

Borough Heritage

Conservation area character appraisal

Status:

Adopted guidance

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February 2005

Chelmsford - West End Conservation Area



West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

A report by Chelmsford Borough Council on the special character of the West End.

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the appraisal

This document defines the special architectural and historic interest of the West End. It justifies the designation of the Conservation Area and forms the basis for subsequent guidance on enhancement proposals, preservation of key elements and the design of new development. It draws attention to the location of the boundary and has led to changes to the boundary to more effectively protect its character.

It is intended that the document will be used by :-

1. Property and business owners to help them understand the importance of individual buildings, spaces and other built and natural elements within the conservation area.
2. The Borough Council, as local planning authority, to form the basis of character protection and enhancement through environmental improvement schemes and control of new development.
3. Essex County Council, as highway authority, to help its appreciation of the impact of possible future highway works on the character of the area.
4. The local community, to increase awareness of the special character of the area.

1.2 Designation of the West End Conservation Area

Conservation area status for the West End began with the designation of Duke Street Conservation Area in September 1983. This resulted following concern of the Council to recent planning applications in Duke Street.

On the 6th September 1988 the West End Conservation Area was designated. This stemmed from local representations for improvements in the West End area, especially as much redevelopment was expected in the area.

An extension to the West End Conservation Area was adopted on the 5th February 2003 to include the group of buildings on the West side of Victoria Road South in view of their architectural and historic character.

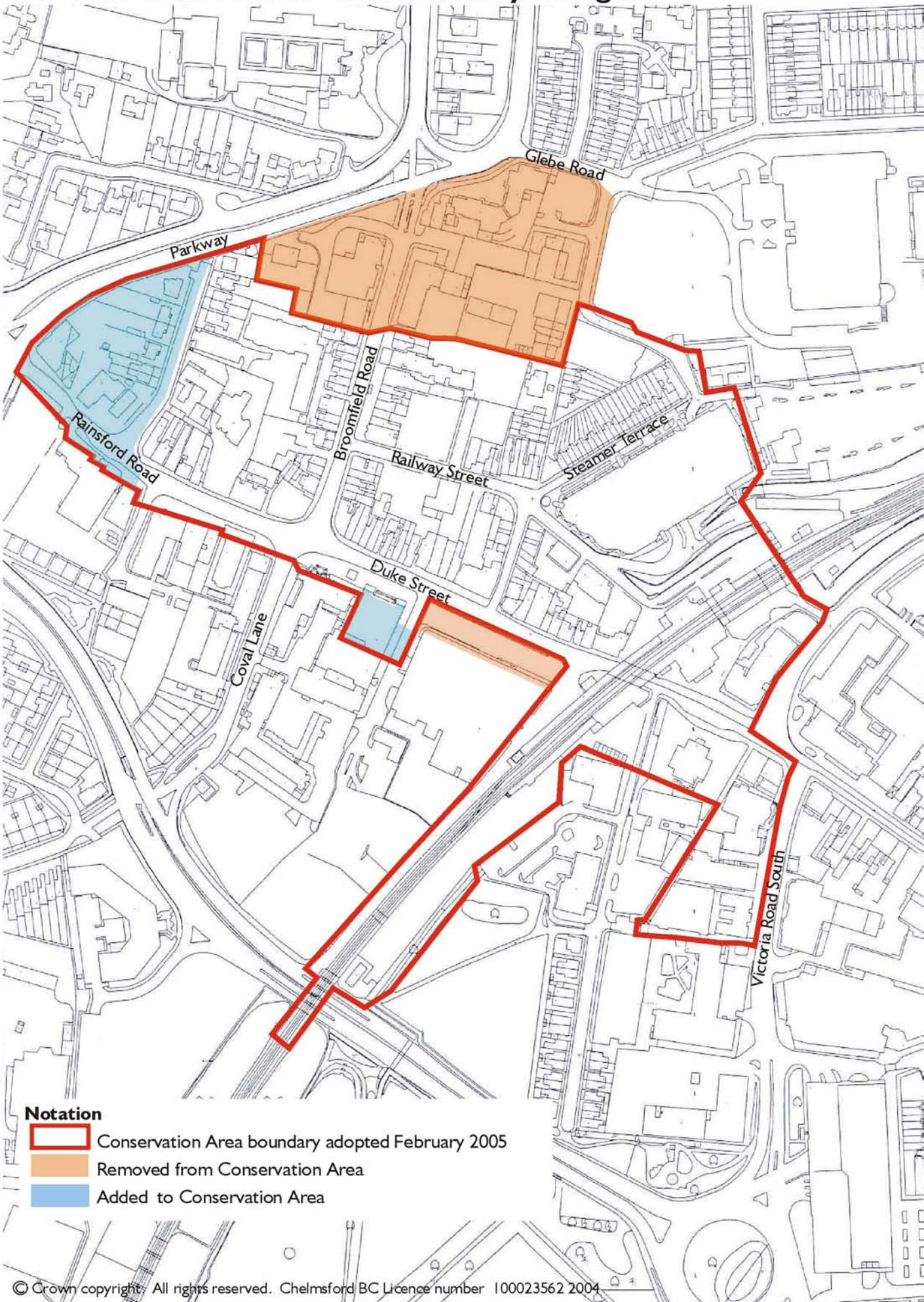
Proposed boundary changes

As a result of the character appraisal the boundary has been further amended.




Two areas have been included, the western side of Cedar Avenue to Parkway and Civic offices on Duke Street and theatres on Fairfield Road.

Two areas have been taken out of the conservation area, the area of Broomfield Road from Britvic to Parkway and the old bus station apron alongside Duke Street. These changes are shown on the following plan.

West End Conservation Area boundary changes



Notation

-  Conservation Area boundary adopted February 2005
-  Removed from Conservation Area
-  Added to Conservation Area

1.3 Conservation areas

Conservation areas were introduced through the Civic Amenities Act of 1967. Today their legislative framework is provided mainly by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The legislation requires local planning authorities to designate conservation areas and to keep them under review. A conservation area should be designated where an area has special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 – *Planning and the Historic Environment* advises that the definition of an area's special interest should derive from an assessment of the elements that contribute to (and detract from) it. Conservation area designation acknowledges the contribution these areas make to the Borough's cultural inheritance and economic well-being.

