late nineteenth century terraced houses. These are indicative of the expansion of the town following the industrial revolution and feature attractive architectural detailing. The former workhouse site on Rayne Road, Old St Michael's Drive [Figure 18], is also included in the revised boundary. The former workhouse site was converted to residential use in the late 2000s, in a mixed development of flats and houses.

### Boundary Revision Area C

George Yard [Figure 12], the modern shopping precinct at the core of the town centre, has been removed from the Conservation Area. Built in the late twentieth century, George Yard is not of historic interest and limited architectural value. Buildings within George Yard make reference to the prevailing building types in Braintree, for example featuring front facing gables however they lack the quality and sympathy in design required to merit inclusion within the Conservation Area boundary.

Developed from industrial units and formerly a back-land site, George Yard is the site of the first Crittall forge, which provides context and historical interest of national significance. These buildings feature a commemorative plaque, and external materials typical of the Conservation Area. For this reason, a small section of George Yard shopping centre has been retained within the Conservation Area, at the entrance way on Bank Street.

### Boundary Revision Area D

London Road was partially included within the original boundary. The revised boundary extends the Conservation Area south, to the northern edge of Braintree Cemetery. This is to include examples of interesting mid to late nineteenth century detached and semi-detached houses, three listed buildings and good examples of early twentieth century Arts and Crafts dwellings.

### Boundary Revision Area E

Notley Road is a historical route out of the town centre, meaning it features a varied collection of dwelling of various build dates. The boundary of the Conservation Area has been extended south, to include examples of older buildings which reinforce the



Figure 11 Bradford Street, which is now a separate Conservation Area



Figure 12 The modern section of George Yard, removed from the Conservation Area



Figure 13 The original Crittall works, in George Yard, remains in the Conservation Area

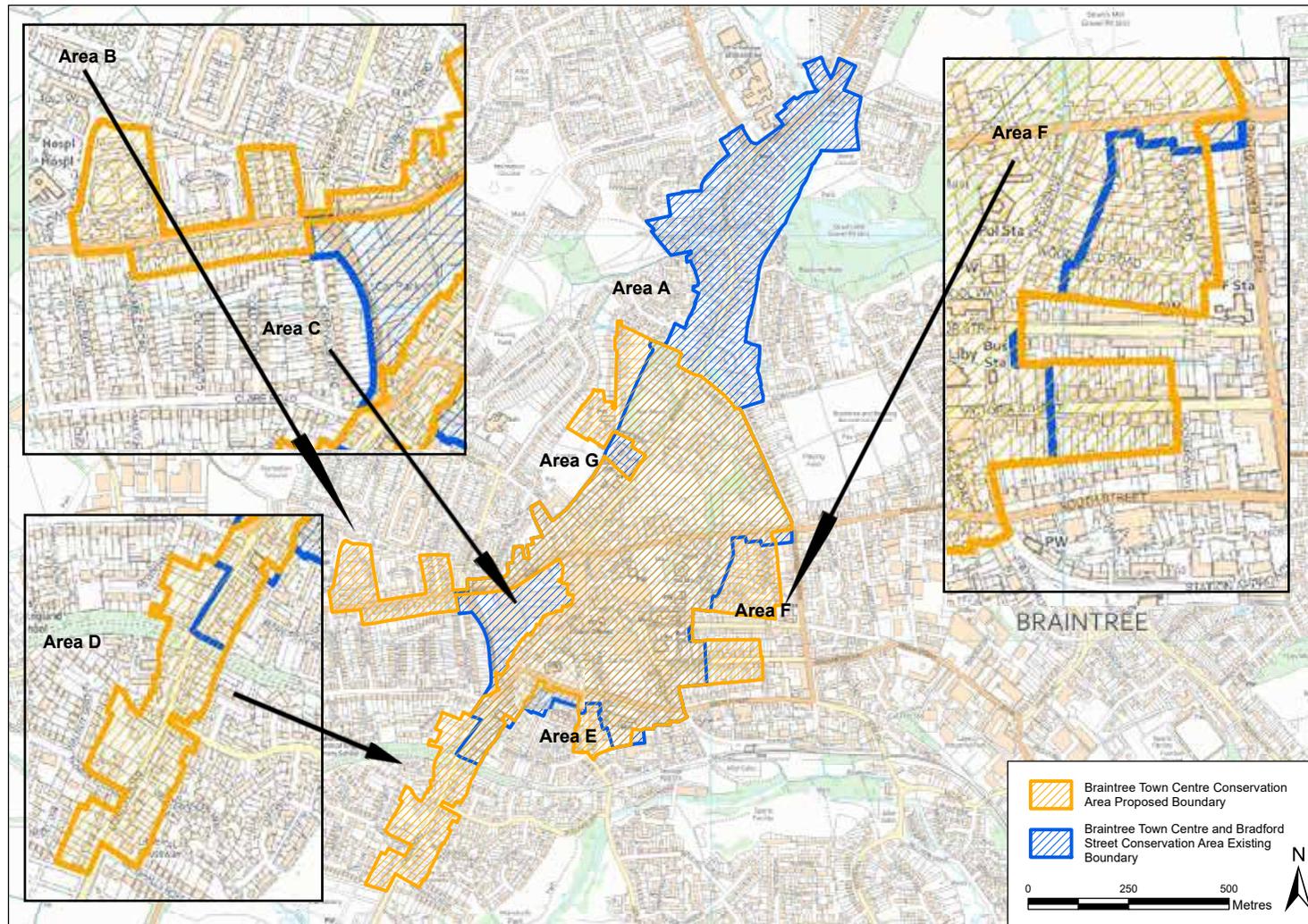


Figure 14 Map showing the changes to the Conservation Area's boundary



Figure 15 Terraced houses on Rayne Road, now within the Conservation Area

Figure 16 Terraced houses on Mount Road, now within the Conservation Area



Figure 17 Houses on London Road, now within the Conservation Area

special historic interest of the Conservation Area. These include the former site of The Angel public house, located on the curve of Notley Road, which now acts as the boundary marker for the Conservation Area.

#### **Boundary Revision Area F**

Sections of Woodfield Road, Victoria Street and Mount Road have been added to the Conservation Area boundary. As with the section of Rayne Road which has been added to the Conservation Area, these areas represent important Victorian and Edwardian expansion of the town, with buildings featuring a level of special interest and architectural quality worthy of preservation and conservation.

#### **Boundary Revision Area G**

The Council Offices, Causeway House, opened in 1982, has been removed from the Conservation Area. This is because the building does not reflect the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area, featuring unsympathetic external treatments and materials. Were this area to be redeveloped in a more appropriate architectural style of high quality, there may be scope for its future inclusion within the Conservation Area.

St Peters in the Fields is a Grade II listed Church, built in 1897 by JT Micklethwaite. Built in the Gothic style, its simple styling is partly due to a lack of funds, which marred its construction. The building is a good example of a late Victorian church built by a prominent architect of the period, and its inclusion within the revised Conservation Area boundary acknowledges the contribution the church makes to the area.

Surrounding dwellings to the west, south west and north east of the church have on St Peters in the Fields road also been included within the revised boundary as they too contribute positively to the local character and the setting of the Memorial Gardens, included within the previous boundary. This section of the town centre features good examples of detached houses dating from the Edwardian era and early twentieth century, in a tree lined, secluded setting.

### 2.3 Designated Heritage Assets

There are eighty-three designated heritage assets within the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area boundary, including domestic and industrial buildings, a fountain and telephone kiosk. These listed buildings are shown on Figure 21, on page 21.

These buildings and structures have been listed due to their special historic and architectural interest as defined by Historic England. Further information about the listing process can be found on the Historic England website, and a link is included in section 6.3 of this document: Legislation, Policy and Guidance.

The rarer and older a building is, the more likely it is to be listed. As a general principle, all buildings that pre-date 1700 and are in a relatively intact condition will be listed, as will buildings that date between 1750 and 1850. There is a strict criterion for buildings built after 1945; buildings less than thirty years old are unlikely to be listed unless they have been deemed as exceptional examples of their type. Listed buildings are split into three grades in England. Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest and make up approximately 2.5% of all listings; Grade II\* are of more than special interest; Grade II are of special interest and most common, making up 91.7% of all listings.

Listed buildings are protected by government legislation and there are policies in



Figure 18 St Micheal's Hospital, the former workhouse and now flats, is now within the Conservation Area



Figure 19 St Peters in the Fields, now within the Conservation Area



Figure 20 The Picture Palace Cinema on Fairfield Road, now a pub

place to ensure that any alterations to a listed building will not affect its special interest. It is possible to alter, extend or demolish a listed building but this requires listed building consent and sometimes planning permission. More details on applying for listed building consent can be found on Braintree's planning website: <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/directory-record/6430/listed-building-consent>.

Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area contains a very high number of listed buildings which emphasises its special interest. Many building types are designated, including mill buildings, churches, constitutional clubs, historic inns, cottages and shops, providing a rich and layered representation of English architectural history. The variety is important, highlighting how the town has grown and altered over time and acknowledging the multiple phases of Braintree's development.

A full list of all the designated assets within the Conservation Area is included in Appendix 6.3. Prominent listed buildings are also highlighted in the description for each character area, as appropriate.

## 2.4 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

All buildings, features and planned landscapes within a Conservation Area make a contribution to its significance. These can be measured on a sliding scale of positive, to neutral, to negative contributors.

Heritage assets are defined in Planning Policy Legislation as 'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.'

Not all heritage assets are designated, yet although a building may not be included

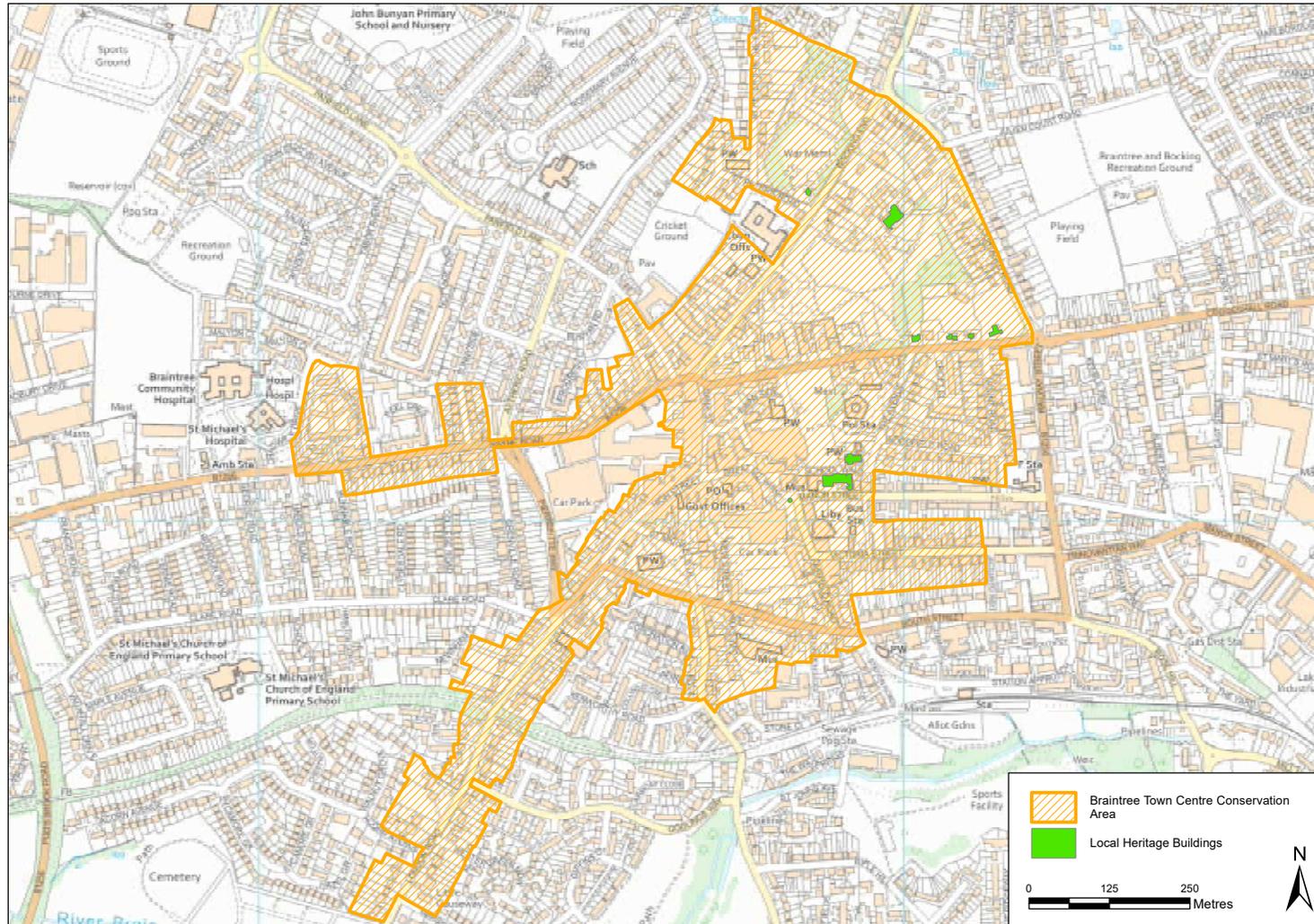


Figure 21 Map of listed buildings within the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area



on the list, this does not mean it is of no heritage value. Buildings and other smaller features of the built environment such as fountains, railings, signs and landscaping can make a positive contribution to the appreciation of an area's historic interest and its general appearance.

Local listing is an important tool for local planning authorities to identify non-listed buildings and heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the locality. At present there is not a singular, formally approved local list for Braintree District, and this matter is discussed in the management proposals for the Conservation Area. Some buildings have, however been identified by the local authority as Local Heritage Buildings and are identified on the council's interactive mapping facility, accessed by clicking this link. Where applicable, these buildings are identified within the character area sections of this document.

As part of the appraisal of the Conservation Area, this document has identified heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and should be considered for local listing in the future. These are identified in the descriptions of each character area outlined in Section Three.

## **2.5 Heritage at Risk**

Historic England publishes a yearly list of Heritage at Risk. To be included on the list, buildings must be Grade II\* listed or above, with the exception of Grade II listed places of worship and Grade II listed buildings in London. Other designated heritage assets can also be included on Historic England's register, including Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Wreck Sites. Non-designated heritage assets are not considered by Historic England for inclusion on the Heritage at Risk Register.

There are no designated heritage assets within the Braintree Conservation Area on the At Risk Register at present. The Conservation Area itself is also not deemed to be at risk by Historic England. There are needless many areas of the Conservation Area which would highly benefit from enhancement which are identified in section 4 of this document.

## **2.6 Archaeological Potential**

It has been demonstrated that there is a high potential for archaeological deposits from prehistory to the post-medieval period within the town centre, despite disturbance from successive phases of building and localised quarrying. Archaeological stratigraphic deposits within the urban built up areas have been recorded as up to 2.7m in places.

Due to the nature of the built-up stratigraphy within the town the potential for survival of a wide range of archaeological material is likely, coins and metal objects have been recovered as well as bone, ceramic and building material. Waterlogged deposits are known to survive in deeper features such as wells and cess-pits and have the potential to preserve paleoenvironmental evidence that provide insight into past environmental conditions and preserve a greater range of archaeological remains. Evidence of the Late Iron Age settlement has been shown to have been truncated but not destroyed by the later occupation of the town and can be expected to survive in places.

There is potential for further evidence of the Roman roads and roadside buildings along Rayne Road and within the confines of the Roman town where it is deeply buried or in less developed areas. Medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains are likely to survive relating to the growth and development of the town and its associated functions. Disturbance of below ground archaeological remains can be expected in areas of the town where cellars have been built, this has been identified

in places along Bank Street and the High Street. In places the ground has been made up through the spoil from the cellar excavations. Limited excavations beyond the town centre suggests there is good potential for the survival of archaeological features, particularly to the rear of the post-medieval settlement and in the open green spaces which lie along and between Bocking End, The Causeway and Courtauld Road.

A little bronze Roman horse and rider figurine measuring only 8cm [Figure ] was found during excavations of what is now the George Yard shopping area. The rider is more Celtic in appearance than Roman and depicted as naked with the exception of a rolled belt. It is thought he would have originally held a spear in his raised right hand and either reins or a shield in his lower left hand. The figurine may have been a religious item, perhaps depicting a Celtic version of Mars, the Roman god of war.



Figure 22 Roman figurine, found within the Conservation Area

## 3. Assessment of Significance

### 3.1 Summary

The special interest of Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area is in its legibility as a mediaeval market town which has grown and developed in response to regional and national trends in industry and manufacture. Well placed geographically, the town's position allowed trade to flourish, with the town specialising in the manufacture of textiles. Weaving was incredibly important to the town's economy from the post-medieval period onwards and examples of buildings formerly associated with the textile industry remain prominent within the townscape. These include the former mill buildings and those presented to the town by its benefactors, many of whom had made their fortune in the textile trade. Changes in manufacturing techniques as part of the industrial revolution resulted in a quick expansion of the town in the late Victorian period, represented by the high number of terraces and dwellings on the edges of the Conservation Area.

At the centre, the vernacular and medieval appearance of the town is still visible, evidenced by the dense, low rise streetscape and narrow, winding road pattern. Many of the buildings in the Conservation Area are traditional in construction, with timber being a dominant building material. Gentrification and rationalisation of the façade of some buildings in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries disguises the build date of many properties, however service areas, rear elevations and roof forms remain indicative of the Conservation Area's historical nature.

Areas of parkland and open space provide sections of reprieve and seclusion which contribute positively to the character of the Conservation Area. Topographical high points within the Conservation Area boundary are limited, however the position of St Michael's Church and its surrounding churchyard brings a focus and sense of space to the centre of the town, allowing for views across the Conservation Area, toward the

basin of the River Brain.

Land use is zoned, with sections of the Conservation Area fulfilling specific functions, such as commercial, recreational, or residential uses. This has provided the basis of the character areas outlined in the following sections and provides an understanding of how the town centre developed.



Figure 23 View of the Conservation Area from Notley Road



### 3.2 Character Areas

The Conservation Area is divided into six Character Areas:

1. London Road
2. Commercial Core
3. The Mills
4. Victoria Street, Mount Road and Woodfield Road
5. Rayne Road
6. The Parks

The areas have been determined by building typology, historical development, land use and appearance. Many of the defining characteristics of each Character Area are present and repeated in other sections of the Conservation Area, which emphasises the local character and architectural significance of the Conservation Area. The following descriptions are not exhaustive, aiming instead to provide accessible accounts of each Character Area which will allow for an informed understanding of the Conservation Area's special interest and defining features.

A map of the character areas is on the following page [Figure 24].

Prevailing architectural styles, building materials, spatial planning, landscaping and boundary materials are detailed in the description of each Character Area to highlight the special architectural and historic value of the six zones. Photographs are included to aid the descriptions, providing examples where appropriate to inform the understanding of this document. Each character area features designated heritage assets, a full list of the designations within the Conservation Area are included as appendix 6.3 to this document.

Designated buildings or structures which make a notable contribution to each character area are described in the following sections, however the omission of any buildings from the description does not mean they make no contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area. An assessment of the significance of each listed building and the contribution it makes to the special interest of the Conservation Area should be made when development or alterations are proposed.

Non-designated buildings or features deemed to reflect and enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area are also identified in the descriptions of each character area. These may be suitable for local listing; information regarding the definition of a non-designated heritage asset can be found in section 2.5 of this document. As with the listed structures, not all buildings that contribute to, or reinforce the character of the Conservation Area have been identified within this appraisal of the Conservation Area. Other buildings which feature architectural detailing typical of the Conservation Area, for example, would also be considered to contribute to the significance of the Conservation Area. Future development must be assessed on an individual basis, remaining considerate of Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area's special interest, with the aim to enhance or preserve those aspects which contribute to its significance.

Key views have been identified within each Character Area, and views from outside the Conservation Area from which its special interest can be recognised are also highlighted where appropriate. There may, nevertheless, be other views of significance within or beyond the Conservation Area's boundary which contribute to how it is appreciated and understood. Any proposals for development within the Conservation Area, or its environs, should thus not only consider the views identified within this document but also any others which may be relevant or highlighted as part of a bespoke assessment of that proposal.

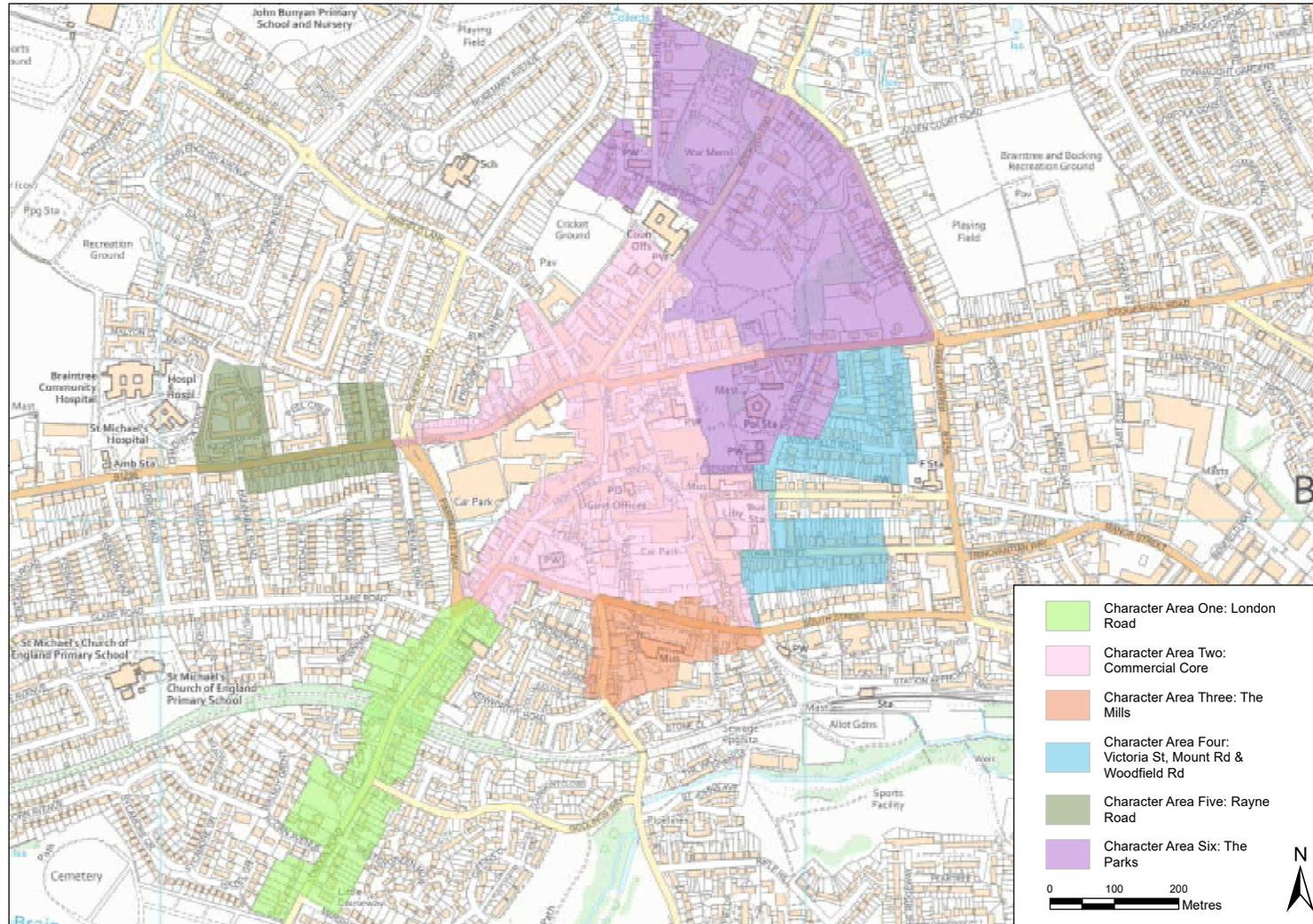


Figure 24 Map showing the Character Areas within Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area

### 3.2.1. London Road

#### Description

At the south western edge of the Conservation Area, London Road is one of the principal routes into the centre of Braintree and primarily residential. The northern section of the road rises in land level to adjoin the High Street, which is visible from the road junction. Buildings on London Road range in date from the late seventeenth to twenty-first century, representing multiple phases of Braintree's history. The first edition OS map shows that the road layout and pattern of development on the eastern side of the road was established by the late nineteenth century; the prevailing character is of late Victorian and Edwardian detached and semidetached houses within large grounds.

Development of London Road was spurred on in the nineteenth century by the creation of the Flitch Way, a now dismantled railway which ran underneath the road, between Numbers 45 and 47. The railway connected Braintree to Bishops Stortford and closed to passengers in 1952. For the next twenty years it was used by freight trains, finally closing in 1972. The train line is now a maintained park. Dwellings are typically set back from the road behind gardens, giving the road a green appearance and sense of space, emphasised by the gaps in built form. Compared to the High Street it adjoins, the London Road Character Area is quiet and expansive, featuring a footpath on each side. The change in land levels emphasises the turns of the road, allowing for a varied kinetic experience when travelling through the Character Area which emphasises the variety of building types present, preventing a sense of enclosure or homogeneity.



Figure 25 Map of Character Area One, London Road, shown in green



Figure 26 The Flitch Way



Figure 27 View looking north up London Road, from taken from the bridge over the Flitch Way

Where present, twentieth and twenty first century development has been sympathetic to the character of the area, maintaining a regular grain of development which diminishes toward the southern section of the road and Braintree Cemetery. As part of this appraisal the Conservation Area boundary has been extended along London Road to encompass dwellings represent the development of Braintree in the early twentieth century. These buildings are good examples of their type and represent an important recent phase of the town’s history.

### Layout and Land Usage

London Road is a predominantly straight road, running northsouthwest from the junction between the High Street and Pierrefitte Way in the centre of town, towards Great Notley. The road kinks slightly in the centre of the Character Area as it passes over the Flitch Way. Buildings are almost exclusively residential, with the exception of Christ Church, a late nineteenth century classically designed Chapel, at the northern end of the Character Area. The building grain is tighter in the northern section of the London Road, featuring examples of smaller terraced houses and reflecting the density of the town centre. To the south, away from Braintree’s centre, the houses are more generously proportioned and spaced with a more suburban character.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces

The Flitch Way runs beneath London Road, which bridges the disused railway. Now a maintained park used recreationally by walkers and cyclists, the Flitch Way is largely unseen from street level. Trees and a boundary wall indicate the bridge’s presence; a small footpath leads from the north western side of the bridge to the Flitch Way below. The Flitch Way provides a green break in built form, with its tree cover and the narrowing of the road acting as a transitional element on the journey out of the Conservation Area. This sense of transition is emphasised by the development on

Cecily Avenue, formerly the site of the William Julien Courtauld hospital.

Landscaping in the Character Area is minimal. Nonetheless, the positioning of properties, set back from the pavement behind front gardens and generously spaced at the southern edge of the Character Area, means London Road has a green, open character and appearance.

### Key Buildings

#### Designated

There are six designations within the London Road Character Area. All are Grade II, and details of the designated buildings can be found in Appendix 6.3.

Four of the six designations are clustered together at the centre of the character area and represent two phases of development. Numbers 23-33 (odd) are an eighteenth century terrace, indicative of vernacular, timber framed houses of the period [Figure 28]. In contrast, number 19 and 21, and 35 and 37 are more formal in appearance, semi-detached pairs from the nineteenth century. Number 41, a detached house, features architectural detailing similar to that of the semidetached listed buildings and dates from the same period, giving these dwellings a group value. All feature hipped roofs and ornamentation around the windows and doors, in a classical styling with emphasis on proportion and form.

