

Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Plan



Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

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Background

Conservation areas

Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and are defined as “areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Local authorities are obliged to determine which parts of their district are of special interest and declare them Conservation Areas. Designation is dependent on the overall quality and interest of an area, rather than individual buildings, although it is common for such areas to contain a number of Listed Buildings. There are currently 14 conservation areas in the City of Sunderland, including City Centre areas, pre-conquest villages, the Victorian suburb of Ashbrooke and the coastal resort of Roker. Each conservation area has its own unique character and appearance.

Designation as a conservation area has a number of implications. Most importantly, the Local Authority is required to give “special” attention to preserving or enhancing the conservation area in exercising its planning functions. Also, planning consent must be gained for certain types of development which are elsewhere classified as permitted development, such as various types of cladding, dormer windows, satellite dishes and radio masts / antennae. Consent is further required for the demolition of buildings within conservation areas. Designation also brings extra controls over works to trees.

Appraisal of character

The Conservation Area Management Strategy represents the first phase of a dynamic process aimed at the conservation and enhancement of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. It is an assessment of those features and qualities that make an individual conservation area special and add to the distinctive character and sense of place. Every conservation area is different, derived from its topography, historic development, individual buildings and groups of buildings, architectural details and materials, open spaces, trees and landscaping, and the relationships between all of these elements.

This appraisal will help to raise awareness and appreciation of Bishopwearmouth’s special character, while also providing a consistent and evidential basis on which to determine planning applications affecting the conservation area. The appraisal also seeks to identify any factors which detract from the conservation area’s special qualities, and to present outline proposals for improvements which could lead to the preservation or enhancement of those qualities.

Management of Conservation Areas

The primary legislation governing Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This legislation includes certain statutory duties which the Council as Local Planning Authority must uphold. s69(1) of the Act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate any areas which they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest as conservation areas, and under s69(2) to review such designations from time to time.

The Council has a further duty under s71(1) to formulate and prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas from time to time. The 2017 review and update to the 2007 conservation area appraisal and management plan fulfils this requirement.

Decision Making

When assessing applications for development, the Local Planning Authority must pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation areas under s72(1) of the Act. This does not mean that development will necessarily be opposed, only that this should not be detrimental to the special interest of the wider conservation area.

Specific guidance relating to development within conservation areas can be found within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and its accompanying practice guide which are published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, at national government level.

Para 137 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 or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

Para 138 advises that not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole.

Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (CAMS)

Following a public consultation process, the City Council adopted the previous CAMS document as formal Planning Guidance in support of the City of Sunderland UDP in 2007. The guidance is therefore a material consideration when considering applications for development within the conservation area.

The 2017 review of the conservation area designation and appraisal document provided an updated assessment of the special interest of the conservation area, and was re-adopted as Planning Guidance in June 2018. The document incorporates the management & maintenance plan for the Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage scheme in section 3.

This Character Appraisal and Management Plan discharges the Council's obligations and duties under the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, and complies with Historic England guidance on Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal, and Management published in February 2016.

UDP Conservation Policies

Policy B4 of the City of Sunderland UDP states that: "All development within and adjacent to Conservation Areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character or appearance". Under this policy the Council is obliged to prepare supplementary guidance in the form of character assessments for each of its conservation areas. These will identify features and characteristics that contribute to the areas' special interest, identify opportunities for enhancement and, where appropriate, establish design criteria for new development and restoration projects. The Bishopwearmouth Character Appraisal and Management Plan is one of a series of such assessments that will cover all the City's conservation areas. Certain buildings and structures within the conservation area are Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and are thus protected by tight planning controls.

Policy B6 further encourages the retention of unlisted buildings and their features, open spaces, historic street patterns and plot boundaries and for the Council to exercise control over landscape features such as mature trees. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are a good example of this; they ensure that the consent of the Council must be obtained before trees can be cut down, topped or lopped. This

policy also seeks to control the display of advertisements in conservation areas. However, within Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area the gradual loss of features, both architectural and natural, the impact of signage on historic buildings and the effects of new development gives cause for concern and raises the issue as to whether further measures should be introduced that would better protect and enhance the Conservation Area. To this end, the Management Plan in part 2 of the document expands upon existing UDP policy to give clearer guidance on issues of particular importance to Bishopwearmouth. Policy B8 presumes in favour of the retention of Listed Buildings. Policy B10 seeks to preserve the setting of Listed Buildings.

UDP policies relating to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are reproduced in full in the appendix to this document.

Draft Core Strategy and Development Plan 2017

The City Council consulted on a new Core Strategy in September 2017, this sets out the planning policy framework which will guide and shape development across the City until 2033. The Environment section contains policies relating to the built and natural environment. Policy E1 aims to achieve high quality design and positive improvements from development which protects and enhances the environment and sets out the design principles which should be taken into account. Policy E2 relates to public realm works and emphasises the need to create attractive, safe, legible, functional and accessible public spaces, as well as the need for quality sustainable materials which reflect local context. Policy E3 states that advertisements and new/alterations to shop fronts will be required to contribute to the visual appearance of the streetscene. Policy E4 relates to development within the historic environment and specifically references the role of Conservation Area Management Strategies as a material consideration in decision making. Policy E5 sets out the considerations for decision making and protection in relation to designated heritage assets, such as listed buildings and conservation areas. This policy again reiterates the weight given to Conservation Area Management Strategy documents.

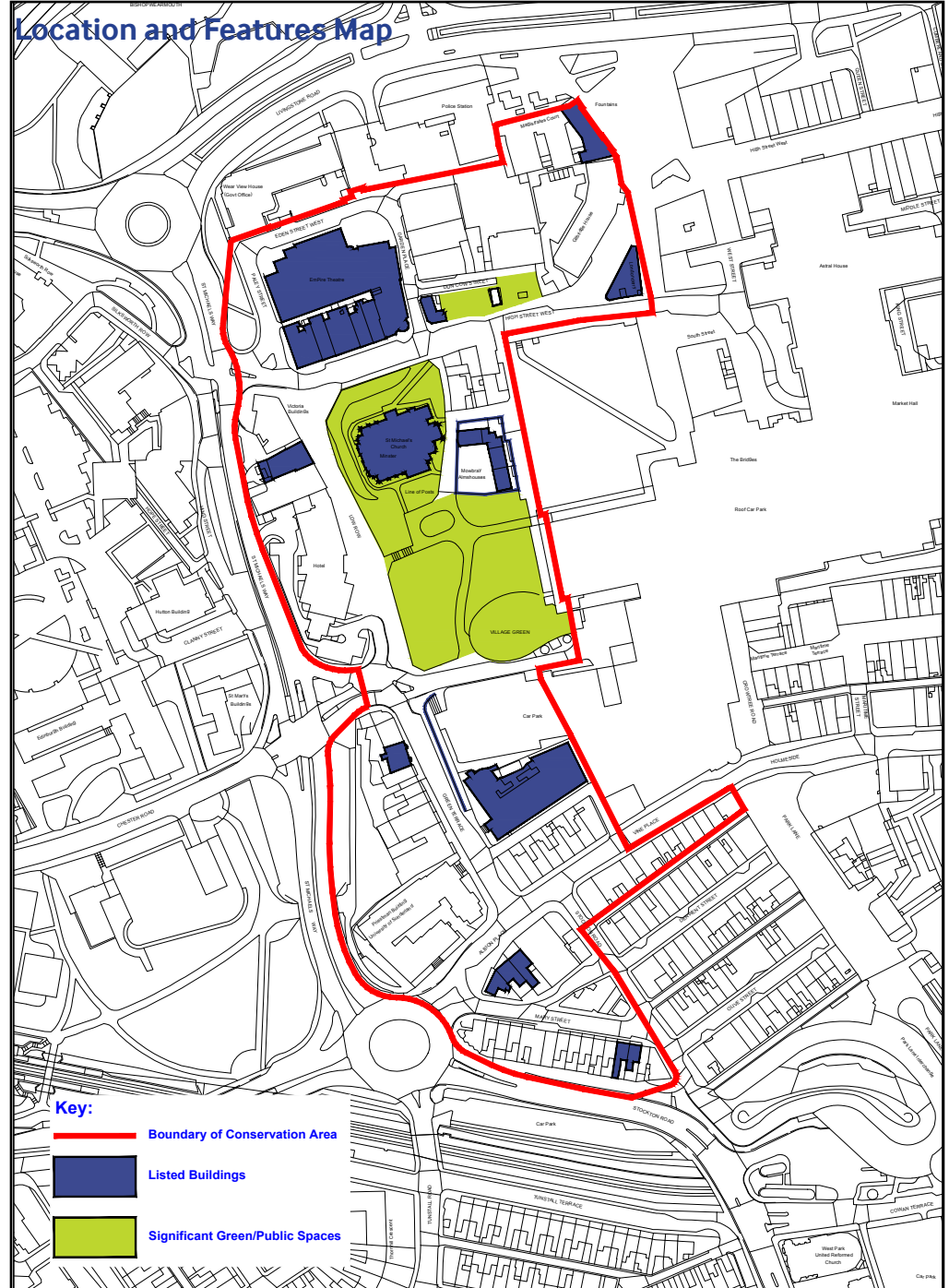
Draft Core Strategy and Development Plan policies relating to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are reproduced in full in the appendix to this document.

Introduction

Bishopwearmouth was initially declared a Conservation Area in 1969 around the heart of the former medieval village in recognition of its architectural and historic interest, and further extended in 1989 to take in surrounding 19th and early 20th century development. It comprises fine Victorian and Edwardian buildings set within the surviving medieval street plan and the remnants of the former village green, now Town Park. It obtains much of its character from its many landmark buildings with their distinctive architectural features. This document combines an appraisal of the Conservation Area's character and appearance with management proposals for preserving and enhancing its special qualities. Part 1, the Character Appraisal, identifies and assesses those characteristics and features that give the area its special architectural and historic interest and considers current issues which threaten its historic integrity. Part 2 of the document comprises a Management Strategy and contains a series of management objectives and proposals to address the issues raised in the Character Appraisal. Part 3 contains the Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Management & Maintenance Plan.



Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area comprises one of the most historically important and architectural unique environments in the City. It is situated in the western part of the City Centre, to the south of the River Wear and covers an area of 7.63 hectares. It is irregular and elongated in shape, its boundaries best defined to the east by Crowtree Leisure Centre and Crowtree Road and to the west by the Ring Road. Elsewhere, the boundaries are less clearly defined but the area generally encompasses the site of the pre-conquest village of Bishopwearmouth.





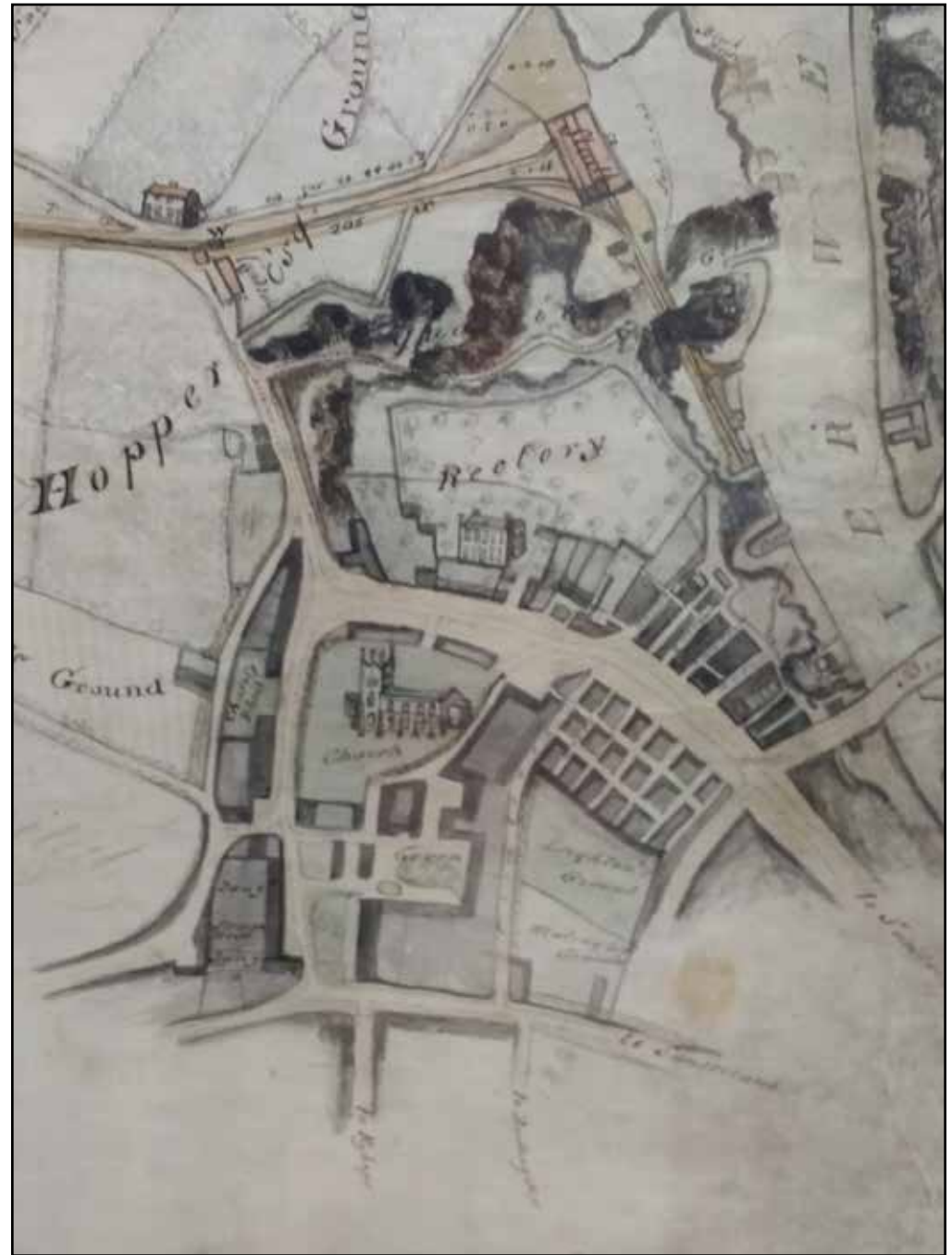
Part 1

Character Appraisal

John Rain's Eye Plan 1785 - 1790

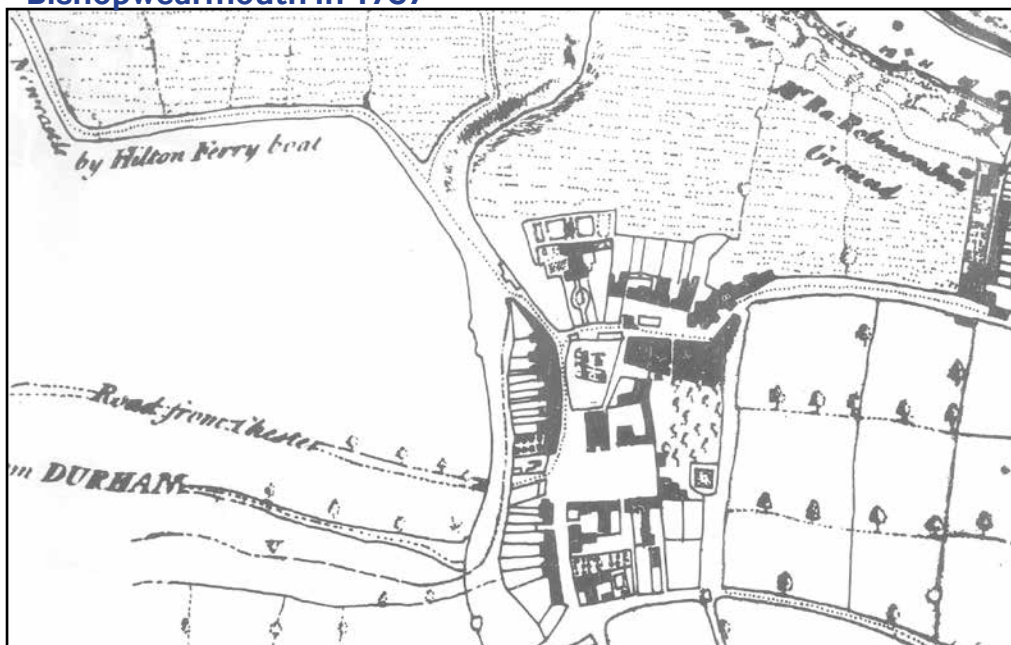


Newbottle Waggon Rail Map 1817

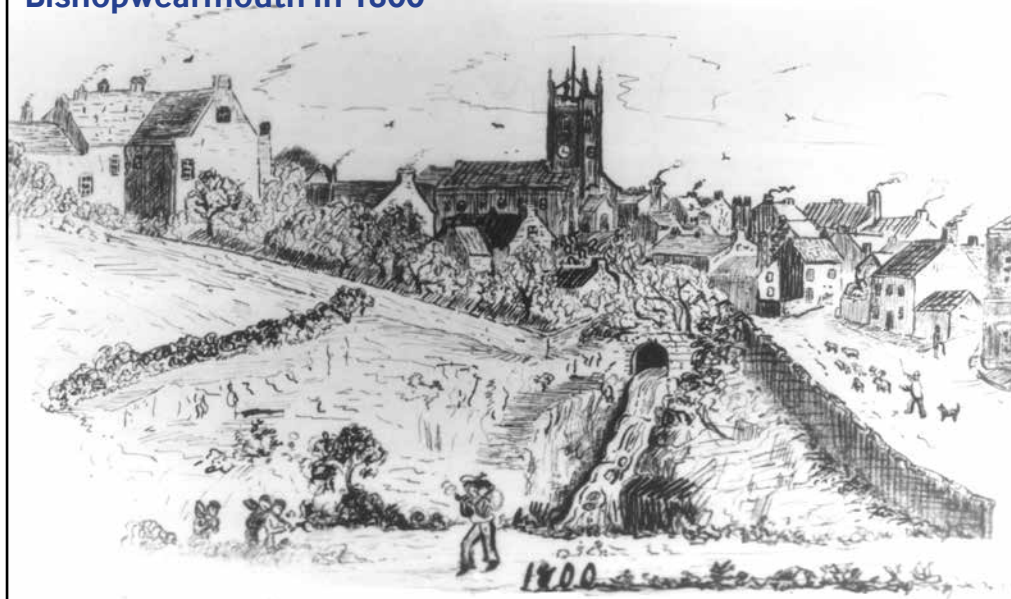


Historical Development

Bishopwearmouth In 1737



Bishopwearmouth In 1800



Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area encompasses all the area that once formed the original village of Bishopwearmouth, one of the three settlements that would eventually coalesce to form Sunderland. The designated boundary also includes subsequent Victorian and Edwardian developments within and around the village.

The village has Anglo Saxon origins, the earliest reference thought to be around 930 AD when King Athelstan gave "South Wearmouth" and its appendages to the See of Durham. Thus, as its name suggests, the village was established on lands belonging to the Bishops of Durham. It is believed that the first stone church was built upon St Michael's rocky knoll around the middle of the 10th century.

During the middle ages Bishopwearmouth grew into an important and thriving farming community and religious centre. The village was quite small and dominated by the medieval Church of St Michael, although the Parish it served was extensive covering an area of some 20 sq. miles and included the small fishing port of Sunderland. Physical links between Bishopwearmouth and the port were strengthened during the 15th and 16th centuries by the development of salt production, ship-building and coal-exporting industries along the banks of the river. The people of Sunderland would walk up Sunderland "Lonnin" now High Street to worship at St Michael's until 1719 when Sunderland's expansion demanded the creation of a separate parish with its own church, Holy Trinity, thus severing a long-standing social link between the two towns. Around 1800 the population served by St Michael's, which seated several hundred, was between 7000 and 8000 compared with 12,000 in Old Sunderland.

During the 18th century Bishopwearmouth was a small self-contained village set within a patchwork of fields punctuated by hedgerows and trees, as shown opposite on Burleigh and Thompson's map of 1737. Cottages with courtyards and narrow garden plots lined the village road which curved around the hill top church on its way to the port. Bishopwearmouth Green has always been common land lying at the heart of the medieval village with Durham Road, Chester Road, Stockton Road, and High Street all converging onto it.

Around the green were a multitude of small houses and terraces, interspersed with workshops, corn mills, slaughter houses and tanneries supporting village life. Bull baiting also took place on the green. A bull would be tethered by a rope to an iron ring and dogs set upon him. It was claimed that the meat of the bulls so treated tasted better and such events were quite common place. The last bull baiting occurred on the green in 1788.

Low Row In 1890

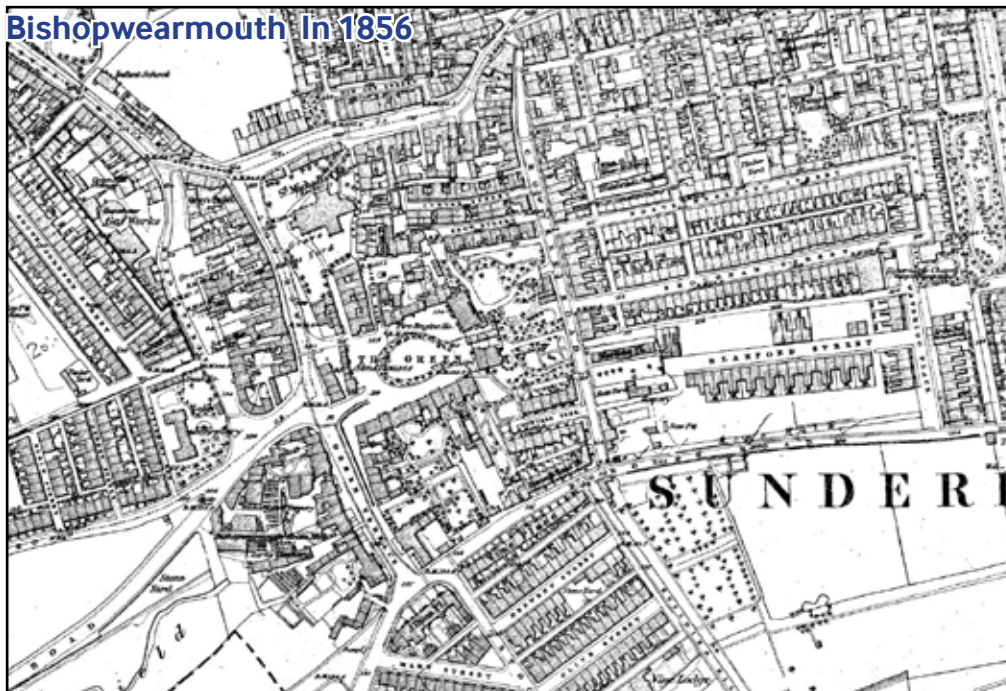


The Rectors of Bishopwearmouth were usually well-connected gentlemen and scholars who lived well, paying curates to carry out their more onerous tasks. The first development to occur outside the medieval bounds of the village seems to have been the building of a fine Rectory to the north of "The Lonnin". The Rectory dated from the middle ages, was refurbished and extended in the 17th and 18th centuries to give it a handsome Queen Anne style. Unfortunately, it was demolished in 1855.

As the two centres of Bishopwearmouth and, in particular, Sunderland expanded there was a tendency for ribbon development to occur especially along the North side of "The Lonnin". This trend was exacerbated with the opening of the first Wear Bridge in 1796 that linked the two settlements with Monkwearmouth and led to the development of the Fawcett Estates and the eventual coalescing of the villages into one town.

By 1826 the village contained additional spacious houses built by industrialists and merchants and by the mid 19th century it was clearly no longer a village but had become part of the expanding urban borough of Sunderland, chartered in 1835. The haphazard layout of cottages and yards of the old village, was surrounded by more orderly residential development. Large houses with extensive semi-formal gardens contrasted with the elegant terraced houses of Crowtree Terrace and Borough Road, and the back-to-back houses of Carter Street and Crow Street. This was largely driven by the need to house the workers who were required to service the rapid industrial expansion of the town and its hinterland. The village setting was becoming dominated by tightly cramped and uniformly designed swathes of grid-iron terraced housing which was in stark contrast with the organic jumble of lanes, spaces and road and the wider range of house sizes and shapes which characterised the old Bishopwearmouth village. A surprising number of inns and smithies served the needs of the larger local population and of travellers through the area. Part of Little Gate had become Church Lane, and had been closed to wheeled traffic at its northern end.

Bishopwearmouth In 1856



The Mowbray Almshouses were erected in 1863 in an L shape on land once occupied by cottages, where Church Lane joined Little Gate. The original almshouses, built around 1740, had been removed to provide a vehicular link between Church Lane and Back Carter Street. The Bowes Almshouses were also in existence by the common land of the green, and served to complete the enclosure of this space for a subsequent hundred years. However as time went by less and less of the green retained its original seclusion and tranquility.

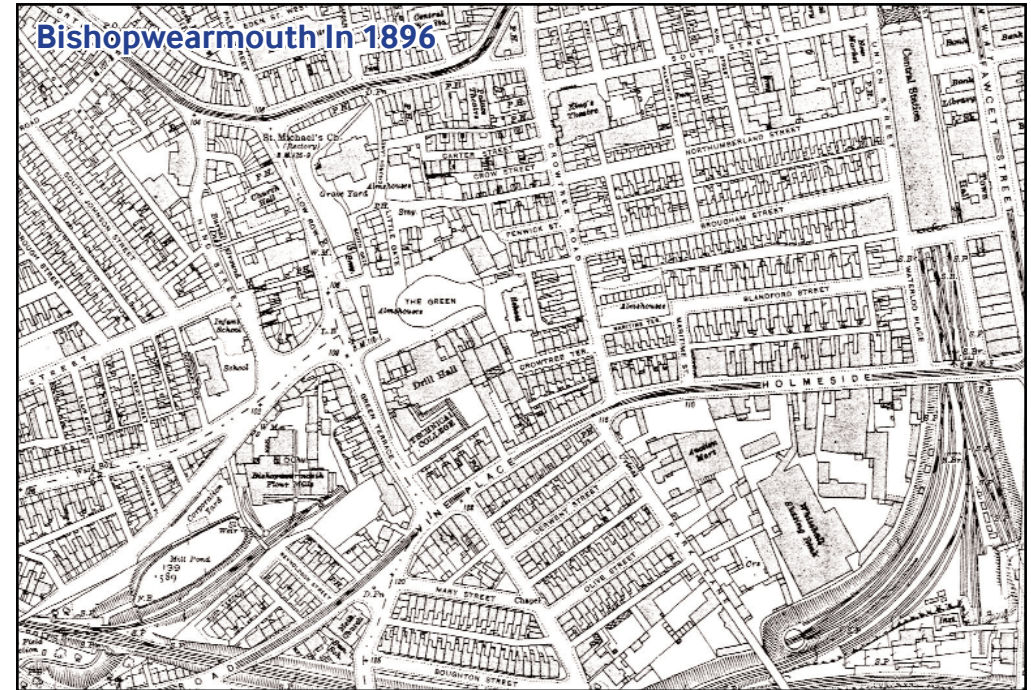
The latter part of the 19th century saw marked changes to the character of the area. Although substantial parts of the earlier layout of the village survived, parts had changed including the loss of many of the larger 18th century houses and their gardens that edged the southern side of the Green, to be replaced by the Drill Hall and Bonomi's Technical College. The size and quality of properties to the south of the Green were in stark contrast with the small, cramped cottages and workshops at the heart of the village.

In 1892 Bishopwearmouth still had something of the atmosphere of a village with the pantiled, white-washed cottage on the corner of Little Gate and the church closing the view up this narrow lane. The cobbled carriageway across the corner of the green was an ominous hint of things to come. By this time two tramlines had been laid along High Street West for the horsedrawn trams of the period.

Towards the end of the 19th century several terraces were built to the south of the green, some of these incorporated into the conservation area when it was extended in 1989, for example Vine Place. In the early years of the 20th century several key Edwardian developments took place, especially along High Street West with the construction of some very impressive buildings such as the Empire Theatre and the Dun Cow and Londonderry Public Houses. The photograph opposite from around 1930 shows how the tower of the Empire Theatre dominates the north side of High Street West. Key landmark buildings such as the Empire and St Michael's Church came close to being destroyed during the war. Mowbray Almshouses and their garden railings were actually damaged by bombings in 1943 but have since been restored.

One of the most dramatic changes to the architectural appearance of the area followed the construction of the fine and imposing late-Victorian and early-Edwardian buildings along High Street West opposite the Minster. Their size and flamboyant designs changed the sense of place from post rural and early suburban to town centre and altered the skyline with the new roofscape dominated by soaring domes and colonnaded lanterns. Despite some subsequent loss, this continues to define the character of High Street West and its relationship to the remainder of the conservation area.

By 1939, an equally dramatic change had occurred in part of the south of the area as the technical college was expanded with a new block, now called the Priestman building. Its monumental scale and sandstone presence continued the grand urbanising of this part of the area from 18th and 19th century residential suburb to 20th century town quarter.