Designation of a conservation area gives a planning authority firmer control over the demolition of unlisted property, carries stricter provisions concerning certain kinds of development and permitted development rights, and requires notification of works to trees, in addition to normal planning controls.

Conservation area designation does not prohibit new development, but it gives a local planning authority more control over the design of new development.

Once designated, the local planning authority is required to pay special attention to preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of a conservation area, and to publish proposals to further preserve and enhance the conservation area.

1.4 Policy background

Policies in both the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan adopted April 2001 (HC2) and the Local Plan adopted 1997 (ENV6, 7 and 8) provide the policy background to protect or enhance the character of conservation areas, for the preparation of improvement schemes and encouragement of regular maintenance of important features.

There are policies within the Chelmsford Borough Local Plan adopted April 1997 specific to the West End:

- protection of local shopping in the area (policy SHP5), extended secondary retail areas at Railway Street and Wells Street (SG3) and Railway Viaduct (SG6).
- sites identified for mixed use redevelopment - at the bus depot and car parks to the rear (OFF1), the land rear of Duke Street, Broomfield Road, south side of Railway Street (OFF4) and the land between Parkway and Rainsford Road (OFF5).
- provision of new long stay parking in Fairfield Road (T15).

The Council has started to produce its Local Development Framework which will replace the adopted Local Plan.

2.1 The Conservation Area and its context

The West End comprises the area west of Victoria Road South enclosed by Parkway. The area is formed around the Duke Street western approach to the town centre, leading to Chelmsford Cathedral and the High Street to the east, and the southern end of the Broomfield Road arterial road from the north. Central Park is located to the south and at the margins of the area to the north are King Edward VI Grammar School and Marconi. The West End represents an important neighbourhood centre for an inner residential district which has good community spirit developed over long periods of residency. The wider residential area of West Chelmsford is split off by Parkway.

The West End Conservation Area, covered by this appraisal, is roughly the area north of Duke Street including the fronting civic buildings, the station and railway viaduct and the land west of the railway including approximately half of the Anglia Polytechnic University central campus containing the Anne Knight Building, and the Frederick Chancellor Building alongside Central Baptist Church. Chelmsford Central Conservation Area, originally designated in 1971, adjoins to the east.

Location plan



Although the Conservation Area has a clear boundary the appraisal will also cover the adjoining areas to help show the context and to appreciate the distinct function and full character of the West End.

At the heart of the West End lies an area primarily of medium density terraced two storey buildings dating from the 1840's in anticipation of the opening of the railway for Chelmsford. This core area contains a mixture of residential, retail, primarily small specialist shops and local convenience shopping, and pubs and is surrounded by larger scale development comprising several major offices.

The theatres, churches, pubs and restaurants provide an important community and entertainment role and a vibrant nighttime economy.

2.2 Origins and historical development

The town of Chelmsford in its earliest historic form is situated to the east and south of the West End. Much of the towns medieval street pattern still exists as well as some of its medieval buildings.

During the mid to late 19th century there was major expansion of the town north and west, with the sale of land by the Mildmay family in 1839, the opening of the railway from London to Colchester in 1843, and the relocation of the town market. These changes set the scene for further development on the west side of the medieval town.

John Walker's survey map of 1591 shows that apart from the roads (now Duke Street, Rainsford Road, Rainsford Lane and Broomfield Road) the area was entirely open fields. Only one dwelling exists, on land named "Haywards alias Covyles", now Coval Hall.

The Chapman and Andre map of 1777 shows the town centre of Chelmsford and only a handful of buildings to the north and west and some within the Conservation Area. On the junction of Broomfield Road there was the Red Cow Public House, records back to 1722, an attractive detached property with well kept front garden, it became the Red Cow Temperance Hotel, and other uses including an auction house, a warehouse, Barclays Bank, but then suffered years of abuse.



The maps on the following pages show the evolution of the area from the 1870s (source: Essex Records Office). The Ordnance Survey 1st Edition map of 1874 is shown on the back page of this report.