#### Non-designated

Christ Church, 12 London Road is a nineteenth century chapel and typical of the period [Figure 29]. Featuring an imposing gabled main façade, the building is classical in appearance featuring pedimented windows and stone cross at the apex of the gable. Built in gault brick, it is located at the road junction and a prominent part of the



Figure 28 23-33 London Road (left hand side) and 35 and 37 London Road, all Grade II listed



Figure 29 Christ Church



Figure 30 Nineteenth century houses, 47 - 57 London Road



Figure 31 91 London Road



Figure 32 36 London Road

streetscape.

10-20 London Road, three pairs of red brick semidetached houses which retain some original windows and doors are set back from the road, in an elevated position.

36 London Road [Figure 32], a large, detached Arts and Crafts house with Neo-Tudor mock beams, decorative chimneys and sash windows.

47-53 London Road, a collection of late nineteenth century semidetached pairs.

52 and 54 London Road, a large three storey townhouse, now flats. Buff brick, set back from the road and largely concealed by hedgerow.

56 London Road, a large two storey gault brick house, now two dwellings. The property features decorative tiles to front gable and parapet to ground floor bay window.

64 London Road, an early twentieth century detached house with original windows.

91 London Road [Figure 31], an early twentieth century Neo-Georgian house in buff brick with original timber windows across the front elevation, including two bow bay windows at ground floor level and sliding sashes on the first floor. Semi-circular door canopy and original Edwardian door featuring decorative glass.

103 London Road, an early twentieth century rendered house in a vernacular style, featuring a cat slide roof and unusual turquoise coloured roof tiles.

### Building Materials and Boundary Treatments

The variety of building ages within London Road influences the building materials used. Older properties are located closer to the town centre and area timber framed with a rendered exterior; later buildings are typically brick. Despite the variety in building ages, traditional materials dominate the Character Area.

#### Roofs

Roofs are often an indicator of a building's age: older properties on London Road are covered in plain tiles whilst most nineteenth century homes use natural slate, concrete tiles feature on twentieth century dwellings.

Decorative tiles are found throughout the character area and add interest to the roofscape. These include scalloped tiles, creating a fish scale pattern, and turquoise enamel tiles. Finials and intricate ridge tiles are also features of the roofline on London Road.

Roof pitch varies according to building style; catslide, hipped and gabled roofs all feature throughout London Road, giving the Character Area an eclectic appearance. Where present, gables are typically perpendicular to the street, small gables facing the street are normally an architectural decoration or feature, above bay windows. Dormer windows and rooflights are not dominant features in the street scene and should not be introduced.

Chimneys are a prominent feature of the roofscape and reflect the age of the building's on London Road. Older buildings often feature extremely large chimneys, visible from some distance. Buildings are typically two storeys in height, rising to



Figure 33 Photograph of the roofscape on London Road



Figure 34 Examples of brickwork in the Character Area



Figure 35 Example of Render, London Road



Figure 36 Pebbledash, 23-33 London Road

three storeys in the central section of the Character Area, near the Flich Way.

### Walls

Brick dominates the London Road Character Area. Red brick is the most prominent but buff (a light-yellow colour) and stock brick (a darker, mid tone) also feature. Brickwork is employed decoratively and sometimes varies between principle and side elevations – deeper coloured bricks are found on principle elevations. Flemish bond is most common, and many houses feature string courses and/or banding between each floor. Some brickwork is painted; painting any brickwork which is currently exposed will cause harm to the structure and should not occur.

Render is most common on the older properties in the Character Area, some twentieth century buildings feature rendered panels as part of their Arts and Crafts or Neo-Tudor design. Where present, render is painted in neutral tones: creams, soft greys and yellows.

Pebbledash, where present, adds texture and variation in tone to the street scene. 23-33 London Road are good examples of how pebbledash can be visually interesting and are an example of an early use of the material as a substitute for traditional lime render.

Timber cladding is not a feature of this section of the Conservation Area. If present, it is on outbuildings or garages, not principle dwellings.

### Windows and Doors

Many of the buildings retain their original timber windows and doors. Stone surrounds are common for windows, as are arched brick lintels. Sash windows are most

common, although some older houses do feature casement windows.

Mid to late twentieth century properties towards the southern section of the Character area have nearly all lost their original windows, replaced by uPVC. Many of these houses would have featured metal framed windows, the reinstatement of which would be beneficial to the appearance of the houses and Conservation Area.

Fanlights, sidelights and coloured glass are attractive features of some retained original doors and add visual interest. Unsympathetic modern uPVC doors are present on some properties, and the infilling of storm porches has removed period features such as tiled doorways and lanterns from the streetscape.

Extended porches are not a typical feature of the Character Area. Where present, porches are recessed, storm porches, and feature decorative brick or stone detailing as part of the door surround. The infilling of some storm porches detracts from the design and symmetry of houses on London Road.

Gabled or flat canopies feature on some properties but are not a dominant feature and should not be introduced.

### Boundary Treatments

Most properties are set back from the road behind gardens, although many of these have recently been converted to driveways and off-road parking. Hedgerow and low-lying brick walls add to the increasingly suburban appearance of London Road towards the southern edge of the Character Area and are an important characteristic.

Hedges, railings and low-level walls add to a sense of openness and should be retained. Where present, close boarded fencing is incongruous. Painting (in a dark



Figure 37 Examples of timber sash windows, brick, slate and painted render on London Road



Figure 38 Examples of doors within the Character Area

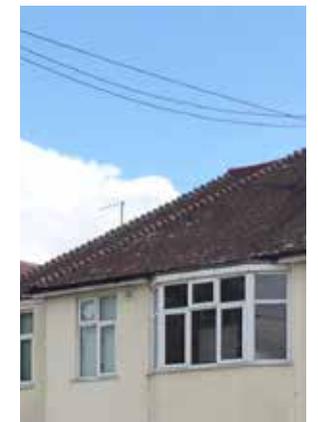


Figure 39 Example of uPVC windows



brown or green) or replacing sections of fencing with hedgerow would improve the appearance of the area.

### Public Realm

Public Realm within the Character Area is limited to areas of pavement, the road and few small sections of grass at road junctions. The Flitch Way [Figure 26], although present, does not make an active contribution to the appearance of the character area as it is largely hidden from view. The bridge and trees around the Flitch Way add an important green element to the streetscape, however the lack of interpretation, signage, or visibility from London Road onto the disused railway below, mean the Flitch Way is not easily discernible from street level.

The set back of properties, behind front gardens, mean that the Character Area appears spacious despite the lack of public space. Pavements are wide, on either side of the road, giving good pedestrian access. There are limited pedestrian crossings; the only light controlled crossing is at the northern edge of the Character Area, at the junction with the High Street.

Where modern (late twentieth century – present) housing has been developed east or west of London Road, these are accessed via road junctions, there are few alleys or footpaths within the Character Area. At these junctions, open sections of grass or gardens create a wide road opening, furthering emphasising the suburban appearance of London Road. At the entrance to Acorn Avenue, for example, there are two sections of grass which provide an important break in built form, opening up the western side of the road. A post box on the northern side indicates this land is public amenity space, albeit underutilised.

Wide pavements allow for decoration and enhancements to the visual interest of the public realm, such as the planters on the section of pavement between Godlings Way and Marshalls Road. Telegraph poles in this section of the road, the set back of numbers 83 to 89 and prominent hedges of 48 London Road, on the west side, as well as the properties on Cecily Avenue, make this section of the Character Area visually interesting and complex, highlighting the multiple phases of development which have occurred.

Signage and traffic management within London Road is minimal, marking speed limits and junctions. Bus stops, where present, do not benefit from shelters or designated stopping bays. Streetlights along London Road feature concrete bases and utilitarian lamps, adding no heritage interest to the public realm.

### Views

Key views within the character area are identified on the following page in Figure 40.

London Road is principally straight, meaning views up and down the road are important, particularly looking south, where the grain of development loosens. Views along the road highlight how Braintree has expanded and grown over time. The cluster of listed buildings at the centre of London Road and Victorian villas around the Flitch Way are indicative of the importance of the railway to the town's development, whilst the presence of the Flitch Way adds a green backdrop to the centre of the character area.

Looking out from the southern section of the character area and the edge of the Conservation Area, the cemetery and Marshalls Park reinforce the earlier, rural, edges of the settlement, now removed by the presence of the A120 and expansion

of Notley Green.

Views north, towards the High Street, highlight the London Road Character Area's differing density of built form, comparative to the tightly packed streets of Character Area Two, the Commercial Core. Looking toward Pierrefiette Way, from the corner of London Road and Clare Road, is a detracting viewpoint, which could be improved by lessening the traffic or more visually appealing footpaths and traffic barriers.

Throughout the Character Area, the presence of hedgerow, trees, good boundary walls and railings, create a suburban appearance to London Road. This is enhanced by long views up and down the road, emphasised by the wide street and set back of properties from the pavement.



Figure 40 Map showing notable viewpoints within the Character Area

### 3.2.2. Commercial Core

#### Description

The Commercial Core Character Area includes the High Street, St Michael's Lane, New Street, Great Square, Bank Street, Swan Side, Market Place, Fairfield Road, Bocking End and sections of Rayne Road, Panfield Lane, Manor Street and Coggeshall Road.

Revisions to the boundary exclude George Yard shopping area and Pierrefitte Way from the Conservation Area, details of which are in section 2.3 of this document.

This Character Area contains some of the oldest buildings in the town centre, including St Michael's Church, at the southern side of the Character Area. The surviving block plan follows the medieval plan of the town, radiating around the original marketplace, which was located immediately south of The Swan public house between Drury Lane and Bank Street. As the town grew and industries changed, the marketplace was infilled and moved to its present location, south east of its original site. Buildings still present in the location of the original market, such as The Old Manor House and Swan Public House, suggest the formalisation of stalls and infilling of the market had begun by the sixteenth century.

Surviving 'gants' (alleyways) between buildings on Swan Side and Great Square also suggest the layout of original stalls and highlight the influence of Flemish weavers on the town, with the term gant originating from the Flemish word 'gang', meaning corridor.

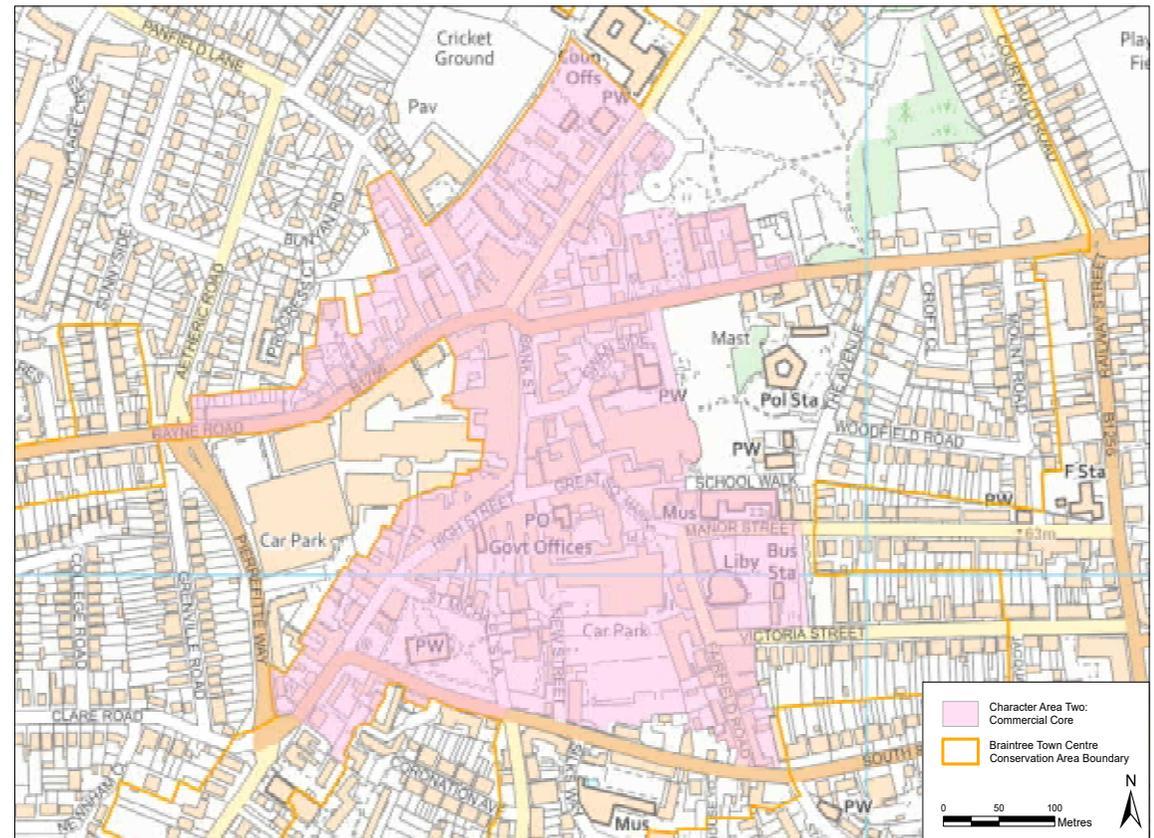


Figure 41 Map of Character Area Two, shown in pink



Figure 42 The junction of the High Street and South Street, by St Michael's Church



Figure 43 Braintree Town Hall



Figure 44 Braintree Museum

Braintree flourished in the medieval period due to the cloth trade, which continued to be a focus for the town's economy until the twentieth century. Changes in technology and production, including the advent of the railway and establishment of engineering firms in the twentieth century have meant the centre of the town has continually evolved, resulting in a rich and varied building stock in this Character Area. Vernacular, mediaeval buildings are often hidden behind Georgian facades, nestled between early twentieth century infill buildings. Some Victorian shop fronts survive, as do early windows, typically on higher floors.

As indicated by its name, this Character Area is focussed on the retail centre of the town and the heart of the Conservation Area. Shops, restaurants, pubs and cafes are the dominant building use, with some residential areas and uses on upper floors, in converted units and in periphery streets. Industry and trade extended the town centre outwards from the medieval marketplace, with workshops, yards and warehouses historically located to the rear of the principle buildings of the town centre. Many of these areas have been redeveloped within recent years, providing large supermarket units and blocks of residential flats to the rear of the principal streets.

Municipal buildings are also important to the character area and include Braintree Town Hall, library and museum, located on Manor Street and Fairfield Road. Together these three buildings provide an important public service which is emphasised by their positioning next to each other at an entry point to the town centre.

Buildings within the character area have a strict hierarchy of floors, which diminish in size on higher storeys; many buildings feature attic accommodation. Average building height is three storeys, reflecting the age of the structures. Currently underway, the new Manor Street development, to the rear of the Town Hall, will bring greater focus to the Market Square and Braintree's retail core.

### Layout and Land Usage

Braintree town centre developed around the junction of modern day Coggeshall Road and Bank Street and the central, medieval marketplace, which was located between Drury Lane, Great Square and Swan Side.

The Commercial Core Character Area's layout remains indicative of this early block plan, with outer streets away from the marketplace featuring architectural details and styles which highlight their later construction dates, comparative to the market place and Bank Street. Houses on Manor Street, for example, are built in brick which was a prevailing building material in the Victorian and Edwardian periods (the street was constructed in the middle of the nineteenth century). Properties on New Street, built in the eighteenth century are instead typically timber framed and rendered, perhaps featuring a formal brick frontage to suggest status and wealth.

Some of the oldest buildings in the Conservation Area are clustered around the medieval market square, which are thought to have derived from temporary market stalls, formalised into permanent buildings. A clear example of this is the southern elevation of The Swan Public House [Figure 45], which is a relatively complete frontage of sixteenth century buildings that likely would have included small shops and workshops at ground floor level.

The present-day Market Place, south east of the original location, remains a focal point of the town centre. The Town Hall [Figure 43 ], on Fairfield Road, demarks the south eastern corner of the current market 'square', which is now an elongated rectangle of open space within the town centre. The town hall, library and museum are all located on the present day marketplace, giving a municipal and public amenity focus to the centre of the Character Area.



Figure 45 The Swan Public House

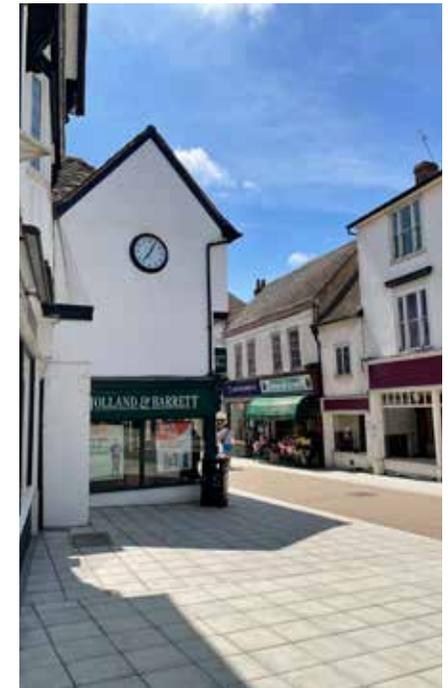


Figure 46 A small area of space on Bank Street remains in the location of the original marketplace and remains in use today



Figure 47 The foreground shows tightly packed buildings on Bank Street, with the High Street behind

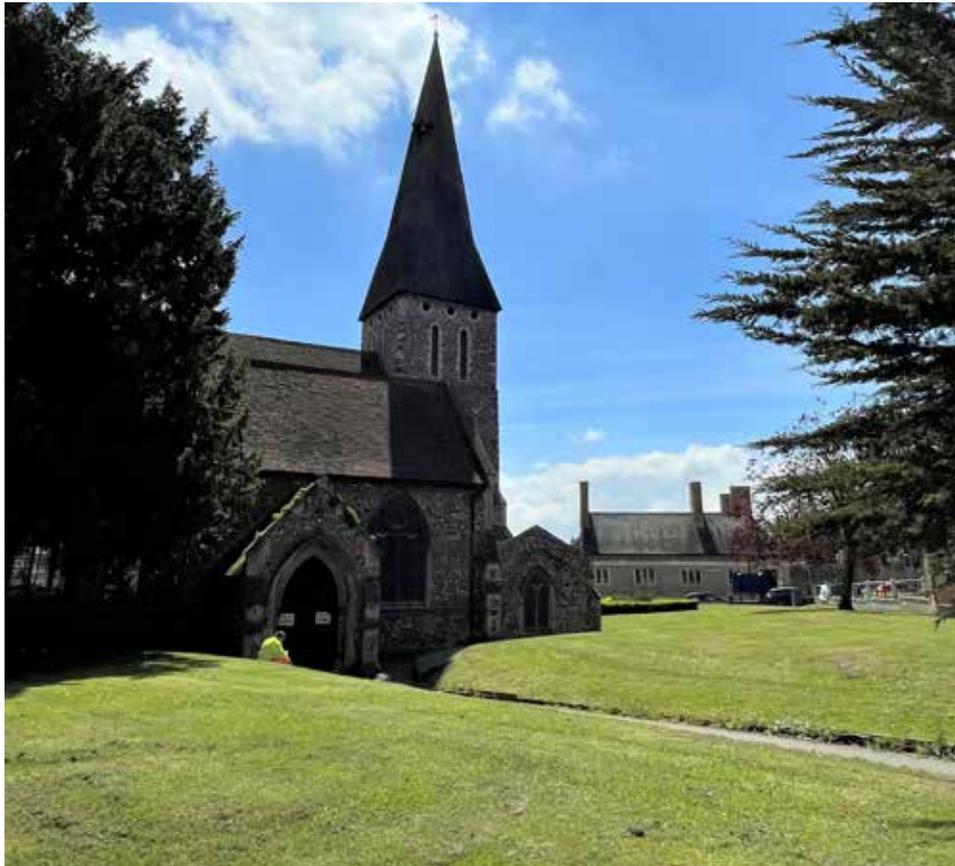


Figure 48 St Micheal's Church and churchyard

Buildings in the older sections of the Character Area are densely packed, with few spaces between. The High Street has a continuous frontage, with building sizes relating to the burgage plots set out in the medieval period. Small gants between properties in the Character Area allow for pedestrian cut throughs, creating intimate and kinetic views which allow for an appreciation of the character area's history. The High Street leads south away from the Market Place to St Michael's Church and London Road. Built in the twelfth century, St Michael's is the oldest building in the town and marks a break in built form. Streets surrounding the church reflect the ecclesiastical focus of this section of the town, such as The Vestry, whilst the lower building heights of properties at the southern edge of the High Street afford greater prominence to the church.

New Street was developed in the early seventeenth century as a new market street, perpendicular to the High Street, following the infilling of the original marketplace. The development of the Tesco site has altered the ability to read New Street as it once was, yet surviving buildings and features of the street are indicative of the street's past functions. One example of this is the small and brick structure with a lean-to roof to the north of The Chophouse. This small building built in 1840 was formerly the town lockup, ceasing to be used as a jail cell around 1875. The main routes in the Commercial Core Character Area run north, east, south and west, away from the centre and out into the more residential areas of the Conservation Area.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces

Buildings are tightly packed throughout the Character Area, which makes the few areas of open space, on Bank Street [Figure 46], the Market Square and by St Michael's church [Figure 48] important breaks in the density of development, allowing for publicly accessible areas for seclusion and recreation. St Michaels Church yard contributes to the significance of the listed building by offering a sense of removal

and separation from the density and volume of built form surrounding the church.

As a contributor to the significance of the Conservation Area, the church yard allows the form of the church to be appreciated whilst also offering an area of seclusion and tranquillity within the otherwise dense town centre. At the church's north west entrance, separated by railings and heavily landscaped, the Grade II listed fountain is a focal point of this section of the character area, at the junction between St Michael's Road and the High Street. Donated by the Coutauld family in 1938, the fountain is Grade II listed. The design features late art nouveau themes of naturalism, featuring curving lines and a sense of playfulness. Four seals are seated at the fountain's edge, with a central sculpture of a boy holding a fish in each hand, atop a large swirling shell.

The fountain was designed by John Hodge and cast in bronze at the Burton foundry in Thames Ditton, greater London. Together, the church, fountain and almshouses to the south are an important group, with the openness and set back of buildings emphasising the rise in land levels and offering long views to the south.

The Market Square, sections of wide pavement on Bank Street and Great Square offer areas of space and respite, featuring benches and other items of street furniture. On market days stalls are present in these areas, and there is scope for better public engagement with these sections of the town, which are described within the management proposal section of this document. There are two large car parks within the Character Area, serving the two supermarkets in the town centre. The appearance of these is utilitarian, detracting from the character of the Conservation Area. Areas of planting at the edges of the car parks add an element of greenery, yet these are areas which offer no engagement or visual interest.



Figure 49 St Michael's Church and Fountain

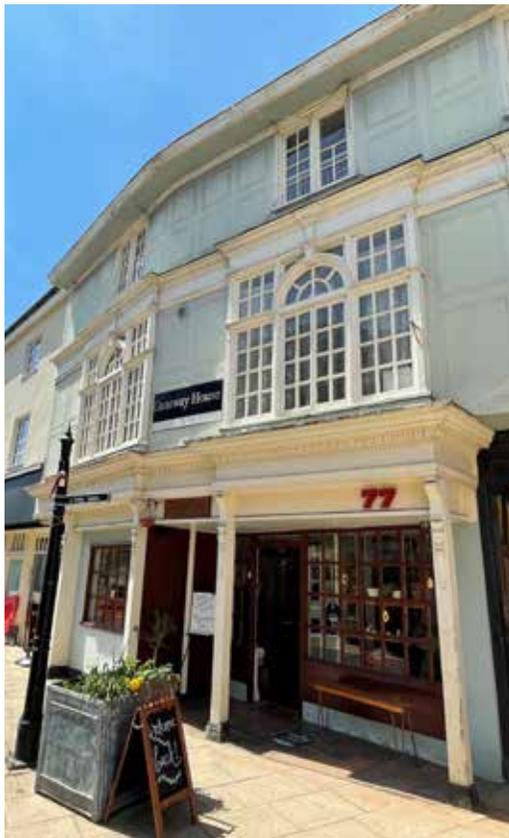


Figure 50 77 High Street, Grade II listed



Figure 51 Former Essex County Library, Coggeshall Road, Grade II listed



Figure 52 Bradbury House, New Street, Grade II listed

## Key Buildings

### Designated

There are sixty-one designations within the Commercial Core Character Area, details of which are included in list format in Appendix 6.3 and demarked on Figure 21. This high number emphasises the historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area, with many of the properties listed due to their age and construction. Five of the designations are listed Grade II\*, with remainder listed as Grade II. There are no Grade I designations.

Grade II\* buildings within the Commercial Core Character Area are the Town Hall, Constitutional Club, The Old Manor House (Bank Street), The Swan Public House and St Michael's Church.

St Michael's Church is the oldest building in the town, dating from the twelfth to thirteenth century, enlarged in the fifteenth to sixteenth century and restored in the Victorian period. Much of the exterior is evidential of the Victorian renovations, with almost all the windows nineteenth century, in a free Geometric style, featuring trefoils, circles and crosses. It has a tall, shingled broach spire and much medieval fabric remains in the interior.

Braintree Town Hall, built between 1926-8, was designed by Vincent Harris, and is built in a neo-Georgian style. It has been described by architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner as 'Just the right size for a small but prosperous town'.

Large sections of the High Street and Bank Street include listed buildings, many of which are designated due to their age. Of these, there a handful of listed coaching

inns, including The Boar’s Head Hotel, The Swan, The White Hart, The Bull and The Horn Hotel, now split into different commercial and residential units. These highlight how Braintree operated as an important market town, with merchants and prospective customers travelling from further afield to purchase and sell goods in the town. All are timber framed and typically occupy more than one postal address, with the inns having expanded over time.

Shops are also incredibly important to the Character Area, and many of the retail units are listed despite having been altered at ground floor, shop level. The higher storeys of buildings often provide an indication of the building’s past use, perhaps as a dwelling, or offices. 106 High Street [Figure 54] features a double jetty, and is one of a few relatively unaltered buildings on the street which provide a visible insight into how the high street would have looked in the medieval period. The building dates from the fifteenth century, with a later sixteenth century range and eighteenth century alterations, which include the existing first floor windows.

Number 77 High Street is a good example of a building that has been heavily adapted and altered over time. At its core, the building is a fifteenth century timber framed structure, yet it was restored and adapted in the eighteenth century to feature Italianate windows. Its side passageway way was retained, and the cornices suggest the building featured jettied upper floors.

Barclays Bank on Bank Street [Figure 56] is one of few examples of a building constructed in buff coloured brick within the Character Area. Built on the corner of the street, it is double fronted, also featuring an entrance on Rayne Road.

37 and 39 Bank Street [Figure 55] serves as the primary entrance to George Yard and features an impressive, decorative brick frontage with columns and shop fronts at ground floor level. Behind the brick front is a timber framed building thought to date



Figure 53 The Bull, one of the town centre’s many pubs



Figure 54 106 High Street



Figure 55 37-39 Bank Street, doubling as an entrance to George Yard



Figure 56 Barclays Bank



Figure 57 Example of one of the town centre's many gants



Figure 58 Braintree's two water towers, both now in residential use



from the fifteenth century; the building was entirely refronted in 1758.

### Non-designated

There is no published, formal Local List in Braintree District, yet some buildings have been acknowledged by the local authority and Local Heritage Buildings, two of which are within the Commercial Core Character Area. These are Braintree Museum and The Water Fountain on Market Place.