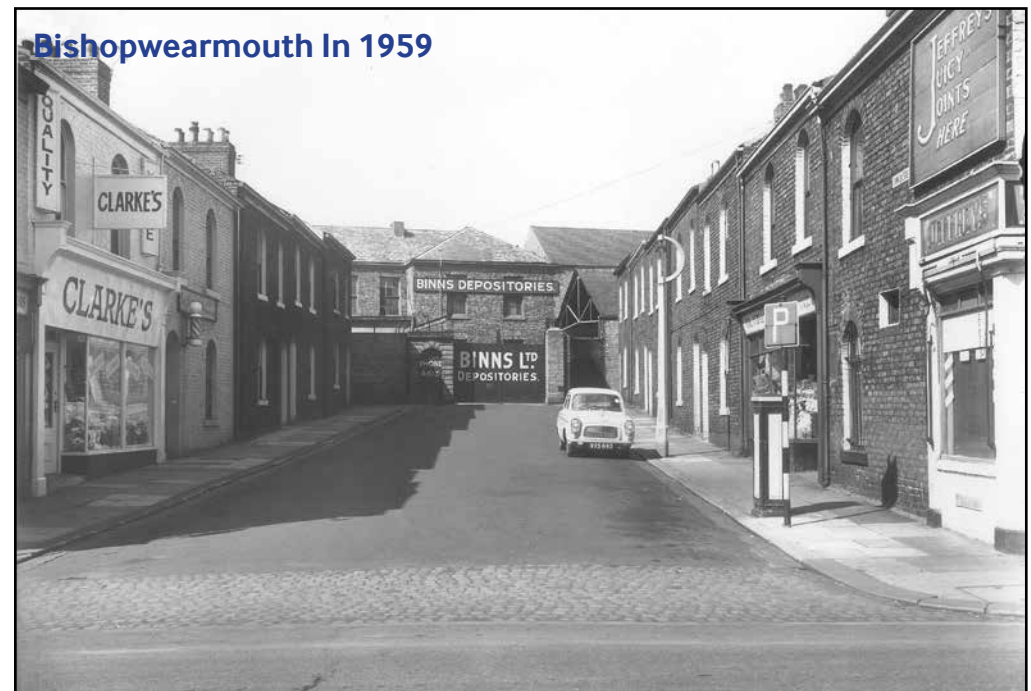
The post WWII period saw the start of some of the most radical alterations to the whole area and its setting, with the demolition of poor quality workers housing in and surrounding the conservation area. By the mid-seventies large scale changes to the shape and layout of the wider neighbourhood occurred with the demolition of streets of housing to the east of the Green to provide city centre car parking, and major road re-ordering to the west.

Until the 1960's the area still retained many of its industrial enterprises that were part of a mixed use village; for instance a flour mill was located to the rear of Green Terrace and Low Row was the home of a toffee factory and a laundry. By 1960 decayed parts of the old village had been demolished and their sites left vacant. The demolition of the Bowes Almshouses had once again opened up the green. By the end of 1973, all of the buildings in Little Gate, South Gate, Fenwick Street, Crow Street and the buildings to the north and east of the green had been removed to make way for car parking. The area to the south of St. Michael's has since been landscaped to form, in conjunction with the remnants of the green, the Town Park. The oval demarcation of the green reflects the layout of the 1856 plan.

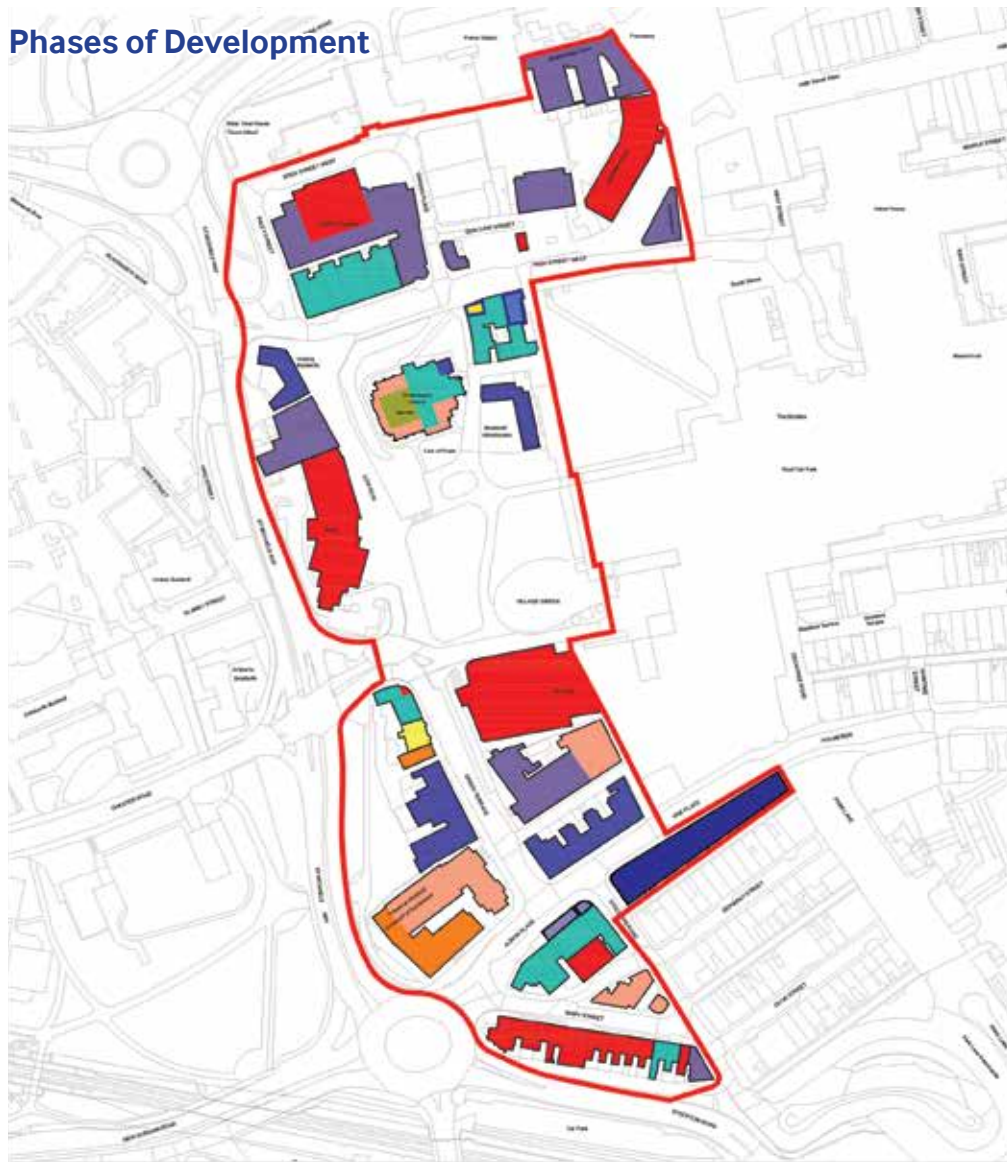
In the latter half of the 20th century, office and retail uses have come to dominate and more recently an influx of leisure-based operators. The 1990's and new millennium have witnessed large-scale developments taking place, consistent with a modern city centre. For example, a new office development was completed in 1992 on the site of the former High Street Baths and a Travelodge hotel erected on Low Row. New developments are also planned adjacent to the Old Fire Station and on the site of the former leisure centre.

The northern half of the conservation area has benefitted from recent investment in improving the quality and appearance of the public realm. The confident approach to the design and use of open space is a positive start to the transformation of the appearance and function of the area. It knits together the urban matrix, creating social space which will encourage greater use of facilities through improved footfall, particularly for the cultural and evening economies.









No architectural trace of the medieval village remains today, having been obliterated by redevelopments in the Victorian period except for the general street pattern and the remnant of the green now incorporated into Town Park. Only fragments of medieval fabric survive within Sunderland Minster and 2 Church Lane. However the Victorians left a fine legacy of terraced properties, now used almost exclusively for commercial purposes, along with some very notable Edwardian buildings.



Phases of Development



Key:

 Existing in 1800	 1857 - 1896	 1940 - 1969
 1800 - 1826	 1897 - 1919	 Post 1960
 1827 - 1856	 1920 - 1939	

Village Green 1938



Church Lane

Summary of Significance

This summary of significance provides an overarching understanding of each character zone in terms of the area's strengths and weaknesses and its evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values in accordance with English Heritage's 2008 Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance document.

The fundamental significance of Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area derives from a combination of its medieval origins and subsequent Victorian and Edwardian development, resulting in its formal designation as a conservation area in 1969. It is predominantly characterised by distinctive Victorian and Edwardian landmark buildings with towers, domes and cupolas rising above refined terraced streets. These are set within a medieval street pattern and around an elevated Town Park upon which the historic St Michael and All Angels Church, now Sunderland Minster, proudly stands as the dominant feature of the conservation area. Although nearly all above ground remnants of the earlier Bishopwearmouth village have disappeared, traces of the medieval street layout and the village green survive.



Views from surrounding high points reveal the prominence of St Michael and All Angels Church and the true essence of Bishopwearmouth's distinctive roofscape

Evidential Value

The general layout and road pattern of all three character zones reflects the medieval shape of the village of Bishopwearmouth. The Northern two thirds of the Conservation Area (Zones 1 and 2 on page 28) in particular reveal the village's ancient rectangular shape. The general street pattern and remnants of the green are almost all that remains of the medieval village of Bishopwearmouth today. Clusters of buildings have come and gone, but the Minster still occupies its medieval site to secure over 700 years of historical continuity. In the southern third (Zone 3), Green Terrace continues Low Row's medieval route.

The high stone retaining and boundary walls help to describe the partially obscured topography of the area which, in turn, helps to describe why the site was first settled. The advantages of building the village on the defensible magnesium limestone ridge would have appealed to the Anglo-Saxon settlers, particularly sitting astride the important east to west trade road which followed the ridge line.

Inevitably, with the rapid expansion of the Town during the 19th and 20th centuries the layout of the area developed, with the formation of several additional terraced streets particularly in the southern part of the conservation area. Also, by the 1970's, with the exception of Church Lane the narrow cobbled lanes which led from the green had all but disappeared, all the buildings in Little Gate and South Gate having been demolished to make way for car parking and subsequently the Town Park. Nevertheless, the principal medieval street plan - High Street West (formerly The Lonnin), Low Row, Vine Place (Back Lane) - remains in evidence as the main vehicular or pedestrian routes through the area.

The Victorian Mowbray Almshouses at the south end of Church Lane combine with the Minster and the Church to create an attractive and traditional built group which is of clear historic and townscape value as evidence of the once tight-knit historic centre here.

There are other reminders of this pre-mid-19th century village character, such as the narrow Church Lane. The modern, wider, streets which have overlaid their medieval precursors create a less intense and more spacious character. They and the terraced housing and shops which line them are evidence of the thought given to planning the town in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in particular. Road widening cleared away some evidence of earlier development (eg. opposite No's 1-7 High Street West), but the larger landmark buildings added in the late 19th and early 20th centuries can be seen and readily appreciated, fitting comfortably into a larger scale

metropolitan streetscape of great quality. The rectilinear layout of the southernmost edge of the area was influenced by the route of the railway skirting the south of the town towards the dock. The shops in and around Vine Place are some of the earliest surviving in the commercial centre development in Sunderland, mostly from the mid to late 19th century but some as early as the first quarter of the 19th century.

The evidence which survives earlier periods is affected by the peaks and troughs in Bishopwearmouth's importance to Sunderland's growth over the centuries. It was of considerable significance in the early Middle Ages when it benefitted from the advantages of being a market borough. However, by the 15th century the settlement was in gradual decline, a trend that was accelerated by the increasing dominance of Sunderland to the east. The eventual assimilation of Bishopwearmouth to become part of its burgeoning industrial neighbour changed its historic agricultural role and appearance to one which reflected its new urban context. It expanded southwards as the whole town grew, taking over productive land for new smart streets. The wealth of the former village soared during the last quarter of the 19th century which was marked by the development of prestigious and exuberant buildings, particularly along the north side of High Street West and Gill Bridge Avenue. A civic presence was established with the construction of the grand Magistrate's Court and the town baths, the latter being demolished in the late 20th Century along with a second large theatre, the People's Palace Theatre, on High Street West. Later, on Green Terrace, further grand high quality civic buildings were added, now part of Sunderland University.

The Green is of ecological value which includes varieties of flora related to the underlying magnesium limestone. Town Park could exploit this with suitable planting and habitats to consolidate and increase the wildlife population of the area. The churchyard around the Minster also offers the opportunity to provide improved habitats for birds and animals.

Historic Value

Bishopwearmouth provides a glimpse of Sunderland's and the sub-region's pre-19th century past. It is one of a large number of medieval villages in Co Durham which were developed or consolidated during the post-Conquest period. There are a number of interesting surviving local comparators such as Westoe, Whitburn, Cleadon, Ryhope and Tunstall. They incorporate open-ended linear village greens flanked on two sides by farm buildings and cottages. However, Bishopwearmouth differs in that its shape is rectangular and enclosed, albeit possibly starting out as a linear green during the Saxon and early Norman periods. This arrangement

has Northumbrian flavour where medieval villages and greens were enclosed to provide a defence against incursions. As a consequence, Bishopwearmouth makes a particularly interesting and significant contribution to the spread and design of the region's medieval villages. At one time Bishopwearmouth was a separate borough and larger than Sunderland, the two becoming physically linked in the 1770's when houses were built along Wearmouth which eventually became High Street.

The records show that in the 18th century the village was a busy place with cottages, workshops, corn mills, slaughterhouses and tanneries, no doubt serviced by bakers and other craft workers. None of this built fabric survives other than the mid-18th Fitzgeralds public house in Green Terrace, originally a residential property, but the cottages flanking the east side of Church Lane, now altered and converted to try to look like 'Georgian' shops most likely incorporate pre-19th century fabric. They certainly illustrate the shape of old Bishopwearmouth.



There is little archaeological evidence to enable us to build-up a more tangible understanding of the precise form and development of old Bishopwearmouth. Over the past thirty years a number of investigative trenches have been dug in advance of development but they have failed to reveal any information or artefacts relating to the medieval period. The Tyne and Wear Historic Environment Record HER includes some interesting information including the early 20th century chance discovery of a paved road some 4 metres below ground level in Low Row during the rebuilding of the Hat and Feathers public house, now Greens public house, (HER 73) together with the discovery of part of a medieval quern (HER 74) near to the road. At the time it was speculated that the road was Roman, but there is no direct archaeological or photographic evidence to explain its provenance.

In spite of the lack of discovered or recorded post-medieval archaeological evidence, there is considerable potential for the survival of below ground remains in the footprints of lost buildings which could be revealed through programmed excavations or through watching briefs as gap sites are developed. This potential extends along Green Terrace but it is unlikely to stretch any further south in the conservation area.

The few surviving buildings from before the mid-19th century might include early fabric and architectural details which have been obscured by later modifications. The Minster for example is an interesting and attractive collection of styles which emerge from the 14th century chancel. The chancel includes a medieval sedilia and piscine, a 10th century grave marker and a 14th century knight's effigy which adds human interest. They might also include building materials which were recycled as structures were demolished, such as the recorded re-use of stones during the Tudor period when the parsonage was cleared to make way for a grander range of buildings. Building analysis might reveal more about the history of individual buildings and structures and add to our sparse knowledge of the settlement's development timeline.

It is clear that the area's connection with its history before the late 19th century has been substantially lost when it was transformed to become part of the late-Victorian/Edwardian Sunderland town centre. There are some tantalising clues to its early past with the survival of the cottages ranged along the east side of Church Lane where it dips past the Minster's old retaining wall and the Green. However, the architectural strength and the scale of the Victorian/Edwardian redevelopment of the area, particularly along High Street West, is so powerful and dramatic that it substantially overpowers the modest surviving traces of old Bishopwearmouth. There is enough, however, to be able to describe the general layout of the old village and, through on-site interpretation, build up a picture of how it looked and what happened there over the centuries



The later growth of Bishopwearmouth southwards tells the story of how Sunderland to the east essentially 'over-washed' Bishopwearmouth, absorbing it into the polite layout of streets which encircled the medieval village. This reveals the economic might of Sunderland from the late 18th century and the demand for smart new housing, neighbourhood shops and civic buildings led to expansion southwards. This story of town-making is a key part of Sunderland's history as it became one of the most important heavy industry towns in the world.



Aesthetic Value

One of the defining and most distinctive characteristics of Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area is the variation and detail in the roofscape provided by several key buildings. The variety of towers, domes and cupolas that punctuate and dominate the skyline are particularly attractive features that can be admired from close and afar, especially when 'lit-up' in the evening. Elsewhere, the predominance of two-three storey terraced streets provides much of the area with a relatively consistent built form which, when contrasted with the distinctive individual qualities of the major landmark buildings, gives the area immense townscape value. Some newer developments, in terms of scale, massing and general form have not responded well to their historic context and have unfortunately obscured views of key landmarks as well as wider views into and out of the conservation area.

Bishopwearmouth contains some of the finest architectural examples of historic buildings in Sunderland and exhibits a range of styles and influences which give the area a lively and spirited architectural appearance and character. Most significant are the works of renowned local architects, W. and T.R. Milburn, who were responsible for designing several key buildings to the north of High Street West in the years after the turn of the 20th century, including The Empire Theatre, The Magistrates Courts and The Fire Station. These buildings show how particularly adept the Milburns were at handling a style derived from the classical model and favoured by the Edwardians. Several buildings in the vicinity have been described as being built in a free Baroque style, including The Empire Theatre and Magistrates Courts and the works of other notable architects Benjamin F. Simpson and HTD Hedley at the Dun Cow and Londonderry Public Houses respectively.

Around Town Park, at the centre of the former village, influences were clearly Gothic; the style of buildings here bearing testimony to Bishopwearmouth's medieval origins. St Michael's Church retains fabric and features of its medieval predecessor but much of what is visible today is the work of W.D. Caroe, although his 1930's extension are tied to the Gothic past. The nearby Mowbray Almshouses are notable for their Gothic dormer windows.

Elsewhere, the terraced streets in the southern part of the conservation area are predominantly classically influenced, ranging from the formal late-Georgian terraces of Mary Street and Albion Place to the more peculiar neo-classical Green Terrace in the late-Victorian period. The polite residential streets with refined domestic -scale architecture matches the best of the late Georgian town elsewhere in Sunderland (eg. Sunnyside) Regular rhythm of form, architectural features and materials creates great visual strength in Mary Street and parts of Green Place, Vine Place and Stockton Road.

The late 19th/early 20th century partial redevelopment of the area not only radically changed its appearance but drew it towards the heart of the town centre with imposing municipal buildings, shops, majestic pubs, grand theatres and a technical college bringing new life and vitality into and around Bishopwearmouth. This collection of visually striking buildings substantially survives to mark and illustrate a frenetic period of the town's life and development. However, the tight-knit pattern of buildings and side streets which merged to create an intensive pre-WWI urban environment has been fractured with cleared sites and new urban spaces leaving some buildings isolated and the edges of the area perforated.

The quality of the architecture of most of the Victorian/Edwardian buildings is exceptional. It is of a civic scale and designed with flamboyance and flair. Some of the interiors are works of art displaying outstanding examples of craftsmanship. The terraces of houses and shops, some of which have been converted to bars and other leisure uses, present an interesting contrast, many of which need repair and enhancement to highlight their design qualities.

Significant open spaces in Bishopwearmouth are few but important. Town Park, the only soft landscaped space in the conservation area and one of the few green spaces in the City Centre incorporates the registered village green and provides a highly desirable setting for the Minster. The Park and adjacent churchyard act as an attractive setting to key listed buildings and provides the centre of the conservation area with a quiet and spacious character, quite unlike anywhere else in the City Centre. The open spaces throughout the conservation area are a mix of hard urban places and soft landscaped areas which create variety and add visual interest. These, too, require enhancement to bring out their aesthetic qualities. This is particularly true of High Street West, Town Park and the green, but also the neat grid of streets in the south of the area. The recently created new civic square, Keel Square, and improved Fire Station Square have significantly enhanced the streetscape of the Conservation Area and are of high aesthetic value.



Communal Value

The area is used and enjoyed by people from near and far. People bring it to life and animate the buildings and spaces. They mould its commercial and cultural outputs. Its historic value adds to the physical quality and design diversity of the City Centre and the quality of life of the city's residents. In zones 1 and 2, this will be enhanced through the improvements brought to the area by the planned Townscape Heritage Scheme and the community engagement that will be at the heart of its delivery.

The Empire Theatre dominates the north side of High Street West. It is a significant cultural hub, making a substantial contribution to the creative life of the North East. It brings thousands of visitors and participants to the area every year, many of whom will take advantage of the neighbouring bars and cafes and enjoy the quality of the historic environment. The Theatre generated footfall reinforces the local economy and should encourage investment by property owners/occupants to create high quality facilities in attractive surroundings. The Theatre's Creative Learning Team already engages with the local community and groups from further afield by offering an extensive programme of activities which includes educational and participatory arts projects. Community engagement is a clear priority for the theatre. This should be exploited to encourage the wider use of spaces throughout the area for performances, workshops and creative learning. The opening of the Old Fire Station as a new cultural venue will bolster the area as the anchor cultural quarter for the city, increasing the area's communal value. The location of the Magistrates Courts in this vicinity also gives a focus to civic functions.

Bishopwearmouth contains a wide range of uses, including retail, office, civic, cultural and leisure uses. Retail uses are predominantly confined to Vine Place with a mix of bars, takeaways and small businesses. This area also contains a number of office uses, mainly concentrated in Mary Street but also in the upper floors of Vine Place. By far the biggest change over recent years in the usage of the conservation area has come with the widespread proliferation of leisure-type uses, mainly in the form of bars and nightclubs, but also restaurants and a hotel.



The Minster, opposite the Theatre, is not just the City's prime Anglican place of worship, it is also a driver and venue for a wide range of community and cultural activities including urban festivals, craft fairs, musical and performance events together with a permanent cafe aimed at attracting visitors and users from both within and beyond the local community. Importantly, activities spread beyond the building into adjacent spaces in the conservation area.

The obvious points of community engagement/activities in the area are clear. However, there is little written information about the history of Bishopwearmouth area and no on-site interpretation to connect people with the history – both evident and lost – of the area. It is difficult for members of the public to piece together and trace the evolution of the area from medieval village to the 21st century. This disconnect weakens resistance to inappropriate change and undervalues the importance of over 1,000 years of the city's history. The opportunity to recognise and reverse this weakness will be a key element in the delivery of the Townscape Heritage Scheme and the wider management of the conservation area.

Community engagement is central to the delivery of a successful and enduring economy throughout the conservation area, giving it a vibrant life and establishing a strong public defence of its qualities. Developing and maintaining public affection and support for the area and its qualities and offerings substantially depends upon real engagement and responding to the views and aspirations of the community. This already has strong roots in the area with clear opportunities to further strengthen community support. It will be important to ensure zone 3 receives the attention it deserves in this respect whilst the Townscape Heritage scheme is delivered in zones 1 and 2. Zone 3 has a good sense of a business community defined mainly by leisure with retail and office uses, all in popular use locally. Bolstering the business sector here will keep the 'churn' of new low-turnover businesses low, encouraging businesses to become established and thrive sufficiently to invest in the historic architecture of the buildings they trade from.

An appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the conservation area's key characteristics can be summarised as follows:

General strengths

The three character zones retain some key surviving traces of the medieval village. This is in terms of general layout / street pattern, the enduring presence of the Minster with its medieval chancel to anchor over 700 years of history, and the altered presence of the village green as part of Town Park. It is likely that some buildings include earlier fabric and footings, such as those fronting onto Church Lane and Low Row, and will also include the reuse of 16th / 17th Century stone from the demolished rectory in High Street West to the east of Paley Street.

The topography of the area demanded the retention of slopes to create development platforms. Substantial pre-19th Century stone retaining and boundary walls survive, many incorporating alterations which add to the intrigue of their history. The walls are of visual, historic and archaeological significance. They also have geological interest in boldly expressing the underlying magnesian limestone, Sunderland's traditional building material.



Roofscapes and skylines are significant features of the area, particularly the northern part but also in the former technical college buildings in the south. Iconic domes, lanterns, towers and cupolas are powerful reminders of the economic strength of the town and sub-region during the Victorian / Edwardian period, and the ability to express this commercial and industrial force through flamboyant architecture. This elaborate and highly decorative approach contrasts with the powerfully bulky late 20th Century lead clad extension over the late 19th Century part of the Empire Theatre where it fronts onto the northern end of Paley Street and Eden Street West. Although visually dominant, its purpose – the theatre fly-tower – is essential to the future of one of the area's key historic buildings and one of the region's key cultural venues.

The spatial strength of the terraces in the south of the area provides a good reminder of how, in the late 19th Century, this was the southern edge of Sunderland as its residential suburbs expanded into the countryside. These polite, well-planned streets are a former-domestic fragment with strong echoes of the Ashbrooke and Thornhill suburbs which grew south from them. Here, historic timber shopfronts and other joinery are some of the best in the city.

General weaknesses

Whilst conversion over time of houses into bars and restaurants has added an economic strength of the area through commercial and cultural activity, it has diminished the daytime liveliness of the area and left some upper floors abandoned and ill-maintained. At the same time, conversion to offices and shops has harmed the unity and detail of some of the terraces in the south of the area. There are some vacant buildings, gaps and cleared sites which harm the historic development pattern of the area and detract from its appearance, attractiveness and economic viability as a place. Other buildings have had a high turnover of tenants, users or operators, suggesting economic instability.

There has been a loss of historic architectural features and the introduction of inappropriate details and materials which weaken the historic integrity and appearance of some buildings and undermine the wider historic character of the area. This can be as harmful to the architecturally-flamboyant buildings in the north as to the more simple terraces in the south. This is evidence of lack of investment, ill-informed investment, unsuitable skill-sets in design and construction, and a choice of 'quick fix' over long term quality. A clamour of busy shopfronts and commercial signage suggests low margins where businesses are in high competition. It is unfortunate that many commercial operators have demands for signage and security measures which can often conflict with the desire to preserve and enhance the area's historic character.



Some post WWII developments close to the conservation area have adversely affected the quality of its setting and impacted upon its historic character and appearance. This impact is from both road layouts and large, modern buildings, which have disrupted the pattern in which Bishopwearmouth became established and grew. The demolition of half of the monolithic, bland Crowtree Leisure Centre has created a flat grassed void to open out views of the large, poorly detailed Bridges Shopping Centre and its tower blocks. Other demolition has brought into view other buildings, such as the utilitarian rear of the police station which provides a poor concrete backdrop to the fine sandstone Edwardian buildings along High Street West. The demolitions offer the opportunity to repair the damage caused by poor design through the insertion of new buildings and better road layouts, sensitively reasserting the quality of the conservation area and the wider townscape in which it sits.



Large areas of surface car parking in the north of the area diminish the subtle streetscape quality and create sterile and unattractive spaces. They also fragment the urban form of the area and diminish the subtle historic weave of buildings and streets which defined the substantially lost historic urban matrix.

Recent planning permissions for a new Auditorium on the car park adjacent to the Fire Station and for development of the former Crowtree site are of a design quality that, along with a programme of on-going public realm improvements, gives confidence of significant townscape enhancement of the Conservation Area and its setting in the near future.





The variety of building forms, styles and materials adds significantly to Bishopwearmouth's character.

Typical Features & Materials

Building Materials

There are two main types of building material in the conservation area - red/ brown brick in various shades, and sandstone. These contrast and complement each other perfectly and are an essential part of the area's distinctive character and appearance. Most of the major buildings are built from sandstone, ranging from the smooth ashlar sandstone used in the construction of the Magistrates Courts and The Dun Cow and Londonderry Public Houses to the coursed square rock-faced sandstones at St Michael's Church and Mowbray Almshouses. Several of the pubs in the area also feature granite plinths.

Certain landmark buildings are especially distinguished by their materials. For example, the Galen Building is built from very distinctive and unique bright flemish red bricks with terracotta quoins, dressings and other architectural detailing. Red bricks and the decorative use of terracotta for door casings and window surrounds are also evident nearby at Green Terrace and part of Albion Place.

Most terraces in the southern part of the conservation area are built from the rough, reddish-brown brick in English garden wall bond. These buildings also feature timber shop fronts and/or door casings. Several buildings in the conservation area have rendered or painted white frontages, most noticeably around the junction of High Street West and Low Row.

Slate is the predominant roofing material in the area, predominantly Welsh slate but also significant amounts of graduated Lakeland slate evident on many of the sandstone buildings. The use of copper, lead and fishscale for domes and cupolas significantly enhances the appearance of the roofscape.