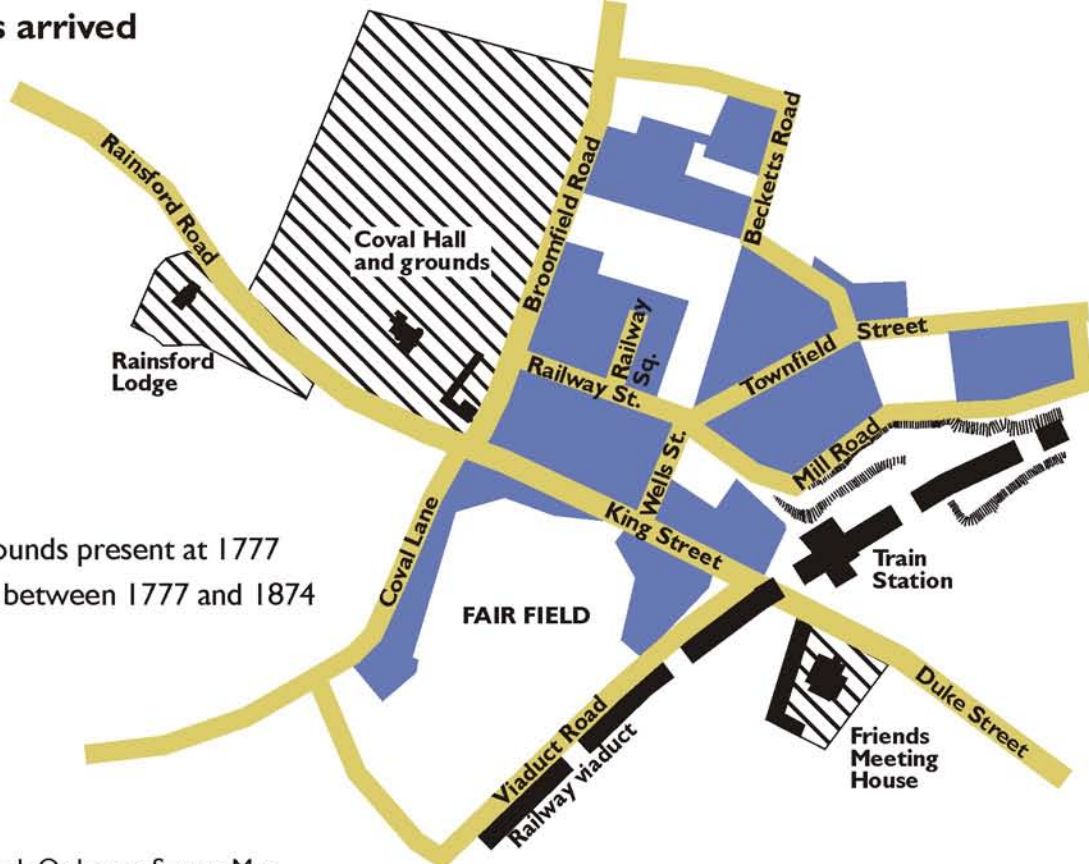
2.3 Archaeological significance

Extracts from the Essex heritage sites and monuments record are reproduced in appendix 1. Although the record notes little of below ground significance within the study area several wells once existed, including the Burgess Well which supplied the medieval Friary but also the town's main water supply into the post medieval period, and one at the Royal Steamer public house. The main archaeological significance within the area relates to the early twentieth century Marconi buildings to the north east of the West End.

1. The railway has arrived

Notation

-  House and grounds present at 1777
-  Development between 1777 and 1874





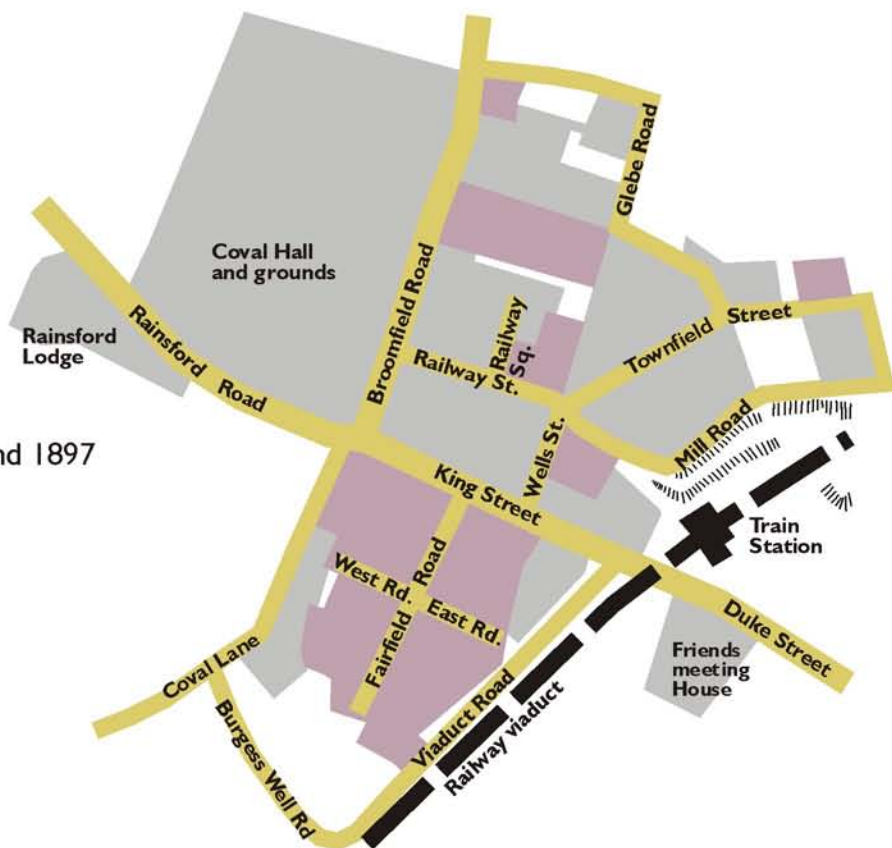
Base: 1874 first edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map

- indicates the first buildings in the area, including two houses and their extensive gardens, a pub and the Friends Meeting House .
- undeveloped Fair Field with Timber Yard adjacent to the railway viaduct and a few dwellings facing King Street and Coval Lane.
- Street formation created with the arrival of the railway (1849 map 3 of a report to the General Board of Health indicates existence of Wells Street, Railway Street, Railway Square and Townfield Street)
- arrival of industry at the end of Mill Road with the steam flour mill

2. Fairfield development

Notation

-  Development between 1874 and 1897
-  Retained from previous phase



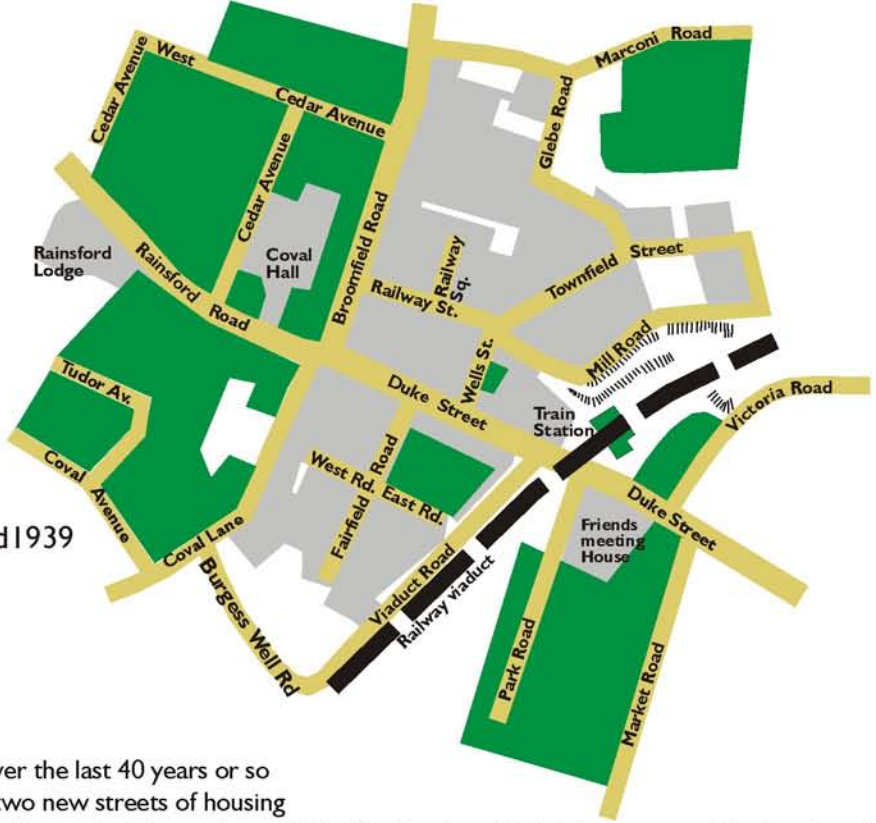
Base: 1897 second edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map