Braintree Museum [Figure 44] was first built as Manor Street School following a donation of £2,000 from George Courtauld II in 1862, for the non-sectarian education of lower class children of both sexes.

The original building partly included the site of a 1820 British School has been extended over time, with the original block now at the centre of the museum site. Built in red brick with a slate roof and gothic stone windows, the museum building's featuring strong gables which give the single storey buildings a strong presence within the street scene, despite their low height. The use of slate for the roofs, punctuated with spires and finials, as well as geometric, decorative patterns within the brickwork, indicate that this building was designed to make an aesthetic statement, using detailing typically found on churches in a secular, educational context in materials which would have been popular and easily accessible at the time contemporary at modern at the time.

The Water Fountain in the Market Place acts as a focal point for the area of open space it is within and is incorporated into the public realm as an object of interest and area of seating.

Baileys Gant, between 59 and 57 High Street, links the High Street to George Yard. The presence of the alleyway is an indicator of how the town developed, allowing for



the public to interact with built form in a kinetic, stimulating manner and providing an important access route for pedestrians.

The Picture Palace, once a cinema and now a pub, occupies a prominent position at the corner of Victoria Street and Fairfield Road. Although modified inside following its change of use, the building retains its large central volume and external appearance, with a curved frontage and Art Deco styling.

Braintree's two water towers, located on Swan Side, are visible throughout the townscape, acting as landmarks and way finders within the town centre. Both have been extended and are now flats.

### **Building Materials and Boundary Treatments**

Many buildings within the Commercial Core are over two centuries old and timber framed, which limits their height and influences their external appearance. Although a large proportion of properties have been adapted and altered at ground floor level, on the upper floors the appearance of many properties remains largely unchanged, giving the Conservation Area a historical, traditional appearance. Buildings at the centre of the Character Area have undergone the most change, periphery buildings at the edges of the Character Area may be least altered, due to a multitude of factors.

In the second world war, Bank Street was hit by a bomb which destroyed properties on the eastern side of the road and led to the infill of buildings in the mid twentieth century; changes to agricultural commerce led to the closure of the cattle market and the creation of the Tesco supermarket on the site.

### **Roofs**

Roofs are typically pitched, often concealed behind parapets and parallel to the

street. Where they do feature, gables are prominent and often indicative of early construction dates. Gables are normally simple, although there are examples of Dutch gables, used on the almshouses on St Michael's Road and The Corner House on Fairfield Road, both designed by E Vincent Harris.

Traditional, handmade, clay peg tiles are typical in the Character Area, with a double camber and affixed in a simple pattern.

Roof tiles are almost exclusively red in colour, in a rich palette of varied reddish, brown and orange tones. Roofs are typically steep, owing to their construction method, at around a 50° pitch. Decorative ridge tiles or finials are not common. Where they do feature, they are typically on buildings which were altered in, or date from, the Victorian period. Natural blue-grey slate is another feature typical of buildings from the Victorian period, and cementitious faux slate is not appropriate for the area. Buildings roofed in slate normally benefit from a shallower roof and deeper floorplans.

There are examples of flat roofs, which are normally consigned to service areas at the rear of commercial units or feature on infill buildings from the mid twentieth century. Pan and Roman tiles are uncommon on principal structures but may be found on outbuildings. More recent, twentieth century additions to the Conservation Area may feature cementitious tiles, which are generally incongruous and would benefit from replacement, yet where they are in an appropriate colour and tone, they are not visually distracting within the roofscape.

Chimneys enliven the roofscape, providing visual interest and further highlighting the age of buildings within the Character Area. Open rafters, decorative rafter feet, corncing, barge boards and fascias also add interest to the eaves details of building within in the Character Area.



Figure 59 Examples of different roof types within the Commercial Core Character Area. Flat roofs are not common, but where present, the flat roofed buildings are appropriately scaled to maintain the line of the roof scape, matching or sitting slightly under, the eaves height of neighbouring buildings



## **Walls**

As much of the Character Area forms a continuous frontage, with buildings joined together, typically it is the flank of the building which is presented to the street. Render and brick are dominant within the Character Area, with some examples of exposed timber work. Render is typically painted in a neutral colour, and there is a prevailing palette of creams, off whites, pastel yellows and soft greys within the Character Area.

Pargetting (decorative render) features on a number of properties, and ranges from particularly elaborate to simple linear markings which imitate stonework. Cartouches, date and name plaques, as well as painted pediments and window surrounds, can often be found on upper floors.

Exposed timber framing on the exterior of buildings is atypical, yet where it is present, on the Swan Inn, for example, it adds a layer of texture and geometric linearity to the streetscape. Decorative beams intended for exposure, normally on jetties, can feature moulding and carvings.

Brickwork is also common in the Character area, either on buildings built from the nineteenth century onwards, or those heavily altered in this period. Red brick is most common, also featuring on brick plinths for timber framed and rendered buildings. Buff and brown brick do feature, yet are less common. Brick is typically laid in a Flemish bond, with flush pointing. Decorative brick panels, alternate courses, lintels and chamfered details on plinths and corners are common.

Stone is uncommon in the Character Area, due to the difficulties in transporting stone to the region. St Michael's Church is therefore distinctive, built in flint and Bath stone. Stone window surrounds, quoins or doorcases do feature on some buildings, normally

those built or altered to reflect the classical style and provide contrast to the brick or rendered walls of the building they feature on.

Wall mounted lighting is a feature of some commercial buildings, as are hanging signs. Satellite dishes and aerials are not a feature of the public realm.

## **Windows and Doors**

Timber, single glazed, vertical sliding sash windows are dominant throughout the Character Area. Windows are typically smaller on higher floors, due to smaller room sizes and a hierarchy of room function and height.

Glazing bars, historic crown and cylinder glass can be found in the windows of many properties. An eight over eight pattern of sash windows is most common, but it is not dominant, there are examples of single pane sashes, side lights and many other arrangements of window panes.

Windows typically feature wooden surrounds, although stone sills are present. On brick faced buildings, an arched lintel is more common than flat. Metal framed casements produced by the Crittall firm are also common. Rooflights do not feature on street facing roof plains and the use of uPVC, on street facing elevations in particular, detracts from the character of the streetscape.

Dormer windows are not common, but where they do feature, they are not dominant within the roof scape. Gable pitches or flat, leaded roofs are used for dormers, featuring casement windows and a high ratio of glazing to render.

Doors vary in style within the Character Area, particularly where they are part of a shopfront. Timber is the dominant material for doors, featuring panelling and sections



Figure 60 Clockwise from top left: Examples of timber sash windows, High Street; Bow-front shop windows, Market Place, Braintree's first cinema, now British Heart Foundation, High Street; the High Street; An elaborate frontage, 13 Coggleshall Road; 34 New Street, a Grade II listed building; The Salvation Army Hall, Rayne Road.

of glazing. Composite or uPVC doors are not common, nor is the use of metal for primary doors within public areas. Porches and canopies are present on domestic dwellings, often featuring a pediment or flat canopy. Gabled porches, projecting from the building's façade, are incongruous where present.

### Shopfronts

There are a variety of shopfronts in the Character Area, many of which are later insertions into older properties. In some cases, this means the shop front projects forward from the façade of the building, to create a deeper floorplan. Many shop fronts within the Character Area feature classical architectural details, such as cornicing and pilasters; shops predominantly feature a central doorway, often recessed.

The quality of shop fronts varies throughout the Character Area, however there are many good examples of shop fronts which engage the public with an active shop front, good maintenance and stimulating appearance.

Timber fascias and cills and the use of stall risers are typical on properties adapted in the Victorian period, when the shop front as we know it became commonplace. A high number of shop fronts within the Character Area are twentieth century imitations of Victorian designs, yet this style of shop front, featuring plates of glass contained within pilasters and decorative framing, adds interest and texture. Colours of shop fronts vary according to tenant, with whites and dark blacks, blues and greens common.

Floor to ceiling glazing is more common on buildings adapted in the mid to late twentieth century and often detracts from the overall appearance of buildings, drawing greater focus to the modern appearance of the ground floor which is at odds



Figure 61 Examples of Victorian shopfronts, High Street



Figure 62 Projecting shopfronts, Rayne Road



Figure 63 Projecting shopfronts, High Street



Figure 64 Shopfronts requiring improvement, Manor Street

with the character of the building it is within.

Signage is mixed, and there are examples of unsympathetic plastic fascia boards which detract from the quality of the street scene due to the material qualities of the fascias. Where present, timber fascia boards with hand painted signage adds to the quality of the area.

Some signs feature projecting lettering which can add a layer of texture to the sign, however the success of the signs depends on the materials used. Backlit or internally illuminated signage is not a feature of the Character Area, downlighters illuminate signage, combined with street lighting.

### Boundary Treatments

There are few formal boundary treatments within the character area, as many properties directly front the street. The lack of boundary treatments is also indicative of building use, residential properties on periphery streets away from the commercial sections of the Character Area, such as St Michael's Lane, New Street or The Causeway may be set back behind small gardens.

Low lying brick walls are the most common boundaries to public areas, and taller walls feature at the rear of properties, demarking ownership lines. Brick is the dominant material for all boundaries, sometimes with a stone coping course. Public buildings, such as the Town Hall and St Michael's church are partially enclosed by areas of iron railings, however railings are not a common feature of the streetscape.

### Public Realm

The public realm is large due to the commercial nature of the Character Area. Pathways and pedestrian pavements are generally large, encouraging high

pedestrian traffic. Bollards and highway systems discourage vehicular traffic, with large car parks preventing on-street car parking.

Street furniture is erratic in style, with evidence of many different phases of upgrading and replacement apparent. Lighting is provided by free standing lamps, which vary in quality.

Heritage style lampposts, with circular motifs on the rear arms and large hanging lamps are in place on the High Street which complement the character of the buildings within the street. Some properties also feature hanging lamps above doorways, which reinforces the historic character of the Conservation Area.

Benches and bike stands are scattered throughout the Character area, offering areas for respite, creating meeting points and encouraging non-vehicular traffic.

Paving is used throughout the Character Area to differentiate between roads and pedestrian pavements, with no curbs throughout the central section. Where retail and commercial units spill onto the pavement, through signage, stock or areas of outside seating, this makes the Character Area feel more dynamic and vibrant, positively encouraging public engagement with the space.

### Views

Views toward landmark buildings within the Character Area are important as wayfinders, helping people to navigate their way around the town centre. Due to their height, the water towers and the spire of St Machel's Church are visible throughout the Character Area and, where gained, incidental views toward these buildings add to the overall experience of the Character Area. Other important views include along



Figure 65 Walls and railings, Braintree Town Hall



Figure 66 Area of seating and the town sign, Bank Street



Figure 67 Heritage style lamp post

the High Street and Bank Street, from where it is possible to experience and view a variety of architectural styles. Views toward the Town Hall, across the market place provide a contrast to the density of development on the High Street, whilst views across both car parks also allow for an appreciation of the pattern of development within the Character Area and sense of openness, compared to when within the core of the Character Area.

From the junction of the High Street and South Street, it is possible to gain wide views of the town, looking across towards St Michael's Church and the Mills Character Area. Views from this point allow the viewer to look across the valley toward the river basin, and the fall in land coupled with the low height of buildings at this junction emphasises the prominence of the church.

Views toward the Character Area can be gained from lower points, whereby the topography emphasises the gradual increase in building density. This is particularly noticeable when looking south on the Causeway and north on Fairfield Road, where the land and building heights rise toward the market place and epicentre of the town.

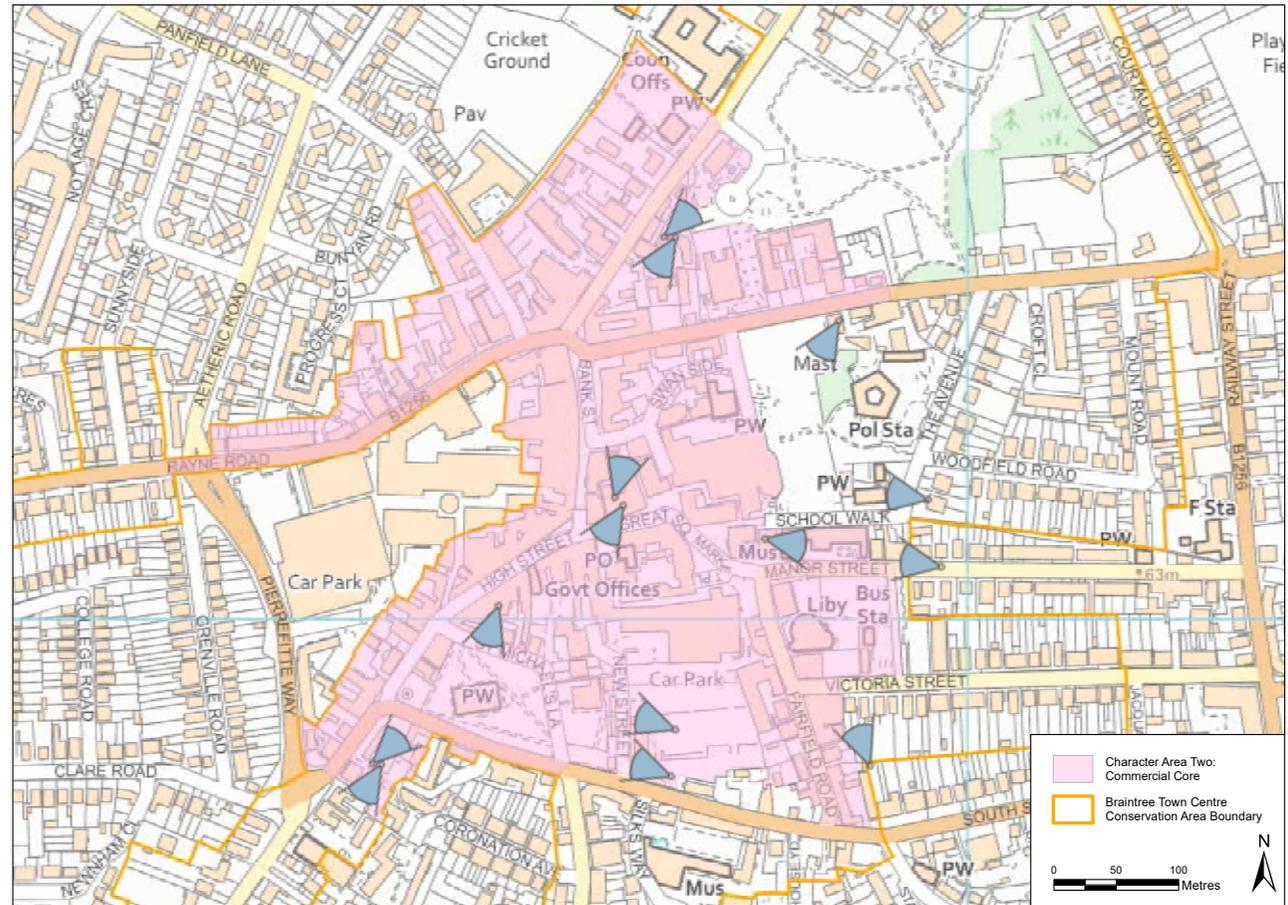


Figure 68 Map of important views within the Commercial Core Character Area

### 3.2.3. The Mills

#### Description

The Mills Character area encompasses a section of Notley Road, Pound End Mill and the New Mills complex at the southern edge of the Conservation Area. Pound End Mill, now flats but more recently in use as Tesco Garden centre, was built in 1819 by the Courtauld firm as a silk throwing mill, only for the Courtauld's to move their operation entirely to Bocking six months later. Daniel Walters, a London silk manufacturer, was in situ by 1822. His business quickly gained a reputation for producing high end upholstery silks, and, despite fluctuations in the silk trade, expanded. The New Mills complex on the southern side of the road was completed in 1877 for the Walters Firm, changing hands to the Warner company in 1895. Warners specialised in the use of hand looms, creating the silk for Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953.

The mill buildings are timber framed and clad with white weatherboarding and occupy a significant portion of South Street. The mills represent important changes in manufacturing methods during the industrial revolution and are unusual examples of their type, featuring large expanses of high level glazing and a horizontal emphasis. Their presence meant that this section of the town centre was predominantly working class in the nineteenth century, with workers living close by in notoriously poor conditions. Examples of such housing is included within the Character Area on Notley Road, although the conditions have greatly improved since the Victorian period and peak point of silk manufacture in Braintree.

The appearance of Notley Road is pleasant and domestic, with terraced and semi-detached houses set back behind small front gardens. Other buildings within the character area include structures associated with the mill and houses. The mill closed

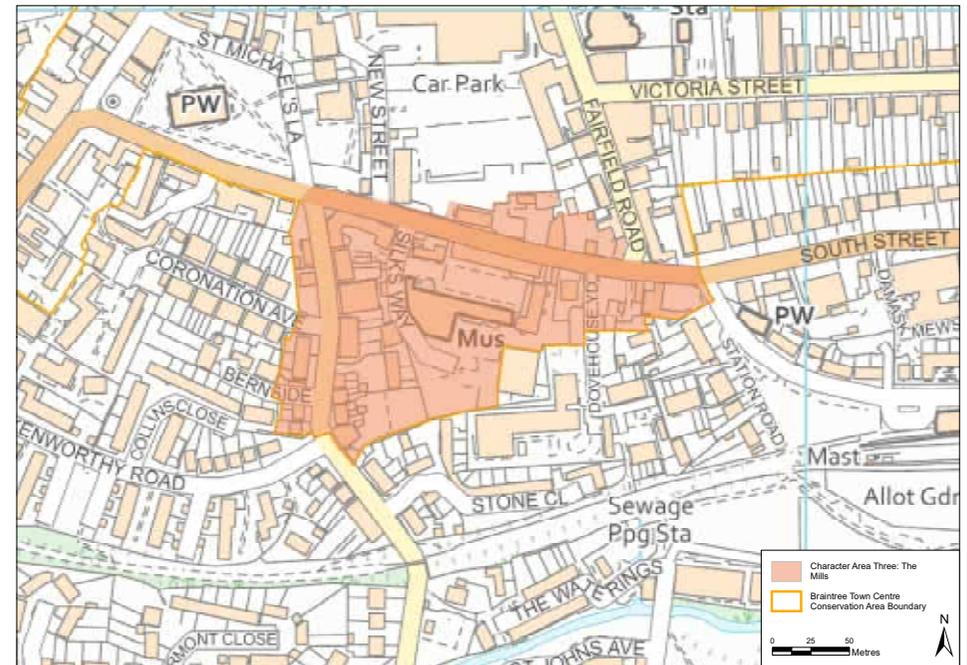


Figure 69 Map of The Mills Character Area (shown in orange)



Figure 70 Notley Road, looking north



Figure 71 The Mills

in 1971, with the majority of the mill buildings converted to residential flats in the early twenty first century. A modern block of flats, to the west of the original buildings, creates a U shape to the buildings, creating a courtyard and sense of enclosure.

The Warner Textile Archive is located to the rear of the main mill building, within a single storey building with a saw tooth roof. The museum provides insight into the history of the cloth trade in Braintree and is a valuable resource, aiding in the interpretation of the Conservation Area's significance.

### Layout and Land Usage

The layout of the character area is focussed on the New Mills buildings on South Street, which are arranged in a courtyard formation [Figure 71]. This courtyard is not visible from South Street, creating a sense of enclosure and containment within the mills complex.

Pound End Mill, on the northern side of South Street has a visible relationship with New Mills, featuring the same materials and design. This relationship enforces the understanding of this section of South Street as distinct from the Commercial Core Character Area.

The northern section of Notley Road included within the Conservation Area runs south from South Street; the Character Area's boundary on Notley Road is at the road's kink, at the junction with Kenworthy Road.

Buildings are almost entirely residential, with the exception of the Warner Textile Archive. Offices and commercial buildings are present on Silks Way, contained within buildings that have a domestic appearance.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces

Landscaping is minimal, with open spaces often the result of a lack of development. Open spaces are predominantly used as car parks and incidental to the character of the area. Better use of these areas to provide a public focus to the street scene would be beneficial. Tarmac and gravel dominates areas of open space, giving the Character Area an urban appearance, largely devoid of planting and featuring few trees.

At the junction of Fairfield Road and South Street, a corner plot on the north western side has been developed as a small respite area, with benches planters and interpretation boards which provide a brief history of the textile industry in Braintree [Figure 72].

Decorative panels affixed to boundary walls in the park feature prints from the Warner archive, giving a visual link to the industry once present in the area. From this area of open space it is also possible to gain views across the rooftops of buildings within the Character Area from an oblique angle.

Properties on Notley road benefit from private gardens to the front, providing a set back from the street, and to the rear. Planting is minimal in this area, with landscaping confined to private garden areas.

### Key Buildings

The key buildings within the character area are the street fronting mill buildings, their height and blank frontage providing a striking contrast to other buildings on the road and in the wider Conservation Area. Accessed from the side or rear, buildings within the mill complex are insular and interconnected, with their proximity to each other indicative of their once shared function and ownership.



Figure 72 Pocket Park, South Street

Figure 73



Figure 74 New Mills (left hand side) and Pund End Mill (right hand side), all Grade II listed



Figure 75 68 and 70 South Street, both Grade II listed



Figure 76 Terraced cottages, Notley Road



Figure 77 Pound End Mill, South Street, Grade II listed

### Designated

The New Mills Complex benefits from a group listing which includes the three blocks. Pound End Mill, on the northern side of South Street, is separately listed [Figure 74 ].

There are three other listed buildings within the Character Area: 68 and 70 South Street, 66 South Street and The Angel Inn, Notley Road. 66-70 South Street [Figure 75].are part of the New Mills group, however they pre-date the mill buildings. 68 and 70 is typical in appearance for Braintree, and is a timber framed and rendered building. 66 South Street is brick built with a Mansard roof, uncommon within the region.

The Angel Inn, 85 Notley Road is a seventeenth century timber framed building, extended in subsequent centuries. No longer in use as a public house, the building occupies a prominent position on the road's curve, and is evidential of the Braintree's history as a market town, where inns contributed to the town's economy, housing visiting traders and customers.

### Non-designated

Other buildings within the Character Area which provide an indicator of the area's industrial history contribute to the overall appearance of the area and help to reveal its significance. These include the works at number 10 Notley Road, a sawtooth roofed building built in brick.

Nineteenth century cottages on Notley Road [Figure 76] and Silks Way also contribute to the appearance of the Character Area and have a group value, providing context to the former factory buildings.

### Building Materials and Boundary Treatments

Building materials in The Mills Character Area are typical of the wider Conservation Area, with one key difference which is the heavy use of cladding on the old mill buildings. Traditional materials dominate, with modern developments making reference to the built heritage of the Character Area through the use of complimentary brick, for example, and other architectural details.

### Roofs

Roofs are pitched, and in the case of the mill buildings, expansive. Built as single ranges, the mill buildings are block like and comparatively tall which makes their roofs particularly prominent. Slate is common in this character area, more so than tile which is prominent in the Commercial Core Character area.

The predominance of slate is indicative of the mills' build date – slate grew in popularity in the nineteenth century, when increased travel links and the advent of the rail network allowed for better transportation of slate from Wales and the north of England into regions where it is not quarried.

Tiles are found on domestic dwellings, made from clay and featuring a red-orange tone. In contrast to the slate, the tiles provide colour and add vibrancy to the roofscape.

Chimneys are common on domestic buildings, with cupola style vents on the mill buildings. These were used to provide ventilation to the factories, which have few opening windows.

### Walls

The mill buildings are clad in feather edged timber boarding with a brick plinth.



Figure 78 South Street, looking west toward St Michael's church



Figure 79 Saw-tooth roof, otley Road



Figure 80 White painted weatherboarding on the Mill, with timber single glazed windows



Figure 81 Red brick, South Street



Figure 82 Examples of pebble dash and red brick, Notley Road

Painted white, the cladding is striking and a distinct contrast from ancillary buildings or former agricultural units within the Conservation Area which are also clad but painted black, as was common historically. Barns were typically covered in tar as it was hard wearing and easily cleaned.

Brick is used for the brick plinths of the mill buildings and other structures within the Conservation Area. Red brick in a Flemish bond is used for the mill structures and associated boundary walls; buff and yellow brick features on other buildings within the Character Area, with contrasting brick colours used to pick out details such as window surrounds, lintels and quoins.

Render and painted brick are also present, in a variety of off-white tones. Pebble dash is used on properties on Notley Road, complementing the buff, light brown brick used throughout the street.

### Windows and Doors

The windows on the converted mill buildings along South Street are a mix of timber framed sashes at ground floor level, with top light casements on higher floors, featuring glazing bars and small panes of glass. Buildings to the rear, set back from the road, feature only casements. The dominance of the glazing gives a horizontal emphasis to the mill buildings, with a homogenous, linear character.

Windows on surrounding streets would have once been almost exclusively timber, however there are examples of modern uPVC windows throughout the Character Area. Where present, these detract from the quality of the building they are in, often failing to adequately mimic the dimensions or patterns of windowpanes they seek to mimic.

Properties on the western edge of Notley Road feature bay windows; the prevailing

window style is flush with the wall plate and rebated window reveals do not feature prominently. Doors within the Character Area are typically timber and panelled, some properties feature doors with glazed panels.

Side lights within the wall plate and projecting porches are not common, with flat roof canopies typically offering weather cover; the majority of buildings feature no porch or canopy over their entrances.

Storm porches, where present, add depth and interest to the streetscape. Removal or infilling of storm porches, as well as the addition of porch extensions disrupts the rhythm of the street, detracting from its character.

### Boundary Treatments

Boundary treatments are minimal, with brick walls being the most common. Where present, brick walls are high and on South Street in particular they emphasise the tunnel-like, blank frontages created by the mill buildings.

Timber picket fences, iron railings and hedgerow are present on Notley Road, to demark front boundaries and further emphasise the domestic character of the street. Rationalisation of these elements, as well as general maintenance, would benefit the Character Area. Areas of low lying hedge are most prominent within the mills building complex, adding a green border to the car park and separating pedestrian and vehicular traffic

### Public Realm

With the exception of the small pocket park at the corner of Rainsford Road and South Street, public realm is confined to pavements, roads and pedestrian pathways. A description of the park is within the Landscaping and Open Spaces section.



Figure 83 Examples of porch extensions and railings



Figure 84 Examples of porches and brick boundary walls



Figure 85 View along South Street



Figure 86 Examples of uPVC windows

Street furniture is eclectic, with bollards featuring within the mills buildings, as well as sections of railings, barriers and gates to increase privacy and provide traffic calming measures

Lighting is sporadic, with standard streetlamps providing no visual interest. Road signage is clustered at junctions and could be refined; telephone cabling is prominent at the eastern edge of the Character Area, stretching along South Street, outside of the Conservation Area boundary. The reduction or rationalisation of road signage would be of benefit.

**Views**

Public views toward the mill buildings, along South Street, are of particular importance within the Character Area. Other views toward St Michael’s Church and Fairfield Road are also important in providing context to the Character Area and allow for an understanding of the Character Area’s position in relation to other sections of the Conservation Area. Within the New Mills complex, views are restricted, emphasising the scale and appearance of the mill buildings.

From within the buildings, particularly on higher floors, it is possible to gain wide views southwards into the valley of the river Brain and north into the town centre.