Streetscape materials are undergoing a transformation in the northern part of the Conservation Area along High Street West through a public realm enhancement scheme that is introducing high quality traditional stone materials including gritstone and granite paving and granite curbing. Elsewhere, the quality of surface treatment in Low Row is of a reasonable standard and provides an attractively paved pedestrianised area, whilst in the northern part of the conservation area paving materials are largely uninspiring with most historic surfaces having been replaced by typically bland modern materials to suit cars.

Shop Fronts

Traditional shop fronts were historically designed to successfully integrate the shop front with the building as a whole and enhance the appearance of the street generally. One of the best examples of an historic shop front in the conservation area, albeit belonging to a pub rather than a shop, is Vesta Tilleys. Vine Place is also especially notable for retaining a terrace of fine Victorian shop front features which contribute considerably to the historic street scene. Decoratively carved timber features are particularly distinctive components of these shop fronts. Whilst there is a variety of shop front infills in Vine Place, properties in the northern terrace have almost exclusively retained timber consoles, pilasters, and cornices to form the basic framework of a traditional shop front and guide subsequent infill improvements. Shop owners will always be encouraged to adopt a traditional approach when improving their shop fronts, replicating original timber detailing to achieve harmony of design in the terrace and reinforce its historic character. Signage is also an essential element of an attractive shop front. The lettering of Vesta Tilleys is of an appropriate form and well-proportioned in relation to the length and depth of the fascia. Detailed design guidance on shop fronts and associated signage is given on pages 67-71

Windows

Most terraces have retained their original domestic appearance and feature traditional timber sliding-sash windows at ground and first floor, contributing significantly to their character. The simple, formal pattern of fenestration in Mary Street is typical of the appearance of Georgian buildings. Certain properties in Green Terrace have been altered to add bay windows at street level, which have been used as a type of shop front by many occupiers utilising their fascias for the display of signage. Elsewhere, there are a variety of styles of bay windows above ground floor level, for example in Vine Place. The more individualistic buildings have windows which reflect their architectural style, such as multi-paned timber windows on Greens Public House.



A mix of window styles can be seen on Vine Place

Doors and Doorcases

Traditional timber panelled doors surrounded by decorative doorcases are particular characteristics of Mary Street and Green Terrace. The latter features detailed terracotta door heads, unique to this terrace. Mary Street doorcases are composed of classical pilasters and entablature and most have traditional Sunderland style six-panel pattern doors. In the landmark buildings, doorways can be particularly large and decorative.

Roofscape

Bishopwearmouth's roovescape is especially striking and highly distinctive. The multitude of towers, domes and cupolas that rise above surrounding buildings are outstanding features of the skyline. The level of detailing and ornamentation evident in many of them is of the highest standard and demands respect for the craftsmen of the period. The huge drum tower and copper cupola surmounted by an effigy of Terpsichore, the Greek Muse of Dance, is particularly distinctive and makes the Empire Theatre instantly recognisable, especially when 'lit-up' in the evening. The terraced roofscape are also distinctive for their unity and the rhythm provided by chimneys and rainwater goods.

Walls and Railings

The limestone walls which enclose Sunderland Minster and stretch along much of Green Terrace act as the central axis of the conservation area and are particularly strong features. These walls are notable for fossilised remains in the stonework which would not be evident in replacement stones. It is important that the walls are repaired and not rebuilt unless absolutely necessary. Matching masonry materials should be used as sandstone and limestone do not react well if used together. Original railings are a rarity in the conservation area, the ones surviving at Sunderland Minster are missing a number of cast heads and in need of repair. Both Mary Street and Green Terrace have installed replacement mild steel railings which do not replicate the decorative cast heads and detailing that characterises traditional designs, but at least some stretches provide a uniform domestic character to the street.

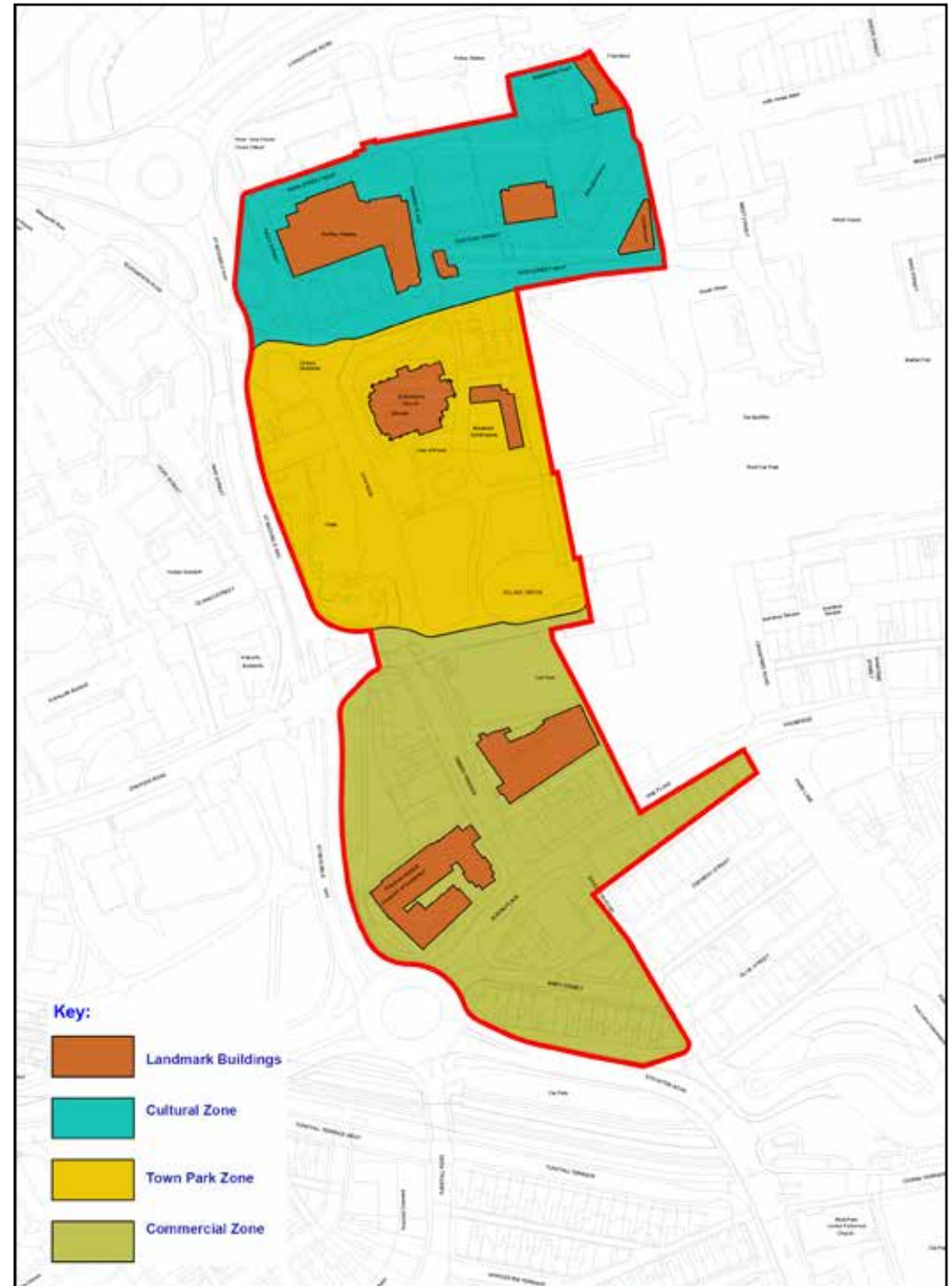


Key Components of Character

For the purposes of a more detailed study of its character, Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area has been divided into three broad character zones. In addition, due to the special qualities of numerous key buildings within the various zones, there is first of all a section devoted to landmark buildings.

Fundamental Characteristics of Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area

- ❖ City Centre Victorian and Edwardian developments set within surviving street pattern and remnants of former medieval village.
- ❖ Dominant central feature, St Michael's Church, perched upon elevated Town Park.
- ❖ Soft, spacious and quiet green spaces at core of conservation area.
- ❖ Distinctive and architecturally significant landmark buildings designed by the finest local architects.
- ❖ Refined busy terraced streets, many properties retaining traditional Victorian shopfronts and other timber features.
- ❖ Varied and distinctive roofscape punctuated by a series of attractive towers, domes and cuppolas.
- ❖ Complementary mix of high quality natural materials.
- ❖ High degree of local distinctiveness.

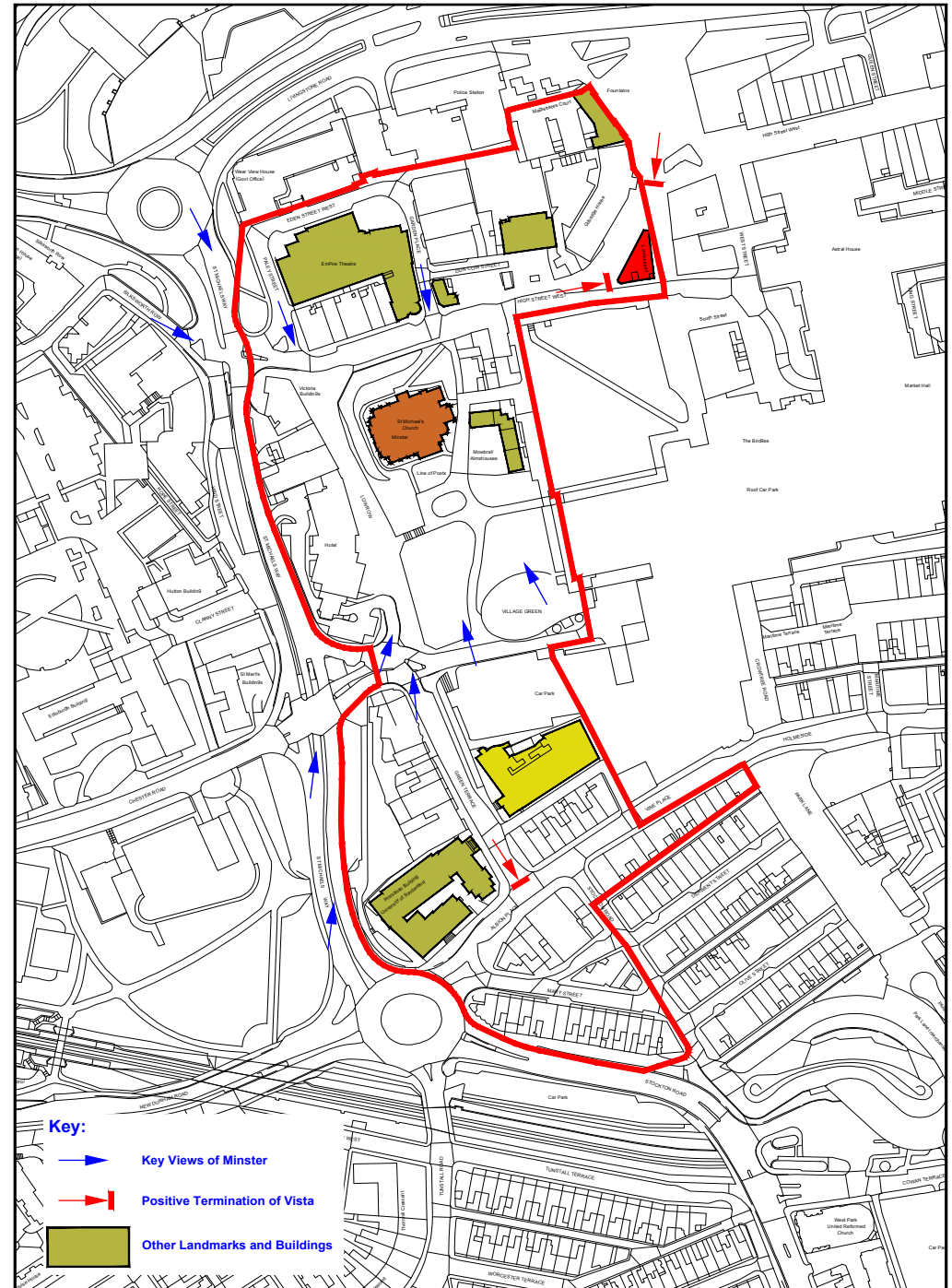


Landmark Buildings

Many buildings in Bishopwearmouth have attractive individual qualities of their own and most are of a scale and form that enables them to blend in with their neighbours to form a successful visual unit. Several buildings, however, stand out due to their scale and form and act as readily identifiable landmarks within the Conservation Area and City Centre. Some of these buildings, most notably Sunderland Minster, have features such as towers, domes, cuppolas etc that are prominent in the skyline from more distant views and make them much admired landmarks in a city wide context. Many landmark buildings were designed by the finest local architects, such as The Milburns, as exemplars of their style and period and are as notable for their architectural quality as for their scale and form. Combined together, such attributes have created buildings with an imposing presence, demonstrated admirably by The Empire Theatre and Galen Building for instance.

Key Characteristics of Bishopwearmouth's Landmark Buildings

- ❖ Dominant central landmark feature, St Michael's Church, at heart of conservation area.
- ❖ Several buildings of imposing scale and form and outstanding examples of local architecture.
- ❖ Series of towers, ornate domes and cupolas give the skyline a distinctive appearance.



Sunderland Minster

The Minster stands dominant on Church Lane and provides a very important landmark feature which can be seen or glimpsed from many locations. It is a quite remarkable building of a free neo-perpendicular style with a variation of roof heights and shapes. A Grade II* Listed Building, it demonstrates a sensitive handling of period material on a scale not often seen in 20th century churches. Although largely rebuilt in the 19th century and again in the 1930's, it retains the character, fabric and features of its medieval origins. Unfortunately, views of the Church have been partially obscured by recent developments.



The Peacock

The Peacock (former Londonderry) Public House designed by Hugh T D Hedley was built in 1901/2 in a simple baroque style to an unusual triangular plan with each corner surmounted by distinctive bell-shaped lead turrets, making it an immediately recognisable building. It is constructed of sandstone ashlar with granite entrance columns and Lakeland slate roof.



Empire Theatre

The Empire is an impressive Edwardian Theatre and Grade II* Listed Building. Built 1906 / 1907 in a free baroque style, it has a colonaded entrance, rear auditorium and lobbies built of brick with ashlar dressings and slate roof. The building is dominated by its huge drum tower in ashlar and copper cupola, surmounted by an effigy of Terpsichore, the Greek Muse of Dance. The Empire Theatre is the most notable building in the conservation area to be designed by W.M. and T.R. Milburn and is a fine example in the region.

The recent flytower is a new landmark feature and although it lacks the finesse of the earlier architecture, it is in natural materials and announces the theatre use



Galen Building



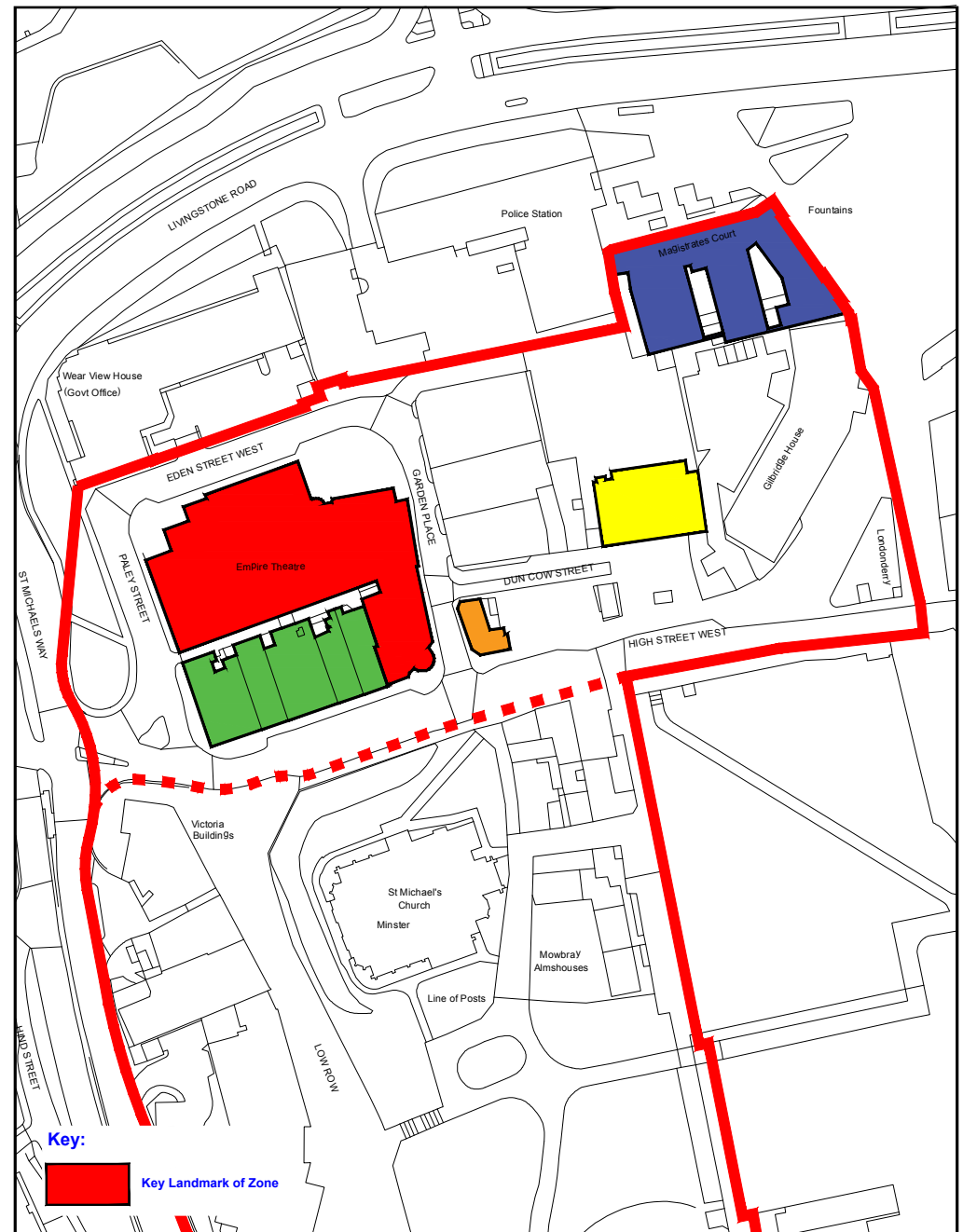
The Galen Building was built in 1899 and opened as a 'technical college' in 1901. It is a quite spectacular bright red brick and terracotta building with a large square tower surmounted by a dome making it the most prominent building in the southern part of the conservation area. It is richly decorated with intricate architectural features, such as a detailed frieze over the elaborate entrance portico. The building is currently subdivided into two properties and converted into a Wine bar and two nightclubs. Planning Permission has been granted for residential conversion of most of the building retaining the bar and nightclub uses.

Cultural Character Zone

This character zone generally comprises that part of the conservation area north of and including High Street West. The area is predominantly characterised by landmark historic buildings alongside several terraced properties together with a newly formed public square to the front of the vacant fire station. The designs of W.M. and T.R. Milburn and other important local architects are particularly prominent in the area, giving it some of the finest buildings in the conservation area and City as a whole. The buildings along High Street West vary in scale and style and there is an abundance of bars, many in former terraced houses. The area is also often described as Sunderland's 'Cultural Quarter' due to the location of the Empire Theatre and the Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter (MACQ) which is itself a recognised sub-area within the Zone centred around the Fire Station and forthcoming Auditorium development.

Key Characteristics of Character Zone 1

- ❖ High concentration of listed buildings, many with landmark qualities.
- ❖ Strong influence of renowned local architects, W.M & T.R. Milburn, in area's architecture.
- ❖ Empire Theatre, a Grade II* listed building of regional importance.
- ❖ Music Arts and Cultural Quarter (MACQ), including recently converted Fire Station and Auditorium development site.
- ❖ Attractively landscaped public square to front of fire station with associated street furniture and lighting.
- ❖ Surface car parks contribute to reduced streetscape quality and detract from character of area.



Strengths

- The high concentration of listed buildings, many of which are of both architectural and townscape value. This reflects the strong influence of the Milburn brothers, renowned regionally important architects at the turn of the 20th century.
- The Empire Theatre is of regional cultural importance and a focus for community engagement. It brings architectural exuberance to High Street West and is a key force in bringing visitors to the conservation area and underpinning its commercial and cultural life.
- Location of MACQ quarter places the area at the heart of the City Centre's Cultural Renaissance with the rejuvenation of some of Bishopwearmouth's landmark buildings, such as the Fire Station and Dun Cow and Peacock Public Houses, acting as catalysts for the area's revival as a cultural destination. The recent conversion of the old fire station into a major music and arts hub for the city, with performance spaces, auditorium, restaurant and bar adds significantly to the vitality of the area.
- The area in front of the old Fire Station has been landscaped to provide a new urban space. This helps to mitigate the impact of the loss of historic buildings and the opening of gaps in the High Street West frontage. The conversion of the old Fire Station into a major music and arts hub for the city, with performance spaces, auditorium, restaurant and bar adds significantly to the vitality of the area.
- A neighbourhood scale collection of strong historic buildings with the potential to operate as a cultural and evening economy quarter, exploiting their street presence as well as their historic interiors.

Weaknesses

- The demolition of properties on High Street West to the east of the Dun Cow public house and Dun Cow Street has removed the unbroken solidity of the street frontage; it has left the Dun Cow as an isolated building and exposed views across open space and surface car parks to the distant modern and unattractive police station and the closer but more attractive early 20th century Fire Station. The landscaped public square to the front of the fire station alongside the Dun Cow helps mitigate the loss of built form, and this space will be further enhanced by the Auditorium development which will remove the surface car park and mask views of the police station.

- There are a number of vacant buildings, parts of buildings and gap sites in the character area. Their redevelopment, reuse and re-ordering will bring investment into the area, remove the sense and appearance of neglect and provide new commercial cultural and residential facilities and outlets. The architectural quality of Gillbridge House is neutral at best.
- The detail of richly detailed historic buildings is often eroded and ill-maintained.
- The electricity sub-station in front of the old fire station should ideally be relocated if the full potential of this space as the setting to several historic buildings is to be realised. Recent redecoration and incorporation of advertising for the Old Fire Station occupiers has however significantly improved its appearance.



1 - 7 High Street West



These 'listed' 19th century former terraced houses adjacent the Empire Theatre have long since been adapted from their original use into shops, offices and more recently into three bars. They are quite simple buildings with understated features, but well proportioned and solid in their form and appearance. Their relatively uniform first floor detailing and use of traditional shopfront features and fenestration details gives the streetscene a quite distinct character. The removal of paint to the upper floors and more unity of shopfront proportions and detailing at pedestrian level would enhance their appearance.

Dun Cow Public House

The Dun Cow Public House is an Edwardian building constructed of highly moulded sandstone ashlar and compliments the materials that have been used in the conservation area. The building has a rounded corner bay surmounted by an ornate drum and copper cupola. Its entrance has a granite plinth, marble features and together with richly embellished dormer windows makes a significant visual statement. It's interior contains one of the most stunning back bars in Britain, featuring richly decorated and delicate Art Nouveau style woodcarving. Several vacant and dilapidated properties adjacent to the Dun Cow were demolished a few years ago with planning permission granted to the rear of the Dun Cow for a new auditorium connected to the refurbished Old Fire Station



Fire Station



The Fire Station is one of several historic buildings designed by W.M. and T.R. Milburn. A very attractive and distinct building of local character defined by its proportions, architectural rhythm and use of materials. The building has recently been converted to a new cultural hub with a newly formed public square and contributes significantly to the cultural regeneration of the conservation area.

Magistrates Courts



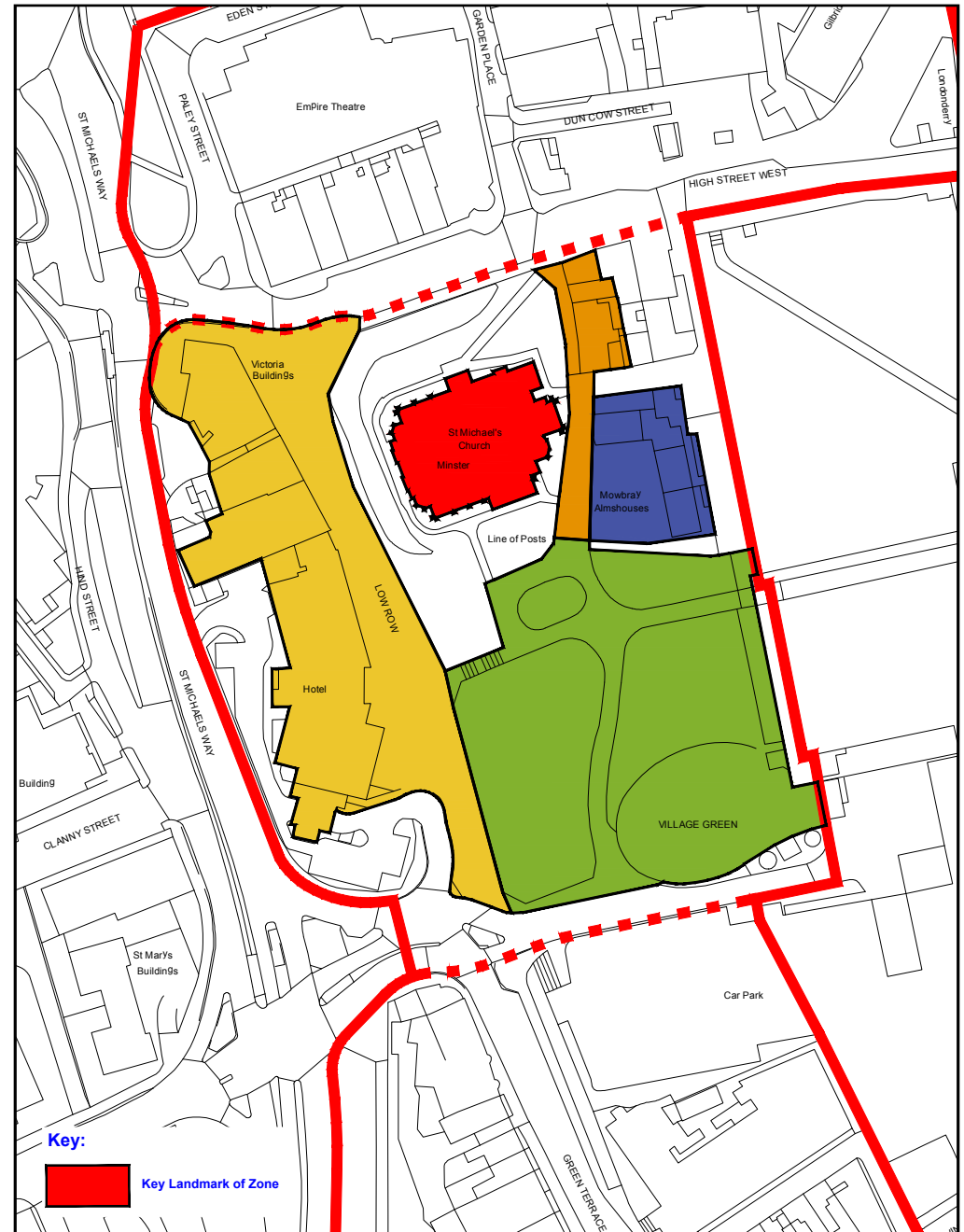
The Magistrates Courts, also designed by the Milburns, were constructed in 1907 of sandstone ashlar and feature a square clock tower with a vaulted open stage and ball finial. It has a powerful presence onto the newly created Keel Square. Gillbridge House was built adjacent to the Courts in 1992 and incorporates the entrance portico that was salvaged from the public baths that formerly occupied the site, but is overall a weak form of corporate architecture.

Town Park Character Zone

This area is the most unique of the three character zones. It is much quieter and spacious, with a lot of appeal and strong historic character being the heart of the former medieval village. It is centred upon St Michael's Church, formerly the medieval Parish church now Sunderland Minister, which acts as the centrepiece of the conservation area and stands prominently on Town Park perched above surrounding buildings. The Town Park includes the registered village green and sets the area within a pleasant landscape. The Mowbray Almshouses and buildings on Church Lane are the only surviving group of buildings that give a clue to the former character of the green. To the west, Low Row was one of the busiest roads in the City before the Ring Road was built. It has since been pedestrianised and is very lively in the evenings due to numerous pubs along the street. The Town Park / Low Row area also forms a major pedestrian route between the University's Chester Road Campus and the City Centre.

Key Characteristics of Character Zone 2

- ❖ Historic core and surviving remnants of medieval village of Bishopwearmouth.
- ❖ Soft, spacious and quiet character of Town Park.
- ❖ St Michael's Church, the centrepiece and most dominant feature of the conservation area.
- ❖ Charming, quaint and unique character of Mowbray Almshouses and Church Lane.
- ❖ Attractive pedestrianised thoroughfare of Low Row with vibrant evening atmosphere.