- domestic scale buildings were constructed on Fair Field spreading development to the south adjacent to the railway
- other open patches of land were developed including infilling and creating further street frontage

3. Spreading development including Coval Hall gardens

Notation

- Development between 1897 and 1939
- Retained from previous phase



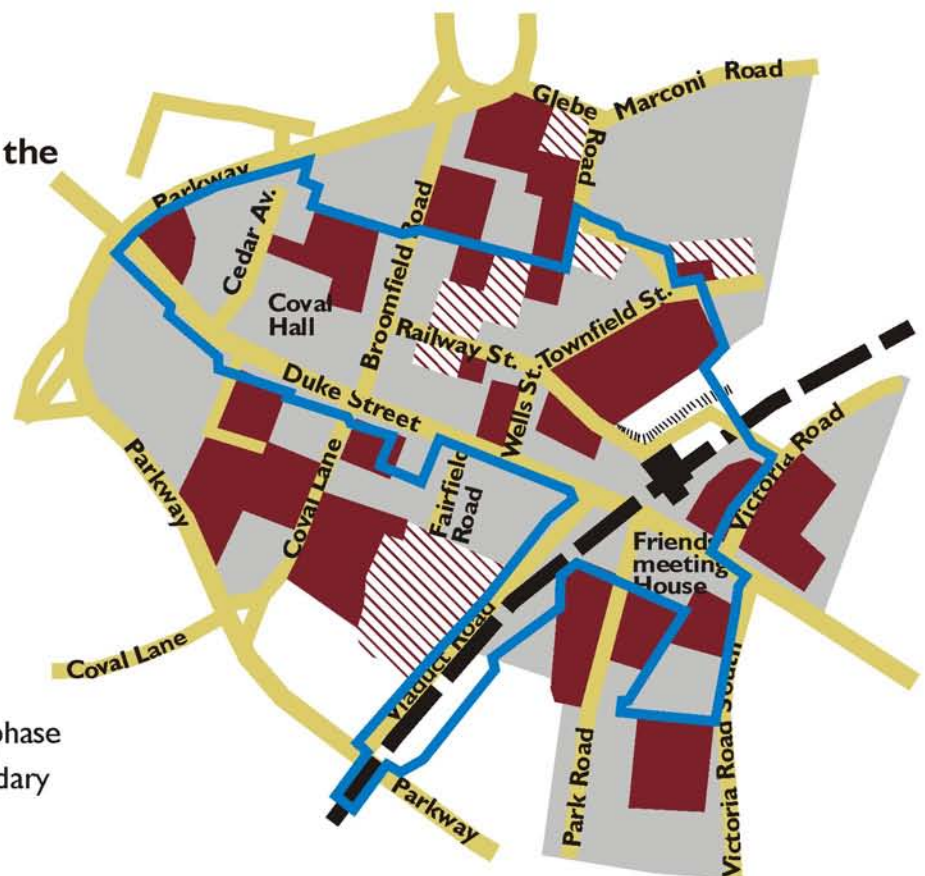
Base: 1939 25 inch OS map

- considerable development had taken place over the last 40 years or so
- carving up of the grounds of Coval Hall with two new streets of housing
- development of land opposite Coval Hall including part of the gardens of Rainsford Lodge with hotel, cinema and further housing
- National Omnibus Company purchased the timber yard in 1918. Demolition of several houses including Fairfield House which stood on the corner of Fairfield Road in the 1930's to make way for the expanding bus station
- further development of industry close to the area with the arrival of the Marconi buildings
- redevelopment of the railway station and a new building opposite also fronting a new street Victoria Road
- arrival of the churches on Rainsford Road and Market Road, the building up of Market Road with school buildings and of Park Road with housing and a further school building