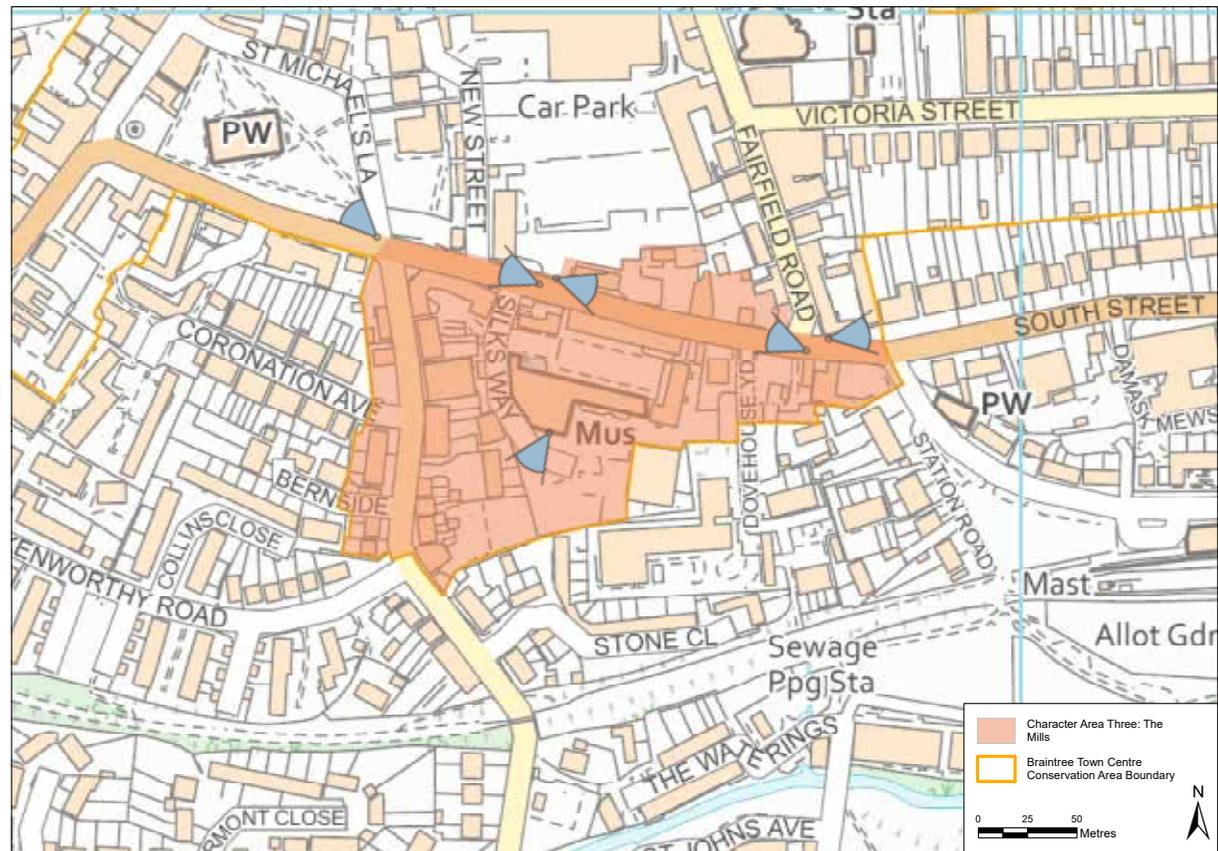


Figure 87 Map showing important views in the Character Area

### 3.2.4. Victoria Street, Mount Road and Woodfield Road

#### Description

Victoria Street, Mount Road and Woodfield Road were built between the late nineteenth century and the first few decades of the twentieth century, part of the town's expansion following an increase in industry and the coming of the railway. Homes were built within the area to provide accommodation for workers in the nearby factories, and there is a variety in the accommodation offered on the streets, including terraced houses, semi-detached pairs and detached dwellings.

The streets are residential in character, with their layout indicative of the speculative way in which they were built. Buildings are clustered in small rows and terraces, set back from the road, creating a suburban appearance. Minor variations in style and detailing provide interest across the street scene, yet the overall appearance is homogenous and unified, due to the limited palette of materials used externally and lack of variation in building height.

As examples of houses from the period, the buildings within this Character Area provide a visual link to Braintree's past and development following its establishment as a medieval market town. The character area is an important contrast to other sections of the Conservation Area, featuring exclusively residential brick buildings. From the character area there is easy access into the town centre, bus and train station and there is good connectivity to other sections of the Conservation Area. Properties possess large rear gardens, which provide a green backdrop to the streetscape and emphasise the Character Area's suburban character.

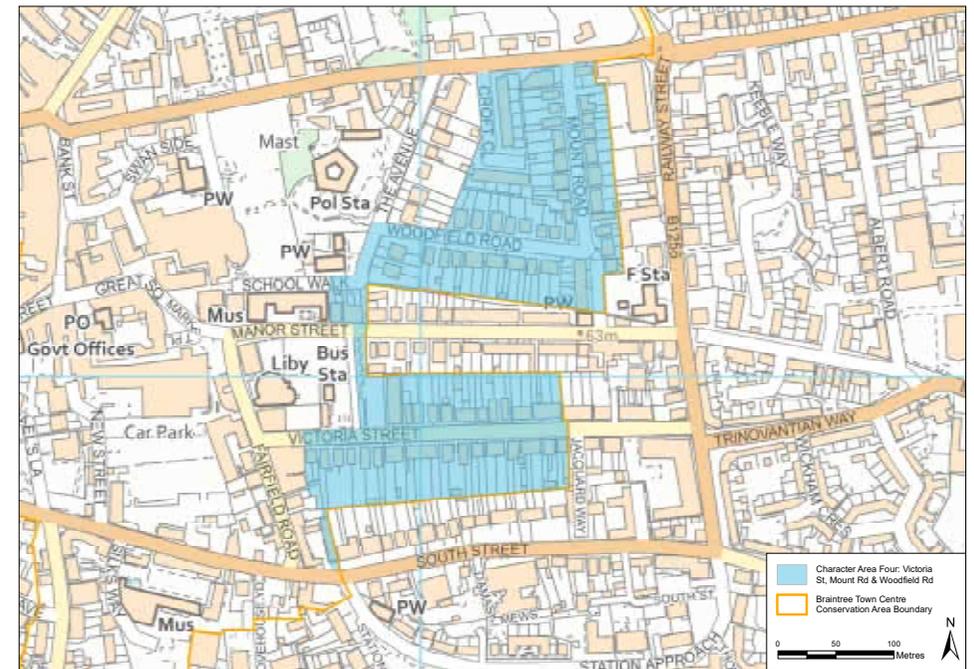


Figure 88 Map showing the Victoria Street, Mount Road and Woodfield Road Character Area, depicted in blue

### Layout and Land Usage

The layout of the character area remains unchanged since the houses were constructed. Straight lines of houses are a contrast to the curves and bends of older streets, indicating their deliberate phasing and layout. Properties feature rear gardens and are set back from the street behind small areas of garden or driveway, in contrast to older sections of the Conservation Area where properties are accessed directly off of the pavement.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces

Landscaping and open spaces are not a dominant feature of the character area. Where present, areas of open space are incidental and often the result of demolition or a hesitancy to develop corner plots, which would result in a crowded streetscape and poor visibility for road users.

### Key Buildings

#### Designated

There are no designated buildings within the Character Area.

#### Non-designated

Non-designated buildings which make a positive contribution to the Character area are those which retain a high number of original features, such as their front door or timber windows. Buildings dating from the Edwardian period are particularly decorative, featuring panelled coloured glass windows within the front door, for example.



Figure 89 Terraced houses, Mount Road



Figure 90 Victoria Street



Figure 91 Roofs on Woodfield Road

### Building Materials and Boundary Treatments

Brick is the only visible building material in the Character Area and is a reflection of the build date of the properties within it. The industrialisation of brick manufacturing methods in the Victorian period allowed for bricks to be produced quickly and cheaply, meaning houses could be built quicker than ever before.

### Roofs

Roofs are pitched and run parallel to the street, with gable ends visible on corners and on side returns. Bay windows and gable details do feature on the street facing elevation of some properties, predominantly on larger, semidetached houses, closer to the town centre. These gables break up the appearance of the street scene, adding visual interest to the roofline.

Chimneys are prevalent, reflecting the build date of the properties within the Character Area. Chimney pots have been removed on some dwellings, yet most are retained, with chimney stacks typically featuring six or more terracotta chimney pots, simple in style without cowls.

Slate would have been the only roof covering when the streets within the Character Area were built and remains the most common. Buildings which have been reroofed are mostly clad in cementitious brown interlocking concrete tiles, typical of the late twentieth century.

Rooflights and photovoltaic (solar) panels are present but are not common, whilst bargeboards, decorative courses at eaves level, faux timber framing on the apex of gables and finials add interest to the roofscape.



Figure 92 Example of decorative brickwork



Figure 93 Example of doors



Figure 94 Example of doors



Figure 95 Example of solar panels within the Character Area



Figure 96 Examples of gardens paved over to provide off street parking



Figure 97 Example of a name plate



Figure 98 The loss of front gardens has removed greenery from the street



Figure 99 Example of a sash window

## Walls

Brick is the primary building material within the Character Area and is used for all dwellings. Outbuildings and ancillary structures, such as garages, may be constructed in blockwork and rendered. The brick bond (the pattern in which the bricks are laid) is typically Flemish, indicating that many buildings within the Character Area do not feature cavity walls.

Red brick and buff or gault brick are used throughout the Character Area, often both on the same façade with the differing colours used to pick out details and add decoration. Arched brick lintels are present on doors and windows and string courses, quoin details, decorative brick plaques or nameplates [Figure 97] are commonplace. Brickwork has been painted in places; however, this can cause damage to properties, preventing adequate ventilation. The painting of brickwork which is currently exposed is not recommended. Side returns are often in a different brick type and are more commonly painted.

## Windows and Doors

Timber sash windows are dominant [Figure 99], although these have been replaced by top hung or centrally opening casement uPVC units on some properties. Bay windows are common, framed with stone surrounds and decorative detailing, such as scrolls and pilasters.

Doors are often recessed, within storm porches which add depth to the street scene. Timber doors, as with windows, are most common, but there are examples of composite and uPVC replacements.

Timber doors, where present, are often original and panelled, some featuring glazing. There are good examples of decorative Edwardian doors within the Character Area,

featuring coloured glass in ornamental patterns.

Side lights within the wall plate and projecting porches are not common, the majority of buildings feature no porch or canopy over their entrances

### Boundary Treatments

Low lying brick walls, hedgerow, metal railings or timber fences are present, and there is no overriding boundary treatment within the Character Area. Gates have typically been removed or were never installed.

Properties are set back from the pavement, behind small front gardens. In some cases, these have been converted to driveways which removes vehicles from the road, yet the resultant loss of planting has an urbanising effect [Figure 96].

Quarry tiles laid in geometric patterns are used to add decoration to some paths [Figure 100], and where they are present, they add a layer of visual interest to the streetscene. As with other surviving original architectural elements, they reinforce the late Victorian character of the area.

### Public Realm

The public realm within the Character Area is limited to the roads and pavements, with a small pedestrian cut though between the centre of Mount Road, where it adjoins Woodfield Road.

Street furniture is restricted to traffic signs and lamp posts, which are generic and do not contribute positively to the overall appearance of the area.

Domestic bins are a feature of the street scene, typically stored at the front of



Figure 100 Decorative paths add colour, texture and vibrancy to the street scene



Figure 101 Example of a retained hedge boundary



Figure 102 Manor Street development under construction, summer 2021

properties, on driveways or in front gardens.

Parking is predominantly on road, in demarked bays, with some houses benefitting from off street parking, following the loss of their front gardens.

Telephone cables criss-cross the street, reinforcing the older character of the area. Satellite dishes, where present, detract from the architectural quality of the character area, as do poorly placed meter boxes.

**Views**

Views within the Character Area are confined to views along the streetscape, there are no opportunities to gain meaningful long views across the Character Area into other sections of the Conservation Area.

Throughout the Character Area, the continuous roof height of buildings creates channelled, focussed views which reinforce the homogenous nature of the streetscape, with built form stretching forward east away from the Town Centre. This is an important contrast to the winding, non-linear block plan of the Commercial Core and older sections of the town centre. Currently under construction, the development on Manor Street, to the rear of the Town Hall, will be visible on Victoria Street once completed. As a landmark new development for the town, it will serve as a prominent, contemporary addition to the streetscene.

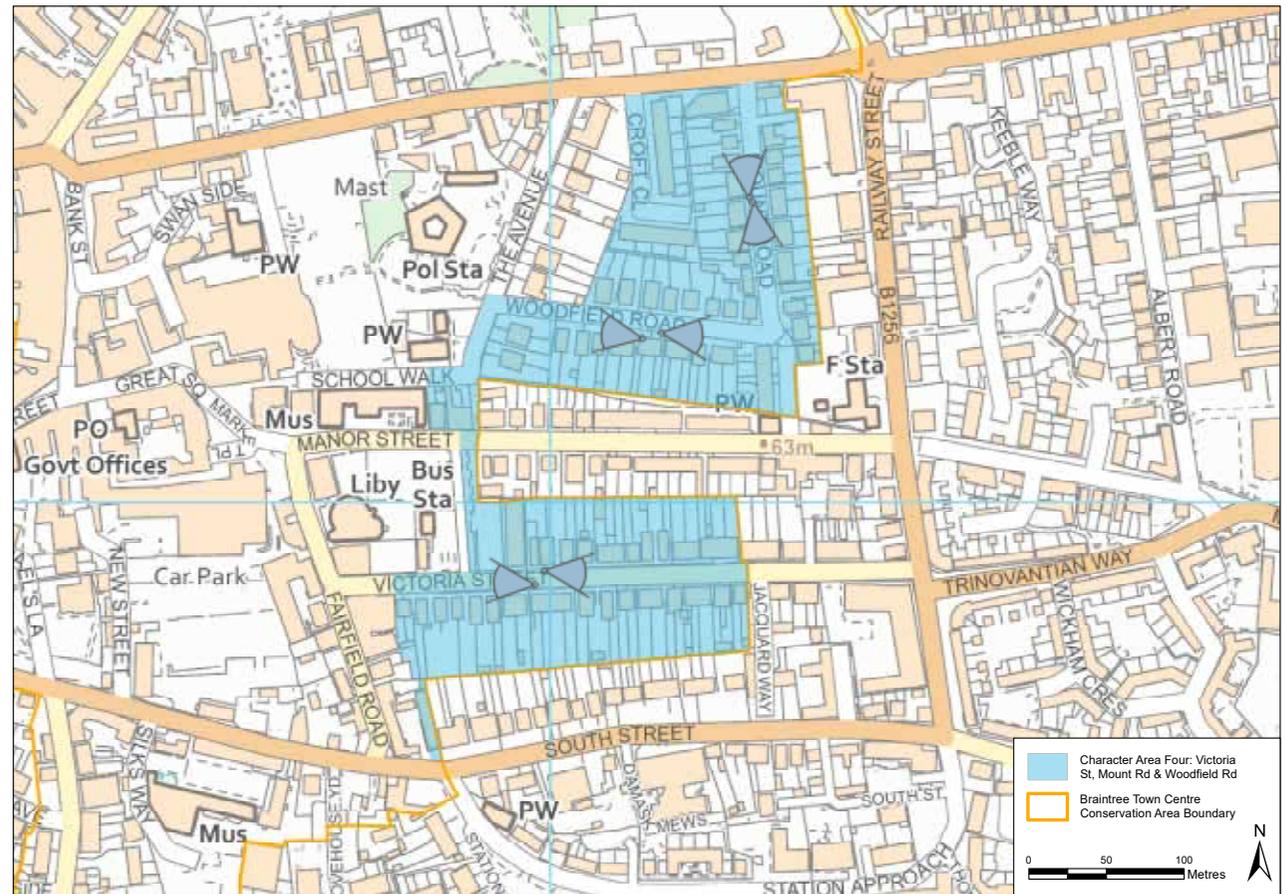


Figure 103 Map showing important views within the Character Area

### 3.2.5. Rayne Road

#### Description

Rayne Road Character Area is on the north western side of the Conservation Area and includes sections of nineteenth century development, west of the junction with Pierrefiette Way. A small section of Sunnyside, a nineteenth century development of houses accessed via Rayne Road, is also within the Character Area. Rayne Road, as indicated by its name, connects Braintree to Rayne, a small village approximately two miles to the west of Braintree town centre. At one point in history Rayne was the bigger settlement of the two, with Braintree overtaking as the larger settlement following its granting of a market character in the mediaeval period.

Rayne Road follows the line of Stane Street, a Roman road which ran laterally across the northern section of modern Essex. Despite the road's ancient origins, it was not developed until the Victorian period; buildings within the character area date from the mid to late nineteenth century. The former workhouse site on Old St Micheal's Drive was purposefully built away from the town centre, although it is now an integral part of the landscape of the Conservation Area and history of the town. Properties on Peel Crescent are excluded from the Character Area as it lacks the architectural or historic interest of the remainder of Rayne Road.

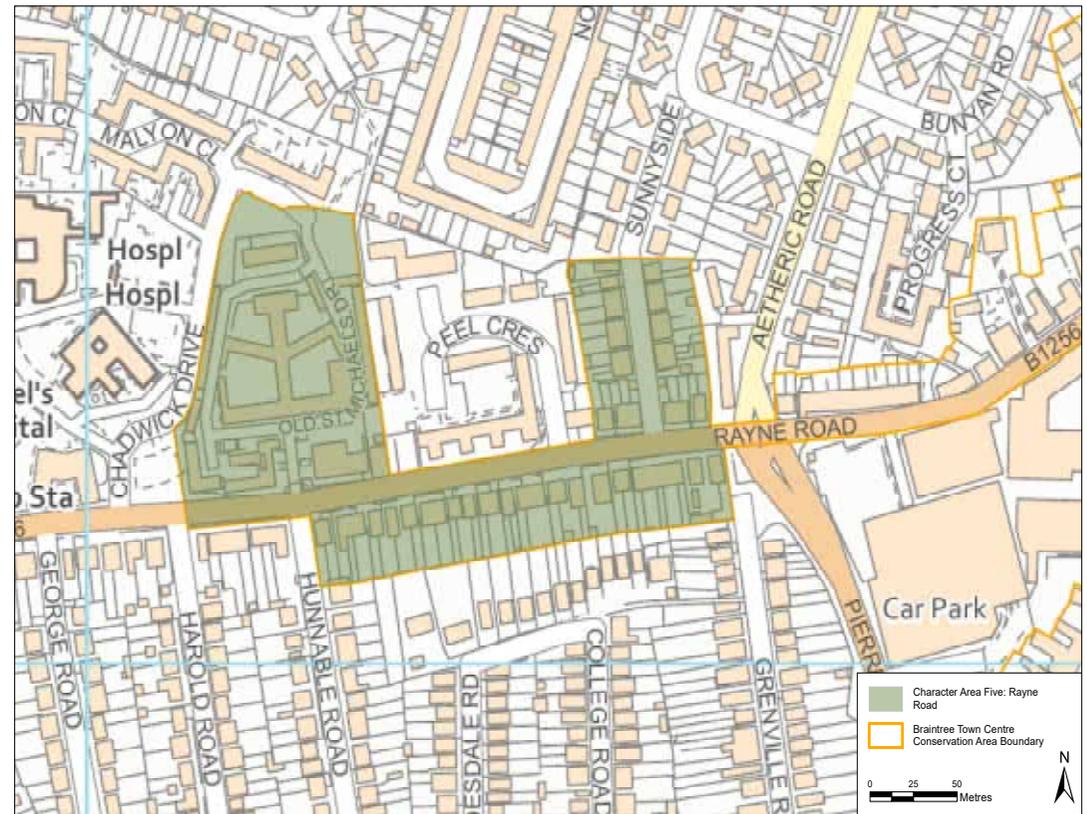


Figure 104 Map of the Rayne Road Character Area

### Layout and Land Usage

Land usage is almost exclusively residential, a doctors' surgery within the St Michael's complex is the only nondomestic building. Detached, semidetached and terraced buildings feature within the Character area. The proximity of buildings to each other and continuous building height create a sense of homogeneity and the appearance of a continuous, unbroken street frontage, despite the presence of semidetached pairs of houses.

Old St Michael's Drive, the former workhouse is arranged in a circular formation, looping around the building. The layout of the Character Area is, however, largely linear, with Rayne Road running east-west; Sunnyside is perpendicular to Rayne Road, heading north.

Peel Crescent, on the northern side of Rayne Road, is excluded from the Character area as it is a twentieth century development which does not reflect the special interest of the Conservation Area.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces

There are no areas of public open space and landscaping is minimal, reserved for private garden areas. Rayne Road is wide, which gives a sense of space, albeit often dominated by traffic which can be congested in peak periods. In comparison, Sunnyside is narrower and a dead end for vehicles, meaning there is no through traffic.



Figure 105 View east on Rayne Road toward the Commercial Core Character Area and the town's water towers (centre)



Figure 106 Peel Crescent, excluded from the Conservation Area



Figure 107 St Michael's Hospital, seen from the rear. The building is Grade II listed and now converted to flats



Figure 108 Rayne Road, looking east



Figure 109 Examples of red brick and gardens removed to facilitate off road parking, Rayne Road

## Key Buildings

### Designated

St Michael's Hospital [Figure 18], the town's former workhouse, is Grade II listed. Built in 1837, the projecting central block of the building is three storeys in height, built in red brick and featuring a hipped slate roof. Later twentieth century wings flank the central block, and sympathetic, well executed modern houses have been constructed within the grounds.

### Non-designated

Non-designated buildings which make a positive contribution to the Character area are those which retain a high number of original features, such as their front door or timber windows.

## Building Materials and Boundary Treatments

Much like other sections of the Conservation Area which were built in the nineteenth century, brick is the primary building material in the Character Area. This reinforces the architectural quality of the streetscape, indicative of the prevalent building methods at the point in which properties in the Character Area were constructed.

### Roofs

Roofs are pitched and run parallel to the street, with gable ends visible on corners and on side returns. Gable details do not feature on the street facing elevation of properties, with the exception of 99 Rayne Road [Figure 109], but there are examples of detached, hipped roofed dwellings.

The hipped roof of Michael's Hospital is prominent in the street, due to the building's elevated height compared to surrounding structures and projecting nature of the front block.

Chimneys are prevalent, reflecting the build date of the properties within the Character Area. Chimney pots have been removed on some dwellings, yet most are retained, with chimney stacks typically featuring terracotta chimney pots, simple in style without cowls.

Slate would have been the only roof covering when the streets within the Character Area were built and remains present. Many buildings have been reroofed in cementitious, brown interlocking tiles, typical of the late twentieth century which dilute the character of the area.

Rooflights are not a typical feature of the Character Area.

### Walls

Brick is the primary building material within the Character Area and is used throughout. Some properties are rendered, which breaks up the appearance of terraces. Outbuildings and ancillary structures, such as garages, may be constructed in blockwork and rendered or clad.

Red brick and buff or gault brick are used throughout the Character Area, often both on the same façade with the differing colours used to pick out details and add decoration. Arched brick lintels are present on doors and windows, whilst contrasting bricks are commonplace for the string courses and quoin details [Figure 111].

Brickwork has been painted in places; however, this can cause damage to properties, preventing adequate ventilation. The painting of brickwork which is currently exposed



Figure 110 Examples of rendered buildings which disrupt the uniformity of the street scene



Figure 111 Example of a bay window and decorative brick detailing on doors



Figure 112 Example of timber sashes (second left) and uPVC replacements (right)



Figure 113 Chimneys and telephone wires add visual interest to the skyline



Figure 114 Example of a bay window



is not recommended. Side returns are often in a different brick type and are more commonly painted.

### **Windows and Doors**

Timber sash windows have been replaced by top hung or centrally opening casement uPVC units on almost all properties on Rayne Road and Sunnyside. Where they are still present, timber sash windows provide texture and are a link to the street's original appearance. Bay windows are common, framed with stone surrounds and decorative detailing, such as scrolls, moulded bricks and pilasters. Bays feature pitched slate or brown tiled roofs and are present on the ground floor only.

Within St Michael's Drive there are examples of Crittall metal windows, with timber windows most common, featuring on the modern dwellings within the complex. On the listed building there are examples of arched windows, which are unusual within the Conservation Area and add to the building's Classical appearance.

Doors are often recessed, within storm porches which add depth to the street scene. Where these have been infilled, it removes depth and flattens the façade of street fronting elevations. Timber doors, as with windows would have been installed originally, but there are examples of composite and uPVC replacements. Timber doors, where present, are often original and panelled, some featuring glazing. Side lights within the wall plate and projecting porches are not common. Porch extensions are most common on Sunnyside, and have been executed in varying levels of success. The majority of buildings feature no porch or canopy over their entrances.

### **Boundary Treatments**

Low lying brick walls, hedgerow, metal railings or timber fences are present, and there is no overriding boundary treatment within the Character Area. Gates have typically been removed or were never installed. Properties are set back from the pavement, behind small front gardens. In some cases, these have been converted to driveways which removes vehicles from the road, yet the resultant loss of planting has an urbanising affect.

Quarry tiles laid in decorative patterns are used aesthetically on some paths, and where they are present, they add a layer of visual interest to the streetscene.

As with other surviving original architectural elements, they reinforce the late Victorian character of the area.

### **Public Realm**

The public realm within the Character Area is limited to the roads and pavements, with bus stops and laybys prominent on Rayne Road. Street furniture is restricted to traffic signs and lamp posts, which are generic and do not contribute positively to the overall appearance of the area.

Telephone cables are a feature of the streetscape, stretching between houses as shown on Figure 113.

### Views

From Rayne Road it is possible to gain views of the Commercial Core Character Area, with the town centre's water towers prominent due to their height. The third, smaller, tower is part of George Yard, in filling the gap between the two towers with a similar, conical roof.

From Rayne Road it is possible to gain a sense of arriving at the town's centre, and with George Yard also prominent.

The junction of Pierrefiette Way, Rayne Road and Aetheric Road is a wide area of road, with central pedestrian islands and multiple crossing points. As part of the town centre ring road, this alleviates traffic in the Commercial Core, but detracts from the character of Rayne Road and the approach into the Character Area. Views towards St Michael's Drive are also important, with the building's set back, gates and associated landscaping adding a formal, institutional quality to the Character Area.