Strengths

- The Minster provides an outstanding historical and visual focal point.
- Low Row has been pedestrianised and sensitively resurfaced (though partly in man-made materials) to create a welcoming, safe and accessible environment. It houses a range of leisure outlets and a 2000s hotel. The latter has a neutral impact on the conservation area but its large windows are at odds with the architectural finesse of its neighbours, which echo the strength of Zone 1.
- The stone retaining and boundary walls surrounding the Minster churchyard provide a substantial enclosure for the church and give legibility to the presence of the now unseen rock promontory upon which the church was founded. They add considerable visual appeal and a tactile richness when moving through the area's streets and spaces.
- Church Lane is an intimate space which is rare in the conservation area, illustrative of the routes which once characterised the area between the Minster and the village green. The cranked alignment of the lane is visually squeezed by the high retaining wall of the Minster grounds. The partially-rebuilt cottages along the east side still retain some historic fabric but have been altered with the addition of inappropriate bay and box windows projecting from the front elevations.
- Town Park is an area of maturing greenery which provides a pleasant and tranquil environment. It includes Bishopwearmouth Green, forever the heart of the medieval village, the layout of which can still be discerned today though in a weaker way than when edged by buildings. Part of the park is registered village green.

Weaknesses

- The Green was substantially enlarged to become Town Park as a consequence of the mid-20th century wholesale clearance of buildings and roads at Little Gate, South Gate and associated routes, which would have visually detached it from the church and graveyard. As a result, although pleasant, the Green's setting is weak and confusing.

- The space's current layout, which is primarily directed towards providing east-west and north-south footpath links, does not reflect or build upon the historic location or shape of the medieval green or the square lined with buildings which contained it. The careful design of upgrading work to the spaces coupled with on-site interpretation can bring back the spirit of the old Green. There is also the longer-term aim of redeveloping Crowtree Leisure Centre to provide new buildings/frontages facing the Green again along its eastern edge.
- There are some partially empty properties which detract from the appearance of the area and many buildings have lost original details and incorporate inappropriate 20th Century features and man-made materials. This zone contains some of the oldest buildings in the area and their standing historic fabric is poorly understood.



Town Park



The Town Park created in the 1970's is a small primarily soft landscaped area with some mature trees and shrubbery. The inclusion of the remnants of Bishopwearmouth village green gives it immense historical significance. It also provides a pleasant setting for the Minster and Mowbray Almshouses, although some over-mature vegetation obscures views of these key buildings. In conjunction with the Church grounds, the Park has the quality of a quiet and spacious City Centre space. Unfortunately, it suffers from being very underused and would benefit from improvements to attract visitors to this valuable asset.

Mowbray Almshouse



Mowbray Almshouses were built in 1863, replacing earlier almshouse buildings. Grade II listed, these two storey Gothic style buildings are constructed of thin courses of squared sandstone rubble with ashlar dressings and a Welsh Slate roof with red ridge tiles and tall ashlar chimneys. The buildings are arranged around a well-landscaped communal garden and provide this part of the conservation area with a pleasant domestic character.

Church Lane

Church Lane comprises two storey cottages and shops, of a small scale with a simple appearance retaining historic and modern fabric. The area has acquired a charm and quaintness of its own that is distinctive and unique to the City Centre. This is due to the absence of vehicular traffic, the narrow lane and resultant intimate enclosure of space. These characteristics are typical of small-scale developments historically clustered about the green.



Low Row



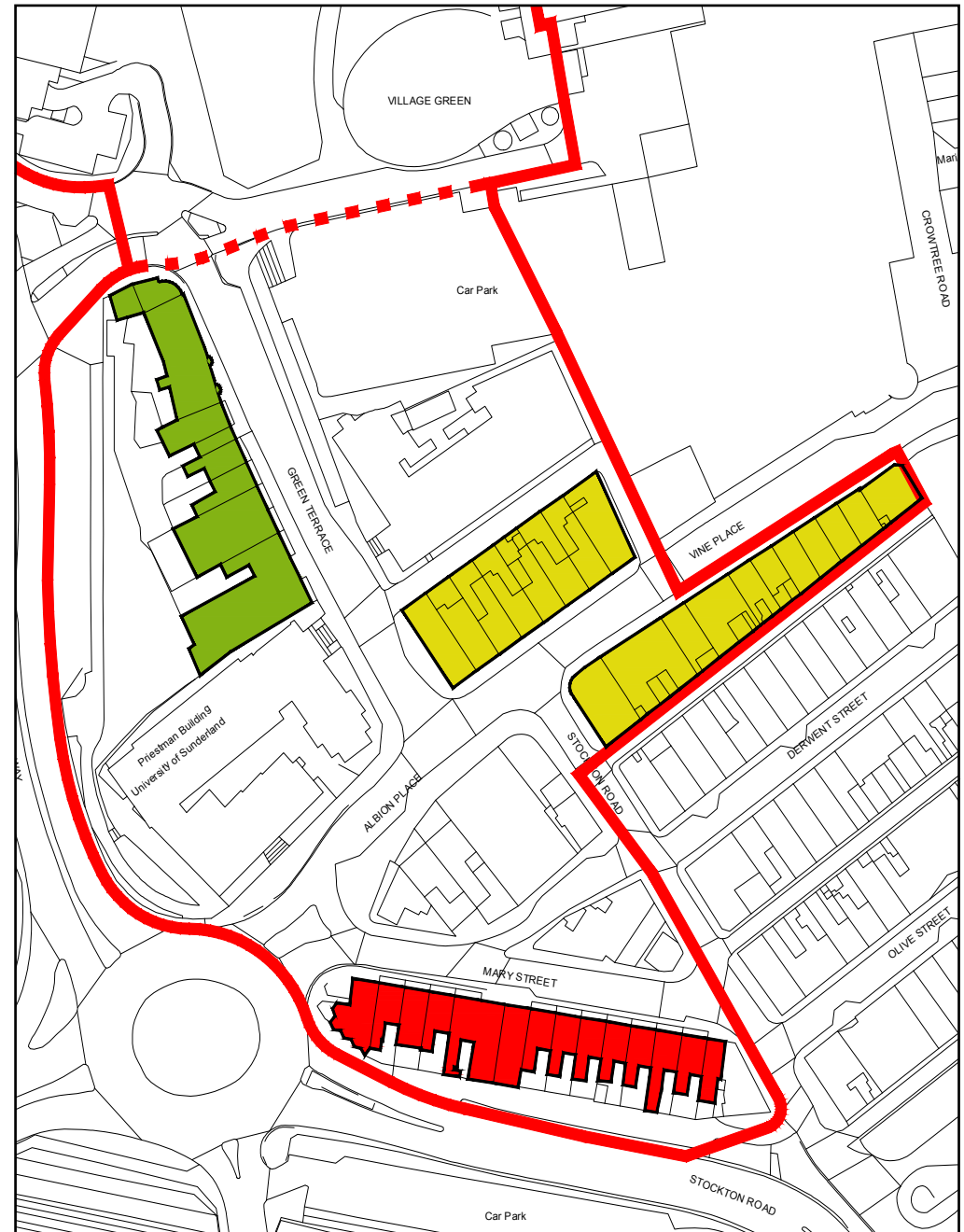
Low Row is an attractive pedestrianized area with seating and planting. At the northern end stands an attractive group of public houses in former halls and commercial buildings. Greens Public House was built in 1901 and is the most significant building in the group, a Grade II listed building it features a granite plinth and pink marble to the doorcase and a beautiful vaulted ceiling, unfortunately now hidden by a lower suspended ceiling. The former Low Row car park has been redeveloped with the erection of Travel Lodge, incorporating yet more bars at street level to add to the lively evening atmosphere.

Commercial Character Zone

This area has some similarities with the other zones but is generally quite different in terms of its overall character. It is the busiest and most vibrant part of the conservation area. The area contains an abundance of bars, specialist shops, restaurants, several nightclubs and offices, mainly in the upper floors. The area's built form is predominantly characterised by streets of refined two/three-storey terraces. Terraces such as Vine Place contain active shop frontages at street level, many retaining their traditional form and architectural features. In contrast, Mary Street and Green Terrace have retained their domestic appearance, although apart from some upper floor flats none remain in residential use. Elsewhere, the area is notable for containing two major landmark buildings, the Priestman building and the Grade II listed Galen Building. Unfortunately, the area has suffered from a multitude of unsympathetic modern additions and alterations which undermine the appearance of some buildings. Historic shop fronts have been lost and the demands for signage by commercial occupiers can often conflict with the desire to preserve domestic frontages.

Key Characteristics of Character Zone 2

- ❖ Concentration of refined 2/3 storey terraced buildings containing a wide mix of uses.
- ❖ Prominent landmarks, Galen Building and Priestman Building.
- ❖ Some of the finest surviving examples of period shopfronts in the City.
- ❖ Poor quality design and materials of replacement modern shopfronts.
- ❖ Characteristic domestic frontages to Mary Street and Green Terrace.
- ❖ Retention of original offshoots to Vine Place and Mary Street give rear lanes an unusually distinctive appearance.



Strengths

- Zone 3 contains two major landmark buildings, the Priestman Building and the Grade II listed Galen Building, which provide high quality historic landmarks to this end of the area, echoing those key landmark buildings in Zone 1.
- The planned layout of streets is evidence of polite town-making at the start of the 19th century as Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth expanded.
- The zone is the busiest and most vibrant part of the conservation area during the daytime, containing shops, bars, restaurants and offices some on upper floors and some. The annual influx of university students into the Priestman Building provides weight to the zone's economy, which the proposed conversion of the Galen Building (currently a bar and nightclub) to student housing would continue.
- Many Vine Place shop frontages retain their traditional form and some historic architectural features; the proportions overall respect the facade of each building and of the terrace as a whole. Other early shopfronts on Mary Street are neat, with small-scale fascias that respect the domestic architecture here. Sympathetic commercial signage on Green Terrace opposite Galen Building although recent issues with banner signs.
- The polite early 19th century domestic architecture and front garden landscaping of Mary Street is a strong reminder of the origins of this neighbourhood, characterised by a unity and rhythm of materials and features which has been lost to commercial competition in similar streets outside the conservation area nearby.

Weaknesses

- Whilst the gradual change from domestic to commercial uses is part of the zone's history, the worst effects of this have harmed the character, unity and rhythm designed in to the zone's terraced streets. Victorian and Edwardian buildings of more flamboyant quality stand out against the more restrained quality of the late Georgian and early Victorian terraced forms. Worse, 20th century additions intrude on the quality of the earlier development.
- The loss of a building on the corner of Vine Place and Stockton Road disrupts the streetscape and harms the once carefully planned layout of these

streets, a key aspect of late Georgian / early Victorian town-making.

- The Bridges Shopping Centre car-park is clearly inferior architecturally for the Galen Building which it sits next to; it provides, at best, a neutral backdrop to Town Park. Its frontage on to Green Terrace is bland, leaving the altered historic retaining wall here rather isolated as an ancient fragment with its origins untold. Due to its blank pedestrian frontage, the car park's presence on Vine Place is also a weak setting to the historic shops opposite.
- The area has suffered from unsympathetic additions and alterations which undermine the appearance of some buildings, for example, the large extension on Albion Place (currently Cooper Rose). Extensions to the rear elevations of Green Terrace are often out of scale and lack an understanding of their scale as offshoots. This creates a visual muddle of forms, periods and materials which does not reflect the traditional pattern and hierarchy of architecture in this zone. For those parts which are terraced, it also interrupts rhythm and unity. This is particularly true on Vine Place.
- Although a building of great architectural quality, the size and relative height of the rear wings of the Priestman Building are visually dominant when viewed from outside of the conservation area. Now exposed onto the main western through-route around the city centre, they and their modern rooftop paraphernalia are very prominent.
- The dual-carriageway and underpass pedestrian route at the rear of Green Terrace is an uncharacteristically urban setting for a former medieval village.
- Alterations to some shopfronts on Vine Place and elsewhere has harmed the rhythm and unity designed into such terraces, particularly over-large shopfront signage and fascias which unbalance proportions and obscure or damage original detailing. Instances of temporary banner signage obscures architectural details, also having a detrimental impact on the character of Zone 3 and setting of important listed buildings.

Green Terrace



Green Terrace is an attractive red brick group of late Victorian buildings in a neo-classical style with terracotta doorcases. Unfortunately, the domestic character of some of these fine properties has been marred as a result of their conversion into a café bar, their interiors having been gutted and some overbearing rear extensions added. However signage quality has improved. Within the terrace is an earlier late 18th century stuccoed villa, featuring particularly fine bowed windows. Now a wine bar, it was extensively restored in 1992 and gives an idea of the character of the buildings of an earlier period of the village.

Mary Street



Mary Street comprises Victorian terraced houses that are now predominantly used as offices. With a uniform and quite simple appearance, they were extensively restored in the 1980's and together create a strong townscape feature. As such, it is important their domestic form and features are retained and not allowed to be subject to the type of alterations and additions that have degraded many other properties in the conservation area

Vine Place



Vine Place, once the back lane of the medieval village, is now a busy shopping street. The southern terrace contains a jumble of fairly non-descript building styles, however, collectively they present a charming informality and feature several notable shopfronts of the late 19th century. Some very ornate pilasters and finials remain that enliven the street scene. In contrast, where historic shopfronts have been replaced with modern ones, there is a general lack of quality in their design and materials. The northern group of tall 3-storey terraced properties are simple yet quite refined buildings, but notable for almost exclusively retaining the basic framework features of historic shopfronts, such as the carved pilasters, consoles and cornices.



Current Issues and Possible Solutions

Over the past 20 years Bishopwearmouth's architectural and historic integrity has become undermined as developers and commercial operators sought to capitalise on the area's new found status as the 'nightlife' quarter of the City Centre. An influx of bars and nightclubs has had a serious impact on historic buildings which were not originally designed for such uses. The alterations made to some buildings to accommodate these operators have been quite dramatic and have changed the very essence of their character. The loss of traditional shop fronts and use of inappropriate signage are issues of particular concern, as well as upper floor vacancy as a result of the loss of much of the resident population from the area. Elsewhere, the historic space of Town Park has lost much of its authenticity and its spirit as the communal heart of Bishopwearmouth. Its current layout is functional and together with inappropriate paving and lack of interpretation, its historic character, usage and vitality has been compromised, diminishing the area's historic and communal values.

In more recent years however Bishopwearmouth has become the focus of considerable City Centre regeneration investment being at the heart of a new cultural quarter, known as the Minster Quarter and including the Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter (MACQ). Significant public and private investment into the public realm, the re-use and restoration of historic buildings and high quality new developments, has significantly enhanced the character of the area and has provided the impetus for further heritage led regeneration that will be delivered through the Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme that is due to commence in 2018.

Boundary Review

Issues

Boundaries of conservation areas should include all elements that contribute to the special character of an area, including its setting. In the past some boundaries were, in Historic England's view, drawn too tightly. Their recent Advice Note 1 on Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (2016) recommends regular reviews of Conservation Areas, including their boundaries, and advises it is worth considering as part of reviews whether the immediate setting of the Conservation Area also requires the additional controls that result from designation. The Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area was first designated in 1969 and substantially extended in 1989. In recent years the context and setting of the Conservation Area has dramatically changed, so a review of its boundary is particularly appropriate.

The new public square, Keel Square, that has been formed around the north eastern corner of the conservation area has transformed the setting of this part of the conservation area and that of key listed buildings such as the Magistrates Courts and Peacock Public House. Keel Square is now part within and part outside the boundary of the Conservation Area, yet the quality and consistency of materials flow through the Square into the Conservation Area and through it along High Street West. There is no longer any clear definition to the north east boundary of the conservation area.

The demolition of part of the Crowtree Leisure Centre has left a large temporarily landscaped open space along the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area, pending redevelopment of the site for a Retail Store with associated landscaping. The hard and brutal eastern edge that the Crowtree building provided this part of the Conservation Area is not as clearly defined as previously and has opened up views and pedestrians linkages between Town Park and Keel Square.

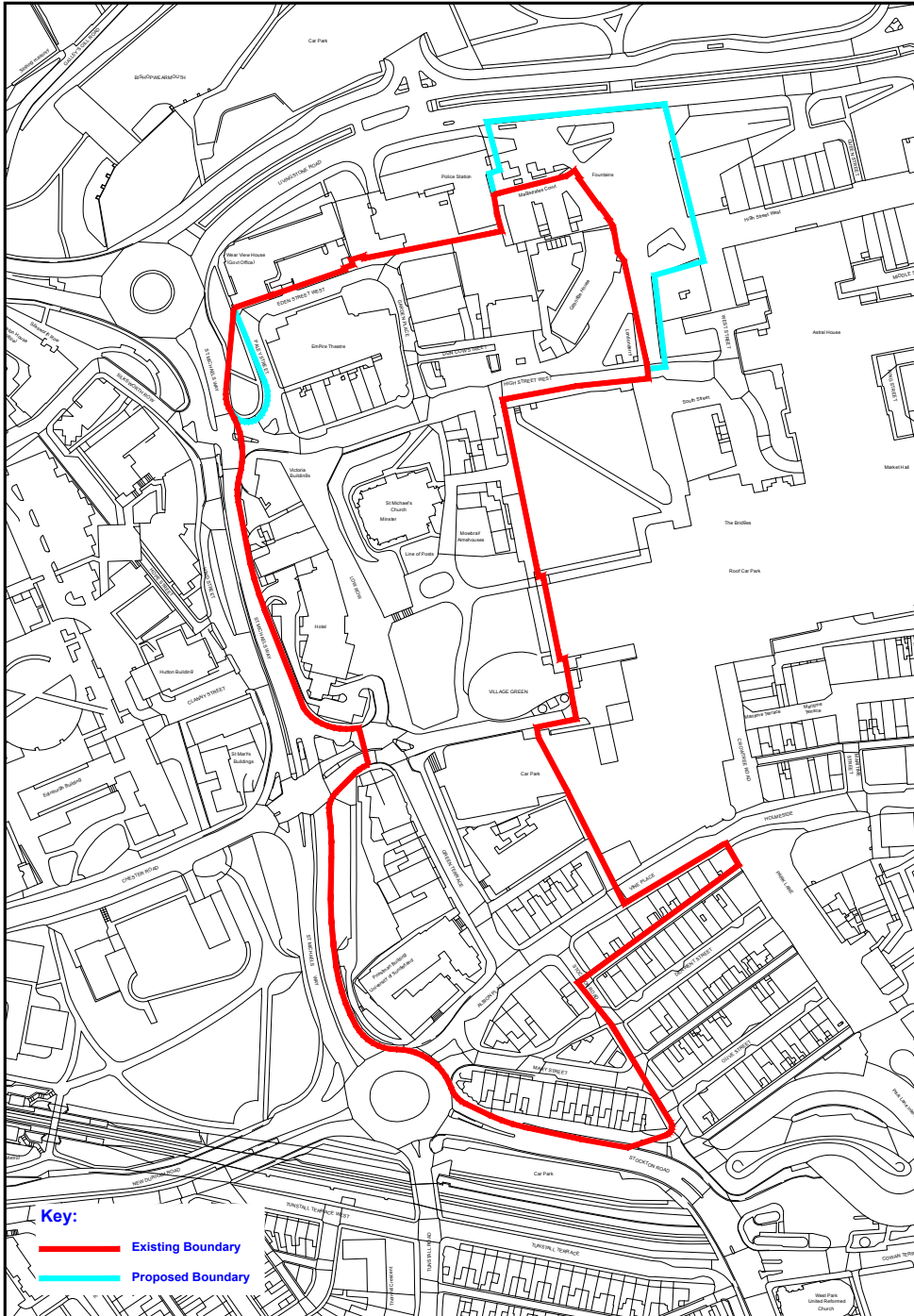
To the northwest the boundary is drawn across an area highway verge / open space and appears on the ground to have little discernible meaning.

Solutions

Having considered the above changes in light of Historic England's current guidance on Conservation Areas, the following changes to the Conservation Area boundary are recommended. A detailed justification for the boundary revisions is provided within Part 2: Management Strategy.

It is proposed to extend the north east corner of the Conservation Area to incorporate Keel Square for the contribution it makes to the special character of the area as a high quality public square that enhances the setting of key buildings such as the Magistrates Courts and Peacock Public House and the Conservation Area generally. It also has an additional role in providing a high quality gateway into the Conservation Area, the quality and consistency of its surface materials flowing into and through the designated area.

It is proposed to alter the northwest boundary of the conservation area to align with the existing street pattern defined by Paley Street and provide a more discernible edge to the Conservation Area on the ground.



Regeneration Issues

The drive to regenerate Bishopwearmouth inevitably creates demand in the area for historic buildings to be adapted and extended to accommodate business expansion and new uses. Whilst the majority of buildings can be sympathetically and constructively adapted and managed to support, stimulate and lead the area's revitalisation, issues of conflict can arise between regeneration and conservation objectives.

Historic buildings do not always lend themselves easily to modern space requirements, as the required layouts can compromise the historic integrity of such buildings. The cost of refurbishment and conversion works can also be more expensive for historic properties; owners are sometimes reluctant to commit resources to restoration works in particular as these are not always considered essential from a business perspective. This is particularly likely to be the case where the viability of a business concern is already marginal and no financial gain can be seen in spending money on a building's architectural features.

Vacant upper floors are a problem in the conservation area that has largely come about as a result of the area's evolution in recent decades into a leisure and nightlife quarter. The economy of the area has clearly been strengthened through its regeneration for commercial and cultural activity, but this has been at the cost of a reducing residential population. The conversion of former residences into leisure uses has led to upper floors becoming empty and abandoned. Consequently a more general lack of maintenance is evident in fabric above street level, and without an 'above the shop' residential population diminishes the liveliness and ambience of the area.

Solutions

The Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD and this Character Appraisal and Management Plan are intended to be used together to effect the 'constructive conservation' of the area, focusing on conservation-led regeneration and a positive and sympathetic approach to managing change, with the heritage of the area at the heart of its renaissance.

Bishopwearmouth is starting to be reintegrated into the commercial core of the City Centre through current strategic planning and regeneration initiatives by the Council and its partners that are focusing on the Minster Quarter, in particular the revitalisation of the area's historic buildings. The conservation area is now strategically positioned at the heart of the Minster Quarter to take advantage of the direct benefits and spin-off effects of major new developments such as the Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter (MACQ), University Enterprise and Innovation Centre, Vaux redevelopment, Bridges retail expansion and new hotels. The recent conversion and re-use of the Old Fire Station, which had sat vacant for many years, as a major cultural venue is indicative of how the area's heritage is stimulating its regeneration and addressing issues of vacancy and deterioration.

The pivotal regenerative positioning of Bishopwearmouth together with the forthcoming availability of grant assistance through the Townscape Heritage scheme provides an integrated strategy for reducing upper floor vacancy in the area, repairing and restoring many of its buildings and ensuring the sustainable care of these buildings in good repair. The TH offers the opportunity to both support the delivering of vibrant cultural leisure uses whilst also encouraging the conversion of upper floors for commercial and residential uses.

Retaining and re-using the area's historic buildings further makes a key contribution to the pursuit of sustainable forms of development that is now enshrined into the planning system through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). There should always be a presumption in favour of the retention and re-use of historic buildings in order to fully utilise the embodied energy within old properties and to preserve the precious historical narrative that they represent.

Building Maintenance and Alterations Issues

A lack of sufficient maintenance regimes has led to the unchecked erosion of architectural features on properties, particularly at upper floor levels. This problem is most evident with the loss and degradation of decorative stone features on some the area's finest Edwardian buildings. Many of these buildings have been inappropriately repaired and the conservation of their features has reached a tipping point whereby without substantial investment to address urgent repairs and restoration works the architectural character of the buildings could be irreversibly harmed.

There has been a loss of historic architectural features and the introduction inappropriate modern details and materials which weaken the historic integrity and appearance of some buildings and undermines the wider historic character of the area. This is evidence of ill-informed investment, a lack of investment, unsuitable skill-sets in design and implementation, and a choice of 'quick fit' over long term quality. The problem is most acute with shop fronts and signage as explained below, but the loss of features such as traditional sliding sash windows to inappropriate modern casement windows, and the loss and non-replacement of chimneys are additionally common issues.

Deterioration of masonry, often exacerbated by inappropriate past repair work, and loss of architectural stone features and detailing, is a common and often acute problem on the area's distinctive Edwardian buildings that will hopefully be addressed through the Townscape Heritage scheme.



The trend for open plan style bars has had highly unfortunate consequences for several of the area's historic buildings. In Green Terrace the 'gutting' of the interiors of several former houses to accommodate new bars has all but destroyed their domestic character. All evidence of their historic layout has been obliterated and any surviving original features such as fireplaces and staircases lost, leaving only the shell of the historic houses.

Solutions

Regular maintenance should always be carried out to prevent or at least delay the need for repairs. Repairs should only be undertaken where considered strictly necessary to slow down the process of decay without damaging the character of the buildings. A traditional approach to repair work should normally be adopted, replacing decayed material on a like-for-like basis. Replacement of features should only be undertaken when beyond economic repair and the unnecessary loss of historic fabric should always be avoided. Advice should always be sought from the Council's Conservation Team.

The Townscape Heritage scheme will hopefully address many of the maintenance issues and reinstate many lost features and detailing within the larger southern part of the conservation area it covers. A maintenance guide will also be produced as part of the scheme that will be issued to all properties in the conservation area as an educational tool to encourage better care of the area's historic buildings.

The strengthening of Bishopwearmouth's role as a cultural destination, especially through the Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter developments, is seeing a revival of more traditional and sympathetic forms of building conversions for leisure uses, particular for public houses, with an emphasis on retaining and revealing historic fabric and features. Recent conversion schemes at the Dun Cow and Peacock Public Houses have capitalised on their historic interiors. Smaller business operators are starting to adopt a similar traditional approach, such as at No.2 Church Lane, offering encouragement for a reversal of the trend for open plan style bars in favour of a better informed conservation approach to alteration and conversion works.

Shop Fronts and Signage Issues

The loss of period shop fronts is a common problem in Bishopwearmouth. Too often traditional Victorian shop fronts have been replaced with poorly designed and maintained modern frontages, using poor quality materials, which detract considerably from the character and appearance of not only the individual building but the street scene in general. This problem is most acute along the south side of Vine Place where only scattered remnants of historic shop fronts remain and there are numerous examples of poor quality shop fronts that require improvement.

The proliferation of signage associated with the influx of bars, nightclubs and hot food takeaways into the area is cause for concern. The competition amongst such operators to attract custom has led to increasingly obtrusive forms of advertising

that detract severely from buildings of historic interest.

The character of Vine Place has particularly suffered from inappropriate forms of advertising.

Shop front security measures can have a major impact on the appearance of the historic street scene and character of the conservation area. Typically, external roller shutters have been used in the past but these create unattractive 'dead' frontages when lowered in the evening to the detriment of the character of the buildings and general ambience of the area.



The property to the left exhibits all the defects of a poor quality, modern shop front including a plastic internally illuminated fascia, projecting box sign and external roller shutters, giving it a very poor appearance. In contrast, the premises to the right, has retained many traditional shop front features and makes a positive contribution to the historic building and street scene, though would benefit from a more traditional colour scheme.

Solutions

Improvements to shop fronts must meet high standards of design and workmanship and seek to achieve consistency in the street scene. In most cases, shop owners will be required / encouraged to adopt a traditional approach, restoring / reinstating historic shop surrounds and inserting new infill shop fronts to a traditional pattern to reinforce the historic character of the area. Contemporary shop fronts can in some instances also achieve attractive results and will be considered in certain areas if they are well-designed using good quality materials. Detailed design guidance on improving shop fronts is given within Part 2: Management Strategy.

All signs should clearly relate to the building to which they are attached and there should be consistency over the type of signage within a particular street or character area. Guidelines are provided on page 69 on the types and amount of signs that will be permitted in various parts of the conservation area.

Security measures should cause no significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building and wider street scene. Generally, measures which allow light to spill onto the street in the evening such as internal lattice grilles and laminated glass will be preferred to external shutters. Solid external roller shutters will no longer be permitted anywhere in the conservation area.

Impact of New Developments / Gap sites

Issues

Some major city centre developments of the 20th century have occurred in locations within or on the edge of Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area and have had significantly adverse impacts on its character. For instance, despite now largely demolished the remains of Crowtree Leisure Centre still compromises the setting of the Mowbray Almshouses and several other historic buildings. It also forms a very unattractive hard edge to the eastern boundary of the conservation area that hinders pedestrian movement between the core of the City Centre and Bishopwearmouth and, as a result, discourages the use of Town Park as a valuable public space.



Brutal, unsightly blank elevation facing onto Town Park discourages activity and use of the space.

Whilst the part demolition of Crowtree has opened up views of some of Bishopwearmouth finest buildings from the east and south, it has conversely exposed views of the bland and poorly detailed Bridges shopping centre and other unattractive 20th century developments.