4. Post war clearance and the start of regeneration

Notation

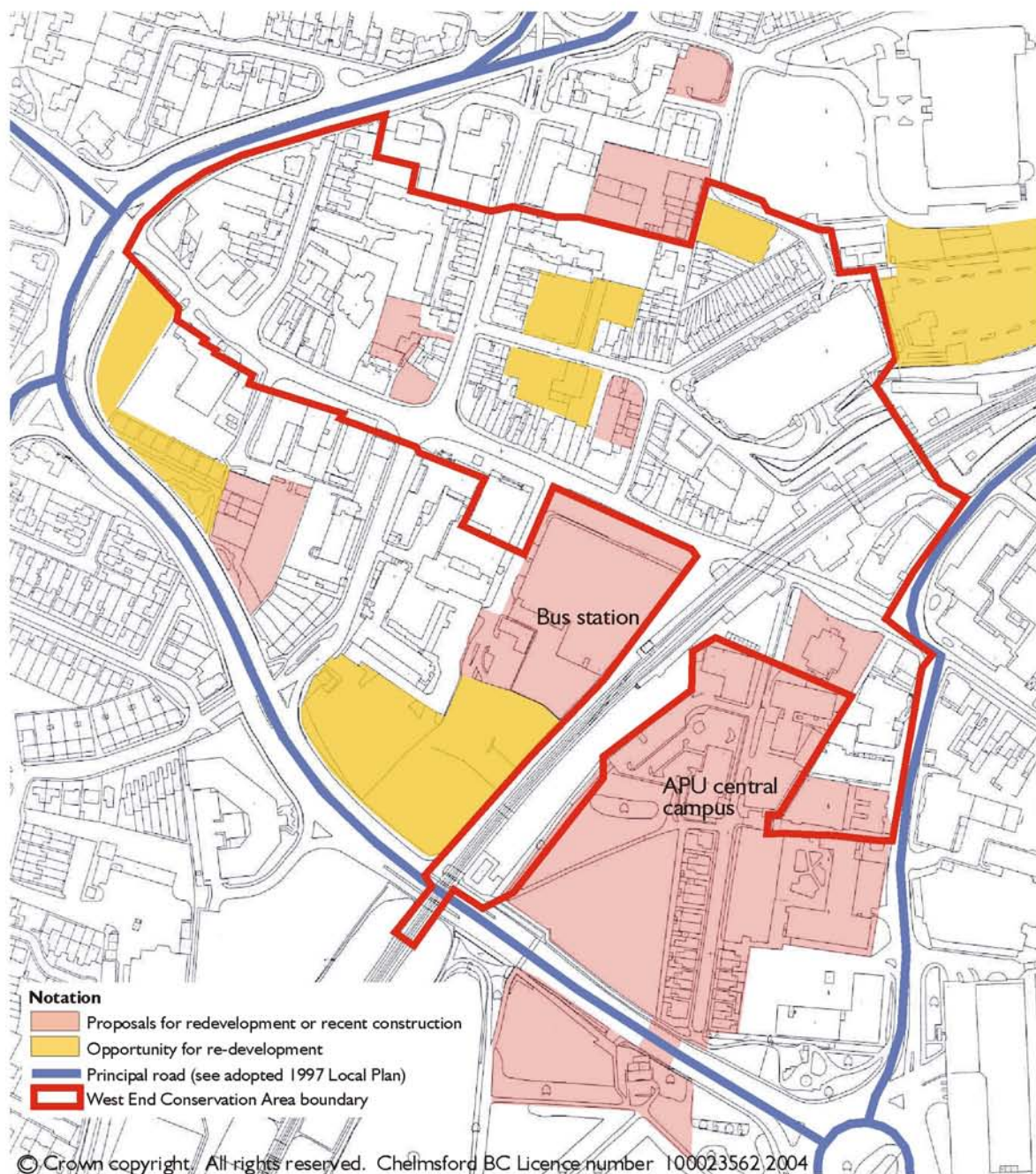
- Post war development
- Post war clearance
- Retained from previous phase
- Conservation Area boundary



Base: 2003 OS map

- bomb damage during World War II resulting in building clearance, some redevelopment and the laying out of surface car parking areas
- Building Parkway (1960's) resulted in the demolition of a number of buildings and cutting off parts of the original West End
- despite these major events much of the early 19th century development still remains.

Planning and development issues affecting the area



While containing some major employers and civic functions, business has suffered from being cut off by the viaduct and Parkway, and from the dominance of car parking. These issues were addressed by the West End Forum between 1998 and 2000 resulting in the West End masterplan which sets out a vision for a revitalised West End based on public transport, the arts and development for living and working.

The West End masterplan anticipated gradual removal of unnecessary through traffic by changing traffic circulation to enable vehicle access to West End businesses and facilitate pedestrian, bus and bike movement. As development progresses and new car parking is put in place, an enhanced public realm will be devised.

The role of the West End as a leisure, entertainment and cultural focus will be nurtured as a principal asset.

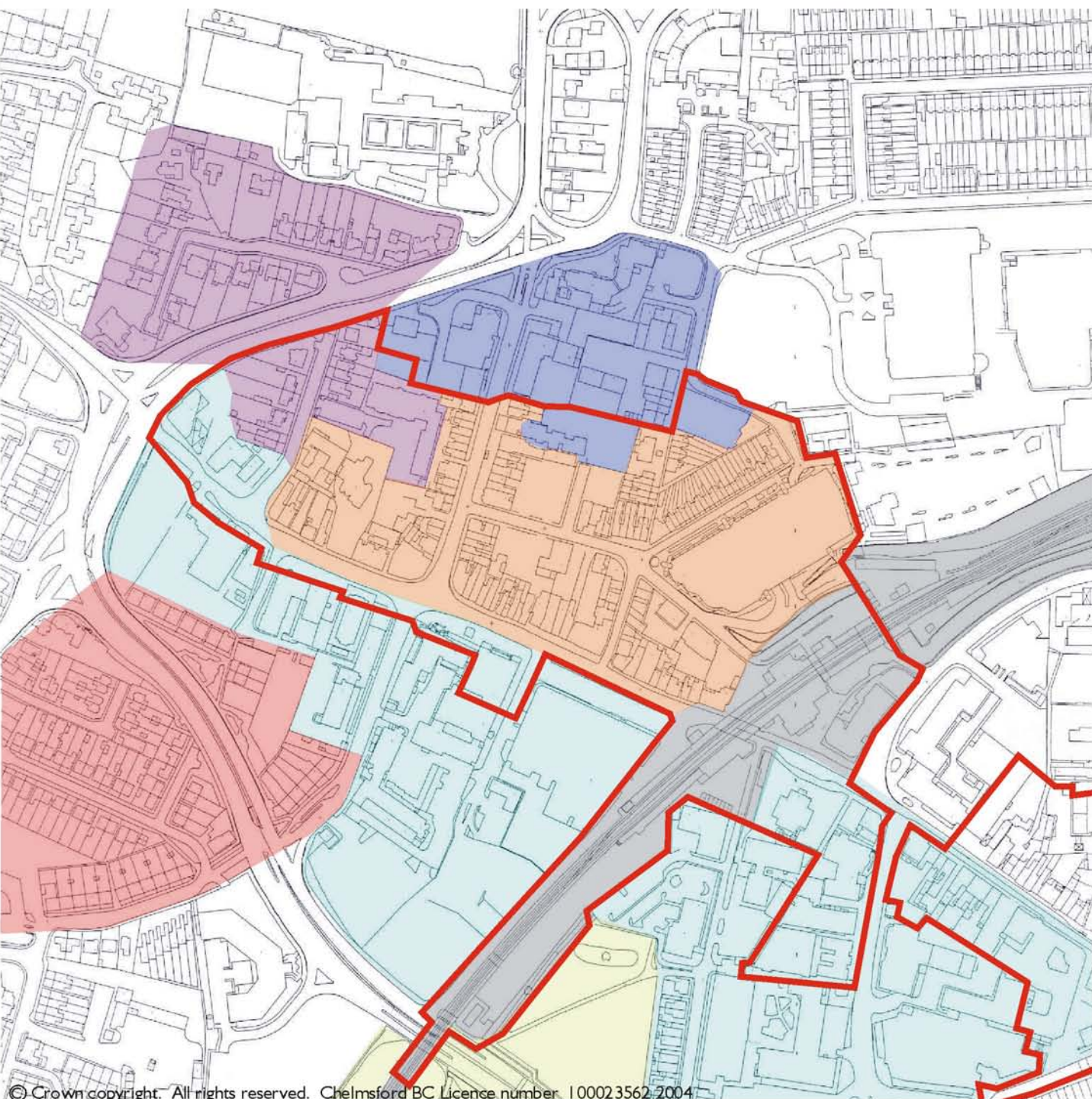
Several major changes are anticipated that will impact upon the conservation area (see map):