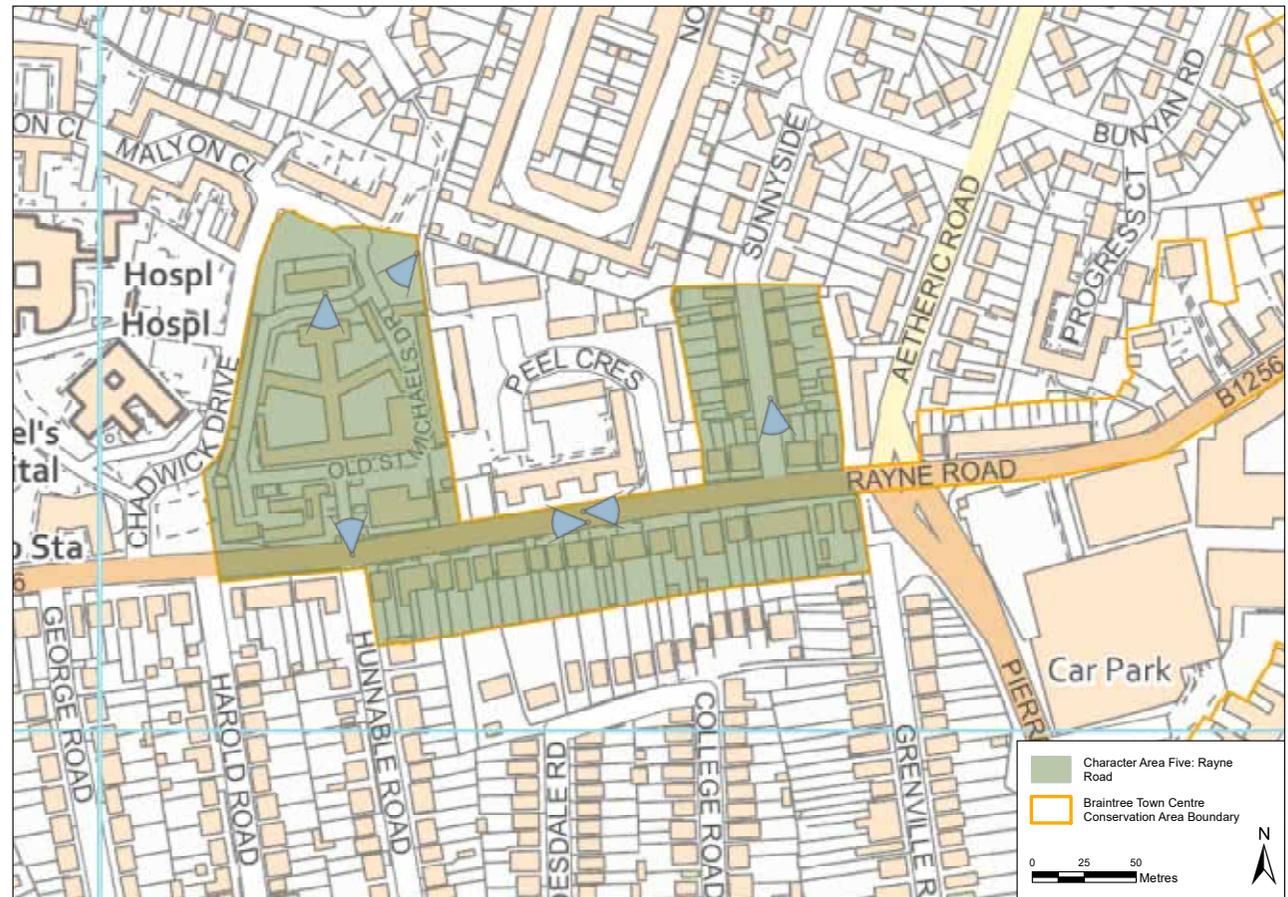


Figure 115 Map of important views within the Rayne Road Character Area

### 3.2.6. The Parks

#### Description

The Parks Character Area encompasses the north eastern section of the Conservation Area. This section of the town was developed in the nineteenth to early twentieth century and marks the coalescence of Braintree and Bocking, infilling the gap between the two settlements as Braintree town centre expanded along Bocking End toward Bradford Street.

The character area takes its name from the municipal parks within the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area, Weavers Park, located between Coggeshall Road and Bocking End, and Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens, located off Bocking End, on the northern side. Surrounding areas of housing, St Peters in the Fields and Our Lady Queen of Peace churches, and the Howard Hall Masonic Centre are also within the character area, as well as a small number of commercial buildings and the Braintree Police Station. Built form is more generously spaced in The Parks Character Area than other sections of the Conservation Area, many buildings are detached within spacious grounds.

The two parks differ in character, Weavers Park is largely open areas of lawn and features a skate park and changing rooms. Weaver’s park is used primarily for sport and as a green pedestrian cut through from Coggeshall Road to the northern section of the town and Bocking. In contrast, Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens are gated and only accessible via two entrances on Bocking End at set times, which vary throughout the year.

Deliberate landscaping and planting segregates sections of the gardens into deliberate zones according to use: tennis courts in the eastern section of the park

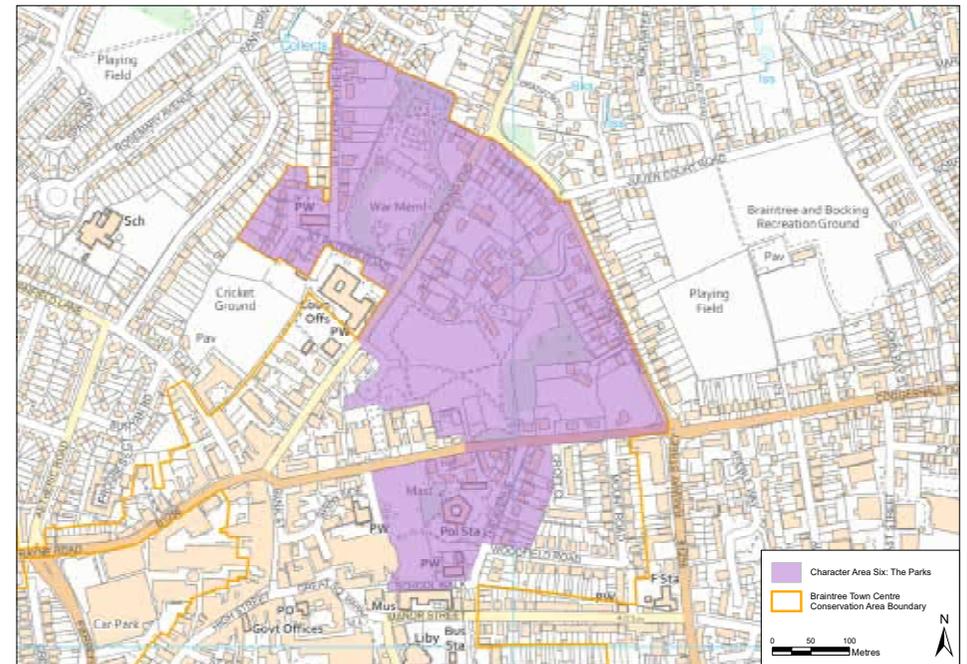


Figure 116 Map of The Parks Character Area

are partially concealed by tree cover, benches offer respite around the central green, orientated toward the thatched band stand. Both parks share the same origins despite their differing appearance, having been gifted to the town by its prominent benefactors, the Courtauld Family who owned Bocking Place, a large house set back from The Causeway (Bocking End) which had been entirely rebuilt by Sydney Courtauld in the late 1880s.

The park once formed Bocking Place's grounds. Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens opened to public in 1888, following a donation to the town by Sydney and his wife Sarah.

### Layout and Land Usage

The Character Area is bounded by Coggeshall Road on its eastern edge, which marks the edge of the Conservation Area. Coggeshall Road runs east west across the southern section of the Character Area, with Bocking End (The Causeway) crossing north east, running diagonally from the core of Bank Street, within the Commercial Core Character Area. Land use is primarily recreational park space, with areas of housing on splinter streets of the main roads: The Avenue, St Peter's in the Fields and Courtauld Road. Buildings are generously spaced, with houses almost exclusively detached.

### Landscaping and Open Spaces

Weaver's Park and Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens are open to the public, providing important recreational space within the town centre. Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens are managed by a charitable trust, who maintain and administer the space. Weaver's Park is maintained by the local authority. Both are accessed through formal gateways, bound by a combination of railings, hedgerow and planting.



Figure 117 Weaver's Park



Figure 118 The Play Area, Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens



Figure 119 The Skate Park, Weaver's Park



Figure 120 Listed buildings, Coggeshall Road



Figure 121 19 Coggeshall Road, Grade II listed

Both parks feature areas of open grass and there is a spacious, generous proportion to the parks. Land levels are predominantly flat, which allows for good visibility across the areas when stood in both parks. Landscaping and planting is a prominent feature of the Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens; both parks feature designated pedestrian pathways which provide routes through the parks and offer visual interest, creating a sense of surprise when users arrive at various areas and features of the parks. Mature trees offer shade and interest to areas of grass.

A skate park and changing rooms feature in Weaver's Park, whilst Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens include tennis courts, a play area and banc stand. These features encourage public engagement with the space, providing areas for recreation and activity.

There are other areas of open space within the Character Area surrounding the Character Area's two churches, St Peter's in the Fields and the Catholic Church of Our Lady, Queen of the Peace (see Figure 109). These church yards offer a sense of separation and quiet for both religious buildings, particularly in the case of Our Lady, Queen of the Peace, the western edge of which adjoins the neighbouring supermarket's car park.

### Key Buildings

#### Designated

There are six designations within The Parks Character Area. All are Grade II and, with the exception of St Peter's in the Fields Church, located on Coggeshall Road. The listed buildings on Coggeshall Road date from the eighteenth or nineteenth century.

They are examples of domestic houses, typical in build and character for the Conservation Area. Together, the buildings possess a group value and are indicative

of the development of the town centre away from the medieval core.

### Non-designated

Non designated buildings which retain a high number of original features contribute positively to the appearance of the Character Area. On Coggeshall Road, The Avenue, Courtauld Road and St Peter's in the Fields there a high number of such buildings, which are often adorned with decorative details such as glass panelled doors, feature windows, moulded brick courses, bargeboards, roof finials and decorative eaves details.

The Catholic Church of Our Lady, Queen of Peace, located at the corner of School Walk and The Avenue opened in 1939, and is believed to be the last church opened before the outbreak of the second world war. Outwardly is a relatively simple church, built in a cruciform plan in brick with Roman arched windows, tiled roof and copper spire. Set back from the pavement behind mature trees, its presence adds to the secluded, quiet appearance of The Avenue.

The Lodge, Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens. Featuring tile hanging, which is not common in the Conservation Area, the lodge acts as the formal entrance to the gardens and is typical in design of buildings of this type from the nineteenth century.

High Cedars, on Bocking End, is Modernist, flat roofed and rendered house, built with Crittall Windows and an Art Deco styling. Although examples of modernist architecture are present in Braintree, on Clockhouse Way, this is the only example within the Conservation Area. It is indicative of the influence of the Crittall family, who created Silver End, a modernist garden village close to Witham, to house workers at their factory within the village.



Figure 122 The Lodge, Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens



Figure 123 High Cedars, Bocking End



Figure 124 Our Lady, Queen of the Peace Catholic Church. Braintree Museum is visible on the left



Figure 125 Rendered dwellings, St Peter's Close



Figure 126 Tile hanging, The Avenue



Figure 127 Properties on The Avenue feature a high level of architectural decoration



Figure 128 Tree cover on The Avenue creates a sense of privacy

## Building Materials and Boundary Treatments

### Roofs

Roofs are typically pitched, featuring clay tiles. Street facing gables are more common in this Character area than other sections of the Conservation Area, in part due to the build date and styling of the properties. Victorian and Edwardian Arts and Crafts, aesthetically styled dwellings are prevalent. Hipped and pyramidal roofs are also a feature, leading to an eclectic, varied street scape. Buildings are predominantly detached, allowing for greater variation in roof form.

Finials, bargeboards, scalloped tiles and ornate chimneys are present throughout the Character Area. On St Peter's in the Field Road, dormers are a design feature of properties, however they are not prevalent elsewhere.

### Walls

Red brick is the dominant building material, with render also present. There are examples of grey gault brick, yet overall, the material palette is in keeping with the rest of the Conservation Area.

Brick or stonework is used decoratively, to pick out architectural details and add interest to primary facades.

Tile hanging is used on buildings within the Character Area at first floor level. This adds texture and decoration yet is unusual in Essex, being a more typical feature of Sussex and the South downs. Other examples of decoration include the use of moulded bricks or brick plates.



### **Windows and Doors**

Single glazed, timber framed, sliding sash windows are most common, with casement windows also prominent. Panes are often arranged decoratively, with top sashes featuring multiple panes and bottom sashes less plates of glass.

Where present, unsympathetic double glazing and uPVC detracts from the architectural quality of the Character Area, due to the often clunkier appearance of the glazing, with thicker glazing bars and frames than achievable in timber.

Some properties on The Avenue feature shutters, painted in complementary colours to the building, creating contrast and adding decoration. Bay windows are also common, typically featuring on first and ground floors, creating a projecting frontage which adds depth to the street scene.

Doors are predominantly timber, featuring glazed panels in the top third of the door. Coloured glazing features on some front doors. Canopies and projecting porch extensions are not common.

The use of brick detailing, including key stones around doorframes is common and doors are typically recessed, with tiled floors and/or stone steps up to front doors present on many dwellings.

### **Boundary Treatments**

Brick boundary treatments are prevalent, with tree cover and planting creating a verdant atmosphere within the wider Character Area, echoing the appearance of Weaver's Park and Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens.

Railings, picket and close boarded fences and areas of hedging are also present.

On Bocking End, a flint wall covers much of the southern section of the Road. This adds a historic as rural quality to the road, particularly as stonework is not common within the Character area.

### **Public Realm**

The parks are the largest part of the Character Area, meaning it is dominated by the public realm.

Other aspects of the public realm are confined to areas of pavement and the road network, where street furniture and signage are generic and add little to the quality of the area.

**Views**

Views across the parks are important within the Character Area, offering a sense of space and contrast to the density of built form within other sections of the Conservation Area. From the western section of Bocking End it is possible to gain views across to Bradford Street as the land falls away toward the river Blackwater, offering an appreciation of the Character Area’s setting.

Glimpsed views of houses and the roofscape beyond the parks also allow for an understanding of the Conservation Area’s setting, whilst views along the Avenue and Courtauld Road, both dominated by tree cover in summer months, create a feeling of seclusion and separation.

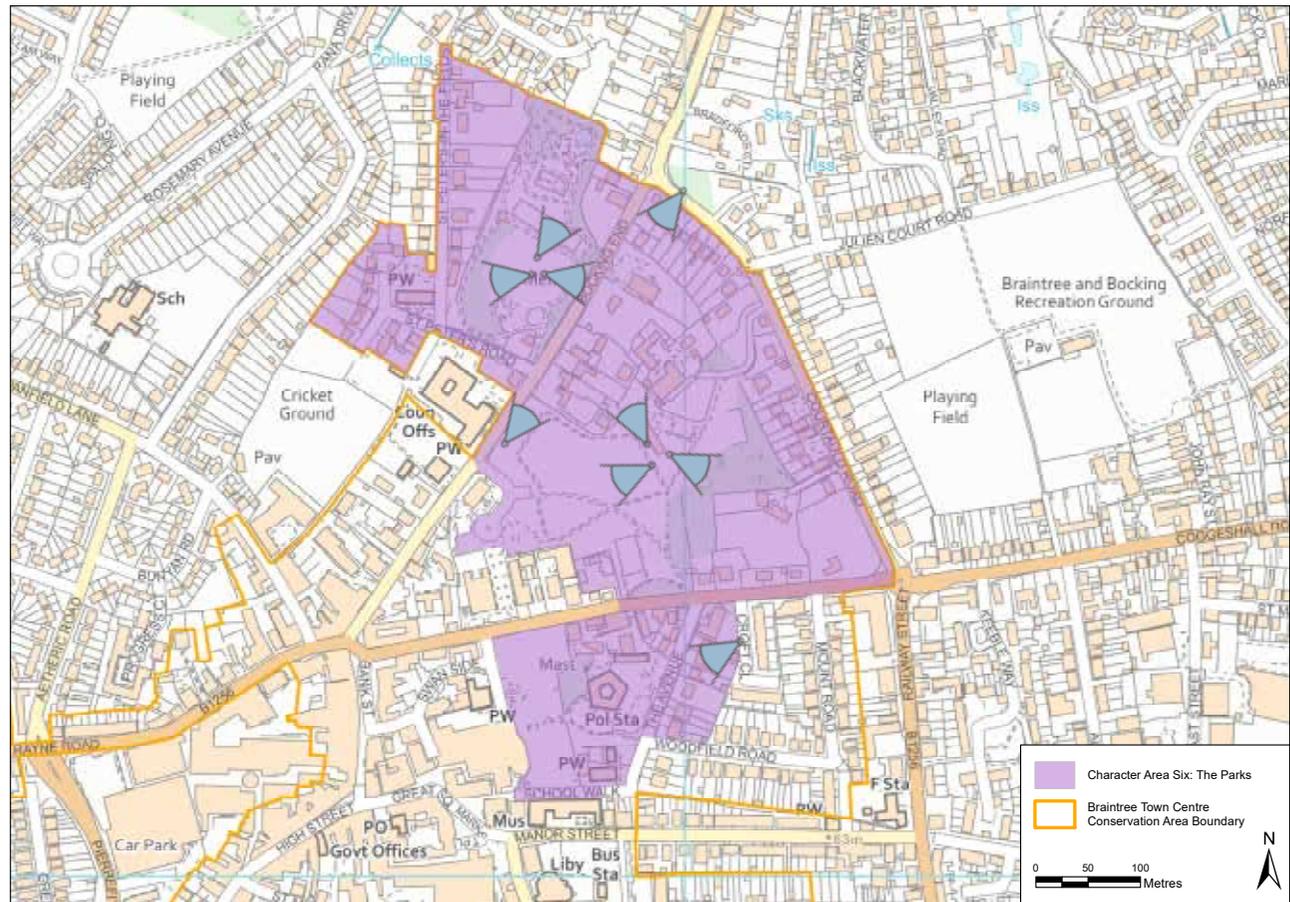


Figure 129 Map of important views in the Character Area



### 3.3 Setting of the Conservation Area

The setting of the Conservation Area is a contributor to its significance, allowing for the Conservation Area to be understood and appreciated. Setting is defined within the NPPF as:

The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. (NPPF: Annex 2: Glossary).

Historically, the setting of the town centre was agrarian, with fields surrounding what is now the retail core of Braintree. Development within the nineteenth century altered the town's appearance dramatically, and sections of good quality development from this period are included within the Conservation Area's boundary. Braintree continued to expand in the latter part of the twentieth century, meaning the Conservation Area is almost entirely bound by areas of housing. To the south of the Conservation Area, near to the train station, there are areas of industrial units, leading to Braintree Village, a modern retail and leisure centre.

Further development of Braintree, either in immediate proximity to the Conservation Area, or some distance away, must be mindful of the Conservation Area's setting. Development which will alter entrances into the Conservation Area, for example would change how it is understood and appreciated, whilst the construction of tall buildings could be visible from within the Conservation Area, detracting from its appearance and overall aesthetic value.

Change will occur, and it is acknowledged that the setting of the Conservation Area

has already been compromised in some areas, comparative to its appearance in other historical periods.

However, through good planning and the appropriate implementation of planning policies, there is the opportunity to both enhance and preserve the setting of the Conservation Area. Any development which will result in harm would have to be outweighed in the planning balance and mitigation measures should be implemented where appropriate to lower and proposed harm to the setting of the Braintree Town centre Conservation Area.



## 4. Opportunities for Enhancement

The following key issues have been identified and are summarised below in brief. The list is in no way exhaustive and neither are the issues identified unique to Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area, with many being shared with other conservation areas.

### 4.1 Access and Integration

Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area is expansive and accessed through multiple routes, on foot or by vehicle. In many places entry to the Conservation Area is not discernible and better acknowledgment of the Conservation Area, either through signage, changes in streetscape features or markers would be beneficial. Interpretation boards and the creation of integrated approach, utilising uniform signage and specific lighting and paving throughout the Conservation Area, or Character Areas, would allow for improved public awareness.

### 4.2 Car Parking

Car parking can have an adverse effect on the character of a conservation area, impacting the street scene and how the area is experienced. Braintree Town Centre contains some areas where parking is particularly an issue and presents an opportunity for enhancement, to rid congestion and improve the appearance of the area. Particularly in residential areas, there is a shortage of off-road parking and parking is predominantly on-street, and thus does little for the appearance of the Conservation Area. Car parking within Rayne Road and Victoria Street, Mount Road and Woodfield Road Character Areas is particularly problematic, and in instances this creates a narrowing of the road, limiting visibility. Cars travel rapidly along straight sections of Rayne and Victoria Road and there is scope for subtle and sympathetic

traffic calming measures to be introduced, to ensure the safety of pedestrians and better appreciation of the character of the area.

### 4.3 Inappropriate Modern Development

Throughout the Conservation Area are examples of inappropriate and unsympathetic additions which can make a cumulative negative impact on the area. The addition of uncharacteristic modern porches to residential units, the replacement of windows and doors, as well as the installation of unsympathetic additions to buildings such as air conditioning units, rooflights, extraction flues, and TV aerials and satellite dishes, harm the historic character and qualities of the area. In some cases, unsympathetic fixings can affect the historic façade of buildings.

Care should be taken to ensure that unsympathetic additions do not have an impact on views along historic streets and the character of groups of historic buildings is preserved.

Within residential areas in particular, the agglomeration of structures through additional side developments between detached properties can have a detrimental impact to the historic grain of the village, and our appreciation of its development. Braintree is a historic settlement and has been subject to a considerable degree of infilling and building on larger gardens and backland sites. It is considered that further development in this way would most likely harm the character of the Conservation Area. The more substantial domestic properties within outer character areas are enhanced by the setting provided by their reasonable and proportioned gardens.

Backlands are important features of old town centres and villages, being part of the grain of the historic town plan and representing areas that had a service function in



relation to the main street frontages. Those that survive in Braintree Town Centre provide spaces useful for service areas and off-street parking. Similarly, the installation of unsympathetic and piecemeal boundary treatments can harm the immediate setting of historic buildings and spaces and the use of inappropriate railings, walls, and fences cause cumulative harm to the street scape and character of the area.

Within commercial properties, the removal and replacement of plastic and vinyl signage is considered to be an opportunity for enhancement. The use of overly large signage, and particularly of plastic and vinyl signage, can create a visually cluttered street and detract from the historic character of an area and should be avoided.

The introduction of an inappropriate colour palette and low-quality modern materials (cementitious render and roof tiles, or uPVC windows, for example) is also a concern within the Conservation Area, particularly in residential areas which are vulnerable to a diminishment of quality through the replacement of windows, doors and roof cladding. By using a palette or modern material which is out of keeping with the area, buildings can be visually domineering within a streetscape, and therefore have an impact the character of the area and group value of a street scene

#### 4.4 Maintenance

Maintenance, and the lack of it, is notable in some sections of the Conservation Area. This is most common on private dwellings, and there is scope for better engagement with landowners to improve the appearance of properties. Regular maintenance, including painting, cleaning and the clearance of vegetation should be promoted as a key component of preserving the quality of the Conservation Area.

#### 4.5 Neutral Contributors

A significant proportion of buildings make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The dilution of positive buildings amongst those which are neutral leads to an underwhelming and indistinctive overall character.

#### 4.6 Public Realm

**Street Furniture (Lampposts, benches, signage, bins, bike stands, bollards etc.)**

Street furniture throughout the Conservation Area is generally of an acceptable quality, although generic in appearance. Streetlights are particularly inconsistent and modern in design and would be enhanced through replacement with traditional and consistent streetlights which respect the historic character of the area. It is considered that there is an opportunity for enhancing street furniture throughout the Conservation Area, through a heritage and design led programme of renewal.

#### **Hard Landscaping**

While road surfacing is generally of a good quality, there are some areas that would benefit from consistent maintenance. Pavements are of varying quality throughout the Conservation Area and at the time of writing the Commercial Core was undergoing a period of surface relaying.

Hard landscaping can have a particularly harmful impact on the character of the area where areas of private front gardens have been paved over in a piecemeal approach and are inconsistent with their neighbours and adjoining paving.



## Open Spaces

The open and green spaces in the Conservation Area make a positive contribution and are integral to its character in many instances, particularly with The Parks Character Area. The long-term maintenance needs of these spaces should be considered and, where appropriate, opportunities taken to enhance them and ensure access is maintained through roadside pathways and public rights of way. Incidental, smaller areas of paved open space, particularly on Bank Street and the Market Place, offer breathing space and sections of respite.

Maintenance of street furniture and increasing positive public engagement with these spaces, through the expansion of outdoor cafes and restaurants for example, should be considered.

## Trees and Planting

Appropriate levels of maintenance need to be ensured and, where required, opportunities for enhancement sought to maintain and manage the trees within the Conservation Area. There are opportunities to enhance the verdant appearance of the Conservation Area within residential areas, where the removal of front gardens and hedgerow has had an urbansing visual effect.

## 4.7 Shop Frontages

Shop frontages are of a varied quality, ranging from positive to low quality and requiring attention. Where present, original frontages are incredibly important to the street scape and should be preserved. Many shop fronts, nonetheless, are low in quality, featuring unsympathetic materials, low quality signage and, in some cases, require better upkeep and maintenance.

## 4.8 Vacant Buildings

The decline in the high street has meant that there are several empty shop fronts and buildings within the Conservation area. In particular, this is noticeable within the Commercial Core Character Area. Empty buildings are prone to encouraging antisocial behaviours and detract from the quality of the Conservation Area as they often fall into rapid decline, due to associated issues of neglect and a lack of maintenance. Examples of empty buildings which detract from the quality of the Conservation Area are on Rayne Road, at the site of the former car dealership.

Empty shops on the High Street also detract from the Conservation Area, offering no engagement with the public and, if high in number, discourage footfall. Other examples of vacant buildings are scattered through the Conservation Area, however there are few examples of empty residential buildings in need of urgent care.



## 5. Management Proposals

There are a wide range of issues facing the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area, many of which share common themes. This section seeks to recommend management proposals which address these issues in both the short and long term.

### 5.1 Positive Management: Short term

The first set of proposals relate to positive management and focus on good practice and improved ways of working with the local planning authority. These are generally low cost and can be implemented within a short timeframe, typically within one or two years.

#### Enforcement

Where the necessary permission has not been sought for alterations, such as advertising signage and building alterations which are not contained within the General Permitted Development Order, the Local Planning Authority's powers of enforcement should be considered. This could assist in reinstating any lost character or architectural features whose loss may have a negative cumulative effect on the Conservation Area, as well as avoiding a precedence being set for similar, uncharacteristic works.

#### General Maintenance: Public Realm and Highways

Through the agreement of a standard good practice within the Conservation Area between relevant Local Authority teams and other landowners, long term goals can be set to promote good design within the public realm, such as avoiding excessive road markings or signage and agreeing a standard street furniture within Character Areas to ensure consistency over time as elements are introduced or replaced.

#### Heritage Statements, Heritage Impact Assessments and Archaeological Assessments

In accordance with the NPPF (Para.189), applicants must describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

All applications within the Conservation Area and immediate setting require an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement. Any application without a Heritage Statement should not be validated.

The key views analysed within this document are in no way exhaustive. The impact of any addition, alteration or removal of buildings, structures, tree's or highways on key views should be considered to aid decision making. This includes development outside the conservation area. Where appropriate, views must be considered within Design and Access or Heritage Statements. This should be in accordance with Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2019). Applications which fail to have assessed any impact upon views and setting should not be validated.

#### Local Heritage List

A Local List identifies buildings and structures of local architectural and/or historic interest, and these are considered to be 'non-designated heritage assets' under the provisions of the NPPF. Local Lists can be beneficial in ensuring the upkeep and maintenance of historic buildings that contribute to the character of the settlements. The exercise of creating a Local List would also facilitate a greater understanding of the area and could be utilised as a public engagement strategy to improve awareness



and understanding.

### Neutral Elements

The dilution of positive buildings amongst those which are neutral leads to an underwhelming and indistinctive overall character.

Braintree District Council must not allow for the quality of design to be 'averaged down' by the neutral and negative elements of the built environment. Officers must where possible seek schemes which enhance the built environment and look to conserve and reinstate historic features. It is also considered that poor-quality or unsympathetic schemes should not be allowed, both within the Conservation Area and its setting.

### New Development

There are numerous opportunities within Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area and its setting for development which makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.

To be successful, any future development needs to be mindful of the local character of the Conservation Area, while at the same time addressing contemporary issues such as sustainability.

#### Successful new development will:

- Respect important views;
- Respect the scale of neighbouring buildings;
- Use materials and building methods which as high in quality of those used in

existing buildings; and

- Create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of their setting.