There are several gap sites in the Conservation Area that diminish streetscape or townscape quality. Some that are used as surface car parks create sterile and unattractive spaces, whilst another on a prominent corner of Vine Place disrupts the carefully planned layout of streets that were a key aspect of early Victorian town-making. These gap sites fragment the area's urban form and detract from the subtle historic weave of buildings and streets which defined the historic street pattern.

The electricity substation in front of the Fire Station is an intrusive infrastructural anomaly that detracts from settings of existing historic buildings and the quality of developments and landscaping being implemented around it.

A desire to increase the floorspace of premises has resulted in some over-bearing and poorly designed rear extensions, most notably along the south side of Vine Place, Green Terrace, Mary Street and Albion Place. Such additions have disrupted the rhythm and significantly altered the former character of the rear lanes in these areas. The great length of the exposed rears of Low Row, Green Terrace and Mary Street, with their haphazard collection of different forms of rear extensions, presents a poor image of the Conservation Area from the City Centre ring road.



The rhythm and uniformity that originally characterised the rear of Green Terrace has been spoiled by the addition of the above extensions.

Solutions

The Crowtree gap site offers the opportunity for significant enhancement of the setting of the conservation area and key listed buildings such as the Almshouses, Minster and Peacock PH. The recent planning approval to develop a Next Retail Store on the site with associated landscaping will, if implemented, introduce a built form of higher design quality and high quality landscaping that will enhance the setting of the listed buildings and conservation area and improve pedestrian linkages between Keel Square and Town Park.

Measures to reduce the visual impact of the leisure centre will be encouraged. These may include along its western elevation tree planting to obscure views of the building, or new developments that establish an active frontage to Town Park (see below).

The MACQ's Phase 2 Auditorium development will introduce a subtle and striking high quality piece of modern architecture alongside the fire station at a key gap site surrounded by key listed buildings such as the Empire Theatre and Dun Cow. This will significantly enhance the conservation areas townscape quality and further support the area's cultural renaissance.

To support the above initiatives options are currently being explored to relocate the electricity sub-station to a less obtrusive site, possibly as part of the Crowtree site development. In the short term the sub-station has been painted to reduce its visual impact and promote the area's cultural renaissance.

In certain areas, such as the north side of Vine Place and Mary Street, original offshoots are largely intact and they give a certain rhythm and symmetry to the appearance of the rear lanes. Rear extensions in these streets should seek to conserve this continuity of built form and the general unspoilt character of the lanes.

Public Space

Issues

Bishopwearmouth contains some key city centre public spaces, most notably Town Park and the recently formed Keel Square. Keel Square presents a fresh high quality contemporary urban space and as a result is drawing users to it. Conversely, Town Park is looking tired and vastly underused for a number of reasons but offers considerable potential.



Poor quality landscape and surface materials in Town Park detracts from the historic setting of the Minster and Almshouses and creates an environment that is not conducive to an attractive and well-used public space,

The functional layout, relatively poor landscape quality and consequential underuse of Town Park are key issues that need to be addressed at the heart of the Conservation Area. The layout does not reflect its historic context and the setting of the former medieval Village Green within the park has been weak and confusing since the historic buildings which contained it were demolished in the mid-20th century.

A lack of facilities and active frontages to Town Park further discourages activity spilling into the Park, whilst a lack of natural surveillance encourages inappropriate use and activity in parts of the space.

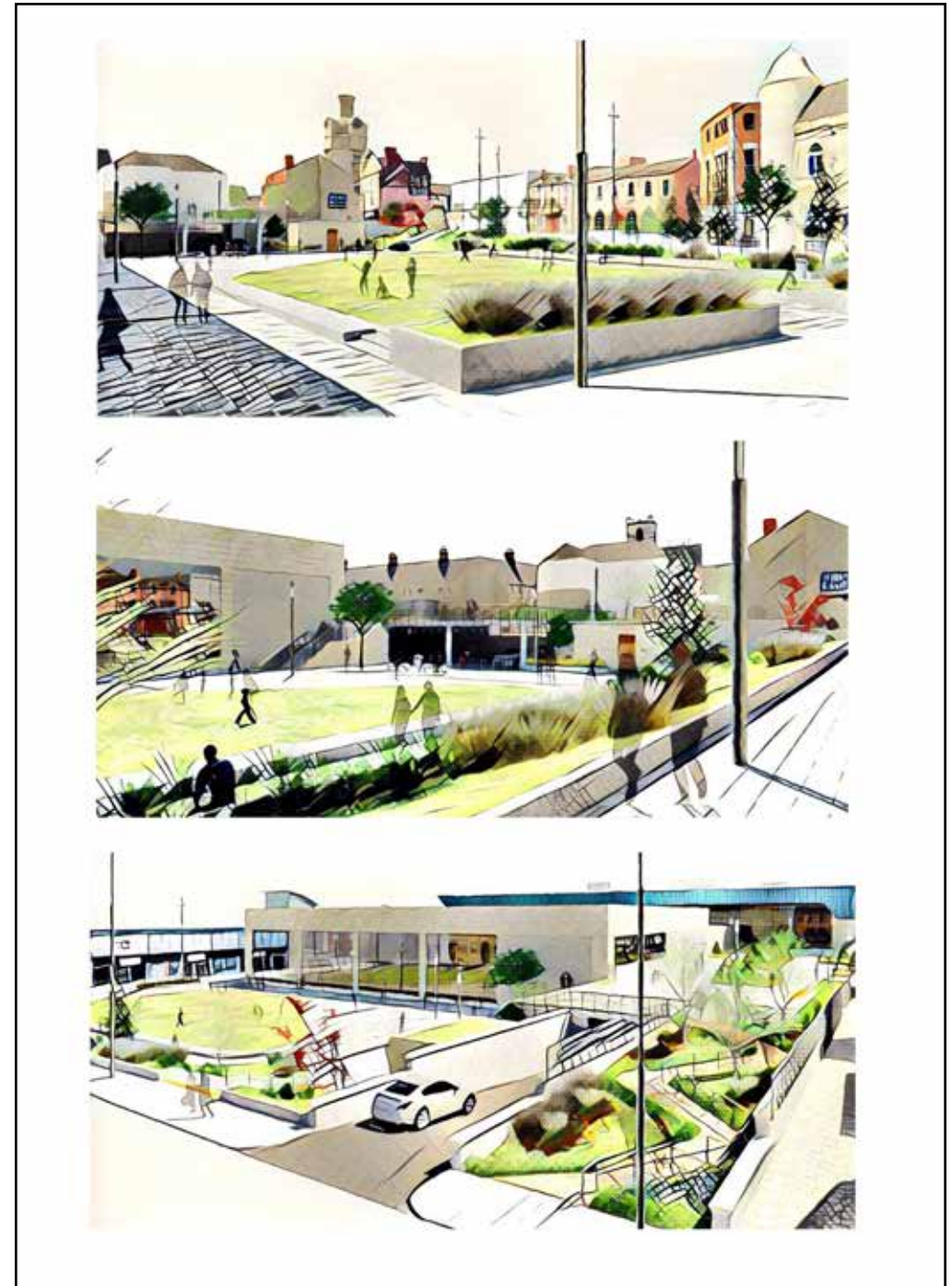
Solutions

Recent and on-going public realm improvement schemes by the Council along High Street West under its Investment Corridor initiative, including the creation of Keel Square, are vastly improving the quality of the streetscape within and around the Conservation Area and redefining its landscape setting.

The recent conversion of the Fire Station as a café bar / restaurant and forthcoming Auditorium is providing uses that will spill out and activate the square to the front of the fire station. The emergence of new cultural uses along High Street West is further drawing people to this part of the Conservation Area and enlivening its streetscene with a dynamic mix of uses supporting both increased daytime and evening activity.

A proposed comprehensive enhancement scheme for Town Park through the Townscape Heritage is expected to start in 2018/19 and will revitalise this ancient space to reveal something of its earlier layout, and re-emphasize its historic village Green. The use of high quality traditional materials laid out to reflect the medieval street pattern along with attractive new planting, interpretation and artwork, the scheme will significantly enhance the settings of the Minster and Almshouses. It has been designed to create spaces and focal points for events and activities and to encourage people to stay and spend time in a tranquil setting.

Future redevelopment of the remains of the Crowtree Leisure Centre to provide active uses and frontages along the eastern boundary of Town Park would further draw people to the park and greatly enliven the space. The Minster Quarter Masterplan identifies this site (Crowtree Phase 2) as having development aspirations for cafes and restaurants fronting onto Town Park. The plan opposite formed part of the planning application submission for the Crowtree site in 2016.





Part 2

Management Strategy

Management Strategy: Introduction

Part 1 of this study has identified and appraised the special characteristics and features of Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. Part two, the 'Management Strategy', addresses in more detail the issues raised in the Appraisal. It establishes a number of management objectives and proposals to facilitate the more sensitive and proactive management of the conservation area, thus ensuring its special interest is better preserved and enhanced into the future. Measures through which the objectives and proposals may be achieved are discussed and an agenda is established that will be pursued, as resources allow, to secure the future conservation of the conservation area. Its primary objective may therefore be expressed as follows:-

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE: To ensure that the special architectural or historic interest of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations and for the enrichment of the City's built heritage.

N.B The Management Strategy has been devised as planning guidance to assist the Council in preserving and enhancing the 'special architectural and historic interest' of the conservation area. It is not a management strategy for the area in a wider sense. For example, it does not contain proposals for the traffic management in the area or social issues such as crime and antisocial behaviour.

Management Objectives and Proposals

The primary objective sets out the overarching vision of the Management Strategy, that is the sustained conservation of the heritage assets that make up Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. The following Plan, like the preceding Character Appraisal, is divided into sub-areas or common building types. Each section has a Management Objective which establishes the broad vision for the area / buildings, followed by Management Proposals which are the means by which the primary objective may be achieved and which will be pursued as resources allow. The proposals seek to address the key issues which threaten the integrity and authenticity of the Conservation Area and vary in their nature, ranging from measures to ensure the future preservation of key buildings, features and views, environmental improvements to Town Park, to design guidelines for shop fronts and new developments. These proposals form the basis of a mid-to-long term strategy for the future management of the Conservation Area.

Part 3 of this document contains the Management & Maintenance Plan for the Conservation area. This sets out the overarching vision for future management of this part of the conservation area, and establishes timetables and task lists to sustain the legacy of the Heritage Lottery Fund and Sunderland City Council investment.



Management Objectives & Proposals: Boundary Review

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 1: To advance understanding of the historic development and evolution of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area and ensure that the designated boundary reflects all elements which contribute to the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area.

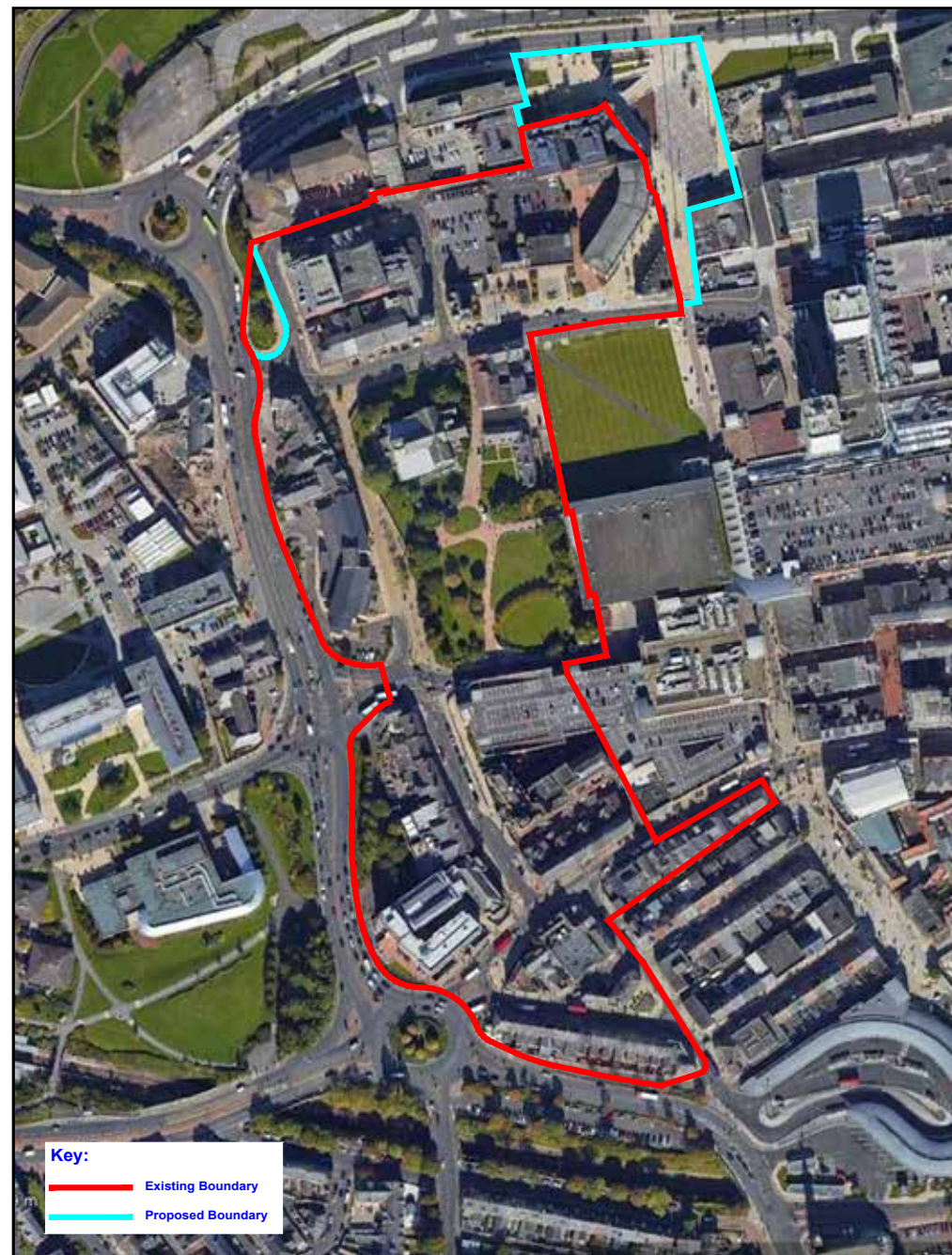
PROPOSAL 1a: The council will undertake a review of the designated conservation area, consult on options for inclusions and deletions, and if supported, progress formal amendments to the designation

Proposed boundary extension

The current conservation area boundary was last reviewed in 1989 and the area has undergone significant physical change within the intervening decades, most notably around Keel Square with substantial changes to the highway network and the public realm. These works have been undertaken to a high standard with a marked improvement in the setting of the adjacent listed buildings as well as the general appearance. The contribution this new landscaped area makes to the sense of arrival to the historic conservation area and framing of the surrounding historic buildings is considered worthy of inclusion within the designated boundary. It is therefore proposed that the boundary be formally amended to include Keel Square, omitting the adjacent new build development sites. This will add to the status of the space, acknowledging the quality and value of the improvements.

Proposed boundary omission

The current conservation area boundary includes only part of landscaped area to the west of Weardale House between Paley Street and St Michaels Way. The boundary here does not represent any defined borders to the planting or pathways, and is not indicative of any former features or layout shown on historic mapping. It is therefore proposed that the boundary edge be simplified here to end at the pavement edge on the east side of Paley Street and then meeting High Street West on the corner of the Victoria Buildings retaining the pavement around the Revolution PH within the designated boundary. These amendments were formally approved on 20th June 2018.



Management Objectives & Proposals: Cultural Regeneration

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 2: To advance the wider renaissance of Bishopwearmouth as a cultural quarter within Sunderland City Centre through strengthening links with complimentary regeneration activity, in accordance with the principles and policies of the Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD

PROPOSAL 2a: The council will apply the Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD in conjunction with the Bishopwearmouth Character Appraisal and Management Plan as a management tool to ensure both the conservation needs and regeneration objectives of the Conservation Area are realised.

The Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD outlines the council's vision for the wider Minster Quarter area, which includes at its heart the larger part of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. The document contains objectives relating to design, built form, public realm, materials and detailing, sustainability, uses, and site-specific development aspirations amongst other things. The SPD contains the following vision for the Minster Quarter:

A Vision for the Minster Quarter

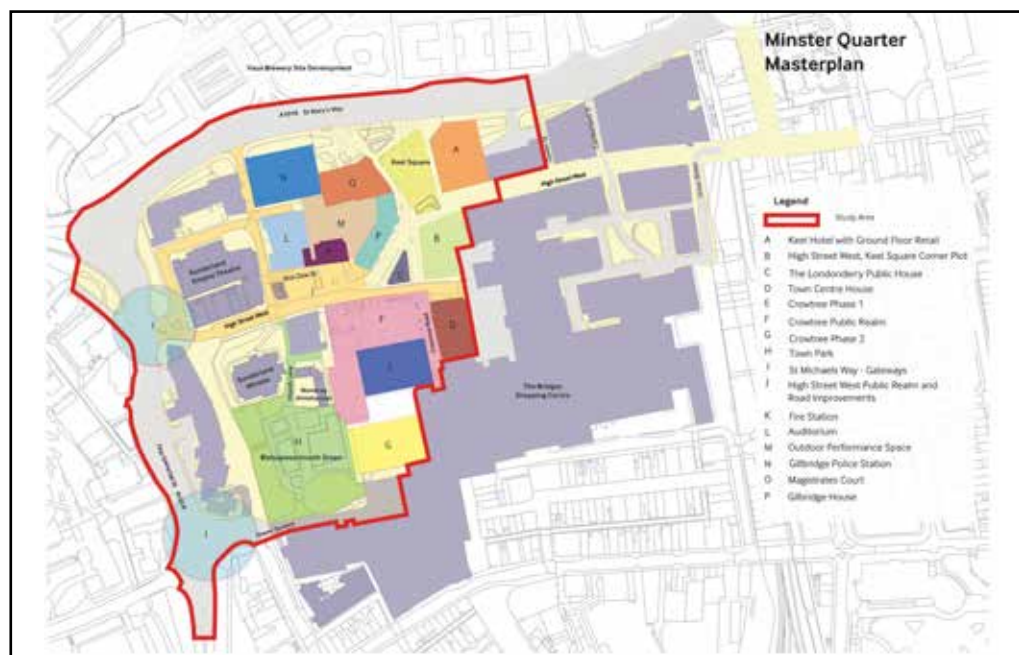
“To create a Cultural Quarter and a key gateway into the City Centre of Sunderland that restores the area's historic importance and to create a place that is valued by the whole community. Architectural and urban design excellence will underpin a first class environment with a distinctive character and identity that draws on its rich heritage. Great streets, beautiful squares and parks will provide the setting for a lively and dynamic mix of uses which are safe and accessible for all”.

The Bishopwearmouth CAMP gives an additional conservation emphasis to this vision by giving recognition to and raising awareness of the area's significance, and providing management proposals that aim to protect and enhance its distinctive character and appearance.

It is intended that the SPD and the CAMP will be mutually reinforcing and should be used together to effect the 'constructive conservation' of the area, as advocated by Historic England, through a positive and collaborative approach to planning, conservation and regeneration that focuses on proactively managing change.

The CAMP supports the SPD by providing additional detailed guidance on conservation-specific issues that are not covered in detail in the Masterplan; for instance, repairs and alterations to historic buildings and more detailed shop front design guidelines. Conversely, management proposals that would normally have been covered in some detail in the CAMP, such as design guidelines for new developments in the area, have been given less emphasis and instead suitably cross-referenced with the corresponding guidance in the SPD.

The CAMP and Minster Quarter Masterplan also support the Central Area Urban Design Strategy SPD (CAUD) and Evening Economy SPD for the wider city centre area. The CAUD strategy seeks to achieve a co-ordinated approach to the future development of the Central Area to create, amongst other aims, a high quality built environment that builds on the history and identity of Sunderland, drawing together different development proposals and design guidance.



PROPOSAL 2b: The council will continue to work with key partners, stakeholders, developers and the local community to ensure that the heritage-led regeneration of Bishopwearmouth remains at the heart of the Minster Quarter's renaissance.

Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area is at the heart of the cultural transformation of the Minster Quarter and has key links with current and planned regeneration initiatives and activity being delivered by the Council, its cultural partners and the private sector. These are outlined below:-

Keel Square and High Street West Public Realm Improvements

Completed in 2016, Keel Square is a major new public space of the highest quality at a key gateway into the Minster Quarter and Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area, linking the existing city centre retail core and the Vaux development site. The square has been designed around the concept of the 'Keel Line', a physical and metaphorical link for growth and opportunities in Sunderland and includes the 'Propellers of the City' artwork. It has been laid out in high quality natural materials and significantly enhances the settings of the Magistrate Courts and Peacock Public House, and the conservation area as a whole. It is for reason that Management Proposal 1a proposes to extend the boundary of the Conservation Area to incorporate the square.



The Council is currently investing further in public realm improvements along High Street West as part of its Investment Corridor Programme. Phase 1 to the east of Keel Square was completed in 2017, Phase 2 which includes that part of High Street West running through the Conservation Area will be implemented in 2018 and along with Keel Square will transform the streetscape of the conservation area and provide its historic buildings with a setting worthy of their architectural qualities, significantly enhancing the conservation area.

Vaux Redevelopment

Located just to the north of the conservation area, Vaux is a prime development site of five and a half hectares that is beginning to be transformed into a central business district. Bishopwearmouth is perfectly positioned to take advantage of the spin-off effects of such a major development, with the inevitably influx of new office workers spending time and money in the area and supporting businesses operating in the conservation area. The site also includes the continuation of the Keel Line, linking the river bank to Bishopwearmouth via Keel Square.

Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter

The Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter (MACQ) comprise a smaller sub-quarter (shown on plan above) within both the conservation area and Minster Quarter, that is focused on the former fire station and includes development land to its side and rear, and potentially in the longer-term the Magistrates Courts and Gilbridge House. The project aims to regenerate this part of Bishopwearmouth as a cultural destination, complimenting the Empire Theatre's existing cultural offer with a range of new leisure, entertainment, arts and performance uses.



Phase 1 brought the former Fire Station back into active use as bar/ restaurant and café, with upper floor theatre, studio, dance and exhibition spaces. This was completed in November 2017 and demonstrates how heritage-led regeneration at the heart of the conservation area is driving forward the area's cultural renaissance. Phase 2 of the MACQ project to develop an auditorium and outdoor performances space adjacent and linked to the Fire Station has recently received £6 million of Arts Council funding and will commence in 2018. The Auditorium will provide a high quality designed contemporary development (see image on page 60) that compliments the architectural qualities of surrounding historic buildings, and together with the Fire Station will provide a hub of cultural uses and activity that will both enhance and enliven this part of the conservation area.

Sunderland University Hope Street Exchange

Sunderland University's £10million Enterprise and Innovation Centre, the Hope Street Exchange, recently opened just outside the western boundary of the conservation area. Another example of successful heritage-led regeneration within the Minster Quarter, the scheme involves the conversion and re-use of the Grade II listed Milburn designed former Gas Office building, with a complimentary high quality contemporary new build alongside. The Hope Street Exchange is part of the University's City Campus, with Bishopwearmouth positioned as the main route for students between the Campus and the City Centre retail core.



Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme

The City Council has recently been successful in bidding for £2million Heritage Lottery Funding for a Townscape Heritage scheme in Bishopwearmouth. A round 1 pass was granted in February 2017, with Development Phase funding released to the Council to work up the detail of the scheme throughout 2017 to prepare a Round 2 application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in February 2018.

The Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage (TH) area encompasses the northern two-thirds (zones 1 and 2) of the conservation area. The TH scheme will make grants available to property owners / tenants for repairs and restoration works to buildings and to bring vacant floor space into use. It will also fund a comprehensive enhancement scheme for Town Park, and activities and events for local people to enjoy their heritage and learn more about Bishopwearmouth's past and its historic buildings. It is also funding a dedicated Project Officer to oversee its development and delivery.

A successful Round 2 pass was awarded in June 2018, the TH scheme will commence in September 2018 and will run for 5 years until 2023, delivering substantial improvements to the conservation area's historic buildings and spaces and making a significant contribution to the wider regeneration of the Minster Quarter. Full details of the projects the Bishopwearmouth TH scheme will deliver, and the outcomes and outputs it will achieve are set out under Management Objective 3.

Regeneration Linkages

The heritage led regeneration initiatives of the Townscape Heritage scheme and the MACQ will address many of the heritage needs of the originally designated part of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. Alongside investment corridor public realm improvements and major private sector developments within and around the Minster Quarter, they are delivering a cultural renaissance in Bishopwearmouth that has not been since its late Victorian / Edwardian heydays over 100 years ago, and with its buildings from this period at the very heart of this renaissance. The ongoing reinvigoration of this historic area to become a cultural quarter will bring more people to the area adding to its dynamic and evolving city centre character.

Management Objectives & Proposals: Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 3: To ensure that heritage and culture led regeneration underpins the sustainable economic future of Sunderland City Centre, through the promotion of and successful delivery of a Townscape Heritage Scheme

This Heritage Lottery funded project will deliver a Townscape Heritage (TH) Scheme within the northern part of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area from 2018 to 2023, following their approval in June 2018.

The TH will help turn the fortunes of the area around by providing grant aid for building works, public realm improvements and delivering public activities and education. Grants to historic buildings and spaces will address the area's physical heritage needs which along with complimentary strategic investment will underpin its new economic direction. The Town Park will be revitalised through new paving, planting, lighting and street furniture. A range of activities and events will increase understanding of the significant heritage value of the area, helping this have an even higher profile within the city centre.

This part of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area contains a concentration of listed buildings and other historic buildings, including landmarks such as the Grade II* listed Sunderland Minster and Empire Theatre and several prominent Grade II listed buildings including the Peacock and Dun Cow Public Houses and the Magistrates Courts. The towers, domes and cupolas of these buildings rise above refined terraced streets to provide the TH area with a rich and interesting townscape. Several of the buildings were designed by Sunderland's most renowned architects, the Milburn brothers, who were particularly active in the early 20th century and especially notable for their impressive Edwardian Baroque style of architecture.

Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area has been chosen over other designated conservation areas in Sunderland for a TH funding bid as it has the most potential to make the greatest contribution to the local environment and economy in terms of townscape enhancement, improving economic prosperity and strengthening

the area's evolving cultural scene. It is located within the Minster Quarter of the City Centre that is currently the focus of substantial regeneration investment. A TH has significant potential to build on existing regeneration initiatives by capitalising on its unique heritage assets to make a key and tangible contribution to strengthening the local economy. It also contains the highest concentration of architecturally distinctive buildings in the City in need of repair and restoration work, presenting the best opportunity for tangible and collective townscape enhancement. Please see below the map of the Townscape Heritage scheme boundary with eligible properties highlighted.



PROPOSAL 3a: The Council will invest in repairs to historic buildings, reinstatement of traditional features and bringing property back into active economic use through delivery of the Townscape Heritage Scheme

The TH will be a robust vehicle for coordinated area improvements. The principle of heritage and culturally led regeneration will underscore the emerging economic direction. It will demonstrate that the historic environment has monetary value worth investing in to help contribute positively to a sustainable economic future. Bringing back vacant upper floor space in key landmark buildings will expand their business model, create a mix of uses to stimulate economic growth, and provide additional income to support future maintenance of the publicly funded enhancement works.

The second round submission details a range of building projects across the TH area. These were determined by first assessing the contribution of all the properties to the significance of the conservation area, and then prioritised by use of a scoring matrix assessing condition, appearance, use, grouping, vacancy, public realm and owner/tenant support. There is unlikely to be sufficient funding within the scheme to address all heritage need, and this prioritisation process is therefore important to ensure public funding is targeted where the impact will be most effective.



Within each building project a range of repair and reinstatement works have been identified, with priority given to listed buildings, works that aid wind and water tightness and works that support the long term economic use of the historic buildings. The retention of surviving elements of historic shopfronts and the reinstatement of traditional style shopfronts is a fundamental element of the TH scheme, based on historic photographs and evidence wherever possible.

The TH will promote Bishopwearmouth as a place to visit and enjoy, expanding the function of the TH area to become an after work cultural destination, and building upon the existing strong foundation of arts based activity in the immediate area. The revitalised Town Park will encourage passersby to linger within the space, enjoying views of the Minster and the tranquil character of this valuable open space in the heart of the city centre. The rejuvenated public open space will complement the restored landmark buildings surrounding it, and combined with potential new development will create a stronger sense of place and local identity within this part of the city centre. Telling the story of the historic core at the heart of the TH area through physical representations of the lost street pattern, emphasising the remains of the village green, and new interpretation panels explaining the origins of the settlement, will help fulfil this management objective.

PROPOSAL 3b: The Council will bring together those with an interest in the area and its future to collaborate in creating a distinctive, memorable and enjoyable place through promotion of the Townscape Heritage Scheme

It is our intention that by improving building condition, townscape appearance, public realm use, and commercial and cultural activity, the area's historic integrity and future resilience will strengthen and the legacy of the TH investment will be sustained. The Council will work collaboratively with key partner organisations and local stakeholders to ensure that the TH investment brings those parties together to deliver a shared vision, drawing upon local networks, knowledge and experience.