- Relocation of the bus garage and redevelopment of the bus station including retail and residential will give new frontage to Duke Street and a new square on Fairfield Road will create a new centre of activity for the area.
- Relocation of university activity to Rivermead and redevelopment of the central campus will create a dense retail residential quarter between the West End and High Street and new uses for historic buildings within the conservation area.

SECTION 3 - CHARACTER APPRAISAL

3.1 Character areas

Each character area has been appraised from the point of view of use built form, character, development history, townscape (streets and spaces), finishing with buildings. There are also two plans at the end of Section 3 providing an appraisal of townscape and of buildings.



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Notation - The character areas

- Terraced street blocks** - the character of the heart of the West End is nineteenth century and early twentieth century domestic scale buildings, in terraces.
- Railway** - the railway viaduct runs right through the area and gives the area its identity.
- Civic** - these buildings are largely all in civic uses and are typically larger buildings.
- Modern** - contrasting with the smaller buildings of domestic scale and appearance there are large modern era commercial buildings. The appraisal led to this area largely being removed from the conservation area.
- Villas** - Parkway cuts this residential area in half.
- Suburban** - outside the conservation area but part of the context is another divided residential area.
- Green space** - also outside the conservation area, Central Park is the main park for the town centre and helps to provide context for the conservation area.
- Conservation Areas** - West End Conservation Area on the right

3.2 Character area A - Terraced street blocks

Development history

The domestic scale of the majority of the buildings in this character area is due to their original purpose as accommodation for the railway workers. The earliest buildings include the east side of Broomfield Road, the northern side of Duke Street and Steamer Terrace.

Due to land being sold off from the Coval Hall estate considerable development was seen in this area between 1900 and 1930 including the West side of Broomfield Road (1913 to 1929) and along Rainsford Road.

The western half of Railway Street once contained built frontage including a side street, Railway Square, unfortunately lost through bomb damage and clearance of the site resulting in the surface car parks that exist today.

The remaining 1840's building adjacent to the car park, 8 Railway Street, leads into the inner neighbourhood area of Townfield Street and sets the scene of the buildings that once existed where the surface car parks now are.

Description of the character area

A network of streets of terraced buildings forms the historic urban heart of the West End and is given focus and identity by historic pubs. Shops, businesses and workers cottages in red and yellow brick are predominantly two storey but rise to three storeys on Broomfield Road and on corners including that of Duke Street with Wells Street. The surviving terraces form the frontage to Broomfield Road, Duke Street – giving the West End its core cruciform structure, Railway Street, and Wells Street/Townfield Street. The buildings have a close historic relationship to the railway and to Marconi's industrial land to the north. The strong street pattern of small scale buildings has been undermined by modern development of the Townfield multi-storey car park and the office buildings opposite.

Broomfield Road and the northern side of Duke Street give the West End its main commercial frontages. The majority of the buildings fronting the streets contain shops, restaurants, cafes and takeaways uses at ground floor, with either office, storage space and some residential above.

In Duke Street and Rainsford Road, these buildings are delicate, small scale and show considerable variation in detail along the terraces. Buildings of special note in the Duke Street terraces include the Original Plough pub, distinctive corner buildings at Wells Street, and a curved corner building at Broomfield Road. On Rainsford Road an Art Deco corner building marks the turn into Cedar Avenue.

The east side of Broomfield Road has two handsome three storey, flat fronted terraces facing the wide street while opposite there are undistinguished, suburban style two storey buildings providing a weaker street edge.

The historic Coval Hall is surrounded by later terraces on Rainsford Road and most recently at the rear with the sheltered housing block, Spalding Court.

At the end of the terraces on Broomfield Road there are two detached houses. West House and 41 Broomfield Road act as the transition to the change of built form that exists at the top end of Broomfield Road.

Terraced street blocks character area



Duke Street, northern side – variety in domestic height, red brick and painted, impact of shopfronts. (right) Rainsford Road and the Art Deco corner building.



Broomfield Road – variety of domestic scale plus modern buildings in background. (right) 3 storey terraces on eastern side with forecourts, a key part of the public realm.



Townfield Street – an example of the mid-nineteenth century terrace and the public realm with the modern car park building forming the eastern elevation of the street.

Wells Street is a delightful, narrow street, with red brick Victorian buildings which has benefited from redevelopment restoring the street form in the 1990s to early 2000s. The recently completed development on the west side of Wells Street with a main frontage to Duke Street includes provision for retail and entertainment venues helping to give activity at the street floor level.

The Townfield Street area is a highly distinctive residential neighbourhood consisting of two storey terraced blocks, with landmark pubs. Townfield Street itself is the main terrace consisting of 22 dwellings with public houses forming each end; the Royal Steamer at its southern end and the White Horse at its northern end. The neighbourhood also includes properties along Railway Street and narrow rear footpaths leading to Steamer Terrace. The car park on Glebe Road leaves a gap on the north side of this triangle of terraces.

There are generally well-defined blocks of development including Wells Street west to Broomfield Road, Duke Street and Railway Street. However this block is disrupted in Railway Street by gap sites used for car parking. Railway Street consists of commercial units and some office blocks. To the east of Townfield Street there are large 1960s and 70s buildings including a multi-storey car park forming the eastern frontage of Townfield Street and two 3 to 4 storey office blocks.

The multi-storey has four frontages; two are street frontages, one a pedestrian only passage way and the other a car park access up a ramp. The ramp with its side green enclosure of tree cover creates an unexpected higher ground level in this otherwise flat area.

The ramp on the station side of the multi-storey allows for one of the two vehicular accesses into the multi-storey but more significantly provides the only access into the goods yard.