#### Braintree District Council should guide development in a positive manner by:

- Engaging with developers at an early stage through the Pre-Application Process to ensure modern development is high quality in design, detail and materials.
- Considering the referral of medium-large scale development schemes to a Design Review (or similar) so that new buildings, additions and alterations can be designed in sympathy with the established character of the area. The choice of materials and the detailed design of building features are important in making sure it's appropriate to the Conservation Area.
- Seeking opportunities for developers to make a positive contribution to the wider historic environment through Section 106 Agreements.

#### Public resources

The preservation and enhancement of private properties can be improved through the publishing of resources aimed to inform property owners and members of the public. An introductory summary of the Conservation Area Appraisal in the form of a leaflet or factsheet(s) is a simple way to communicate the significance of the area and ensure members of the public are aware of the implications of owning a property within a conservation area.

In addition, a maintenance guide would assist property owners in caring for their



property in an appropriate manner. A single Good Practice Design Guide on standard alterations such as signage, shopfronts, windows, doors, rainwater goods, boundaries and roof extensions, will ensure inappropriate development does not continue to be the accepted norm. A Design Guide should:

- Provide guidance on appropriate design and materials for windows and doors and encouraging the retention or reinstatement of historic glazing patterns and door designs and the use of appropriate materials.
- Provide guidance on the traditional form of boundary treatments and encourage their reinstatement where they have been removed or compromised.
- Provide guidance on traditional roofing materials and encouraging the reinstatement of good quality slate and handmade clay tiles with the removal of unsympathetic modern materials such as interlocking concrete tiles.
- Provide and update guidance relating to signage. This should address appropriate size and design, the extent and amount and associated lighting. All further planning applications and advert consent applications should be required to comply, where possible, with this standard, designed to help to restore the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### **Twentieth Century Premises**

There are some twentieth century developments which make a neutral or negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area. There is scope to enhance these sites and buildings through a considered design approach which can guide future improvements. Should opportunities for redevelopment arise in the future, high quality design should be pursued and encouraged through design guidance.

A survey of buildings within the Conservation Area, identifying areas and sites suitable for redevelopment, could be beneficial to pursue positive change. As part of the local authority's local plan, areas of development should be identified and it is therefore integral that a joined-up approach is adopted by Braintree District Council when creating new policies, acknowledging heritage constraints whilst encouraging positive growth.

### **5.2 Positive Management: Longer Term**

The second set of proposals are also focussed on positive management but either take longer to implement or are better suited to a longer time frame.

#### **Access and Integration**

The Conservation Area is easily accessed by public transport, foot and vehicle. There is scope for the creation of an improved cycle network, which, when combined with footpaths, would allow for an improved level of engagement between visitors and residents to the town.

#### **Car Parking**

This should begin with a car parking survey to establish the need for car parking. Once the level of necessary car parking has been established a landscape strategy should be created by Braintree District Council in conjunction with local stakeholders.

#### **Character Appraisal and Management Plan**

The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed from time to time to monitor change and inform management proposals.



### **Conservation Area Boundary**

The Conservation Area boundary has been revised within this appraisal in accordance with the NPPF (2019) and Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (2018). The boundary now excludes areas which were deemed to not reflect the historic and architectural qualities for which the Conservation Area was designated and includes sections of housing from the later nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century which are indicative of the period in which they were built, offering an understanding of the town's development in its more recent history.

The boundary should continue to be assessed as part of future reviews of the Management Plan to ensure it is robust and adequately protects the significance of the area.

### **Interpretation: Improved Understanding and Awareness**

At present there are scattered examples of interpretation boards and signs within the Conservation Area aimed at improving understanding and awareness. Updating, upkeeping and enlarging their reach would be an effective way to improve the awareness of Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area's significance.

The creation of a heritage trail, unification of signage across the Conservation Area and introduction of additional interpretation boards would be beneficial.

### **Opportunity Sites**

There are some opportunity sites across the Conservation Area which, if sensitively redeveloped, may enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Sites which may provide opportunity for enhancement include those where premises

or buildings are empty, back land areas to the rear of commercial structures, corner plots and car parks.

### **Public Realm**

The first opportunity to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area is through investment to improve the wider public realm. This can be achieved through continuing to improve and rationalise existing street furniture.

Better maintenance of areas of public space, through weeding, planting, the renewal of benches and the maintenance of existing features through the creation of an integrated management plan, combined with developer, landowners and the local authority would be of benefit. Encouragement of areas of outdoor seating for restaurants and cafes, as well as the continued presence of markets stalls will also encourage renewed public engagement with the commercial areas of the town centre.

### **Shop Frontages**

There is scope for improvement to shop frontages to enhance the character and appearance of the historic streetscape. In addition to tightening controls, small grant funding schemes would provide an incentive to encourage private property owners to carry out works to enhance their property and thereby the wider conservation area. Vacant shop units can be enhanced creatively at a low cost and should be considered a 'blank canvas' for improvement. This could include public art or information on the area. The Council should consider utilising existing powers to intervene where any unit has been vacant for over three months so that it does not detract from the areas character and appearance.



### **Vacant Dwellings and Neglected Upper Floors**

Small grant funding schemes would provide an incentive to encourage private property owners to carry out works to enhance their property and thereby the wider Conservation Area. In particular, the conversion and reuse of vacant upper floors in commercial buildings should be received favourably through appropriate policy, encouraging a nighttime economy and natural surveillance of the commercial areas, created by the presence of residential units.

### **5.3 Funding Opportunities**

There are three main funding opportunities which would assist in the execution of these plans:

#### **National Heritage Lottery Fund**

The National Heritage Lottery Fund is the single largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK and therefore is the most obvious potential source of funding. Funding is often targeted at schemes which preserve, enhance and better reveal the special interest of the area whilst also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements change overtime, for up-to-date information on NHLF schemes Braintree District Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.

#### **Section 106 Agreements**

Planning obligations, also known as Section 106 agreements, can be used by the local authority to ensure any future development has a positive impact upon the Conservation Area. These agreements could be used to fund public realm or site specific improvements.

### **Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (Historic England)**

Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas is a programme run by Historic England to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. As the name suggests, the scheme forms partnerships with local authorities (along with any additional funding partners) to facilitate the regeneration of an area through the conservation of its built heritage. The scheme makes funds available to individuals to enable them to carry out repairs or improvement works to their property to enhance the area. This would be suitable to preserve and enhance either the shop frontages or the architectural detailing also improving public awareness and understanding. Grant opportunities and requirements change overtime, for up-to-date information on NHLF schemes Braintree District Council should consult their appointed Heritage Specialist.



## 6. Appendices

### 6.1 Bibliography

Baker, Michael. *The Book of Braintree and Bocking*. Buckingham: Barracuda Books Limited, 1981.

Brisley, Derrick. *Braintree and Bocking in Old Picture Postcards Volume 1*. Sixth Edition. Zaltbommel: European Library, 1994

Brisley, Derrick. *Braintree and Bocking in Old Picture Postcards Volume 2*. Third Edition. Zaltbommel: European Library, 1994.

Brisley, Derrick. *Braintree and Bocking in Old Picture Postcards Volume 3*. Zaltbommel: European Library, 1992.

Brunskill, R. W. *Vernacular Architecture: An Illustrated Handbook*. Fourth Edition. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 2000.

Carpenter, Robin. *Mister Pink: The Architectural Legacy of W. F. Crittall*. Chelmsford: Essex County Council, 2007.

Essex County Council. *Conservation in Essex: No. 4, Historic Buildings*. Colchester: The Vineyard Press, date unknown.

Historic England, *The National Heritage List for England*. Historic England, Online Archive: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/heritage-assets/nhle/>, accessed 14/07/2021

Marriage, John. *Braintree & Bocking, A Pictorial History*. Chichester: Phillimore & Co

Ltd, 1994.

Medlycott, Maria. *Origins of Braintree*. Chelmsford: Essex County Council, 1999.

Newell, Corrie. *Conserve: Typical Details for Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas*. Chelmsford: Essex County Council, 2010.

Pevsner, Nikolaus. *The Buildings of England: Essex*, second edition revised by Enid Radcliffe. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003.

Powers, Alan. *Shop Fronts*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1989.

Smith, Adam. *Braintree and Bocking at Work*. Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing Limited, 1995.

Yorke, Trevor. *British Architectural Styles*. Newbury: Countryside Books, 2008.

Yorke, Trevor. *Chimneys, Gables and Gargoyles: A Guide to Britain's Rooftops*. Newbury: Countryside Books, 2018.



## 6.2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

LEGISLATION/POLICY/ GUIDANCE	DOCUMENT	SECTION/POLICY
Primary Legislation	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions. 72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.
National Planning Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (2021) DCLG	Section 16; Annex 2
National Guidance	National Planning Practice Guidance (2014) DCLG	ID: 18a
National Guidance	English Heritage (2019) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance	
Local Supplementary Planning Document	Braintree District Council Local Plan; Policy LPP 47 Built and Historic Environment	

### 6.3 List of All Designated Heritage Assets within the Conservation Area

List Entry No.	Name	Grade
1122509	19 and 21, London Road	II
1122510	23-33, London Road	II
1122534	Barclay's Bank, Bank Street	II
1122535	3 and 9, Bank Street	II
1122540	2, Bocking End	II
1122541	Congregational Church, Bocking End	II
1171095	98 and 100, Coggeshall Road	II
1171161	2, Great Square (listed as House and Shop Occupied by Adams and Sons Newsagent)	II
1171229	The Boar's Head Hotel, 85 to 93 (odd), High Street	II
1171905	34, New Street	II
1235013	3, New Street (listed as The Liberal Club, currently Braintree Post Office)	II
1235026	Town Hall, including Screens and Public Lavatories adjoining North East and South	II*
1305300	48-52, Rayne Road	II
1305310	4 and 6, South Street	II

List Entry No.	Name	Grade
1305314	66, South Street	II
1305319	5 and 7, Panfield Lane	II
1305336	28-34, Rayne Road	II
1305441	112, High Street	II
1305456	Blandford House, 7, London Road	II
1305659	113 and 115, High Street	II
1305791	84, Coggeshall Road	II
1338240	11, Bank Street	II
1338243	The White Hart Hotel, Bocking End	II
1338244	The Institute and Museum, 15, Bocking End	II
1338261	21, Coggeshall Road	II
1338262	86, Coggeshall Road	II
1338263	The Constitutional Club and Shops, Great Square	II*
1338264	Bell Inn, Great Square	II
1338287	77-81, London Road	II
1338291	Angel Inn, 33, Notley Road	II
1338292	3, Panfield Lane	II*

List Entry No.	Name	Grade
1338293	Church of St Michael, St Michael's Road	II
1391259	Fountain, corner of St Michaels Road and High Street	II
1391584	Church of St Peter, St Peter's Road	II
1393723	John Ray House, Bocking End (also known as Braintree County High School Gymnasium)	II
1393767	Almshouses, 2, St Michael's Road	II
1393768	Leahurst, High Street	II
1409745	The Corner House, Market Place	II
1122473	22, New Street	II
1122474	24 and 26, New Street	II
1338241	33, Bank Street	II
1122537	37 and 39, Bank Street	II
1122538	40, Bank Street	II
1338266	The Old Manor House, Little Square	II*
1122536	31, Bank Street	II
1338242	Swan Inn, 22-26, Bank Street	II*
1338294	68 and 70, South Street	II
1338290	2, New Street (listed as House Occupied By Henry Joscelyn Limited)	II

List Entry No.	Name	Grade
1338289	3, New Street	II
1171889	4, New Street	II
1338314	The Cage or Lock Up, New Street	II
1122470	The Bull Hotel, Market Square	II
1122504	The Horn Hotel, High Street	II
1122471	Number 23 and Hill House, Market Place	II
1140085	Baytrees Restaurant and Osborn's Shop, Little Square/Drury Lane	II
1122505	74, 74a and Corn Exchange, High Street	II
1171330	76 and 78, High Street	II
1122507	90, High Street	II
1338265	100 And 102, High Street	II
1171730	92-96, High Street	II
1171209	73 and 75, High Street	II
1305673	72a and 72, High Street	II
1122506	80, High Street	II



## 6.4 Glossary (NPPF)

Term	Description
<b>Archaeological interest</b>	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
<b>Conservation (for heritage policy)</b>	The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
<b>Designated heritage asset</b>	A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
<b>Heritage asset</b>	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
<b>Historic environment</b>	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
<b>Historic environment record</b>	Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.
<b>Setting of a heritage asset</b>	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
<b>Significance (for heritage policy)</b>	The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.



## 6.5 Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a conservation area?

Conservation areas are designated by the Local Planning Authority as areas of special architectural and historic interest. There are many different types of conservation area, which vary in size and character, and range from historic town centres to country houses set in historic parks. Conservation area designation introduces additional planning controls and considerations, which exist to protect an area's special character and appearance and the features that make it unique and distinctive. Although designation introduces controls over the way that owners can develop their properties, it is generally considered that these controls are beneficial as they sustain and/or enhance the value of properties within conservation areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework regards conservation areas as 'designated heritage assets'.

The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act specifies the general duty of Local Authorities, in the exercise of planning functions (Section 72). The 1990 Act states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

### How are conservation areas designated and managed?

The designation process includes detailed analysis of the proposed conservation area and adoption by the local planning authority. A review process should be periodically undertaken and the Conservation Area assessed to safeguard that it retains special architectural or historic interest. Threats can be identified, and the boundary reviewed, to ensure it is still relevant and appropriate.

This Conservation Area is supported by an appraisal and management plan. The appraisal describes the importance of an area in terms of its character, architecture, history, development form and landscaping. The management plan, included within the appraisal, sets out various positive proposals to improve, enhance and protect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### What are the Council's duties regarding development in conservation areas?

The Local Authority must follow the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). These set out in clear terms how development proposals within Conservation Areas should be considered on the basis

of whether they preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area. Applications which fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area are likely to be refused as a result. An authorities Local Plan also typically includes a specific policy on Conservation Areas.

### How can I find out if I live in a conservation area?

Boundary maps of conservation areas can be found on your Local Planning Authority website. Some authorities have an online interactive map search allowing you to search for a property. You can also contact your local planning authority directly to find out if you reside within a conservation area. Braintree District Council has an interactive Conservation Areas map which can be found by following the link below:

<https://www.braintree.gov.uk/planning-building-control/conservation-areas>.

### Do I need permission to alter a property in a conservation area?

Many conservation areas have an Article 4 Direction which covers the painting, rendering or cladding of external walls. Alterations or extensions to buildings in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. Your Local Authority will provide advice as



to how to proceed.

**Do I need to make an application for routine maintenance work?**

If routine works of maintenance are to be carried out using authentic materials and traditional craft techniques, on a like-for-like basis, you are not likely to need to apply for permission. The use of a contractors with the necessary skills and experience of working on historic buildings is essential. Inappropriate maintenance works and the use of the wrong materials will cause damage to the fabric of a historic building. It is recommended you contact the local planning authority for clarification before commencing any works.

**Will I need to apply for permission for a new or replacement garage, fence, boundary wall or garden structure?**

Any demolition, development or construction in conservation areas will generally need planning permission. A replacement boundary, garage, cartlodge or greenhouse will need to be designed with the special historic and architectural interest of the Conservation Area in mind. Your Local Authority will provide advice as to how to proceed with an application.

**Can I demolish a building in a conservation area?**

Demolition or substantial demolition of a building within a conservation area will usually require permission from the local planning authority.

**What is an Article 4 Direction?**

Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, certain minor works, such as domestic alterations, can normally be carried out without planning permission. However, some conservation areas are covered by an Article 4 Direction, which brings certain types of development back under the control of a local planning authority. This allows potentially harmful proposals to be considered on a case by case basis through planning applications. Article 4 Directions are used to control works that could threaten the character of an area and a planning application may be required for development that would otherwise have been permitted development. Historic England provides information on Article 4 Directions on their website.

**Can I remove a tree within a conservation area?**

If you are thinking of cutting down a tree or doing any pruning work, the local planning authority must be notified 6 weeks before any work begins. This enables the authority to assess the contribution the tree makes to the character of the conservation area and, if

necessary, create a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) to protect it. Consent will be required for any works to trees that are protected. Further information on TPOs can be found on Historic England's website.

**How do I find out more about a conservation area?**

Historic England's website has information on conservation areas and their designation. Further information on the value of conservation areas and what it means to live in a conservation area can also be accessed via their website.

Historic England has also published an advice note called Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management which sets out advice on the appraisal of conservation areas and managing change in conservation areas.

In addition, local planning authorities have information on the conservation areas within their boundaries available on their websites. They will have information pertaining to when the conservation area was designated, how far it extends and the reason for its designation.

Place Services  
County Hall, Essex CM1 1QH

T: +44 (0)3330 136 844  
E: enquiries @placeservices.co.uk

[www.placeservices.co.uk](http://www.placeservices.co.uk)

 @PlaceServices



## Appendix 1

Summary of Responses Received in response to the Public Consultation on the Braintree Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan together with Officer Comments and suggested changes.

<b>Representation Summary</b>	<b>Officer Comments</b>	<b>Proposed Alteration</b>
<p>There are other areas that need attention before new proposals/costs are contemplated, for example</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The chicken pox house at the top of New Street is an eyesore that should be sorted out. Propped up wall collects debris.</li> <li>2. Bins behind the Polish shop are disgusting and need constant attention. Three food units use them for raw and cooked food</li> <li>3. Parking on the pedestrian area before the arch sometimes holds 10 cars. Paving uplifts cause hazard for pedestrians. One man was hospitalised.</li> <li>4. Respondent was told years ago they could not have plastic windows as it was a conservation area.</li> <li>5. Lack of practical seating in Market Place/ High Street – they have armless blocks or none</li> <li>6. Wish to know when this is going to committee.</li> </ol>	<p>Place Services state in Section 4.3. that plastic windows are a detracting feature in a number of places. Detailed planning advice to individuals regarding the suitability of plastic windows is undertaken by Development Management and as such is outwith the scope of this decision which reviews the Conservation area as a whole.</p> <p>The issue relating to the appearance of the house at the top of New Street appears to have been a temporary issue as no dwelling appears to fit that description presently.</p> <p>Matters relating to the treatment of food bins and parking are matters for the Environmental Health Department and Highway Authority.</p> <p>Comments relating to seating will be passed to the Town Centre Manager as this issue is not related to this process.</p>	<p>No alterations proposed</p>
<p>Object to removal of Braintree and Bocking public gardens and surrounding areas from the Conservation</p>		<p>No alterations proposed.</p>

<p>Area. These open spaces in addition to the garden are needed.</p> <p>Removal of this part of the Conservation area would harm the only area of Braintree with charm</p> <p>It seems the Council wish to build behind the Council Offices.</p>	<p>The Braintree and Bocking Public Gardens are not proposed for removal and additional area west of the gardens has been included.</p> <p>The proposed new boundary is drawn tightly around the Council building. Car parking and the cricket ground at the rear of the Council building do not lie within the present Conservation Area so their status remains unchanged.</p>	
<p>Unaware of location of changing rooms in Weavers Park.</p> <p>Include the green open space of the cricket ground in the Conservation Area as it is attractive and provides recreation.</p>	<p>There are no changing rooms in Weavers Park.</p> <p>The cricket ground south west of the Council offices is not presently in the Conservation Area nor is it proposed for inclusion as it does not contain sufficient historical or architectural merit in its own right. Nevertheless, it does form part of the Conservation Area's setting and impacts on the setting is an important consideration when considering planning applications. The Cricket Ground is designated in the Local Plan for formal recreation.</p>	<p>Remove reference to the changing rooms. (page 66, paragraph 2 line one remove "<del>and changing rooms</del> feature"</p>
<p>Support considerations toward shop front and grants had been available to improve them.</p> <p>Do not support the materials or colours used in the pedestrianisation of the town centre which have harmed its historic character and weathered poorly.</p> <p>The environment created will not attract visitors or stores to replace those lost.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p>Many of these comments relate to the day to day operation of the Town Centre and to its now complete pedestrianisation and are not related to the consideration of the architectural and historic character of the Conservation Area.</p>	<p>No Alterations proposed.</p>

<p>More electricity connections needed for stallholders as wires across the pavement.</p> <p>Should consider providing trees. Other council have provided planters to improve town centre appearance.</p> <p>Lack of seating leads to difficulty in accessing the whole town centre for those with impaired mobility.</p>	<p>Comments on the choice materials for the town centre floorscape are noted. The pedestrianisation of the town centre was an earlier project which has now been completed and followed a public consultation. Disagree that the project has harmed the historic character and vitality of the area.</p> <p>A number of trees have been planted in the Town centre in addition to those already existing.</p> <p>Concerns over seating and wiring have been passed to the Town Centre Manager.</p>	
<p>Support inclusion of Victoria Street inside Braintree Conservation Area.</p> <p>There are some magnificent historic buildings in Braintree - they must be protected and treasured.</p>	<p>Support Noted</p>	<p>No alterations proposed</p>
<p>Concerned that the Conservation Area has expanded to include Woodfield Road having just moved into the property before it was proposed to be included.</p> <p>Will there be the option to propose the expansion of the conservation area as part of the Appraisal?</p>	<p>The Appraisal document shows the full extent of the proposed Conservation Area expansion as part of this review. The rationale for including Woodfield Road has been explained in section 3.2.4.</p> <p>Conservation Area status is normally a positive for residents as it ensures the area's character appearance is appreciated.</p>	<p>No alterations proposed.</p>

<b>Report Title: Norwich to Tilbury – Consultation June 2023</b>	
<b>Report to: Local Plan Sub-Committee</b>	
<b>Date: 3rd August 2023</b>	<b>For: Decision</b>
<b>Key Decision: No</b>	<b>Decision Planner Ref No: N/A</b>
<b>Report Presented by: Alan Massow – Principal Planning Policy Officer</b>	
<b>Enquiries to: Alan Massow – Principal Planning Policy Officer</b>	

## **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The following report considers the Non-Statutory Consultation under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 in respect of National Grid’s Transmission’s (NGET) 400kv grid reinforcement between Norwich and Tilbury (N2T). This project was previously referred to as East Anglia Green. This project is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide Members an overview of the project and its likely impacts. Following this, Members are requested to endorse the Non-Statutory Consultation response to NGET attached in Appendix 1 to this report by the 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023.
- 1.3 Members may recall that this is the second non-statutory consultation, which was considered in June last year by this Committee
- 1.4 The first non-statutory consultation gave an indication of the pylon route, whereas this second non-statutory consultation shows the positioning of the pylons giving a more detailed route, including an area of undergrounding and sealing end compounds.
- 1.5 The consultation documents are available on the link below;  
<https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury/document-library>
- 1.6 8 documents have been released as part of the consultation, and they are a Project Background Document 2023, Strategic Options Backcheck and Review 2023, Design Development Report 2023, 2022 Non-Statutory consultation Feedback Report, 2022 Non-Statutory consultation Feedback Report Appendices, Community Newsletter June 2023, Consultation Feedback Form 2023 and the Consultation Strategy 2023. A detailed map of the proposals for Braintree District has also been published.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To approve the consultation response contained within Appendix 1.

### **3. Summary of Issues**

3.1 The N2T project in its entirety proposes the following;

- A new 400kv electricity transmission line over a distance of roughly 180km from Norwich to Tilbury and a new 400 kv connection substation in Tendering District.
- The route comprises mostly of overhead line (including pylons and conductors – the “line” part) and underground cabling through and near to the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and in part in Braintree District where it crosses an existing 400kV overhead line.
- Cable sealing end compound (CSE).(A compound which enables electricity to transition from above ground to below ground).

3.2 Since the previous consultation new information has been provided on the location of pylons and sealing compounds within the district. In addition, further information/justification has been provided on Strategic Options such as an undersea route.

#### **Project Background Document 2023**

3.3 This document provides information on the current draft proposals for the project. It sets out background information on National Grid, the move toward net zero, an overview of the project among other topics. It also includes a section on the proposals within Braintree which this report will focus on.

3.4 The main changes between the 2022 consultation and the 2023 consultation are that there is a change to the proposals north-west of Fairstead where the preferred draft alignment would be routed within the preferred draft corridor presented in 2022 but in an area thought less likely, as shown by the graduated swathe. It is proposed to underground a small section of the route north of Fairstead, with CSE compounds at either end, to cross beneath the existing 400 kV overhead line. The location of this crossing has moved to an area within the 2022 corridor previously considered less likely to be used in response to feedback and to reduce effects on residential amenity.

3.5 This document also includes mapping of the proposed route and compounds. It should be noted that the map showing pylon positions is available as an interactive version on the National Grid website linked below.

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ba2cbd9ac64c4723847fae8637d50df3/>

#### **Strategic Options Backcheck and Review June 2023**

3.6 This document is part of the initial options identification and selection stage and outlines the reasons why the transmission system in East Anglia needs to change, a summary description of options for providing additional

transmission system capability identified as strategic options, now NGET identified and evaluated strategic options and the option which are intended to be taken forward.

- 3.7 In terms of capacity, the document shows that without reinforcement of the capacity of the existing network in East Anglia is insufficient to accommodate the connection of proposed new power sources in the area.

### **Initial Strategic Options Analysis**

- 3.8 The Strategic Options Backcheck and Review is designed to test the assumptions and interim conclusions made to date based on the latest available information. The Strategic Options Backcheck and Review document contains Figure C and Table B which set out the different route options for high voltage cables, and an alternative offshore route for those options where this could be achieved.
- 3.9 The document notes that the Offshore route is considerably more expensive than the alternative onshore routes and does not provide sufficient capacity for energy generation at Sizewell and the Essex Coast Generation Groups. Other issues for an offshore route include limited opportunity to avoid the Broads National Park and Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB but some mitigation could occur, and the offshore route would not provide the flexibility of onshore connection options which facilitate flows both to the West and East of the transmission system for different system faults. A detailed analysis is available in this document for each of the options. The interim conclusion of this report is that EAN4 OHL Norwich to Bramford and EAS 2 OHL Bramford via a new substation to Tilbury, alongside SCD1/Sea Link or an alternative connection from the Sizewell area to north Kent. It is stated that this will be kept under review.
- 3.10 More detailed analysis for SCD1/Sea Link will be carried out and consulted on separately. There is no timescale given for this.

### **Design Development Report 2023**

- 3.11 This document provides an overview of the evolution of the project since the non-statutory consultation in 2022, in response to feedback to that consultation and further environmental and engineering studies. Once this consultation has completed the responses will be used to help define the proposal which will be consulted on at the statutory consultation phase.
- 3.12 It should be noted that no decision has been made on what type of pylons are being proposed.
- 3.13 Since the previous consultation the only change in Braintree District is that the line and pylon positions are now shown on the map as well as the sealing end compounds and undergrounding section. This is broadly in accordance with the graduate swath shown on the previous consultation,

however it should be noted that in the area around Fairstead, the line is less central to the swath than other areas.

- 3.14 It is likely that a haul road would be required to serve the sealing end compounds when considering the restraints of the existing road network which are designated as protected lanes. Further information would be required on this subject as the scheme progresses.

### **Consultation Response**

- 3.15 Officers consider that Braintree should submit an in principle objection to the scheme, as the alternative options have not been fully explored and considered versus the impact that the on land option may have on a variety of factors. Whilst recommending this position it is also necessary to consider the detail of the scheme we have before us. As such officers have commissioned specialist advice on built heritage, Arboricultural, geology & hydrogeology, air quality, noise & vibration, ecology and landscape. The detailed responses are included as part of the response to consultation set out in Appendix 1, but summaries are set out below

### **Arboriculture**

- 3.16 There have been no tree constraints identified in relation to the proposal and the areas of trees, which are likely to be impacted (situated in either wooded areas or within field boundaries) have not been recognised as forming a potential constraint on the scheme. Some areas could be considered ancient woodland, veteran trees or covered by statutory protection which would make them a major constraint. The location of the Cable Sealing End compounds is within 15m of trees. As such there could be access issues with construction traffic. Documents should therefore be provided to ensure trees are not impacted by the works.
- 3.17 A tree survey with an Arboricultural survey and impact assessment should be submitted. This needs to be done prior to a design being fixed. Any tree removal should have re-placement planting. As such an objection exists subject to the above information being provided.