PROPOSAL 3c: The Council will bring together local communities and enhance knowledge of the heritage value of the conservation area through inclusive local events and activities as part of the Townscape Heritage Scheme

The TH includes a detailed activity plan intended to reach a range of audience and demographic within Sunderland and beyond. This will include open days and events, talks tours and trails; taster sessions in heritage craft skills; student projects on ecology, photography and architecture; and training opportunities in construction. Volunteer projects are woven through the five year scheme including production of a Bishopwearmouth Village Atlas, building recording, oral history, and churchyard and town park surveys.

The Council will establish positive links with delivery partners and volunteer groups to deliver the activity plan such as the University of Sunderland, Sunderland College, the Empire Theatre Creative Learning Team, and the Sunderland Heritage Forum.

Management Objectives & Proposals: Public Realm and Town Park

Public Realm

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 4: To protect, enhance and maintain significant open spaces and streetscape / landscape features in Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area

The public realm comprises of the streets, parks and squares which are defined and contained by buildings and other elements and structures. The relationship between buildings and the public realm should ensure that streets and spaces are busy, overlooked by the public fronts of buildings, and perceived to be safe throughout the day and into the evening. The design, quality and appearance of the public realm within the conservation area will play a large part in the perception of the place.

The public realm is one the principal means of providing a cohesive identity across the Minster Quarter which is an important part of the conservation area, and will play a key role in:

- Improving the green infrastructure of the city, providing space green space and links whilst solving urban and climatic challenges by building with nature.
- Linking the various development sites both visually and physically.
- Unifying the Quarter through a coordinated design approach that utilises high quality materials and street furniture.
- Creating an environment that is busy, overlooked and safe through the relationship with adjoining buildings.
- Improving opportunities for sustainable forms of transport particularly walking and cycling through enhancements to the connectivity and legibility of the area and identifying new and enhanced linkages across and around key development opportunity sites.

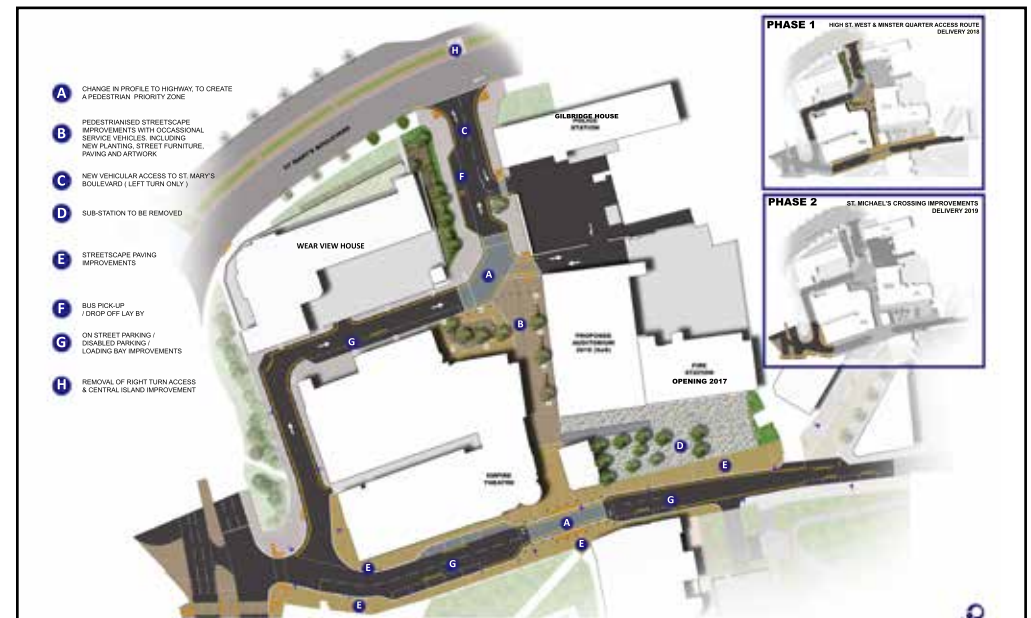
PROPOSAL 4a: The council will continue to seek the implementation of high quality public realm improvements to create spaces and streets of character and interest throughout the Conservation Area

The City Council is also investing in further public realm works to High Street West as part of its on-going Investment Corridor project. These improvements will commence in 2018, continuing the high quality palette of traditional materials, including grit stone and granite paving and curbing, already used at Keel Square and High Street West section outside of the conservation area to the west. Examples of the quality of materials are shown in the image below and illustrate the standard expected for future public realm improvements in the conservation area.

PROPOSAL 4b: The council will maintain to the highest of standards improved public spaces to ensure the quality of enhancement schemes is sustained into the future.

It is essential that public realm improvements are sustainable in that they not only benefit today's generations but that the standards achieved in the works are appropriately maintained into the future. It should be ensured therefore that a long-term maintenance agreement is put in place as part of any public realm schemes that establishes design standards in any subsequent repair or maintenance works and a funding regime to undertake such works.

DRAFT PROPOSALS



Town Park

PROPOSAL 4c: The Council will seek to improve the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the Park to users through a range of environmental improvements, including the introduction of high quality surface materials, landscaping and street furniture. The Council will ensure the enhancement of Town Park is informed by its historic significance and seeks to improve the setting of key listed buildings and create a higher quality, more attractive, secure and usable public space.

Town Park was created after clearance of historic buildings in Bishopwearmouth village in the years after WWII, before the conservation area was designated. The cleared buildings once sat around an elliptical green set in a square, which appears to have been the village green since Bishopwearmouth's medieval origins. The cleared sites and green were amalgamated and laid out with sinuous paths and ornamental beds to create a mid-twentieth century municipal park. Nearby, new roads, clearance, and major new buildings left the park quite isolated from its environs from all but the north, where Church Lane still connects it back to High Street West. Church Lane, east of the Minster, is the last of several narrow routes which characterised this part of Bishopwearmouth before the clearance; others included Little Gate, South Gate and a market place.

Today, Town Park has a tired, under-used feel and is more of an expedient route into the city centre than a well-used destination of choice. It has little historic character of its own; the village green is still discernible but is not defined by buildings and so has become an ambiguous space. The park's layout lacks historic reference, traditional materials seen in historic photos were cleared and planting is generic. The Crowtree Leisure Centre (east) and multi-storey car-park (south) intrude on its setting, and clearance has left it exposed to the west. Only to the north does it have a strong authentic relationship with its surroundings, overlooked by the Minster and Mowbray Almshouses, and linked to intimate Church Lane. The latter also has dull modern materials which do not enliven the route north or the setting of the Minster and its important boundary walls.

Improvements to Town Park to maximise its potential as a place to visit rather than a cut through the city centre is an important management issue for the conservation area as well as the wider Minster Quarter. It is therefore intended that significant changes to the layout, appearance and ambience of the space will be made as part of

the Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage scheme.

The choice of surface materials and street furniture to be used in the Park and on Church Lane adjacent will be particularly important to enhancing the quality and character of this historic space. The existing surface blocks and the style and condition of the seating / bins, as illustrated below, detracts considerably from the park and is disconnected from its historic interest. Any enhancement scheme should seek to remove these inappropriate products and introduce high quality traditional paving materials together with the co-ordinated upgrading of street furniture using more sympathetic styles. Integration with the public realm works on High Street West and to the land to the rear of the proposed Next store will also be key consideration.

A key element of the environmental improvements to the Park will be to enhance the status of 'the green', both visually and historically. Currently, the green is largely unused and forgotten about and visually unattractive. A pathway through its centre has severed the green in two, the removal of this path would at least reinstate its historic form, coupled with landscaping works to improve its appearance. Sensitively designed seating may be placed around the edge of the green to encourage people to stay and enjoy the space - the purpose for which village greens were traditionally formed.



Some of the tree and shrub planting within the Park partially obscures views of surrounding listed buildings such as the Minster, Mowbray Almshouses and the Empire Theatre which also inhibits wayfinding. The Council will seek, as part of any enhancement scheme for the Park, to open up views of key buildings and enhance their settings through the removal of selected trees that do not contribute to the character of the space or the conservation area. The 'opening-up' of the Park in this way would also improve the perception of public safety through the space.



Town Park is an important but undersold green space in the heart of the historic settlement of Bishopwearmouth, and includes the remains of the medieval village green. Generally, the public does not appreciate the historic significance of the green as common land at the heart of the original Anglo-Saxon settlement of Bishopwearmouth.

Telling the story of this historic space through interpretation and physical representation of the lost historic streets is a key objective of the Townscape Heritage scheme. The Council will therefore identify suitable forms of interpretative material to be displayed within and around the Park to help increase understanding of its importance and encourage visitors to experience it.

Town Park includes a registered village green to the southern side of the space around the oval, rather than the oval itself. This was registered in 1969 and highlights the historical importance of this space and is a key consideration of any future improvement works.



Management Objectives & Proposals: New Design in Historic Areas

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 5: To secure the appropriate enhancement of the Conservation Area by ensuring that all new development respects and enriches its historic context and achieves the design aspirations of the Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD

PROPOSAL 5a: The Council will require all forms of new development in and within the setting of the Conservation Area, including new buildings and extensions, to be architecturally well crafted displaying the highest standards of design quality and contextually appropriate within the area's historic environment.

It is vital that all future new development within and around Bishopwearmouth demonstrates the highest possible standards of design and harmonises with the existing physical surroundings. New buildings must make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. All forms of development will be required to be supported by a Design and Access Statement and a Heritage Statement, which will demonstrate that the key principles of good design have been applied and that the proposed development has been informed by a thorough understanding of the site and its context. Guidance regarding the preparation of a design statement is contained within the Council's Design and Access Statements SPD.

There are some basic design principles which all new developments that impact on the conservation area should follow. Architectural designs for new buildings must respond to and enhance their historic context, having special regard to the form, height, massing, orientation, proportions, materials and architectural detailing of surrounding buildings and key views and vistas. The front elevations of new buildings in particular should address the street in a traditional manner, respecting and reinforcing the building lines and proportions of surrounding historic properties. Generally, the arrangement and proportions of the fenestration should reflect those of surrounding historic buildings, though more innovative patterns of fenestration and the use of high quality contemporary materials such as glass and steel are encouraged.

Proposals should include active frontages with emphasis given to ground floor level through the incorporation of high quality shop fronts, which should be designed to reflect the generous proportions and pattern of historic shopfronts whether in a traditional or contemporary design. More specific guidance on shop fronts is provided on page 67.

Developments on prominent corner plots with streets leading to and from High Street West should display landmark qualities in their architectural design, but this should not be overdone and sensitively handled so as not to dominate adjacent historic buildings or compete with their landmark architectural qualities.

Further design guidance on potential developments in the Minster Quarter is contained within the Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD and must be referred to as the relevant design guidance for new developments in the Conservation Area. Specific guidelines are given in the SPD on built form, including building heights, materials and details and the types and form of buildings that will be accepted on particular sites in the Minster Quarter, including some gap sites within and around the edge of the conservation. This includes guidance on matters such as building lines, scale, massing, heights, materials, and treatment of elevations, corners and frontages.



Above: A 3-D image of the proposed Auditorium development recently granted planning permission alongside the Fire Station, displaying the kind of high quality cutting edge yet contextually sympathetic design standards that will be required in all significant new development in and around the conservation area.

The main gap sites comprise the Auditorium, the former Crowtree Leisure Centre site and Keel Hotel site, all of which have recent planning permission for developments of high quality contextually appropriate design that are expected to be built in the near future and will enhance the conservation area and its setting.

New development can also often take the form of extensions to existing buildings. Extensions can often have an important enabling role, by making financially viable restoration and conversion schemes for vacant or under-used historic buildings, and supporting the area's regeneration vision by creating additional floorspace or units needed for business development and expansion.

There are certain basic principles that the council will apply in the consideration of proposals to extend historic buildings in the area. For instance, new extensions should always be subservient to the main building and be built from materials that respect and complement the host building and its surroundings. This may involve the use of matching traditional materials and/or contrasting modern materials. A good example is the former gas board offices just outside the Conservation Area, where a lightweight predominantly glass structure with natural stone cladding was added to provide additional apartments using a design approach that clearly distinguishes the old from the new.

PROPOSAL 5b: Developments to the rear of terraced properties will be required, wherever possible, to be designed in a coordinated manner in the interests of enhancing the appearance and townscape quality of rear lanes.

As a general rule, extensions to the rear of terraced properties should be carefully controlled to avoid piecemeal and disjointed rear street scenes from emerging, particularly where rear lanes are visible from main highways. Extensions should generally not exceed two storeys in height, sit below eaves level wherever possible, and seek to maintain or re-establish a continuous building line to the rear lane. Extensions should also respect the traditional "offshoot" footprint wherever possible in the interests of retaining/ restoring the historic urban grain.



Coordinated extensions to the rear of Mary Street reinforcing the rhythm of the terrace

A good example of this approach was used when the majority of Mary Street was reconstructed in the 1990s, where mindful of the prominence of the rear of the terrace along the City Centre ring road a coordinated design solution was adopted in providing offshoot extensions. In this instance a traditional design approach was adopted that largely replicated the consistent form and detail of the original offshoots, but in other conservation areas in the City Centre such as at Foyle Street more contemporary styles have been used sympathetically to distinguish the extensions as modern additions whilst still reinforcing the rhythm of the terrace.

There will be a presumption in favour of retaining and reinstating traditional boundary enclosures to rear lanes in order to enclose rear yards as is the historic pattern of the area. It is not desirable to see a continuation of the existing trend for 'open plan' rear yards used for car parking.

Management Objectives & Proposals: Guidance on Alterations and Repairs

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 6: To ensure that the repair, restoration and adaptation of historic buildings in Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area are undertaken using the principles of 'informed conservation'

The Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area is undergoing significant change as part of the current city centre regeneration and underpins the cultural renaissance of the area. A balance is required between retention and conservation of those elements which contribute positively to its special character, and permitting positive alterations and new works to be undertaken which add to the evolution of the area and sense of place.

Retaining original features in historic properties has many advantages: the overall appearance of the property will be more aesthetically pleasing, the value of the property is likely to be enhanced, and repairing and upgrading historic fabric is more sustainable and often cheaper than replacement with modern products such as uPVC windows and doors, or concrete roof products.

PROPOSAL 6a: The Council will provide guidance and advice on repair options and techniques. This will be supported by a maintenance manual produced as part of the Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme.

Repairs

On-going maintenance is the best way to keep a building in good condition and save money on future repair bills. Carrying out routine tasks, like clearing gutters or painting windows can stop minor issues becoming major problems. When repairs are needed it is important that they are carried out in a like-by-like basis by an experienced tradesperson using appropriate traditional materials.

Carrying out an annual check of your property is a good way to spot problems before they lead to mounting repair bills. A good method for carrying out an inspection is to start at the roof and work your way down, one side of the building at a time. Common defects to look out for include:

- Missing slates on your roof, or signs of holes or splits on flat roofs
- Vegetation growing in gutters, chimneys or other areas
- Leaks in your loft, especially after heavy rain
- Overflowing gutters and wet stains on external walls
- Damp patches on internal walls or ceilings
- Loose or missing mortar joints between stones/bricks
- Cracks in render or harling
- Weathered or damaged stonework.
- Flaking paintwork on windows or doors.
- Rotten woodwork, for example on window cills.

PROPOSAL 6b: The council will encourage the use of appropriate traditional materials when carrying out repair and alteration works

Traditional Materials

The replacement of timber windows with uPVC alternatives is a popular but ill-conceived option, sacrificing sustainability, quality and appearance for a reduced cost and a greatly reduced lifespan in comparison to timber. Plastic windows cannot be repaired in the same way as timber and cannot be painted when, with time, they begin to discolour. Unlike timber, which is biodegradable, uPVC windows cannot be recycled at the end of their useful life. In addition, the visual characteristics of uPVC units are quite different to the traditional appearance of wooden windows. Their shiny appearance and smooth texture, method of opening, proportions of glazing bars and general lack of detailing all give a very different visual effect to typical wooden sash windows. As a result, uPVC windows appear out of context in historic buildings and are generally harmful to the historic character of the Conservation Area.



In most cases timber windows can be repaired and they can be successfully upgraded in-situ by a joiner at a fraction of the cost of replacement. There is also a strong argument to suggest that timber windows are a far more sustainable option than plastic - uPVC windows require a relatively high energy input in the creation stages, that necessitates the use of chemicals and hydrocarbons that are potentially harmful to the environment, whereas timber can be repaired easily and obtained from sustainable sources.

Traditional roofing materials such as clay tiles and welsh slates have a distinctive colour, size and texture that respect the character and appearance of historic buildings. The substitution of these with concrete tiles and artificial slates is noticeable in the streetscene, and lacks the traditional detailing and patina which gives life to the historic roofscape. Artificial slates in particular have a moulded appearance noticeably different from the natural texture of slate, and the plasticised sheen is particularly obvious in wet weather.

The use of traditional lime mortar when repointing brick or stonework rather than cement, the use of lime based render rather than cement based, and the use of limewash or mineral paints over plasticised paints is encouraged. These traditional products encourage breathability of the historic fabric maximising their life span, and helps retain the traditional appearance of the historic buildings.

PROPOSAL 6c: The Council will promote the reuse and repair of historic fabric and features to minimise their loss, and will require justified alterations and adaptations to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Alterations

The scenarios outlined in the tables should provide a useful starting point when considering making alterations to a historic building in the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. Owners and occupiers should be aware that many of the operations described below would require Listed Building Consent and/or Planning Permission, and should therefore seek further guidance from the Conservation Team prior to undertaking any such works.

Windows

Scenario	Action
Original windows have survived and are in situ	Require retention and repair/refurbishment as necessary. Installation of exact replicas acceptable if originals beyond repair. Modifications may be incorporated to improve ease of operation and heat retention.
Original windows lost, existing are in timber but of poor form	Encourage reinstatement of windows to original design (usually working sliding sash timber frame) using surviving original windows as model. Replica windows should ideally be single glazed and not incorporate trickle vents.
Original lost, UPVC put in place	Encourage reinstatement of timber framed windows using surviving original windows as a model.

Doors

Scenario	Action
Original timber panelled doors have survived and are in situ	Require retention and repair/ refurbishment of inner and outer leafs as necessary. Installation of timber replicas acceptable if originals beyond repair.
Original doors lost, existing are in timber but of poor form	Encourage reinstatement of timber panelled doors using surviving original doors as a model.
Original lost, UPVC put in place	Encourage reinstatement of timber panelled doors using surviving original doors as a model.
Original timber architrave has survived and is in situ	Require retention and repair/ refurbishment as necessary. Installation of replicas acceptable only if originals are beyond repair.

Roof Covering

Scenario	Action
Original Welsh slates have survived and are in situ	If large scale repairs become necessary require retention of all good slates to be re-used on front elevation supplemented with reclaimed materials. Rear elevation may be re-covered in other natural slate, Welsh preferred but Spanish slate may be considered. Slate types should not be mixed on an elevation.
Original Welsh slates have been replaced with artificial tiles, e.g. Eternits	Encourage reinstatement of natural slates where re-roofing has become necessary.
New rooflights to front elevation	May be acceptable in some cases if necessary to facilitate a conversion scheme but should be a conservation style rooflight. In all cases rooflights should be restricted to the rear elevation if possible.
Existing rooflights of poor condition/ form	Encourage replacement with a conservation-style light, to sit flush with the roof slates.
Rooflights to rear elevation	Must be of the conservation style, to sit flush with the roof slates, and kept to a minimum in terms of size and scale.

Chimneys

Scenario	Action
Original chimney stack and pots have survived and are in situ	Require retention and repair/ refurbishment as necessary. Installation of replica pots acceptable if originals beyond repair. Removing or shortening of chimney stack to be discouraged; stack should be repaired and/ or reinstated to original height and design.
Original chimney stack has survived and is in situ, pots missing	Encourage reinstatement of chimney pots to original design using surviving original chimney pots as a model for style.

Fascias/soffits

Scenario	Action
Original decorative timber eaves details have survived and are in situ	Require retention and repair/ refurbishment as necessary.
Original lost, plain timber or uPVC put in place	Encourage reinstatement of timber features to original design using surviving original details as a model for style.

Dormers (to front and rear)

Scenario	Action
New dormer	Unlikely to be supported to the front elevation
Historic dormer of good quality has survived and is in situ	Require retention, repair/ refurbish as necessary. Windows should be timber framed; it is possible that, dependent on the style of the window, double glazed units could be incorporated into dormers.
Modern dormer of poor design, materials and/ or condition	Encourage replacement with either conservation-style rooflights or dormer of alternative design/materials that is more akin to the character of the building and streetscene.

Rainwater goods

Scenario	Action
Original timber or cast iron gutter and cast iron downpipe has survived and is in situ	Require retention and encourage repairs where necessary. If irreparable, replace using exact replicas i.e. timber box/ cast-iron gutter and cast-iron downpipe.
Originals lost. UPVC gutter and/ or downpipe in place	Encourage reinstatement of timber/ cast iron elements as appropriate. Cast aluminium may be an acceptable alternative to cast iron provided it matches the dimensions, colour and profile of the original guttering/ downpipe.

Brickwork

Scenario	Action
Brickwork remains as built, showing patina of age	Cleaning of historic brickwork for purely aesthetic reasons will be discouraged to reduce unnecessary damage to the fireskin of the bricks.
Brickwork has been inappropriately painted or rendered in the past and shows evidence of damage to brickwork as a result	Cleaning of the historic brickwork likely to be acceptable, provided it is undertaken in as minimal a fashion as possible, with a non-abrasive technique such as steam cleaning.
Mortar failing, repairs required	Mortar repairs must be carried out in an appropriate lime mortar (contact the Conservation Team for specialist advice on mortar mixes). Sand/cement mortars are damaging to brick and stone work and are not acceptable.

Stonework

Scenario	Action
Original stone features (e.g. lintels, cills, string courses) have survived and are in situ	Require retention and repair/ refurbishment as necessary. Cementitious repairs are damaging to stone work and are not acceptable. Specialist advice should be sought from a stone mason.
Original stone features lost, concrete replacements/ feature lost completely	Encourage reinstatement of natural stone features to original design using surviving original stone work as a model. Artificial stone should not be used.

Railings

Scenario	Action
Original railings/ hand rail/ newel posts have survived and are in situ	Require retention and repair/ refurbishment as necessary. If originals are beyond repair installation of exact replicas acceptable.
Original railings/ hand rail/ newel posts lost	Encourage reinstatement of iron railings to original design using surviving original railings as a model.

Steps

Scenario	Action
Original sandstone steps have survived and are in situ	Require retention and repair/ refurbishment as necessary. If originals are beyond repair, replace using natural sandstone to an identical profile to original.
Original steps lost, concrete replacements in situ	Encourage reinstatement of natural stone steps to an identical profile to originals, using surviving original steps as model.

Utilities/alarm boxes

Scenario	Action
Alterations to property require new utilities boxes (including meter boxes)	Locate all boxes internally or to the rear of building where possible, ensuring that no cable runs are housed on the exterior of the building. If there is no feasible alternative to locating boxes on the front elevation then they must be discreetly positioned and of as visually unobtrusive a design as possible.
Existing utilities/ meter boxes are of poor appearance, detracting from the character of the building and streetscene	Encourage relocation/ replacement of existing boxes to minimise/ reduce visual impact. Ensure that no cable runs are housed on the exterior of the building.
New intruder alarm system fitted	Require as discreet a housing for the alarm sirens and warning lights as possible (recognise that the box is designed as a deterrent); this includes size and colour. Require a discreet location for the box, to be replicated along the street in order to encourage uniformity.
Existing alarm boxes are of poor appearance, detracting from the character of the building and streetscene	Encourage relocation/ replacement of existing boxes to minimise/ reduce visual impact. Ensure that no cable runs are housed on the exterior of the building.
Addition of satellite dishes	Encourage relocation/replacement of existing dishes to minimise/reduce visual impact. Seek removal of redundant dishes. Encourage erection of new dishes on the rear elevation or attached to chimneys, rather than front elevations.

Management Objectives & Proposals: Setting, Landmarks & Views

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 7: To protect and improve the setting and key views of landmark buildings in the Conservation Area, and the setting of the Conservation Area itself.

Each building in the conservation area has its own setting which contributes to its significance, eg. by its place in views within or through the area, or by its relationship with other buildings or spaces. This is particularly true of the group of buildings with animated roofscapes – the setting of each is enhanced by its relationship with the group and in views. It is also the case with the buildings in terraces which rely in part on their relationship with other terraced buildings in their setting. The whole Conservation Area also has a setting which contributes to its significance. This is strongly influenced by the difference between the intimate historic character inside and expansive modern character outside the boundary, by topography, by views to and through the area, and by the dominance beyond the area of the Minster and Empire as visual and cultural symbols.

PROPOSAL 7a: The Council will require all future development proposals to respect and, where possible, enhance the setting of the Conservation Area, including significant views close to and from more distant vantage points.

Recent changes have given the opportunity to enhance the setting of the conservation area, and this must be taken where possible. It is also important that opportunities are taken to improve the setting of the area where the opportunity arises. For example, demolition of part of the Crowtree Leisure Centre has raised the profile of the area from the east creating the opportunity to better link it physically into the cityscape through redevelopment on the boundary. Redevelopment of the rest of the centre must significantly enhance the area's setting through replacement of the blank elevation and sunken service route next to the medieval village green with an active frontage of a more suitable scale and appearance. It could also open up views of the minster from the east, enhancing one of the most prominent and attractive features when viewed from nearby in the City Centre. This warrants further analysis in the context of any feasibility study into the future of Crowtree Leisure Centre. Other setting enhancement opportunities exist with bulky modern buildings to the north, adding to the success of Keel Square which has dramatically improved the setting of the area to the immediate north-east. The setting of Zone 2 could also be improved by better links west towards the University, and Zone 3 could be

enhanced by improving the visual relationship between the backs of buildings on Greens Terrace and St Michael's Way.



PROPOSAL 7b: The Council will seek to ensure that all future development proposals preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the distinctive roofscape of Bishopwearmouth, in particular views of the Minster and Empire Theatre's tower from St Michael's Way, Low Row, Green Terrace, High Street West and from other more distant vantage points.

There are several important views of the Conservation Area, dominated by Sunderland Minster and the Empire tower, particularly from the western edge of the City Centre via St Michael's Way, one the main approaches into the City. Unfortunately, some of these views have been partially obstructed by some developments in recent years. It is essential that remaining views of the conservation area, and of its important landmark buildings, are protected from further development. Other landmark buildings in Bishopwearmouth also punctuate the skyline with numerous attractive towers, domes and cupolas. As illustrated above, views across the Conservation Area from surrounding and distant high points reveal a roofscape of variety, interest and distinction. The Council considers it important that any new development within and adjacent the Conservation Area is of a scale and form that does not obstruct these views or introduces features of an intrusive nature into the roofscape.

Management Objectives & Proposals: Shop Front Design Guidelines

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 8: To secure the preservation, restoration or improvement, as appropriate, of shop frontages in Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area through the application of the following design guidelines.

The quality of shop fronts in Bishopwearmouth is generally poor and detracts considerably from the historic street scene. Only a few historic shop fronts have survived in their entirety; most consist of the remains of the original framework with poorly designed and constructed modern infill frontages. Some shop fronts have been wholly replaced with modern designs, some more successfully than others, but rarely to a standard worthy of the conservation area. Hence, large parts of the conservation area would benefit from comprehensive shop front improvements. The following design guidelines have been formulated to ensure: -

- ❖ High standards of design and workmanship are evident in all replacement and improved shop fronts in the area;
- ❖ The new/improved shop front is appropriate to the host building and benefits the appearance of the wider street scene.
- ❖ A consistent approach is achieved in particular streets or character areas that enhances the conservation area as a whole.

These guidelines refer specifically to Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area and primarily to Vine Place, Stockton Road, High Street West and Low Row. They build upon UDP policies S8 and SA83 (re-produced in appendix 1).