The industry in the area is generally to the rear of the main streets. Coval Works, adjacent to Coval Hall, is a builders yard with storage workshops and office accommodation set behind buildings fronting the corner of Cedar Avenue and Rainsford Road.

Townscape – the quality of streets and spaces

The continuous built frontages, the mix of two and three storey buildings of domestic scale and the interesting corner buildings provide good townscape in terms of scale, building form and skyline. However the appearance of ground floor frontages along Duke Street, in-particular, is generally poor and adversely impacts on the appearance of the streetscape and detracts from the character of the upper floors.

The Railway Viaduct is a key element of the townscape with its main relationship to the buildings on the northern side of Duke Street but also to the West End in general.

Broomfield Road is a broad, straight thoroughfare. The pavements in front of the block of units on the west side of Broomfield Road on the northern side of the Railway Street junction are slightly set back with forecourts. The forecourts serving the Ship public house and BADA restaurant, accommodate table and chairs helping to create activity in the street.

Wells Street has a strong feeling of enclosure due to the narrow width and 2 and 3 storey street edge development. The character of the street also comes from its rich brickwork colour and detailing. The retail and entertainment venues at street level

help to create interest and activity. The cross roads is an excellent townscape experience although there is potential for improvement.

The townscape of Railway Street is disrupted by surface car parks.

Townfield Street has an interesting mix of character, old to the west and modern to the east. The terrace is faced with the side of the multi-storey car park which detracts from this character. The northern end of Townfield Street comes to a sudden stop with the siting of a bulky planter with three False Acacia trees dominating the space to the frontage of the adjacent public house at the end of the terrace. There is also a planter at the southern end of Townfield Street. Both are important in softening and breaking up the harsh multi-storey edge.

The narrow alleyways of Steamer Terrace and the passage running along the rear of the Townfield Street properties are an important contribution to the historical grain of this neighbourhood. Two mature Sycamores alongside the Townfield Street alleyway and another at the end of Steamer Terrace enhance the setting of the terraced buildings.

The multi-storey car park in terms of depth and building mass is largely out of scale with the terraced domestic block. The elevations of the multi-storey car park do have architectural merit with interesting shaped walls fronting the street. However these walls are also long stretches of dead frontage, with no activity at street level etc. Planters at either end of Townfield Street and along the Railway Street edge attempt to help soften these harsh aspects.

Duke Street continues into Rainsford Road to the west where again this is mainly street frontage development. The only building that is set back along this northern side of the street is Coval Hall providing an element of surprise in the townscape. There are a number of significant trees to the side and rear of Coval Hall, providing a strong backdrop to the adjacent perimeter blocks.

The corner building with Cedar Avenue is higher and more in scale with the larger buildings that sit on the other side of Rainsford Road.

Buildings in the terraced street block character area

Building	Description	Significance and opportunity for enhancement
Buildings contributing to character		
Coval Hall	Grade II Listed. Originally built in 16 th century and was the first dwelling in the West End. It was largely remodelled in the 18 th century but the structure is still of 16 th century origin. White painted bricks. Two storeys. Southern elevation – three parallel wings each of different lengths, creating irregular plan, with hipped and peg-tile roofs. The original property has been extended over the years, most recently with a substantial 2-storey extension to the rear that adds no special character to the area.	This has high historic significance. Pursue enhancement of space to front of building, and improvement of 20 th century additions.

Coval Works	Early twentieth century industrial buildings, both 2-storey, one with white weatherboarding at first floor. Vernacular style and employment use contributes to the historic character and helps define Cedar Avenue.	Contributes to townscape and historic character. Encourage continued use, although redevelopment possible.
Townfield Street and Steamer Terrace	Built 1840s/1850s. Domestic 2-storey terrace, includes particularly attractive end-of terrace building (Royal Steamer Public House). Brick walls and chimneys, slate roof.	These buildings have historic and townscape significance. Reinstate original features. Consider issuing Article 4 (2) direction.
15-19 Railway Street	The terrace has lost its original dwelling frontages with the addition of ground floor bays and white render of the commercial units which now occupy the units and it is not until one views from the rear that it is appreciated that these buildings did respect the original terrace of Townfield Street.	Townscape merit. Seek enhancement of frontages to complement those of Townfield Street terrace.
Broomfield Road east side	Numbers 8-16 date stone 1842. Built 1840-43 in anticipation of opening of railway. The terrace from the Ship PH to the restaurant Bada actually has a change in roofline from TJs to Bada suggesting that this part of the terrace (now TJs and Worldchoice) was added at a slightly later date. The Ship PH has also extended into one of the original houses of the terrace.	These buildings have townscape significance. Promote enhancement of frontages.
West House, 34 Broomfield Road	Timber sash windows, decorative mouldings around the doorway symmetrical fenestration. Slate roof. The building is striking due to its detailing.	Townscape merit. Seek enhancement of front courtyard.
41 Broomfield Road (Dental Surgery)	On the western side of Broomfield Road built before the adjacent terrace. Detached property in commercial use but would have originally been of domestic use. It has timber windows, red brick, and a doorcase with fanlight.	Some townscape merit.
2-18 Wells Street (east side) and 38 Duke Street	Buildings with original features including windows, red stock bricks, tiled roof. 38 Duke Street corner building with its oriel corner bay window and metal detailing in the bay windows and ground floor canopy.	These buildings have townscape significance. Pursue control of changes to fenestration, materials and detailing. Consider issuing Article 4 (2) direction.
Original Plough	2-storey, red brick frontage, yellow brick sides, tiled gambrel roof.	Townscape significance.