### **Built Heritage**

- 3.18 It is noted that much of the information provided as part of the non-statutory consultation is generic and deals with themes and issues including why the upgrading is needed, rather than specific issues relating to Braintree District. It is important that a thorough assessment of how the proposal impacts building heritage, the setting of heritage assets, should be provided. It is unclear if there will be any impact, or if the pylons could be amended or adjusted to mitigate any heritage harm. Visual impacts are likely to be high and should be a strong consideration.
- 3.19 The wider setting of Silver End and Kelvedon Conservation Areas needs consideration as do the wider setting of landmark buildings such as churches

with large spires and not just their settings. Overall, not much detail is provided, however it is stated that where impacts occur attempts will be made to mitigate impacts to significance.

- 3.20 To sum up the documentation which has been provided does not have a true assessment of heritage assets, although this detail is expected to be provided as the scheme progresses.

### **Geology & Hydrogeology**

- 3.21 The design changes and preferred draft alignment shown in the non-statutory consultation documents do not introduce any specific concerns in relation to Geology & Hydrogeology, within the scope and limitations described in the technical note at Appendix 1.

### **Air Quality**

- 3.22 The design changes and preferred draft alignment shown in the non-statutory consultation do not introduce any specific concerns in relation to air quality, within the scope and limitations described in the technical note at Appendix 1.

### **Ecology**

- 3.23 The routing of the underground section seems to have undergone careful consideration, going through the willow plantation and the potential use of trenchless crossing to reduce the potential effects on the woodland plantation. We also note that information on ecological survey and assessment will come at a later stage. Local Wildlife Sites need to be included as non-statutory designations. Additional information is needed to understand the impacts on hedgerows along the route in particular those routes important for bat foraging and commuting routes for bats or Dormouse.
- 3.24 It should be noted that all comments submitted to the previous consultation are still considered valid and should continue to be kept under consideration.

### **Noise and Vibration**

- 3.25 The design changes and preferred draft alignment shown in the non-statutory consultation documents do not introduce any specific reasons for concern in relation to noise and vibration, within the scope and limitations described in the technical note at Appendix 1.

### **Landscape**

- 3.26 Minimal changes have been made to the preferred pylon route, as such previous comments still apply.

- 3.27 Our previous consultation response highlighted the need for two additional photo viewpoints to those proposed by the Applicant. Following more detailed consideration of the proposed pylon corridor, we now believe a third additional viewpoint is needed (see Additional Viewpoints A, B, and C in Figure 1 to this appendix). Viewpoint A represents sensitive footpath users along the Essex Way long distance footpath/Bridleway PRow 120\_15. Viewpoint B represents views from multiple footpaths situated close to the proposed pylon corridor. Viewpoint C will allow for assessment of views from Bridleway PRow 92\_1. This includes a long-distance open view to the south-west.
- 3.28 Fieldwork has also highlighted potential landscape and visual effects on the intimate river valleys of the Brain and Blackwater. It is our opinion that the Applicant's LVIA should pay particular attention to the sensitivity of each river valley, particularly at the points where the proposed pylon route crosses the Brain and Blackwater. There are a number of residential properties that will experience considerable levels of visual effects. We recommend that a Residential Amenity Assessment (RAA) should be considered for private residences which are likely to experience the most significant visual effects. Affected properties should be identified as part of the LVIA process, with specific mitigation measures outlined for each. As outlined above, we would also expect to see specific mitigation measures proposed around sealing end compounds at ground level. This is likely to include native hedge planting.

### **Protected Lanes**

- 3.29 Local Plan Policy LPP69 – Protected Lanes protects a number of lanes within the District, which have been identified as having a particular historic and landscape value for the countryside.
- 3.30 The policy is set out below for reference;

#### **“Policy LPP 69**

##### *Protected Lanes*

*The District Council will conserve the traditional landscape and nature conservation character of roads designated on the Proposals Map as Protected Lanes, including their verges, banks, ditches and natural features such as hedgerows, hedgerow trees and other structural elements contributing to the historic features of the lanes.*

*Any proposals that would have a materially adverse impact on the physical appearance of these Protected Lanes or generate traffic of a type or amount inappropriate for the traditional landscape and nature conservation character of a protected lane, will not be permitted.”*

- 3.31 The proposed underground section will potentially impact on the protected lane at Pole Road/Fairstead Lane, Fairstead. These lanes score particularly

well in terms of their integrity and diversity when they were surveyed for the Protected Lanes study, and any undergrounding proposals should help retain the integrity of the lane.

## **Tourism**

- 3.32 It is the opinion of the Council that the additional further pylons through the district will have a significant impact on tourism within the area. The cost of delivering an offshore route may be more expensive when compared to an onshore route, however this does not take into account the likely impact on the local tourism industry which could also be significant.

## **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 This is the second round of consultation undertaken on this NSIP. Further consultation will be undertaken as new information is made available and the Statutory Consultation is expected in 2024.

## **5. Options**

- 5.1 To agree the response set out in Appendix 1 and submit it in response to this consultation
- 5.2 To amend the response set out in Appendix 1 and submit it in response to this consultation.

## **6. Next Steps**

- 6.1 If approved by members of the Local Plan sub-committee, this response will be sent to National Grid as the formal response of BDC. Once this consultation is concluded, National Grid aim to conduct a Statutory public consultation in 2024 and submit an application for a development consent order in 2025. Officers will continue to work closely with officers from National Grid on their proposals through a PPA.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 Braintree District Council and the other Host Authorities have nearly completed negotiations with National Grid to cover the costs of the project via a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA).

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1 None at this time

## **9. Other Implications**

- 9.1 This project is one of five NSIPs in the District, one of which has been granted a Development Consent Order at Longfield Solar Farm, and the A12 DCO has recently finished examination. Bramford to Twinstead is due to start DCO

examination in Autumn 2023. A new NSIP proposal is being considered at Rivenhall Quarry.

## **10. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 10.1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when the Council makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act
  - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
  - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 10.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 10.3 It will be the responsibility of National Grid to undertake necessary assessments on the project including an Equality Impact Assessment

## **11. List of Appendices**

- 11.1 Appendix 1 - Consultation Response letter (Including technical notes)

## **12. Background Papers**

- 12.1 *Project Background Document 2023, Strategic Options Backcheck and Review 2023, Design Development Report 2023, 2022 Non-statutory consultation Feedback Report, 2022 Non-statutory consultation Feedback Report Appendices, Community Newsletter June 2023, Consultation Feedback Form 2023, Consultation strategy 2023. Braintree District Council Local Plan 2022, Braintree District Protected Lanes Assessment July 2013.*

**Our ref:**  
**Direct Dial:** 01376 552525 ext. 2577  
**Ask for:** Alan Massow  
**Date:** X August 2023



Address – via E-mail  
[contact@n-t.nationalgrid.com](mailto:contact@n-t.nationalgrid.com)

**Development Management**  
Causeway House Braintree  
Essex CM7 9HB

Tel: 01376 557779  
Email: [planning@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:planning@braintree.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam,

**PURPOSE OF LETTER:** Braintree District Council response to Non-Statutory consultation on the Norwich to Tilbury scheme June 2023

Thank you for consulting Braintree District Council as a Host Authority on the Norwich to Tilbury non-statutory consultation.

## 1. Understanding the Need for the Project

- 1.1 The UK government has indicated that it would seek to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 increasing offshore wind from 13.6GW to 50GW by 2030. It is forecast that 60 per cent of all offshore wind could be generated along the East Coast, as such additional infrastructure is required to enable offshore wind generated to be delivered to where it would be used. In this case we understand that electricity generated by wind farms, the Tarchon Interconnector and future nuclear power stations, needs to be transmitted from East Anglia to the wider network.
- 1.2 Braintree District Council has recently declared a climate emergency, and as such is supportive of proposals which benefit the fight against climate change, including support for renewable energy production in the right places. However, this does not mean that all proposals which assist in reducing climate change are approved at any cost; each application must be considered in the context of its benefits weighed against its harms. If the harms are deemed to outweigh the benefits, then BDC would consider it appropriate to object to proposals.

## 2. What the Project Involves (emerging proposals)

- 2.1 The project involves the creation of a new 400kv (high voltage) electrical line between Norwich Main in Norfolk and Bramford in Suffolk and Tilbury in Essex, as well as providing connection to new offshore wind generation.
- 2.2 BDC understand that the project has two aims. First, to provide new capability over the next 10 years for electricity generated by new offshore windfarms and other generation developments to travel to where it is needed, and secondly to provide capacity along the Norwich to Tilbury route by ensuring the new lines are able to carry the increased flows,

whilst maintaining network security and reducing 'constraint costs'. Separate projects which aim to increase the capability of other parts of the existing network are also being considered which include the installation of additional power control devices, increasing voltage capacity, and rewiring overhead lines with higher power conductors.

- 2.3 As in common with other NSIP proposals, the Council would expect National Grid to commit to the signing of Planning Performance Agreement which would reimburse the Council for any costs incurred in fully engaging with these proposals throughout the NSIP process, including bringing on expert consultants, to assist, as necessary.
- 2.4 The Council would also expect National Grid to have a detailed consultation and engagement strategy with Parish Councils and local residents and businesses in effected areas and ensure that all those who wish to participate have access to the right information, through a variety of consultation processes. The Council looks forward to discussing this in more detail with National Grid as the project progresses.

### **3. Principle of the Option shown**

- 3.1 Braintree District Council continues to have serious concerns about the proposal. The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and support the move to a low carbon future. However, the Council continues to believe that the addition of hundreds of new pylons across the district is not the right option in terms of environmental, economic and impact on its residents, and alternative options should be given more serious consideration. as such the Council has an in-principle objection to the proposals as they are before us.
- 3.2 The preferred draft alignment which has been published at this stage, shows that the route enters Braintree District east of Coggeshall and North-East of Feering and continues for approximately 12 miles, passing south of Silver End, Crossing Temple, and White Notley, before exiting the District to the north of Fuller Street. Since the previous consultation the position of pylons, an undergrounded section and sealing end compounds are now shown.
- 3.3 Decision on NSIPs are made based on the relevant National Policy Statement (NPS). In this case the relevant NPS are the Overarching NPS for Energy (EN-1) and the NPS for Electricity Networks (EN-5).
- 3.4 Both EN-1 and EN-5 contain guidance on the undergrounding of electrical cables. In particular, section 2.8 of EN-5 provides guidance on Landscape and Visual issues. Paragraph 2.8.9 within this section provides details on the use of undergrounding to minimise landscape and visual impacts, we would draw particular attention to the section of the paragraph which states:

*'The impacts and costs of both overhead and underground options vary considerably between individual projects (both in absolute and relative terms). Therefore, each project should be assessed individually on the basis of its specific circumstances and taking account of the fact that Government has not laid down any general rule about when an overhead line should be considered unacceptable. The IPC should, however only refuse consent for overhead line proposals in favour of an underground or sub-sea line if it is satisfied that the benefits from the non-overhead line alternative will clearly outweigh any extra economic, social and environmental impacts and the technical difficulties are surmountable. In this context it should consider:*

- *the landscape in which the proposed line will be set, (in particular, the impact on residential areas, and those of natural beauty or historic importance such as National Parks, AONBs and the Broads)*
- 3.5 The authority considers that it is likely to be technically feasible to transfer electricity from the coast, closer to its destination via undersea cables. The authority acknowledges that all possible options will give rise to impacts on the local environment, whether that be marine or land, and will have wider costs and benefits that need to be carefully considered. However as can be seen in the policy statement above, each case for overhead proposals versus underground or undersea cables should be considered on an individual basis.
- 3.6 This consultation response sets out the local authority's views about the overground route corridor which was included as part of this consultation.
- 3.7 The above sections of paragraph 2.8.9 of EN-5 make it clear that decisions on when to overhead or underground cables should be assessed at the project level, taking into account specific circumstances and *'that Government has not laid down any general rule about when an overhead line should be considered unacceptable'*.
- 3.8 Bullet point one of paragraph 2.8.9 describes how decisions to underground cables should consider *'the landscape in which the proposed line will be set, (in particular, the impact on residential areas, and those of natural beauty or historic importance such as National Parks, AONBs and the Broads)'*. Although this paragraph makes specific reference to *'National Parks, AONBs and the Broads'* the use of the phrases 'in particular' and 'such as' make it clear that these areas are not an exhaustive list and that undergrounding in other areas of natural beauty or historic importance may well be justified and this is best placed to be decided upon at the project / local level.
- 3.9 On this point, paragraphs 1.7.3 – 1.7.5 of NE-5 considered *'the adoption of a presumption that electricity lines should be put underground (generally, or in particular locations, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)'* when assessing reasonable alternatives as required by the SEA directive. Paragraph 1.7.5 explains how this approach was rejected due to it being *'considered preferable to adopt the policies in EN-5 because the range of factors to be taken into account means that decisions on undergrounding are best taken within a more flexible policy framework using case by case evaluation.'*
- 3.10 The Council notes that both overland transmission by pylon or underground have significant impacts on the communities and environments within which they occur. Whilst on the face of it undergrounding cables seems like the least impactful, there is a requirement to clear and maintain large swathes of land under which the cables lay, which also has a significant landscape and environment impact.
- 3.11 Within this context and having regard to all the above, Braintree District Council considers that if the on-land route is considered the only feasible option then a mix of pylons and undergrounding of cables will be necessary to deal with the differing landscapes, communities, and historic assets that the line will travel through in the District. For example, there is a point at which the new line will cross an existing line and therefore underground cabling would be necessary at that point. Undergrounding cables is not likely to be necessary across the whole of the district but may be appropriate in respect of locations close to important heritage assets.

## **4. Pylons/Compounds**

- 4.1 The consultation currently indicates that traditional style pylons would be used on this scheme. It is noted that further assessments are due to be carried out on pylon design and no decision has been made on their design, but it would make sense that the newer style low visual impact pylons to be used on all new schemes to minimise landscape impact, rather than installing older style pylons and replacing them later. This would minimise disruption in the countryside and be a much more sustainable use of materials.
- 4.2 It would also help minimise the impact on local residents especially if they were located as far away from residential properties as possible. In due course the Council will require detailed landscape visual impacts for all proposed pylon locations to be produced and consulted upon.
- 4.3 It is unclear from the consultation when the associated impacts, such as location for materials compounds, haul routes and staff facilities will factor into the preferred route alignment. Whilst the construction activities would be temporary, they have potential to generate significant impacts in some locations which could be avoided by reviewing the routing at an early stage. It would not be acceptable to fix the positions of pylons without reviewing all the implications of their routing such as this aspect too.

### **Cumulative Impact**

- 4.4 The route crosses through an area which has been identified as a climate action zone by Essex County Council climate commissioners but is subject to considerable development pressures. These include proposals for significant mineral extraction and solar farms.
- 4.5 The route also crosses the preferred proposed new route of a dual A120 known as route D. It should also be noted that a proposal for a 58m incinerator chimney at Rivenhall Airfield was rejected by Essex County Council on grounds of landscape impact. These proposals are for a series of 50m pylons, and therefore the likely significant landscape impact is clear to see. The Council would therefore expect that the impact of the proposed transmission route be carefully considered considering other existing and proposed developments in the vicinity of it as its cumulative impact and not in isolation.

## **5. Other comments**

- 5.1 Officers have commissioned specialist advice on built heritage, Arboricultural, geology & hydrogeology, air quality, noise & vibration, ecology and landscape. The detailed responses are included as part of the response to consultation.

### **Arboriculture**

- 5.2 There have been no tree constraints identified in relation to the proposal and the areas of trees, which are likely to be impacted situated in either wooded areas or within field boundaries which have not been recognised as forming a potential constraint on the scheme. Some areas could be considered ancient woodland, veteran trees or covered by statutory protection which would make them a major constraint. The location of the Cable Sealing End compounds is within 15m of trees. As such there could be access issues with construction traffic. Documents should therefore be provided to ensure trees are not impacted by the works.
- 5.3 A tree survey with an Arboricultural survey and impact assessment should be submitted. This needs to be done prior to a design being fixed. Any tree removal should have replacement planting. As such an objection exists subject to the above information being provided.

## **Built Heritage**

- 5.4 It is noted that much of the information provided as part of the non-statutory consultation is generic and deals with themes and issues including why the upgrading is needed, rather than specific issues relating to Braintree District. It is important that a thorough assessment of how the proposal impacts building heritage, the setting of heritage assets, should be provided. It is unclear if there will be any impact, or if the pylons could be amended or adjusted to mitigate any heritage harm. Visual impacts are likely to be high and should be a strong consideration.
- 5.5 The wider setting of Silver End and Kelvedon Conservation Areas needs consideration as do the wider setting of landmark buildings such as churches with large spires and not just their settings. Overall, not much detail is provided, however it is stated that where impacts occur attempts will be made to mitigate impacts to significance.
- 5.6 To sum up, the documentation which has been provided does not have a true assessment of heritage assets, although this detail is expected to be provided as the scheme progresses.

## **Geology & Hydrogeology**

- 5.7 The design changes and preferred draft alignment shown in the non-statutory consultation documents do not introduce any specific concerns in relation to Geology & Hydrogeology, within the scope and limitations described in the technical note.

## **Air Quality**

- 5.8 The design changes and preferred draft alignment shown in the non-statutory consultation do not introduce any specific concerns in relation to air quality, within the scope and limitations described in the technical note.

## **Ecology**

- 5.9 The routing of the underground section seems to have undergone careful consideration, going through the willow plantation and the potential use of trenchless crossing to reduce the potential effects on the woodland plantation. We also note that information on ecological survey and assessment will come at a later stage. Local Wildlife Sites need to be included as non-statutory designations. Additional information is needed to understand the impacts on hedgerows along the route in particular those routes important for bat foraging and commuting routes for bats or Dormouse.
- 5.10 It should be noted that all comments submitted to the previous consultation are still considered valid and should continue to be kept under consideration.

## **Noise and Vibration**

- 5.11 The design changes and preferred draft alignment shown in the non-statutory consultation documents do not introduce any specific reasons for concern in relation to noise and vibration, within the scope and limitations described in the technical note.

## **Landscape**

- 5.12 Minimal changes have been made to the preferred pylon route, as such previous comments still apply.
- 5.13 Our previous consultation response highlighted the need for two additional photo viewpoints to those proposed by the Applicant. Following more detailed consideration of the proposed pylon corridor, we now believe a third additional viewpoint is needed (see Additional Viewpoints A, B, and C in Figure 1 to this appendix). Viewpoint A represents

sensitive footpath users along the Essex Way long distance footpath/Bridleway PRoW 120\_15. Viewpoint B represents views from multiple footpaths situated close to the proposed pylon corridor. Viewpoint C will allow for assessment of views from Bridleway PRoW 92\_1. This includes a long-distance open view to the south-west.

- 5.14 Fieldwork has also highlighted potential landscape and visual effects on the intimate river valleys of the Brain and Blackwater. It is our opinion that the Applicant's LVIA should pay particular attention to the sensitivity of each river valley, particularly at the points where the proposed pylon route crosses the Brain and Blackwater. There are several residential properties that will experience considerable levels of visual effects. We recommend that a Residential Amenity Assessment (RAA) should be considered for private residences which are likely to experience the most significant visual effects. Affected properties should be identified as part of the LVIA process, with specific mitigation measures outlined for each. As outlined above, we would also expect to see specific mitigation measures proposed around sealing end compounds at ground level. This is likely to include native hedge planting.

### **Protected Lanes**

- 5.15 Local Plan Policy LPP69 – Protected Lanes protects a number of lanes within the District, which have been identified as having a particular historic and landscape value for the countryside.
- 5.16 The policy is set out below for reference.

#### ***“Policy LPP 69 Protected Lanes***

*The District Council will conserve the traditional landscape and nature conservation character of roads designated on the Proposals Map as Protected Lanes, including their verges, banks, ditches and natural features such as hedgerows, hedgerow trees and other structural elements contributing to the historic features of the lanes.*

*Any proposals that would have a materially adverse impact on the physical appearance of these Protected Lanes or generate traffic of a type or amount inappropriate for the traditional landscape and nature conservation character of a protected lane, will not be permitted.”*

The proposed underground section will potentially impact on the protected lane at Pole Road/Fairstead Lane Fairstead. These lanes score particularly well in terms of their integrity and diversity when they were surveyed for the Protected Lanes study, and any undergrounding proposals should aim to the integrity of the lane. Hedgerow removal should be avoided where possible. Should a ‘sterilised strip’ be required, that would effectively prevent replacement vegetation being planted, the location of the cabling should be carefully selected in order to minimise impacts upon the traditional landscape and nature conservation character of the lane. Any harm should be justified with an explanation as to why any material adverse impacts caused could not have been avoided.

### **Tourism**

- 5.17 It is the opinion of the Council that the additional further pylons through the district will have a significant impact on tourism within the area. The cost of delivering an offshore route may be more expensive when compared to an onshore route, however this does not take into account the likely impact on the local tourism industry which could also be significant.

## Summary

- 5.18 Whilst Braintree District Council is supportive of measures which help reduce climate change impact, each proposal should be considered on its merits. The proposed route runs through an important area of the district, which is home to many heritage assets, wildlife sites, veteran trees, ancient woodland among others. It has also been identified as a climate focus area by Essex Climate Commissioners. Undergrounding can have a significant impact on local ecology as it requires a large strip of land to be cleared, and limited vegetation can be re-introduced after. This would have to be assessed against any landscape impact or impact on historic assets so that the most appropriate option can be used depending on the circumstances in any given location.
- 5.19 As shown above the area has many important landscapes and heritage assets, recreational routes etc. As such pylons, if they are used, should be the new style "T" shape low impact design. Siting of compounds should be done so that they cause minimal impact and be appropriately landscaped.
- 5.20 The area has significant development pressure, with cumulative impacts, therefore such alternatives especially offshore routes need to be fully considered before opting for an onshore route.
- 5.21 Finally, the impact of these proposals on residents needs to be fully considered, as well as local business and tourism.
- 5.22 Due to the nature of these proposals, the public interest in them and the numerous parts of the District that are impacted by the identified route, this response has been approved by the Councils Local Plan sub-committee, who have responsibility for considering NSIP proposals in the District. In addition, we reiterate the comments submitted to the previous round of consultation where they have not been considered.

Yours faithfully,

Councillor G Spray  
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure  
Chairman of the Local Plan Sub Committee

*Inc – Landscape Technical Note – WWA  
Arboricultural Technical Note – Places Services  
Ecology Technical Note – Place Services  
Built Heritage Technical Note – Place Services  
Geology Technical Note – Wardell Armstrong  
Air Quality Technical Note – Wardell Armstrong  
Noise and Vibration Technical Note – Wardell Armstrong*

# WWA Additional Non-Statutory Consultation Response

Prepared for: Braintree District Council

Date: July 2023

## 1 Introduction

This response has been compiled following the release of further consultation information regarding the proposed Norwich to Tilbury pylon route. Development Consent Order (DCO) applicants, the National Grid, have stated:

*"Between Tuesday 27 June and Monday 21 August 2023, we are holding a further non-statutory public consultation to present our current proposals and invite feedback. While we are very much still at an early stage of the proposed project, we have started to develop a preferred draft alignment which shows potential positions for overhead line and associated pylons, underground cables, cable sealing end (CSE) compounds and connection substations."*

Wynne-Williams Associates (WWA) have been commissioned to review the new documents and provide a response relating to potential landscape and visual effects.

Documents and drawings reviewed include:

- Project Background Document 2023
- Design Development Report 2023
- Non-statutory Consultation Feedback Report 2022
- Interactive Map (showing the preferred draft alignment route, including the specific location of pylons and cable sealing end compounds)

WWA have also carried out additional fieldwork to consider the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed pylon corridor.

## 2 Project Background Document

A large proportion of this document is aimed at providing contextual justification for the new pylon route and is, therefore, not within the remit of this consultation response. However, there is a short section that outlines changes to the preferred draft pylon corridor within the Braintree district, since the last consultation. This states,

*"There is a change to the proposals north-west of Fairstead where the preferred draft alignment would be routed within the preferred draft corridor presented in 2022 but in an area thought less likely, as shown by the graduated swathe. We are proposing to underground a small section of the route north of Fairstead, with CSE compounds at either end, to cross beneath the existing 400 kV overhead line. The location of this crossing has moved to an area within the 2022 corridor previously considered less likely to be used in response to feedback and to reduce effects on residential amenity".*

Therefore, there is minimal change in the preferred route through the Braintree district. The associated map shows a very slight deviation from the previously published route, but the change is still within the wider corridor that was originally included in the earliest iteration of the scheme.

### 3 Design Development Report

The Design Development Report offers some further details on considerations made for alternative corridor routes. However, in each case justification is given as to why the original route is preferred. Reasons are predominantly linked to economic viability and heritage effects, therefore falling outside the remit of landscape and visual effects.

### 4 Cable Sealing End Compounds

Within the Braintree district, there is one section of underground cabling proposed to the north of Fairstead. This would be needed to allow the new route to cross under an existing line of pylons. WVA were asked to consider the potential landscape and visual effects of the cable sealing end compounds that will be required to facilitate underground cabling.

The interactive map currently indicates that two cable sealing end compounds will be required, with each including two pylon towers (Proposed Towers TB110-113). Each compound is likely to include additional infrastructure to connect overhead pylons to underground cabling. The underground cable will pass between sealing end compounds, through a small valley caused by a tributary stream of the River Ter, and underneath Fairstead Road.

There are likely to be views to the western compound from footpath PRoW 76\_6. The compound will be seen at a distance of around 400m from the footpath. Pylon towers west of the valley (TB112-115) will be dominant in the view, with pylon towers on the eastern side (TB109-111) also visible. Cumulative visual effects arising from the proximity to the existing 400kV pylon corridor are also likely. Ground-level infrastructure around the western compound is likely to be partially screened by an existing hedgerow and tree line. Further mitigation planting around the western compound should be included to further reduce visual effects.

It is our opinion that the sealing end compounds have been sited suitably far apart. Locating each compound away from the crest of each valley side is also welcomed to reduce visual effects for vehicle users and cyclists in the valley along Fairstead Road

### 5 Recommendations

As minimal changes have been made to the preferred pylon route through the Braintree district, our previous consultation comments are still valid.