General Guidelines

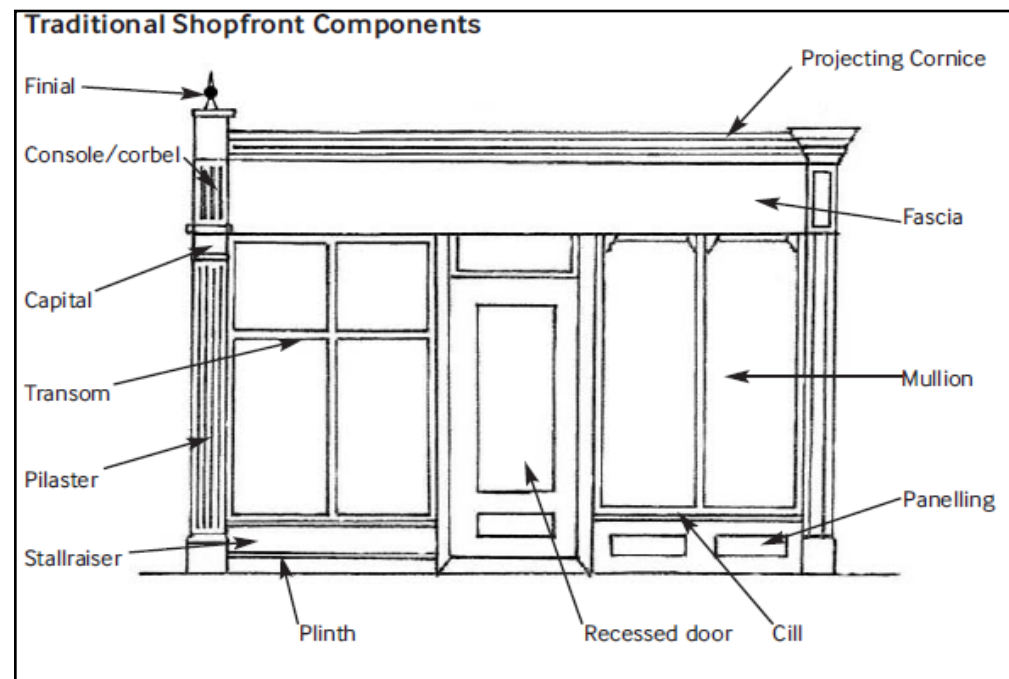
The first decision to be made when proposing to improve/replace a shop front is whether to opt for a traditional or contemporary approach. In the majority of cases, a traditional approach will be required to reinforce the historic character of the area, especially where evidence of the original shop front exists either in the form of surviving features or old photographs / drawings. The main components of a typical Victorian shop front are illustrated in the drawing opposite. These should be incorporated into all new or improved traditional shop fronts. More detailed design guidance on reinstating historic features follows.

Where historic evidence is lacking and the particular circumstances of the premises favour a non-traditional approach, contemporary style shop fronts will be considered. Good quality modern shop fronts tend to display certain characteristics and design standards with regard to their proportions and materials. These are illustrated and discussed in more detail on page 69. Contemporary designs will only be considered that achieve such high standards.

Traditional Shopfronts

PROPOSAL 8a: The Council will require the retention of surviving traditional shop fronts and features and seek to secure their reinstatement wherever possible.

The individual components of a traditional Victorian shop front can for the purposes of these guidelines be divided into two groups. Firstly, the 'surrounding framework' that is generally made up of the pilasters and entablature. Secondly, the 'shop front infill' which is broadly comprised of the stall riser, door and fanlight, window display and glazing bars.



Surrounding Framework

Historic properties along the north side of Vine Place, Stockton Road, Low Row and no's 1-7 High Street West predominantly display traditional shop front frameworks with a unified design for each terrace. Vine Place, in particular, is notable for almost exclusively retaining its decorative pilasters featuring deeply carved consoles, and the entablature composed of the fascia and indented cornice. This framework must be retained where it exists and, where necessary, carefully repaired. Where missing, the historic framework should be reinstated as part of any shop front improvement proposals, replicating the pattern and detailing of pilasters and cornices along the street. This approach will also be required for no's 41-43 Stockton Road and 1-7 High Street West. Thus, the Council insists that a traditional approach be followed for these terraces based on surviving historic, surrounding frameworks in order to maintain and enhance the harmony and uniformity of these elements of the street frontage.

Elsewhere, in the south side of Vine Place only scattered remnants of the historic frameworks survive. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence in surviving pilasters, friezes and cornices to enable designers to replicate these features with a view to full reinstatement of the surrounding framework. This is the preferred approach, however, it will only be insisted upon where at least some elements of the Victorian shop front have survived on a property to prevent further incremental losses of historic features. In other cases, modern shop fronts will also be considered provided they achieve the design standards set out in these guidelines.

Infill Shop Fronts

For traditional shop fronts a Victorian approach will be required for the infill shop front to be inserted into the basic framework, although some flexibility in the design will be permitted. Victorian shop fronts are characterised by vertical glazed panes, subdivided by window mullions, above a stall riser. The preceding diagram shows a typical Victorian shop front.

The infill shop front must be slightly recessed within the surrounding framework, normally no more than 100mm behind the face of the pilaster shaft. The stall riser helps to protect the display windows from damage and is important to the proportions of the shop front. It should generally be aligned with the top of the pilaster base and should feature a slightly recessed moulded timber panel and continuous plinth at pavement level.

Traditional shop doors should also be timber panelled to match the stall riser and should appear as a continuation of the shop window. The main doorway is normally recessed behind the display window and often positioned in the centre of the shop front. Mullions should be appropriately spaced within the display window, as illustrated in the diagram, and delicately moulded on the outside.

Materials and Painting

Painted timber which is both versatile and durable is the standard material for traditional shop fronts. Modern glossy materials such as acrylic, perspex and uPVC appear incongruous against the traditional materials of historic buildings and will not be allowed anywhere in the conservation area.

Traditional timber shop fronts should be painted in a good quality semi-gloss paint, using darker, richer colours that were typical of the Victorian period i.e. burgundy red, dark red and navy blue, leaving the window display to provide the light. Gilding or lighter colours may be used sparingly to highlight architectural features and mouldings. Garish colours, for example bright yellow and bright green, are considered obtrusive and will not be accepted.



This pub frontage was formerly painted a traditional burgundy red and is now a more complimentary shade of pale green and cream

Modern Shop Fronts

PROPOSAL 8b: The Council will give consideration, where all elements of a traditional shop front have been lost, to the installation of high quality, contemporary shop fronts that integrate with the host building and street scene.

Well-designed and constructed modern shop fronts can, in some instances, make a positive contribution to the historic street scene. Such an approach will normally only be considered in the south side of Vine Place on properties where all evidence of the original shop front has been lost. In exceptional circumstances there may be justification for inserting a modern shop front infill within a predominantly traditional framework, but only where it is designed to achieve a strong relationship between these two elements of the shop front and integrate with the building as a whole.

There can be some distinct differences in the detailing and materials of a good quality, modern shop front to those of a traditional design, although the general proportions should remain the same. Thus, fascias should be of a comparable size and align with those of traditional shop fronts in the terrace so signage is provided at a consistent level throughout the street.



The shop front above successfully mixes traditional and contemporary materials in a simple yet high quality modern design to provide an attractive frontage that relates to the upper floor.

There is slightly more flexibility in the choice of materials for modern shop fronts; timber is still preferred but other natural materials such as stone can also be appropriate. Stall risers are normally made from dark granite or similar material. Aluminium frames may occasionally be considered if they are appropriately anodised. A wider range of paint finishes beyond the normal 'heritage' range may be used on modern shop fronts but bright colours should still be avoided.

Modern designs are generally devoid of the elaborate mouldings and architectural detailing that typifies Victorian shop fronts, although occasionally do successfully incorporate some decorative features. However, good quality modern shop fronts are generally notable for their simple design, as illustrated opposite.

Domestic Frontages

Certain terraces in the area, namely Mary Street and Green Terrace, have not been subjected to the evolution of shop fronts. Some windows have been enlarged and signage provided on a small fascia above but, by and large, the buildings have retained their original domestic frontages. In these streets shop fronts will not be permitted in any form. The size, shape and form of the existing windows and doors must always be retained to preserve the domestic appearance of the street.

Signage

PROPOSAL 8c: The Council will exercise strict control over the display of advertisements in Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area to ensure that signs are designed and located to respect the character and appearance of the host building and historic street scene.

Special attention will be given to the size, form and location of adverts in the Conservation Area in the interests of preserving or enhancing its character and appearance

Fascia Signs

The main name sign for the premises should be restricted to the shop front fascia, unless a sub-fascia forms part of the traditional design in which case it should be used for the main shop sign. The name sign should be well proportioned in relation to the length and depth of the fascia and its position within it. Only two types of name sign are considered appropriate, regardless of whether they are to be applied to a traditional or modern shop front. These are painted lettering or cut-out freestanding letters fixed individually to the fascia.

Hand painted lettering is generally more suitable for historic shop fronts. It should therefore be in a traditional typeface and suitably coloured to contrast with the fascia, preferably a light colour against a dark background.



Freestanding letters should be made from metal or wood and not project more than 50mm from the fascia. The height of lettering should be no more than two-thirds the height of the fascia and normally centred about its horizontal and vertical axis, leaving reasonable space at each end of the fascia. Acrylic letters may be accepted on modern shop fronts provided they present a matt appearance and are suitably coloured. Whole fascias of plastic will not be permitted, whether illuminated or not.

Hanging Signs and Banners

The Council will exercise strict control over projecting signs in the conservation area. Traditionally hanging signs, which take the form of a signboard hanging

from a metal bracket on the fascia, are generally acceptable but will be limited to one per property to avoid creating clutter. Hanging signs should have a vertical emphasis, being no more than 750mm in height, and not project more than 600mm from the fascia. Such signs were commonplace in the 19th century, particularly for public houses. A good example exists at Vesta Tilley's, as shown below.



Banners may very occasionally be an alternative option to hanging signs for certain properties but both types of signage must not be mixed together on the same building. Each proposal for a banner will be considered on its individual merits, depending on the suitability of the building concerned to this type of sign and its impact on the wider street scene. Where banners are allowed they must be canvas, must be no more than 1800mm in height and will be limited to one banner per property. Solid banners will not be permitted. Banners are the only signs that may be erected above ground floor level. An example of an appropriate form of banner is illustrated above.

Projecting 'box' signs, whether illuminated or not, will not be permitted anywhere in the conservation area as they are historically inappropriate and appear clumsy and obtrusive.

Other specialist forms of signage may be permitted where the particular nature of the building warrants this. For example, display boards are highly desirable for the Empire Theatre to promote its productions and have been accepted following negotiations to secure a suitable design.

Illumination

As a general rule illumination, where necessary, should be low key and any lighting carefully integrated into the design of the shop front. Only three types of lighting are considered appropriate, depending on the type of signage to be illuminated.

- ❖ For freestanding letters, only halo illumination will be permitted.
- ❖ Traditional hanging signs and banners should be lit from above via a light source concealed within an appropriately designed fitting attached to the bracket of the sign (as shown in the photograph far left).
- ❖ Miniaturised spotlights fixed to the ground below or discreetly located on the building without causing damage to it may alternatively be used to illuminate signs or, especially on larger buildings, architectural features.

PROPOSAL 8d: The Council will seek to ensure that shop front security measures are designed to cause no significant harm to the character and appearance of historic buildings and general street scene.

Security

Preferred methods of security are those which do not affect the exterior of the shop front, such as laminated glass or internal lattice grilles behind the shop window. It is essential that the roller mechanisms for internal grilles are concealed behind the fascia so that the retracted shutter can not be seen from the street.

External roller shutters, which have commonly been used in the past, will no longer be permitted in the conservation area as they detract from the historic character and appearance of the buildings and have a 'deadening' effect on the street scene when lowered in the evening. Removable mesh grilles that are fitted over window and door openings without obscuring fascias, pilasters and stall risers may be used, especially where they are designed as an integral feature of the shop front as illustrated top left. Occasionally, external roller grilles may be permitted provided they are of the open lattice type, cover the glazed areas only, and form an integral part of the overall shop front design. The shutter box must be fully recessed behind the fascia and any runners, retainers and fixings suitably concealed within the shop front structure i.e., pilasters, sills, such as in the example top right.



Blinds / Canopies

'Dutch canopy' style blinds and other types of plastic blinds are considered to be particularly intrusive on historic buildings and will not be permitted in the conservation area. Only traditional canvas awnings will be considered, which should be designed as an integral part of the shop front to not obscure any architectural features, such as pilasters and consoles, and be concealed in a blind box flush with the fascia when retracted. When open they must be no lower than 2.4 metres above the pavement and at least 1 metre in from the kerb in the interests of highway and pedestrian safety.



Management Objectives & Proposals: Historic Pubs of Bishopwearmouth

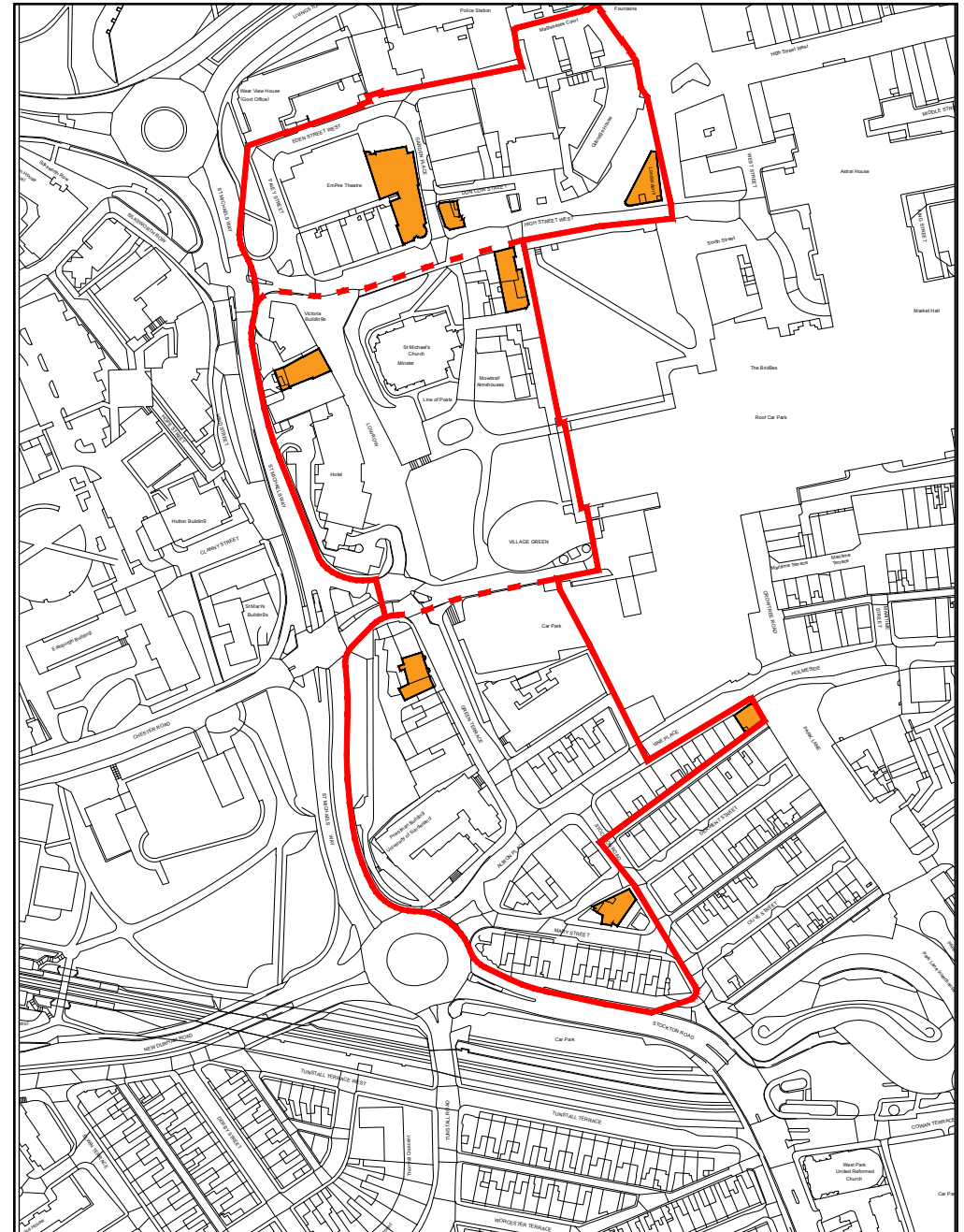
MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE 9: To ensure the preservation of the distinctive qualities and historic character of public houses in Bishopwearmouth.

Bishopwearmouth is notable for containing a fine variety of historic pubs mainly from the Edwardian period, most 'listed' and many with distinctive architectural qualities. These are identified on the map below; their key characteristics are appraised at various points in the Character Appraisal in Part 1 of this document. They include, for instance, the Dun Cow and Peacock Public Houses which are distinguished by their landmark qualities and high degree of architectural embellishment.

The preceding shop front design guide establishes guidelines to protect or secure the reinstatement of traditional pub frontages and forms of signage for the Conservation Area's historic pubs. The following management proposals build upon these guidelines and propose further measures that seek to ensure that the special architectural and historic qualities of the area's traditional public houses are preserved for the benefit of existing and future patrons and visitors.

PROPOSAL 9a: Special control will be exercised over the display of signage on historic pubs in the Conservation Area, in order to conserve their special traditional character.

The recent trend for adapting public houses into modern style 'disco' or 'theme' bars can often be very intrusive to the historic character of formerly traditional drinking pubs. Garish 'fun pub' type signs using bright colours, invariably appear as very obtrusive features on traditional pubs and, as such, as a general rule will not be permitted. A traditional approach will be required to be adopted for erecting signage on such buildings. Thus, signage should be limited to a name sign of either painted lettering or freestanding cut out letters and a traditional timber hanging board sign.



PROPOSAL 9b: The Council will give special attention to the retention of surviving historic pub interiors in the interests of preserving the Conservation Area's distinctive pub heritage.

The desire of modern pub operators to maximise their capacity by providing spacious open-plan bars can be very destructive of historic pub interiors. Unfortunately, such has been the pace of modernisation that only a few original pub interiors now remain in the area; the Council therefore considers it especially important to preserve those that do survive. The interior of the Dun Cow is the best surviving example and is quite stunning. It features one of the most remarkable back-bars in Britain, as illustrated below. Other historic interiors survive at the Peacock and in the Empire Theatre. Fortunately, all these buildings are listed and thus their interiors are afforded statutory protection; any proposals to remove or alter original bar fittings in these premises will therefore normally be resisted.



A scenic view of a university campus. A paved walkway made of dark bricks leads from the foreground towards a large, historic stone building with multiple chimneys and windows. The building is set on a green lawn. To the left, there are several trees with bare branches, suggesting a cooler season. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and well-maintained.

Part 3
Management &
Maintenance Plan

Executive Summary

This Management and Maintenance plan (MMP) for Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area examines the issues affecting the conservation area and presents measures that the council will take to address them.

It is an appendix to the larger Character Appraisal & Management Plan (CAMP).

The MMP outlines the significance of the conservation area and sets out why the document is needed. It has been created as part of the Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage scheme, which is designed to enhance and improve the generally northern part of the conservation area (Zones 1 and 2). It also comes at a time when wider strategic plans for this part of the city centre are being pursued, as set out in the Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD (supplementary planning document). The combination of these actions will have a material positive impact on the conservation area as a whole.

The engagement of property owners and businesses will be important in future efforts to improve the conservation area. In developing this plan, Sunderland City Council has engaged with businesses and owners as part of the Townscape Heritage scheme preparation. This document will also have been through a process of public consultation as part of the CAMP. Future actions will be developed in consultation with local stakeholders.

Part 1 of the CAMP sets out why Bishopwearmouth has special interest as a piece of townscape within Sunderland city centre. Part 2 sets out management objectives. This MMP is Part 3. The primary objective is “to ensure that the special architectural or historic interest of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations and for the enrichment of the City’s built heritage”

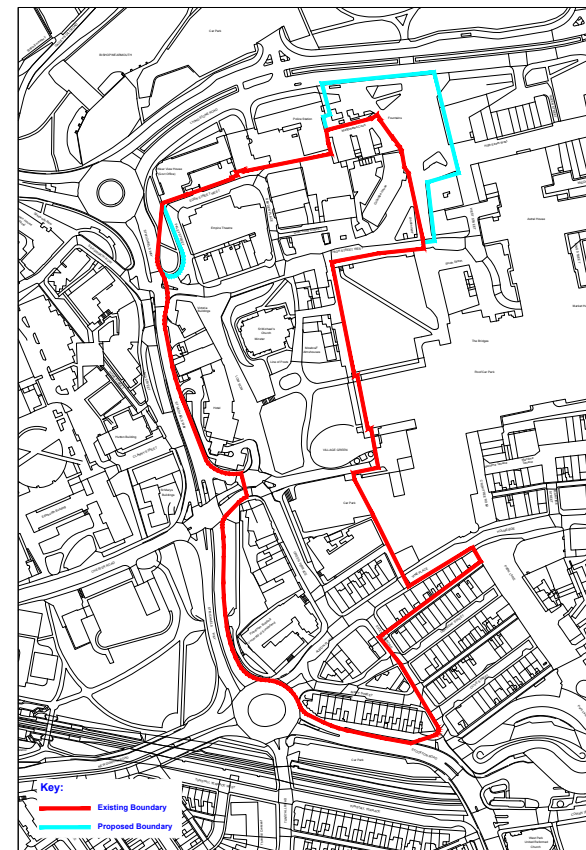
The main areas of concern which this document addresses are:

- Stakeholders
- Planning and regeneration
- Cultural regeneration
- Townscape Heritage scheme
- Public realm and Town Park
- New design in historic areas

- Guidance on alterations and repairs
- Setting, landmarks and views
- Shopfront design guidelines
- Historic pubs of Bishopwearmouth

This document sets out the parameters under which the council will address these issues over the short term (5 years), medium term (10 years), and long term (15+ years). This includes the significant regeneration plans for Bishopwearmouth, a more co-ordinated approach within the council, ensuring compliance with planning regulations and engaging the community to act as positive champions for the conservation area.

More information about the significance and management of the conservation area can be found in the CAMP.



Introduction

Why do we need a management plan?

Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area was designated in 1969 and substantially extended in 1989 in recognition of the special character of this part of the city centre. The council is undertaking a number of measures aimed at ensuring Bishopwearmouth is preserved and enhanced. A Townscape Heritage scheme, partly funded by Heritage Lottery Fund is a critical part of this. The scheme aims to restore and enhance part of the conservation area through a programme of grants to property owners, public realm improvement and public engagement activities and training. However, equally important is establishing a long-term approach to managing, enhancing and monitoring the conservation area. It is for this reason that the council has drawn up this plan.

Scope and status of the plan

The MMP plan sets out a strategic framework for management actions and its purpose is to help co-ordinate the activities of all involved. The MMP plan works within the council's Local Plan for the area which sets out planning policies to guide development. The successful implementation of the Plan and achievement of its objectives will depend to a large extent upon participation and partnership. This plan is adopted by the council through the appropriate committee process; it is not a statutory document and it does not diminish the responsibility of any agency or individual. The plan will continue to inform and respond to other policies and management proposals relating to the area. The plan covers all three zones of the conservation area but parts only address Zones 1 and 2 where the HLF investment will be delivered through the Townscape Heritage scheme in the short term (5 years).

Structure of the plan

This plan was prepared by North of England Civic Trust for Sunderland City Council, using conservation staff in both organisations. This plan is broken down as follows:

- the significance of the conservation area;
- the risks the plan will tackle
- solutions: how the conservation area will be managed

This plan is in line with Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (February 2016) and the Heritage Lottery Fund's Management and Maintenance Plan guidance (October 2012).

Consultation

The MMP has evolved through discussions within the Townscape Heritage Project Team and with potential funding recipients and reflects the overall objectives of the Townscape Heritage Scheme. A formal consultation period on this document commenced in March 2018 and included a public meeting to explain the content and management proposals, and gain public support for the overall objectives. A range of organisations and interested parties were consulted as part of this process including ward Councillors, Historic England, local heritage groups, residents and businesses. Comments received were then incorporated into the final version of the CAMP and MMP documents and reported to Cabinet in June 2018 for adoption as planning guidance, replacing the 2007 version.



Significance of the Conservation Area

A fuller analysis of the special interest of the conservation area is contained in part 1 of the CAMP, particularly the analysis of the three character zones: 1 Cultural, 2 Town Park and 3 Commercial.

Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area was designated in 1969, one of the earliest designations in the region. Bishopwearmouth comprises fine Victorian and Edwardian buildings in a medieval street pattern with the remnants of a village green. There are many landmark buildings, including the Minster Church and the Empire Theatre, which add a distinctive roofscape to the area.

There is significant development pattern evidence of the medieval village which was one of the crucibles of the Sunderland seen today. Rectilinear terraces in the south are evidence of residential street planning as the town grew and 'washed over' Bishopwearmouth's earlier village. The once tightly-knit street pattern is still evident at Church Lane, but the larger metropolitan streetscape which overlaid it is also evidence of the area's significant growth. Survival of the village green is important ecologically as well as for its townscape and heritage value.

As a cocooned medieval village, Bishopwearmouth provides a glimpse of Sunderland's and the sub-region's pre-19th century past. The arrangement of its village green and some archaeological finds make a particularly interesting contribution to our understanding of medieval settlement patterns compared to other similarly 'lost' villages (eg. Westoe, Tunstall, Ryhope). It was once a larger borough than neighbouring Sunderland and, until the late 18th century, was a separate busy place with cottages and local industries. As well as the churches evolved fabric, a small amount of pre-18th century building fabric survives above ground, making it very rare. There is also potential for below-ground evidence as far south as Green Terrace. The 19th century redevelopment of the area is particularly strong, revealing the economic might of Sunderland from the late 18th century as town-making created one of the most important heavy industry towns in the world.

Aesthetically, the area's rich and varied roofscape is one of its more distinctive features.

The variety of the landmark buildings combined with the solid backdrop of the two and three storey terraces gives the area immense townscape value. The area has some of Sunderland's most lively and spirited historic architecture, notably a collection by the local Milburn brothers. Gothic styles at the Minster echo the former village influences, and the refined Classical terraces to the south are strongly descriptive of the late-Georgian period, with great visual strength from the rhythm of form, features and materials. Some newer developments have not responded well to this evolved townscape, which is fractured and perforated at the edges by mid and late 20th century clearances and redevelopments. Town Park is a rare green space in the city centre; it incorporates the medieval village green and is flanked by the richly historic church yard which need enhancement. The hard streetscape is also in need of improvements, as shown by the success of recently created Keel Square to the north east of the area.

The area is used and enjoyed by people from near and far, moulding its commercial and cultural outputs. The Empire Theatre is a significant regional cultural hub, which acts as a catalyst for high quality facilities in attractive surroundings nearby, such as the new cultural venue in the Old Fire Station and adjacent buildings and spaces. Popular leisure and evening economy uses also dominate elsewhere, eg. in Zone 3. The Minster is the city's prime Anglican place of worship and a driver for community and cultural activities. There is little publicly-accessible written history on the area and no on site interpretation, making it difficult for people to trace the area's evolution from what is seen. Community engagement on history will therefore be important for public support of a successful economic future for the area.

The Risks the Plan will Tackle

A fuller analysis of the risks to the area's significance is contained in Parts 1 and 2 of the CAMP. The main risks to the area's heritage significance which the plan seeks to tackle are as follows:

- Under-used upper floors.
- Lower business margins discouraging investment in full use and architectural features.
- Economic instability shown in the high turnover of users.
- Loss of architectural features and introduction of inappropriate materials and designs.
- Lack of and ill-informed investment, unsuitable skill-sets and 'quick fix' solutions.
- Insufficient maintenance regimes.
- Loss of period shopfronts and elements of them.
- Overly-competitive and visually cluttered shop signage, including banner signs.
- The visual and fabric impact of shopfront security measures.
- Removal of historic pub interiors and conversion of domestic to commercial layouts.
- Harm to the appearance of terraces from changes to individual buildings in the terrace.
- Rear alterations which are out of scale or interrupt architectural hierarchy or rhythm.
- Poorly understood pre-19th century standing fabric.
- Town Park does not reflect the layout of the previous development pattern.
- Town Park is tired, under-used and has poor landscape quality.
- The former village green's setting in Town Park is weak and confusing.
- Large gap sites in the north of the area which fragment the townscape and spoil views.
- Some dominant post-WWII buildings, infrastructure and road layouts.
- Some of the area's setting is uncharacteristically urban for a former medieval village.



Protecting the conservation area's significance is generally managed through the City Council, mainly through the planning and development system and in its role as local authority responsible for the public realm and highways, etc. However, individual property owners and occupiers (such as businesses) also have a role in managing and maintaining the aspects which make the area special. There is therefore some risk that the area's heritage will suffer from inappropriate decisions made by owners and occupiers. The plan needs to be used by all stakeholders to ensure it is most effective.



Solutions: How the Conservation Area will be managed

Stakeholders

The Council has responsibility for issues affecting the conservation area, including planning, transport, public realm and regeneration. Stakeholder engagement is important to making sure these are delivered in the best interests of those who have an interest in the area. These primarily include the many private owners of buildings and land in the area, and the businesses and traders who operate from those buildings. There are also some key public owners in the area including the City Council (which owns the Empire Theatre and the public realm including Town Park), the Minster's Parochial Church Council, and Sunderland University. There is also a much wider community with interest in the conservation area including customers to the various businesses, city centre users and visitors, as well as those with an interest in the heritage and amenity of the conservation area. Engagement of the local community in protection and management is very important.