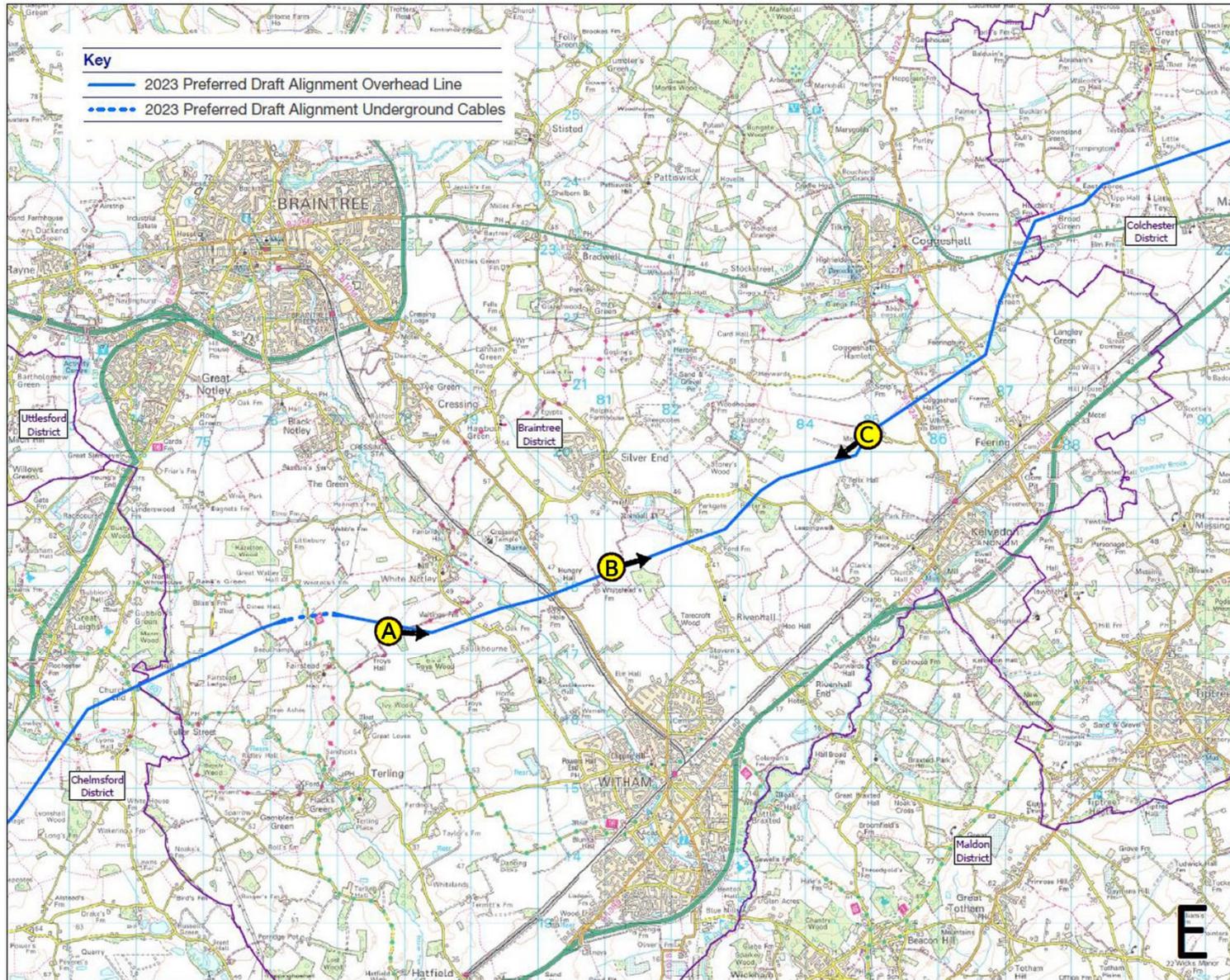
Our previous consultation response highlighted the need for two additional photo viewpoints to those proposed by the Applicant. Following more detailed consideration of the proposed pylon corridor, we now believe a third additional viewpoint is needed (see Additional Viewpoints A, B, and C in Figure 1). Viewpoint A represents sensitive footpath users along the Essex Way long distance footpath/Bridleway PRoW 120\_15. Viewpoint B represents views from multiple footpaths situated close to the proposed pylon corridor. Viewpoint C will allow for assessment of views from Bridleway PRoW 92\_1. This includes a long-distance open view to the south-west.

Our fieldwork has also highlighted potential landscape and visual effects on the intimate river valleys of the Brain and Blackwater. It is our opinion that the Applicant's LVIA should pay particular attention to the sensitivity of each river valley, particularly at the points where the proposed pylon route crosses the Brain and Blackwater.

There are a number of residential properties that will experience considerable levels of visual effects. We recommend that a Residential Amenity Assessment (RAA) should be considered for private residences which are likely to experience the most significant visual effects. Affected properties should be identified as part of the LVIA process, with specific mitigation measures outlined for each.

As outlined above, we would also expect to see specific mitigation measures proposed around sealing end compounds at ground level. This is likely to include native hedge planting.

Figure 1 – Additional Viewpoint Location Plan



Additional viewpoint location and direction of view



17 July 2023

Sent by email: Flavell, Louise [louise.flavell@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:louise.flavell@braintree.gov.uk)

Dear Louise,

Please see our response below for the non-statutory consultation.

### **Background**

Norwich to Tilbury is a proposal by National Grid Electricity Transmission (National Grid) to reinforce the high voltage power network in East Anglia between the existing substations at Norwich Main in Norfolk, Bamford in Suffolk, and Tilbury in Essex, as well as connect new offshore wind generation.

### **Proposal**

The overhead line alignment would continue south-west into Braintree, broadly paralleling both the A12 and railway to the north. The alignment would pass to the north of Witham and the south of Silver End, before crossing the railway again heading south-west into Chelmsford district. The changes since the 2022 preferred draft corridor are that they are proposing to underground a small section of the route north of Fairstead, with CSE compounds at either end, to cross beneath the existing 400 kV overhead line. This would be routed within an area thought less likely in the 2022 draft corridor, as shown by the graduated swathe.

Norwich to Tilbury is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). A desktop study has been undertaken regarding the route of the underground cabling and CSE compound positioning for this proposal.

### **Local and National Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework 2022 puts emphasis on "Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exist" and "Existing trees are retained wherever possible" The NPPF identifies that all trees, no matter their category, contribute to the mitigation and adaptation of climate change. The canopies of existing trees will not be matched for many years and therefore their removal will likely lead to a decline in the ecosystem services provided by an area. Therefore, retention should be prioritised wherever practicable.

Braintree Policies LPP 63 states 'Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure Development proposals must take available measures to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, habitats, biodiversity and geodiversity of the district and to be acceptable, also taking climate change and water scarcity into account in their design. This will include protection from pollution. Proposals inside the District which are likely to adversely affect, either individually or cumulatively, International or Nationally designated nature conservation sites within and outside the district will not normally be acceptable. The Council will expect all development proposals, where appropriate, to contribute towards the delivery of new Green Infrastructure which develops and enhances a network of multi-functional spaces and natural features throughout the district. This will be proportionate to the scale of the proposed development and the rural or urban context. The Council will support and encourage development which contributes to the district's existing Green Infrastructure and where possible, enhances and protects networks and adds to their functions. It will secure additional provision where deficiencies have been identified. Open space and green infrastructure may in some instances be required to provide alternatives to European sites and that such sites should be

designed and managed appropriately to maximise their potential effectiveness in this role. Proposals which undermine these principles will not be acceptable.

Braintree LPP 65 states 'When considering the impact of development on good quality trees the Council will expect developers to reflect the best practice guidance set out in BS5837:2012 (as amended). The standard recommends that trees of higher quality are a material consideration in the development process. Where trees are to be retained on new development sites there must be a suitable distance provided between the established tree and any new development to allow for its continued wellbeing and ensure it is less vulnerable to pressures from adjacent properties for its removal. Planning conditions will be applied to protect trees during development. New landscape proposals for tree planting on development sites should reflect the recommendations set out in BS5837:2012 (as amended) and BS8545:2014 (as superseded). In considering works to trees, new planting and the trees in new development schemes the Council will expect proposals to be in general conformity to and contribute to the aims of Braintree District's Tree Strategy'.

### **Comments**

There have been no tree constraints identified in relation to this proposal and there are areas of trees, which are likely to be impacted situated in either wooded areas or within field boundaries that have not been recognised as forming a potential constraint on the scheme. In addition, it is feasible that some areas could be considered ancient woodlands, veteran or be covered by statutory protection and this would make them a major constraint on the implementation of the scheme.

The Cable Sealing End compound locations have trees within 15m of the proposed area. As such there could be impacts through the access into these areas through construction traffic, storage of materials and potential removals. Therefore, documentation should be provided to ensure that these are not impacted by the works.

A tree survey with an arboricultural survey and impact assessment should be submitted to assess the quality of the existing trees on site. This assessment should be undertaken in accordance with 'British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design demolition and construction – Recommendations' and should provide details on trees and shrubs to be retained and/or removed, the impact on them and any constraints. This survey will identify whether or not trees currently on site are in sufficient condition to pose a constraint on development and will outline the required protection for retained trees. The survey should be done in advance of a design being fixed to prevent any conflict with high category trees. Once the design is fixed, an arboricultural method statement and resulting tree protection plan will be required to ensure retained trees are suitable protected. There may be opportunities to replace trees that do pose a constraint or cannot be retained throughout the construction process with species that will bring more ecosystem benefits to the area long term.

Where existing trees pose a constraint or their removal is required to facilitate this development, replacement planting opportunities should be incorporated into the design through methods such as native hedgerows and should be presented with the submission of a Soft Landscaping Plan. Good species selection would allow for an enhanced provision for wildlife and bring long term ecological benefits to the area to potentially mitigate any disturbance during construction.

At present, there is an objection from an arboricultural perspective until the documentation requested is provided and any impacts towards any trees in the scheme mitigated for.

If you require anything further, please get in touch.

Kind regards  
Jack.



17/07/2023

## **Norwich to Tilbury (formerly known as East Anglia GREEN) – Ecology revised comments**

These comments are in addition to those provided on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and relate to the non-statutory consultation for Norwich to Tilbury (N2T) NSIP and the scheme design including corridor options to minimise ecological impacts.

The submitted information clearly outlines the 2023 preferred draft alignment for the route for the proposed new 400 kV overhead line between the existing Norwich Main substation in Norfolk to the existing substation at Bramford, and from Bramford to the existing Tilbury substation in Essex.

We have viewed the changes for each LA area as set out on the applicant's website and welcome the interactive map. We have also reviewed the consultation documents including the Strategic Options Backcheck and Review 2023 and Design Development Report 2023 (National Grid, June 2023).

### Updated route and design for Braintree District within Essex

We note that for Braintree District, the only change is to underground a small section of the route north of Fairstead, with Compound Sealing End compounds at either end, to cross beneath the existing 400kV overhead line. We welcome that careful routeing of the alignment for the underground cables through the willow tree planting under the existing overhead line and potentially the use of trenchless crossing techniques would further reduce potential effects on woodland and the willow plantation.

We appreciate that the details for ecological survey & assessment for protected and Priority species likely to be present in the Preferred Corridor and would be affected, will come at a later stage. This will be necessary to demonstrate that the applicant has followed the mitigation hierarchy for likely ecological impacts and provide sufficient information to support the DCO application at examination.

We re-iterate that the substation siting constraints need to include non-statutory designated sites e.g. LoWS in order to avoid significant ecological impacts as this could trigger the need to deliver compensatory habitat.

We note that if any ecology constraints are scoped out of the Options Appraisal, they would still be covered in the Environmental Statement for assessment.

### **Other matters**

We are concerned that more information is needed to understand the impacts on hedgerows along the route, particular those that could be important for bat foraging and commuting routes for Barbastelle bats or Dormouse.

### **Next Steps**

We seek to inform choices on micro routeing to avoid ecological features including veteran trees (irreplaceable habitat) and species options for restoration planting schemes as well as securing temporary mitigation measures during construction.



If you have any queries regarding the above matters, please contact us.

Best wishes,

**Hamish Jackson ACIEEM BSc (Hons)**  
Senior Ecological Consultant

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.

FAO: Louise Flavell,  
Planning Department,  
**Braintree District Council**



Ref: Norwich to Tilbury Non-Statutory Consultation, Summer 2023  
Date: 18/07/2023

## **BUILT HERITAGE ADVICE**

Dear Sir / Madam,

### **RE: *Norwich to Tilbury Non-Statutory Consultation, Summer 2023***

Built heritage advice concerning the proposed Norwich to Tilbury power line upgrade. This letter provides comment on the documents produced by National Grid for this non-statutory consultation (*Project Background Document, June 2023; Norwich to Tilbury Design Development Report, June 2023; Norwich to Tilbury 2022 Non-statutory Consultation Feedback Report June 2023 and the Community newsletter, June 2023*) and the interactive map of the proposed cable route published on the National Grid's website.

Much of the documentation provided as part of this non-statutory consultation is generic, relating to over arching themes and issues, including why the upgrading is needed, and not specific to built heritage, or the Braintree district. Of the documents listed above, the *Norwich to Tilbury Design Development Report, June 2023* and the *Norwich to Tilbury 2022 Non-statutory Consultation Feedback Report June 2023* provide the greatest detail. A thorough assessment of how the proposals could affect built heritage, including the setting of heritage assets, should be provided. It is unclear if there will be any impact, or if the exact positioning of pylons could be amended or adjusted to mitigate harm to the significance or setting of heritage assets within proximity of the route. Visual impacts are likely to be high and should be strongly considered.

The proposed route will affect the setting of numerous heritage assets within the Braintree district, both designated and non-designated. The interactive map indicates the route of the proposed new line will pass through mainly agricultural land, a large proportion of the assets affected will be farmhouses or farmbuildings, however the wider setting of Silver End and Kelvedon Conservation Areas should be considered, with views toward and out from these conservation areas assessed for their level of sensitivity, and the contribution this setting makes to the conservation areas' overall significance. The wider setting of landmark buildings, such as churches with large spires, should also be considered, and not confined to their immediate curtilage.

The Norwich to Tilbury Design Development Report provides commentary on the feedback relating to the Colne Valley to Fairstead section of the planned powerlines within the Braintree document. No alternative routes suggested by respondents to the 2022 non-statutory consultation have been taken forward by National Grid, as the routing of the line away from Coggeshall, for example, would create a less direct route, with a higher number of pylons. It is noted that the suggestion to divert the consultation corridor toward Feering has been discounted in part due to the impact this will have on

heritage assets in Feering village, which shows a positive and sensitive understanding of the potential impact to heritage assets. Similarly, the discounting of moving the route corridor closer to Faulkbourne is positive, due to the high heritage sensitivity this area has, featuring Faulkbourne Hall, a Grade II Registered Park and Garden within which there are two Grade I listed buildings and a Grade II building, as well as other listed buildings within the wider Faulkbourne area.

Sections 6.4.103 to 6.4.122 provide clear descriptions of the route within the Braintree district. Heritage assets which have been deemed particularly sensitive are identified within this section and an explanation for the route provided. Whilst the specific placement of the pylons has not yet been determined, the consideration of heritage assets and explanation of the route in these areas is welcomed.

The *Norwich to Tilbury 2022 Non-statutory Consultation Feedback Report June 2023* addresses built heritage issues within Braintree in section 3.6.24. Little commentary is provided, however it is stipulated that where impacts to significance will occur, National Grid will attempt to mitigate these impacts as far as practicable, exploring mitigation measures such as screening and pylon placement. It is expected that Braintree will be consulted on these mitigation measures, as well as the Historic Environment Assessment, as the scheme progresses, and it is positive that this section confirms this. At this stage, no methodology has been provided and it is highly recommended that the proposed method of assessment is presented to the local authority as soon as practicable, to enable the local authority to comment on and agree to the proposed methodology.

In conclusion, the documentation provided as part of this non-statutory consultation provides explanation for the proposed route, yet no true assessment of heritage assets at this stage. It is anticipated that far more detail will be provided as the scheme progresses, and thorough assessments provided.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Johnson

Senior Built Heritage Consultant  
Historic Environment Team  
Place Services

*Note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter*

<b>CLIENT:</b>	Braintree District Council
<b>PROJECT:</b>	National Grid Norwich to Tilbury Geology & Hydrogeology: Environmental Health Support
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Review Comments on National Grid Norwich to Tilbury 2023 Additional Non Statutory Consultation Exercise
<b>JOB NO.:</b>	GM12443
<b>DATE:</b>	18 July 2023
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Matt Woodcock
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	Gavin Campbell

## 1. SCOPE OF REVIEW

- 1.1 In November 2022, National Grid submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report for the Norwich to Tilbury Project (then known as East Anglia GREEN) to the Planning Inspectorate. Wardell Armstrong provided comments to Braintree District Council on aspects of the Scoping Report relating to Geology & Hydrogeology (dated 22 November 2022).
- 1.2 In June 2023, National Grid opened a supplementary non-statutory consultation exercise on a number of proposed design changes to the project. The supplementary non-statutory consultation information consists of a number of documents and weblinks that are available at National Grid's project [consultation website](#) and associated [document library](#).
- 1.3 From a review of this information, it appears that within Braintree District Council's land boundaries the main changes / important information are:
1. Change of proposed technology from overhead lines to underground cables to cross under the existing 400 kV overhead lines north of Fairstead.
  2. Publication of a preferred draft alignment and associated consultation corridor.
- 1.4 Our review comments on the non-statutory consultation are provided in Section 2 of this Technical Note. These relate only to Geology and Hydrogeology, and only to aspects of this topic that are understood to fall within Braintree District Council's regulatory remit. Therefore, the following aspects are outside the scope of this review: (i) mineral sterilisation and / or effects on active or proposed mineral extraction sites, (ii) effects on Controlled Waters, other than private water abstractions, (iii) any proposals outside the geographical boundaries of Braintree District Council.

- 1.5 It is understood from the [GeoEssex website](#) that there are no Local Geological Sites within Braintree, so local geological conservation risks have not been considered further in this review. GeoEssex note a number of 'Other Sites', one of which (White Notley puddingstone) appears to be within the consultation corridor within Braintree DC's geographical area. It is unclear whether this has any designation and, in any case, its nature (a single 1.1m boulder immediately adjacent to a property) is such that it should not present a consideration at this stage of the route development.
- 1.6 National Grid's supplementary non-statutory consultation exercise relates to design evolution and does not include any new or revised information in relation to EIA scoping or methodology. Therefore, our previous comments on the EIA Scoping Report (dated 22 November 2022) remain current in relation to these matters.

## 2. REVIEW COMMENTS

### Underground Cables to the North of Fairstead

- 2.1 The design change proposal to the north of Fairstead involves the installation of a section of 400kV underground electricity cables at the location shown in Figure 1:



Figure 1: Black solid = new proposed overhead lines, black dash = new proposed underground cables, black hexagon = proposed new pylon, blue solid = existing overhead line, white hexagon = existing pylon. Source: [National Grid Interactive Map](#).

- 2.2 The proposed underground cable length is around 700m. The method of cable installation (e.g. open cut, horizontal directional drilling etc.) is yet to be specified. The ground conditions in this location are shown on British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 scale

mapping to be Glacial Till overlying London Clay, with the exception of small areas of alluvium and sand & gravel deposits along the N-S orientated ditch / watercourse immediately to the west of Fairstead Road.

- 2.3 Provided that the cable installation is carried out in accordance with environmental management best practice and adequately controlled (for example under a Construction Environmental Management Plan) the use of underground cables rather than overhead lines in this location should not present a concern.

### Preferred Draft Route Alignment

- 2.4 We have considered the preferred draft route alignment within Braintree DC (as presented on National Grid's [interactive map](#) and described with accompanying figures in their [Design Development Report](#)), to determine whether there are any of the following geological or hydrogeological constraints that could affect the alignment:

- Historical or current landfill sites.
- Any obvious aspect of the geological setting that could give rise to specific concerns (based on published 1:50,000 scale geological mapping).
- Any geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

- 2.5 This review has not identified any concerns.

## 3. INTERNAL DATA ENQUIRIES

- 3.1 The review comments provided in Section 2 of this Technical Note make use of publicly available published information only. Many Local Authority Environmental Health departments hold their own internal data sets and / or have local knowledge that may add to this, and which Wardell Armstrong does not have access to. Braintree DC may therefore wish to make internal enquiries with the Environmental Health team to identify whether any further information is held that may be relevant and should be incorporated into the non-statutory consultation response, such as any knowledge of previous potentially contaminative land uses along the preferred draft alignment. We would be pleased to assist with this if required.

- 3.2 It is understood that the regulation of private water supplies (PWS) falls within Braintree District Council's regulatory remit. Wardell Armstrong does not have details of the locations of PWS within the Braintree DC boundary and therefore is unable to identify whether there are any in close proximity of the preferred draft alignment and consultation corridor. It would be proactive to check this internally at Braintree DC to ensure that any clashes can be highlighted to National Grid. Alternatively, if Braintree DC are able to provide co-ordinates of PWS then Wardell Armstrong can carry out this check.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The design changes and preferred draft alignment shown in the non-statutory consultation documents do not introduce any specific concerns in relation to Geology & Hydrogeology, within the scope and limitations described in this Technical Note.

<b>CLIENT:</b>	Braintree District Council
<b>PROJECT:</b>	National Grid Norwich to Tilbury, Environmental Health Support
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Review Comments on National Grid Norwich to Tilbury 2023 Additional Non-Statutory Consultation Exercise – Air Quality
<b>JOB NO:</b>	GM12443
<b>DATE:</b>	18 July 2023
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Dr P Sanderson
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	M Walton

## 1 SCOPE OF REVIEW

- 1.1 On 29th September 2022 Wardell Armstrong provided a Technical Note reviewing the proposed approach to assessment of air quality for the Norwich to Tilbury Project (then known as East Anglia GREEN).
- 1.2 In November 2022, National Grid submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report for the Norwich to Tilbury Project to the Planning Inspectorate. No air quality input was required at this stage.
- 1.3 In June 2023, National Grid opened a supplementary non-statutory consultation exercise on a number of proposed design changes to the project. The supplementary non-statutory consultation information consists of a number of documents and weblinks that are available at National Grid's project consultation website and associated document library.
- 1.4 From a review of this information, it appears that within Braintree District Council's land boundaries the main changes / important information are:
  - Change of proposed technology from overhead lines to underground cables to cross under the existing 400 kV overhead lines north of Fairstead.
  - Publication of a preferred draft alignment and associated consultation corridor.

## 2 REVIEW COMMENTS

- 2.1 As stated above, the scheme is 180km in length, however, for the purposes of this review and document we have considered only the central part of the scheme which falls within the jurisdiction of Braintree District Council BDC.
- 2.2 National Grid's supplementary non-statutory consultation exercise relates to design evolution and does not include any new or revised information in relation to EIA scoping or methodology. Therefore, our previous comments on the assessment methodology are considered to remain current in relation to these matters.

### Underground Cables to the North of Fairstead

- 2.3 The design change proposal to the north of Fairstead involves the installation of a section of 400kV underground electricity cables at the location shown in Figure 1:



Figure 1: Black solid = new proposed overhead lines, black dash = new proposed underground cables, black hexagon = proposed new pylon, blue solid = existing overhead line, white hexagon = existing pylon. Source: National Grid Interactive Map.

- 2.4 The proposed underground cable length is around 700m. The method of cable installation (e.g. open cut, horizontal directional drilling etc.) is yet to be specified. The proposed underground cable and cable end compounds are in open country and there are no existing sensitive receptor locations within 350 m of the construction areas which may be adversely affected by construction dust. In addition there are no internationally or nationally designated habitat sites within 50 m of the construction areas which may be affected by dust soiling from construction processes.

- 2.5 Provided that the cable installation is carried out in accordance with environmental management best practice and adequately controlled (for example under a Construction Environmental Management Plan) the use of underground cables rather than overhead lines in this location should not present a concern.

### **Preferred Draft Route Alignment**

- 2.6 We have considered the preferred draft route alignment within Braintree DC (as presented on National Grid’s interactive map and described with accompanying figures in their Design Development Report), to determine whether there are any of the following air quality constraints that could affect the alignment:
- Construction dust impacts on existing human and ecological receptor locations.
  - Air quality impacts arising from development-generated traffic in the construction and/or operational phases.
- 2.7 This review has not identified any concerns. Nevertheless, it is expected that assessment works should be carried out in line with current guidance and any appropriate site-specific mitigation, such as the implementation of Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP) and Construction Traffic Management Plans (CTMP) would be implemented to minimise the impact of the proposals.

**3**

### **3 SUMMARY**

- 3.1 The design changes and preferred draft alignment shown in the non-statutory consultation documents do not introduce any specific concerns in relation to air quality, within the scope and limitations described in this Technical Note.

<b>CLIENT:</b>	Braintree District Council
<b>PROJECT:</b>	National Grid Norwich to Tilbury Noise & Vibration: Environmental Health Support
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Review Comments on National Grid Norwich to Tilbury 2023 Additional Non-Statutory Consultation Exercise
<b>JOB NO:</b>	GM12443
<b>DATE:</b>	18 July 2023
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	R Calvert, MIOA
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	Mark Dawson, MIOA

## 1 SCOPE OF REVIEW

- 1.1 In November 2022, National Grid submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report for the Norwich to Tilbury Project (then known as East Anglia GREEN) to the Planning Inspectorate.
- 1.2 In brief, the proposed development comprises the construction and operation of 180km of 400kV electricity cabling between the existing substations at Norwich Main in Norfolk, Bramford in Suffolk and Tilbury in Essex. The cabling is proposed to be predominately overhead via pylons.
- 1.3 Wardell Armstrong LLP provided comments to Braintree District Council (BDC) on aspects of the Scoping Report relating to Noise and Vibration.
- 1.4 In June 2023, National Grid opened a supplementary non-statutory consultation exercise on a number of proposed design changes to the project. The supplementary non-statutory consultation information consists of a number of documents and weblinks that are available at National Grid’s project consultation website and associated document library.
- 1.5 From a review of this information, it appears that within BDC’s land boundaries the main changes / items of important information are as follows;
  - Change of a small section of the proposed overhead lines to underground cables to cross under the existing 400 kV overhead lines north of Fairstead.

- Publication of a preferred draft alignment and associated consultation corridor.

1.6 This technical note comments upon the scoping report for the proposed scheme in terms of noise and vibration (Chapter 14).

## 2 REVIEW COMMENTS

- 2.1 As stated above, the scheme is 180km in length, however, for the purposes of this review and document we have considered only the central part of the scheme which falls within the administrative area of BDC.
- 2.2 National Grid’s supplementary non-statutory consultation exercise relates to design evolution and does not include any new or revised information in relation to EIA scoping or methodology. Therefore, our previous comments on the EIA Scoping Report, dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 (Ref: GM12443-001B), remain current in relation to these matters.

### Underground Cables to the North of Fairstead

- 2.3 The design change proposal to the north of Fairstead involves the installation of a section of 400kV underground electricity cables at the location shown in Figure 1:



Figure 1: Black solid = new proposed overhead lines, black dash = new proposed underground cables, black hexagon = proposed new pylon, blue solid = existing overhead line, white hexagon = existing pylon. Source: National Grid Interactive Map.

- 2.4 The proposed underground cable length is around 700m. The method of cable installation (e.g., open cut or horizontal directional drilling etc.) is yet to be specified.
- 2.5 Noise from the construction of the underground cable, and operation of the Cable Sealing Ends (CSE) has the potential to cause a disturbance at existing noise sensitive receptors. However, receptors are located over 300m from the CSE compounds, and, at this distance, it is considered unlikely that a significant adverse effect will be observed.

## Preferred Draft Route Alignment

- 2.6 We have considered the preferred draft route alignment within Braintree DC (as presented on National Grid’s interactive map and described with accompanying figures in their Design Development Report), to determine whether there are any significant noise and vibration concerns in terms of;
- Construction noise and vibration.
  - Operational noise and vibration.
- 2.7 This review has not identified any justifiable reason for concern. However, as has been previously reported, we would expect that standard Best Available Techniques (BAT) will be employed for the construction works as some construction is likely to take place close to some receptors.

## **3 SUMMARY**

- 3.1 The design changes and preferred draft alignment shown in the non-statutory consultation documents do not introduce any specific reasons for concern in relation to noise and vibration, within the scope and limitations described in this Technical Note.