Planning and regeneration

A number of policies set out the means by which the council can manage the conservation area. The main policies are:

National planning policies

The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the framework for planning policy in the UK. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Keeping heritage assets in use is one of the most sustainable forms of development as it avoids the consumption of building materials and energy, and the generation of waste from the construction of replacement buildings. Areas of the NPPF that are especially relevant for the management of Bishopwearmouth Conservation are the sections on Requiring Good Design and Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. Further details can be found at <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>.

Local planning policies

Two sets of policies are relevant: from the adopted UDP and from the 2017 draft Core Strategy and Development Plan.

The UDP policies include the main conservation area policy B4, which requires all development affecting the Bishopwearmouth area to preserve or enhance its

character or appearance. Policies B6 and B7 help to protect unlisted buildings, open spaces, views, street patterns, plot boundaries, landscaping, and mature trees, as well as offering protection from the impact of traffic and advertisements. Policies B8 and B10 protect listed buildings and their settings. Policy S8 manages change to shopfronts and Policy SA83 helps enhance the appearance of older properties in the area.

The draft Core Strategy and Development Plan policies, consulted on in September 2017, will eventually replace the UDP policies. Policy E1 seeks high quality design and positive improvements to the environment in general, as well as setting out design principles. Policy E2 sets out requirements for works to the public realm, and Policy E3 relates to advertisements and shopfronts. Policy E4 relates to the historic environment, and Policy E5 relates specifically to designated heritage assets

All of these council policies can be found in full as an appendix to the CAMP.

Minster Quarter supplementary planning document

The Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD is the adopted development strategy for this part of the city centre, including Zones 1 and 2 of Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. It is used with the CAMP to bring about constructive conservation of the conservation area, focussing on regeneration with heritage at its heart.

The vision in the SPD can be summarised as seeing the creation of a cultural quarter and a key gateway to the city centre that restores its historic importance and creates a valued, first class environment drawing on its rich heritage. The SPD's objectives are to:

- Recognise the historic and cultural role of the area by introducing opportunities for a mix of new uses and ensuring that new development respects the townscape qualities of the area.
- Create a critical mass of leisure uses and reinforcing retail development.
- Introduce new opportunities for central area living.
- Deliver a development that is highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport to reduce dependency on the private car.
- Consider opportunities to improving north-south and east-west movement and creating an outward looking and sympathetic contextual built form.
- Redevelop areas of surface car parking to stitch back together the built form and character of the area.

These are used to underpin the regeneration of Zones 1 and 2 of Bishopwearmouth and they inform the content of this plan.

Management Objectives

Cultural Regeneration

The CAMP contains the following objective for cultural regeneration: “Management Objective 2: To advance the wider renaissance of Bishopwearmouth as a cultural quarter within Sunderland City Centre through strengthening links with complimentary regeneration activity, in accordance with the principles and policies of the Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD.”

What: This objective is a long term strategic one. It seeks to ensure the built design, public realm, use, development and business life of the area are steered towards its renaissance as a key cultural gateway to the city. To manage and maintain this, changes in the heritage and cultural assets which make up the area need to be managed with long term, coordinated, strategic ambition and political commitment.

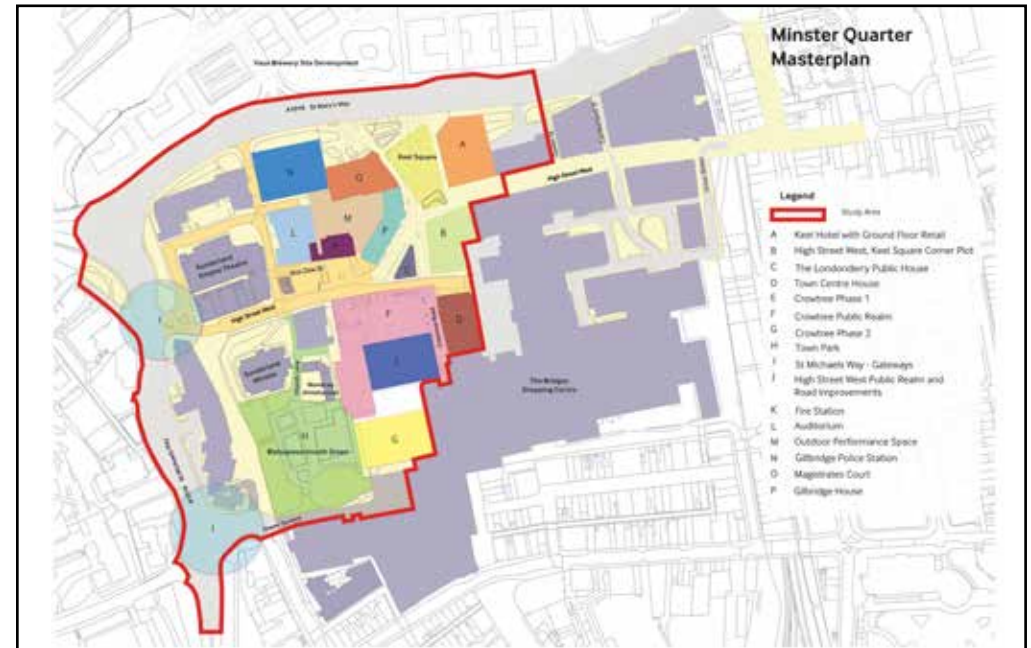
Where: Primarily Zones 1 and 2, inside the Minster Quarter SPD area.

Who: The City Council is principally responsible for this but the Minster Quarter SPD recognises that it cannot be achieved without continued partnership with owners and other partners. Partners will include the Empire Theatre Trust, the MAC Trust, Sunderland Minster, Sunderland University, Sunderland BID and cultural and evening economy businesses in the area.

When: Long term (15+ years)

How: The financial resources to deliver this will primarily be capital investment from developers and the City Council. Both might use funds from the private, public and third sectors, including the Council’s strategic investment corridor funds, the Heritage Lottery Fund (including the TH and, for example, the Heritage Enterprise grant for the recent Old Fire Station project), and commercial finance. The Council could negotiate planning obligations and seek contributions towards funds for necessary public infrastructure from developers. Other resources may be sought should the opportunity arise, eg. through the Sunderland Business Improvement District. The people and skills involved will include political, commercial development, economic regeneration, cultural activity, place-making, conservation, community engagement, project management and business development.

How much: No overall sum for achieving the objectives of the Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD has been identified.



Townscape Heritage Scheme

The CAMP contains the following objective for the Townscape Heritage scheme:
“Management Objective 3: To ensure that heritage and culture led regeneration underpins the sustainable economic future of Sunderland City Centre, through the promotion of and successful delivery of a Townscape Heritage Scheme”

What: The Townscape Heritage scheme will run from 2018 to 2023, helping to turn around the fortunes of the area through grant for repairs, reinstatement and vacant floorspace, through activities, learning and training, and through substantial improvements to Town Park. It is funded by the HLF and the City Council, and will be robust vehicle for coordinated area improvements underpinned by heritage and culture-led regeneration. The area will be promoted as place to visit and enjoy as a cultural destination, with new interpretation on the history of the area and the revitalised Town Park and village green.

Where: Zones 1 and 2.

Who: The City Council is principally responsible for the TH, including the Town Park project (see below), but will work collaboratively with partners. These will mainly be building owners and occupiers who apply for grants as they, too, will invest funds to be able to receive a grant towards their buildings. Other partners will include those taking part in activities and learning which are part of the TH, including the University of Sunderland, Sunderland College, the Empire Theatre Creative Learning Team and the Sunderland Heritage Forum.

When: Short term delivery (5 years) followed by medium (10 years) and long term (15+ years) management and maintenance.

How: A detailed delivery plan has been prepared for the TH which itemises each building project. A detailed activity plan has been prepared for the activities and learning projects which will be run.

How much: £2.5 Million



Public Realm and Town Park

The CAMP contains the following objective for public realm and Town Park:
“Management Objective 4: To protect, enhance and maintain significant open spaces and streetscape / landscape features in Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area.”

What: Managing the public streets, squares and green spaces is a key part of protecting and enhancing the distinctive character of the area, linking disparate elements together, creating a safe, busy environment, ease of movement and better green spaces. This objective is strongly grounded in appropriate maintenance to high standards to ensure quality is maintained into the future.

Where: Primarily Zones 1 and 2, inside the Minster Quarter SPD area, but also in Zone 3 where the opportunity arises.

Who: The City Council is responsible for public realm and Town Park. Some spaces are also influenced by partners, eg. spaces around the Old Fire Station and related MACQ projects are controlled by the MAC Trust.

When: Short (5 years), Medium (10 years) and Long Term (15+ years). Maintenance commitments for the public realm works due to be delivered on High Street West during 2018 (via the strategic investment corridor) and at Town Park in 2019 (via the Townscape Heritage scheme) are already in place.

How: This is primarily a public sector commitment from existing functions within the City Council. This will be delivered through existing services and from ongoing budget allocations towards transport, highways, maintenance, cleansing and grounds-keeping.

How much: £ 50,000



New Design in Historic Areas

The CAMP contains the following objective for new design in historic areas:
“Management Objective 5: To secure the appropriate enhancement of the Conservation Area by ensuring that all new development respects and enriches its historic context and achieves the design aspirations of the Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD.”

What: Ensuring new design is of the highest architectural quality is very important to managing and maintaining the area’s special interest. The area needs good contextual design appropriate to its historic environment. In particular it would benefit from improvements to the appearance of the rears of terraces which face public areas.

Where: Zones 1, 2 and 3.

Who: The City Council is responsible for managing the quality of new design through the development management process.

When: As development comes forward during the life of the plan.

How: This is primarily the role of development management and will depend in part on the quality of design advice and the skills available in the department, as well as the commitment of decision-makers to ensuring high quality design. The Council will continue to ensure good design skills and advice, and political commitment to them, are high on the agenda. Success will also depend in part on the skills and resources of developers and designers. The TH will bolster skills and resources for some new design in Zones 1 and 2 in the short term (5 years), by making grant aid available to encourage high quality design, and that suitably experienced architects are used in grant-aided schemes.

How much: Existing budgets within the Planning and Regeneration department.



Guidance on Alterations and Repairs

The CAMP contains the following objective for new design in historic areas:
“Management Objective 6: To ensure that the repair, restoration and adaptation of historic buildings in Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area are undertaken using the principles of ‘informed conservation’.”

What: A balance is required between retaining and conserving elements which contribute positively to special character, and allowing positive alterations and new works which add to the area’s evolution. Mechanisms to provide advice, guidance and support are needed to ensure suitable details, materials and craftsmanship are used in alterations, repairs and maintenance.

Where: Zones 1, 2 and 3.

Who: The City Council is responsible for managing the quality of alterations needing consent through the development management process. For works that do not need formal consent, such as repairs and maintenance, owners are responsible for the right conservation-led decisions but the Council can provide advice where it is sought.

When: As development comes forward and works are carried during the life of the plan. There will be a particular focus on promoting maintenance after the TH has ended, ie. in the medium (10 years) to long term (15+ years). Maintenance of historic buildings has a recommended timescale which ranges from monthly to 5 yearly and beyond, which will be set out in the maintenance manual to be prepared as part of the TH.

How: For works needing consent, this is the role of development management and will depend on the quality of design advice and the skills available in the department. For works not needing consent it will depend in part on the skills and resources of developers and designers. The TH will bolster skills and resources for some works in Zones 1 and 2 in the short term (5 years), by making grant aid available to encourage repairs, and that suitably experienced architects are used in grant-aided schemes. Outside the TH, and after it has ended, advice will continue to be offered where possible to ensure appropriate works for example, detailed advice on various architectural features is contained in the CAMP for use in a range of scenarios. The TH will be used to produce a maintenance manual for distribution to owners and occupiers across all three zones of the conservation area.

This will deal with methods, materials and skills suited to the area’s buildings, as well as the practicalities of tackling building maintenance and repairs in a way which respects the needs of older properties and the special character of the area.

How much: Advice made available from existing budgets in the Planning and Regeneration department. The TH Activity Plan includes a budget of £1,500 for the maintenance manual and £12,000 for skills training



Setting, landmarks and views

The CAMP contains the following objective for setting, landmarks and views: “Management Objective 7: To protect and improve the setting and key views of landmark buildings in the Conservation Area, and the setting of the Conservation Area itself.”

What: Protecting the setting of the conservation area, and the heritage assets within in, is important to protecting what makes them special. This is important for Bishopwearmouth as the townscape outside the boundary is so different to that within it. Changes outside the boundary which give the opportunity to enhance setting must be taken, such as with the laying out of Keel Square and demolition of part of Crowtree Leisure Centre. Redevelopment of the rest of the vacant centre will provide a key opportunity to improve the setting of Zone 2 in particular.

Where: Zones 1, 2 and 3.

Who: The City Council is responsible for managing the impact of development on the setting of heritage assets through the development management process.

When: As development comes forward during the life of the plan. Particular attention will be paid to the lead-in for any project to deal with the vacant Crowtree Leisure Centre.

How: This is primarily the role of development management and will depend in part on the quality of design advice and the skills available in the department. It will also depend on the commitment of decision-makers to seek setting enhancements during early deliberations about the future of gap sites and development opportunities, both those over which it has direct control and those of partners (eg. Sunderland University). The Council will continue to ensure good design and political commitment to them, are high on the agenda.

How much: Existing budgets in the Planning and Regeneration department.



Shopfront Design Guidelines

The CAMP contains the following objective for shopfronts: “Management Objective 8: To secure the preservation, restoration or improvement, as appropriate, of shop frontages in Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area through the application of the following design guidelines.”

What: Large parts of the conservation area would benefit from comprehensive shopfront improvements. Full shopfront design guidance is contained in the CAMP, relating to traditional shopfronts, modern shopfronts, domestic frontages in retail use, materials, signage, illumination, security and canopies.

Where: Zones 1, 2 and 3.

Who: The City Council is responsible for managing the quality of shopfront design through the development management process.

When: As development comes forward during the life of the plan. Shopfronts will be one of the features which the 5 year life of the TH will focus on.

How: This is primarily the role of development management and will depend in part on the quality of design advice and the skills available in the department, as well as the commitment of decision-makers to ensuring high quality design. The Council will continue to ensure good shopfront design skills and advice, and political commitment to them, are high on the agenda. Success will also depend in part on the skills and resources of developers and designers. The TH will bolster skills and resources for new shopfronts in Zones 1 and 2 in the short term (5 years), by making grant aid available to encourage the right design, and that suitably experienced architects are used in grant-aided schemes.

How much: Existing budgets within the Planning and Regeneration department.

Historic Pubs of Bishopwearmouth

The CAMP contains the following objective for historic pubs: “Management Objective 9: To ensure the preservation of the distinctive qualities and historic character of public houses in Bishopwearmouth.”

What: Ensuring the character of traditional pubs is not harmed by a trend towards modern ‘disco pubs’ or ‘fun pubs’, which can harm appearance inside and out, and that surviving interiors and layouts are protected for future generations.

Where: Zones 1, 2 and 3.

Who: The City Council is responsible for managing the quality of shopfront design through the development management process.

When: As development comes forward during the life of the plan.

How: This is primarily the role of development management and will depend in part on the quality of design advice and the skills available in the department, as well as the commitment of decision-makers to ensuring protection. The Council will continue to ensure a good understanding of historic pubs, and political commitment to it, are high on the agenda. Success will also depend in part on the skills and resources of developers and designers. The TH will bolster skills and resources for refurbishment schemes in Zones 1 and 2 in the short term (5 years), by making grant aid available to encourage the right approach, and that suitably experienced architects are used in grant-aided schemes.

How much: Existing budgets within the Planning and Regeneration department.



Action plan

The Council has responsibility for a considerable amount of maintenance within the conservation area, in particular, the public realm. The Council also has a duty to take actions to ensure that any development within the conservation area is appropriate. The action plan below identifies the actions that the City Council will take during the life of the CAMP to ensure the improved maintenance of the conservation area.

Action	Cost	Responsibility	Year
Determine planning and listed building applications in line with planning policy	Within existing budgets	Planning and Regeneration department	Ongoing
Collaborate with stakeholders to raise the profile of the TH and its objectives	Within existing budgets	Planning and Regeneration department	Ongoing
Drive forward heritage-led and culture-led regeneration of the area based on the Minster Quarter Masterplan SPD	Within existing budgets	Planning and Regeneration department	Ongoing
Undertake annual review of conservation area for the national Heritage at Risk register	Within existing budgets	Planning and Regeneration department	Annual
Enforcement action implemented if necessary	Within existing budgets	Planning and Regeneration department	Ongoing

Action	Cost	Responsibility	Year
TH grant-aided properties are managed and maintained for 10 years from completion of the project	Expected maintenance costs will be an output for the professional team of each grant aided project	Owners/occupiers responsible for cost; Planning and Regeneration department responsible for monitoring	Checked in year 3, 6 and 10 Year 1
Town Park project	£ 433,000	Planning and Regeneration department	Ongoing
Other public realm	£ 2.4 Million	Planning and Regeneration department	Biannual
Undertake condition survey	Within existing budgets	Planning and Regeneration department	

Monitoring plan

Heritage will be in better condition:

- Number of high priority, medium priority and reserve projects delivered
- Number of masonry repairs
- Number of roof repairs
- Number of chimneys reinstated
- Number of traditional windows reinstated
- Number of properties with vacant floorspace refurbished
- Number of complementary, non-grant aided projects delivered by others
- Qualitative indicators on understanding of the financial impact of deterioration
- Qualitative indicators on the need for maintenance to avoid repair
- Qualitative measures on the perception of the area's heritage

Heritage learning, skills and employment will have been improved:

- Number of staff posts for the TH
- Number of professionals trained
- Number of students/trainees trained
- Number of volunteers trained
- Number of people participating in heritage activities
- Number of tours, publishing, interpretation, workshops etc).
- Number of activity visitors at Empire Theatre and Sunderland Minster
- Qualitative indicators on improved public availability of history
- Qualitative indicator on an understanding of Bishopwearmouth's history

The environment will have been improved:

- Qualitative indicator on improved habitat and species protection at Town Park
- Qualitative indicator on the ability of the Council to meet sustainability targets
- Qualitative indicators on improved public availability of history
- Qualitative indicator on an understanding of Bishopwearmouth's history

The environment will have been improved:

- Qualitative indicator on improved habitat and species protection at Town Park
- Qualitative indicator on the ability of the Council to meet sustainability targets

Audiences will be better served:

- Number of volunteers taking part in heritage activities
- Qualitative indicator on improved use of the area and Town Park

Bishopwearmouth will be a better place:

- Number of people using Town Park
- Numbers of recorded crimes
- Numbers of improved business frontages
- Qualitative indicator on an understanding of past amongst local people and visitors
- Qualitative indicator on history being used to inspire cultural or economic activity
- Qualitative indicator on cross-sectoral collaboration
- Qualitative indicator on strength of business community

The area's economy will have improved:

- Numbers of trading floorspace
- Numbers of business turnover
- Numbers of jobs created or secured

Appendix - City of Sunderland Conservation Policies

Conservation Areas

B4 All development within and adjacent to Conservation Areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character or appearance. To this end the Council will issue planning/design guidance for the various areas from time to time.

B6 The council will preserve and enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas; measures will include:-

- (i) Encouraging the retention of existing buildings and the improvement of features, open spaces, historic street patterns and plot boundaries
- (ii) Encouraging the retention of existing mature trees;
- (iii) Introducing controls over the display of advertisements;
- (iv) Seeking, where appropriate, to control development by the use of Article 4 Directions;
- (v) Giving special attention to the preservation of important views into and out of the area;
- (vi) Restoring highways and verges by use of appropriate materials and planting, encouraging utility companies to respect such works;
- (vii) Reducing the impact of traffic where possible by diversion and traffic calming measures; and
- (viii) Promoting environmental improvement and enhancement programmes.

B7 Applications for demolition of unlisted buildings in a conservation area will be determined by the extent to which the integrity, character and appearance of the area is affected, taking into account any replacement proposals. Where unlisted buildings make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area, the criteria in Policy B8 which concern the demolition of listed buildings will apply.

Listed Buildings

B8 There will be a presumption in favour of retaining listed buildings. Demolition in whole or substantive part will only be given consent when all other avenues for retention (including preservation or enhancement in charitable or community ownership) have been explored and found not to be feasible or it is considered that redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition. Consent will only then be given when planning permission for an acceptable replacement development has been granted, which will also be subject to conditions requiring the letting of a contract prior to demolition.

B10 The City Council will seek to ensure that development proposals in the vicinity of listed buildings do not adversely affect their character or setting.

Additional Policies

S8 new and redesigned shop fronts should be of a scale, design and materials which relate satisfactorily to the building in which the shop front is to be installed, also to adjacent buildings. Access for people with disabilities should be provided wherever possible in new shop front design in accordance with development control guidance

SA83 within the area covered by proposal SA78, the city council will take steps to enhance the appearance of older properties by:-

- (i) designing and promoting external refurbishment schemes;
- (ii) giving increased emphasis to the retention of attractive original features when considering frontage developments; and
- (iii) requiring that new or replacement shop fronts are to a standard of design which complements the scale and character of the particular property and the overall street scene.

Draft Core Strategy Policy E1: Urban Design

To achieve high quality design and positive improvement from all development, which protects and enhances the environment and existing locally distinctive character and encourages innovation, development should:

1. create places which have a clear function, character and identity based upon a robust understanding of local context, constraints and distinctiveness;
2. maximise opportunities to create sustainable, mixed-use developments which support the function and vitality of the area in which they are located;
3. be of a scale, massing, layout, appearance and setting which respects and enhances the positive qualities of nearby properties and the locality;
4. retain acceptable levels of privacy and protect amenity;
5. promote natural surveillance and active frontages, including the provision of appropriate lighting, to assist in designing out crime;
6. clearly distinguish between public and private spaces, include appropriate use of hard and soft boundary treatments which reflect the character of the area;
7. create visually attractive and legible environments through provision of distinctive high quality architecture, detailing, building materials;
8. provide appropriate landscaping as an integral part of the development, including the enhancement and upgrade of public realm and existing green infrastructure, retaining landscape features and reflecting surrounding landscape character;
9. ensure that buildings and spaces are orientated to gain benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy and be designed around a sustainable drainage system;
10. not detract from established views of important buildings, structures and landscape features;

11. in the case of tall buildings, form a positive relationship with the skyline and topography of the site and the surrounding area;

12. create safe, convenient and visually attractive areas for servicing and parking which does not dominate the development and its surroundings;

13. maximise durability and adaptability throughout the lifetime of the development to accommodate a range of uses; and

14. meet national spaces standards as a minimum (for residential). Large scale developments should be supported by detailed Masterplans or development frameworks, and where appropriate, design codes.

Draft Core Strategy Policy E2: Public realm

Existing and proposed areas of public realm will:

1. Create attractive, safe, legible, functional and accessible public spaces;
2. Be constructed of quality, sustainable and durable materials which enhance the surrounding context; and
3. Incorporate public art in development, where appropriate.

Draft Core Strategy Policy E3: Advertisements/shop fronts

Advertisements and new/alterations to shop fronts will be required to contribute to the visual appearance of the city's street scenes.

1. The council will support proposals for advertisements where:

i) they are well designed and sympathetic to the character and appearance of their location and the building to which they relate, having regard to matters such as size, materials, construction, location, level of illumination and cumulative impact with other signage on the building and within the vicinity; and

ii) illuminated advertisements and signs will not adversely affect the amenity and/or safety of the surrounding area.

2. Permission will be granted for shop fronts and signs where the following criteria is satisfied:

i) the design is related to the scale and appearance of the building to which the proposal relates; and

ii) the design respects the character and appearance of the location.

3. Solid shutters which present a blank frontage to shopping streets will not be permitted.

4. Proposals relating to listed buildings, within conservation areas and in areas of special advertisement control will be subject to the requirements of the relevant designation and appropriate planning policy guidance.

Draft Core Strategy Policy E4: Historic environment

The historic environment will be valued, protected, conserved and enhanced, sensitively managed and enjoyed for its contribution to character, local distinctiveness and sustainable communities by;

1. giving due weight to the conservation of heritage assets (designated or non-designated) based on their significance in accordance with national policy;

2. ensuring new development makes a positive contribution to the character and townscape quality of the historic environment;

3. supporting and developing innovative initiatives that identify, maintain, conserve and sustain or return to beneficial usage designated or non-designated heritage assets that add to local character and distinctiveness;

4. capitalising in an appropriate and sensitive manner on the regeneration and tourism potential of heritage assets, including taking a positive and proactive approach to securing the conservation and re-use of heritage assets at risk;

5. reviewing existing heritage designations and making new designations to protect and conserve the city's built heritage assets, where justified, by appropriate surveys and evidence;

6. improving access and enjoyment of the historic environment, by encouraging proposals that retain, create or facilitate public access to heritage assets to increase understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of their significance, special qualities and cultural values;

7. ensuring that where a Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS) has been prepared, it will be a material consideration in determining applications for development, and will be used to support and guide enhancement. Due regard should be given to the policies it contains; and

8. ensuring that where consent is granted for proposals involving the loss of all or part of the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset, the council will require archaeological excavation and/or historic building recording as appropriate, followed by analysis and publication of the results.

Draft Core Strategy Policy E5: Heritage assets

Development proposals affecting heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) or their setting should recognise and respond to their significance and demonstrate how they conserve and enhance the significance and character of the asset(s), including its setting where appropriate. A Heritage Statement should accompany all applications that affect heritage assets, and should describe the significance of the heritage asset and the impact of the proposals on its significance. In considering proposals, the council will have regard to the following:

1. Listed Buildings - development affecting a listed building, including alterations, additions and development within its setting, will be supported where it would:

i) Conserve and enhance its significance in regards to protection, repair and restoration of its historic fabric, features and plan form, its boundary enclosures, setting and views of it, its group value and contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

ii) be sympathetic and complimentary to the height, massing, alignment, proportions, form, architectural style, building materials and its setting. The demolition of listed buildings will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be robustly justified.

2. Conservation Areas - in order to preserve or enhance the significance of Conservation Areas, including their diverse and distinctive character and appearance and their setting, the council will:

i) require development to accord with the objectives and proposals of the adopted Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS) for the relevant Conservation Area. CAMS are a material consideration in determining applications for development and will be used to support and guide the conservation and enhancement of the city's conservation areas;

ii) support development proposals that otherwise make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the Conservation Area;

iii) support proposals for the conversion and adaptive reuse of vacant or underused buildings of heritage/ townscape value in a sensitive manner;

iv) normally refuse permission for the demolition or unsympathetic alteration of any building of any building or structure that makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area. Applications will be expected to satisfy the same requirements as those to demolish listed buildings and consent to demolish will only be given when acceptable plans for redevelopment have been agreed;

v) normally resist development of significant open spaces and the loss of any trees that contribute to the essential character of Conservation Areas and the settings of individual buildings within them, unless there are clear heritage or environmental benefits that outweigh the loss;

vi) use Article 4 Directions, where appropriate, to restrict permitted development rights and protect features of historic/architectural importance. Applications submitted as a result of a Direction will be required to accord with the guidelines in the relevant CAMS; and

vii) require new buildings within and adjacent to Conservation Areas to be of high design quality, to respect and enhance the established historic townscape and built form, street plan and settings of Conservation Areas and important views and vistas into, within and out of the areas.

3. Historic Parks and Gardens – Development within or adjacent to the city's registered historic parks and gardens and unregistered parks and gardens that are considered by the council to be of historic interest, will be required to protect and enhance their designed landscape character and setting and their natural and built features of historic, architectural and artistic importance.

4. Non-designated heritage assets- development affecting non-designated heritage assets should have particular regard to the conservation of the heritage asset, its features and its setting, and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

5. Archaeology and Recording of Heritage Assets – the council will ensure the preservation, protection and where possible the enhancement of the city’s archaeological heritage:

i) where proposals affect heritage assets of archaeological interest, preference will be given to preservation in situ. However, where loss of the asset is justified in accordance with National Policy, the remains should be appropriately recorded, assessed, analysed, disseminated, published and the archive report deposited with the Tyne and Wear Historic Environment Record; and

ii) where demolition of a designated built heritage asset or undesignated building of significance has been justified, or substantive changes are to be made to the asset, works must not commence until archaeological recording of the asset has been carried out and deposited with the Historic Environment Record.

6. Heritage at risk - In considering proposals affecting heritage assets identified as being at risk the council will:-

i) support their conversion and adaptation where this secures their sympathetic repair, re-use in appropriate uses and sustains their significance into the future;

ii) explore opportunities for grant-funding to secure their conservation and make viable schemes for their re-use; and

iii) positively engage with owners and partner organisations to develop schemes that will address the at-risk status of the assets.

7. Access and enjoyment of the historic environment - the council will positively encourage proposals that retain, create or facilitate public access to heritage assets to increase understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of their significance, special qualities and cultural values.

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