Buildings which neither enhance nor detract from the character of the area		
Broomfield Road west side	The terrace of buildings on the western side were constructed 1930's onwards. Each unit has a bay window at first floor with a column of red stock bricks pronouncing the edge of individual units. There is a mix of timber, metal and plastic windows. At least one original shopfront, that of number 37 (Only Fine Beer).	Pursue enhancement of frontages - respect domestic scale in any improvements.
29-37 Duke Street – block	Mixed 2-3 storey blocks.	Promote improvement of building frontages, materials and detailing.
Numbers 40 (Co-op) to 46 (Verdes) to 56.	The units adjacent to this recent development up to Verdes and the terraces up to Broomfield Road would have originally been considered quite grand in scale and quality. An example of this is numbers 47 – 48, the brick dentil course under roof line, number 47a has particularly good brickwork. 51-55 also has nice detailing including the delicate appearance of metal Crittall style windows. 1920's red-brick 3-storey 40-42 is a redevelopment scheme of the late 1990's. This building also has a good rear with white timber boarding that was copied from the previous building on the site. Note number 46 confirmed not suitable for listing.	Promote improvement of individual shop fronts. Pursue control of changes to fenestration and materials.
6-14 (evens), Rainsford Road	2-storey. Red brick. Character has been gradually diminished and adds little to the conservation area.	Promote redevelopment opportunity whilst retaining domestic scale.
20-32 (evens), Rainsford Road	Mixed 2-3 storey blocks. Number 32 - late twentieth century corner development.	Seek improvements, respect domestic scale.
Multi-storey car park	Bulk of the block (plan view) does not fit in with the surrounding area although the street frontage respects the scale of building frontages of Townfield Street and Railway Street. The shaped walls also provide some architectural interest. But overall this building has a negative effect on the conservation area.	Pursue improvement of street elevations particularly at ground floor. Investigate potential for creation of a station square and new car park entrance.

3.3 Character area B – The railway

Development history

The modern station dates from the 1980s and replaced the 1856 brick station building. Part of this earlier station building still remains on the southern side adjacent to the Railway Inn and fronting the taxi square and multi-storey. The very first station which no longer exists was a small timber structure 200 metres to the north.

Description of the character area

The railway viaduct is one of the dominating features of the West End. It has a powerful effect on the character of Duke Street and Railway Street and the spaces around it.

The arches to the south of Duke Street once contained traditional uses connected to the railway and other forms of transport but now primarily contain modern commercial units. There is one open arch for through access and two others boarded up but for future connection through to Central Park North. Viaduct Road acts as the frontage for the arches.

Arches to the north of Duke Street under the station platforms are presently used for cycle parking and for rail company storage purposes. A footpath providing the main pedestrian link from the station to Marconi's and AMS employment sites squeezes between the multi storey and the adjacent Marconi site, and leads into the surprise of a low and narrow pedestrian tunnel through the viaduct.

Around the railway station are the busy pedestrian areas to the station entrances, frontage of the station concourse, taxi and vehicular access to the northern side of the main station entrance with the taxi rank itself on the western side of the viaduct, and cycle parking. On the eastern side of the viaduct is the station season ticket car park. All these spaces are congested and adversely affect the setting of the viaduct, the character of the conservation area and pedestrian comfort.

The ramp that gives access to the Townfield Street car park provides a welcome green area. A number of the trees are mature, plus others self grown, but this forms the most undisturbed group of trees in the Conservation Area. The advertisement hoardings sited on this green edge detract from the space.

Railway character area



The viaduct south of Duke Street - filled in arches and a view into the conservation area.



Duke Street and station area - the major link through on Duke Street and open arches adjacent to the station forecourt area.



Modern buildings to the east of the viaduct – the station entrance building and Saxon House.

The ramp also provides the only access into the goods yard bordering the railway. The goods yard contains a handful of industrial units and is adjoins the conservation area boundary.

There are preserved trees around the western and northern edges of the office block opposite the station and also the office block on the opposite side of Victoria Road. These help to soften the large modern buildings particularly when viewed from the train.

The modern station is a result of 1980's alterations to the original building. The station does not infringe upon the scale of the viaduct. However, the 4 to 5 storey office block immediately opposite, though utilising the same yellow brickwork, dominates this immediate area around the station entrance.

On the other side of Victoria Road there are other bulk four and five storey office blocks, of red brick.

Townscape – the quality of streets and spaces

The arches of the viaduct are one of the strongest visual characteristics of the West End. When viewing along Duke Street from the west the railway viaduct provides the enclosure to the street. The viaduct is of a height that does have some relationship to the tops of the domestic terraced blocks.

Viaduct Road is bordered on the west side by unsympathetic fencing to separate it from the surface parking. The fascias and signage on the Viaduct Road arches do have some uniformity with regards to shape, colour and positioning.

The station concourse pedestrian area is surfaced in red clay blocks contrasting with the yellow brickwork of the adjacent buildings.

The alleyway beside the public house fronting Duke Street which leads pedestrians to a side station entrance is an enclosed space consisting of red clay pavements, red-brown brick sides to the arches and yellow brick walls of the public house. Cycle parking dominates the space including use of the viaduct arches. This alleyway has recently received yellow painted lines marking the edge of the cycle parking area which are visually intrusive.

Other spaces around the station include a taxi waiting area and pick-up and drop-off points either side of the railway linked by the arches but their appearance detracts from their importance as arrival points.

On top of the railway viaduct there are railings with decorative heads which provide some good detail to the public realm. Away from the immediate central platform area either side of the viaduct the railings end and unsympathetic mesh fencing is used as the platform side boundary treatment.

The canopy on the front elevation is part of the original station building. This has recently become a bicycle parking area.

The line of preserved trees running parallel to the viaduct bordering Central Park provide a green lung into the West End and provide a pleasant complement to the linear built structure.

Buildings

Building	Description	Significance and opportunity
Buildings contributing to character		
Railway Viaduct	1840-43 red-brown stock brick.	This building has historic and townscape significance. Pursue enhancement of setting and address maintenance of brickwork.
Signal box building	Platform side, part of the public realm of the square below.	Historic and townscape significance. Pursue enhancement of the building.
Building opposite Railway Tavern containing platform level café.	This off-shoot from the viaduct is part of original station building, Solid brick, irregular shape and vacant at ground floor.	Historic, architectural and townscape significance. Promote reuse and active use of street frontage.
Railway Tavern	Distinctive Victorian pub complementing the railway viaduct structure it adjoins. Brick painted, 2 street frontages	This building has historic, architectural and townscape significance.
Buildings which neither enhance nor detract from the character of the area		
Station entrance	1980s concourse building.	
Saxon House	The building has four frontages, is of good architecture for its time consisting of bays and modules, yellow brick, course of red brick separating floors.	Seek improvement of street frontages particularly Duke Street and that facing the station entrance.

3.4 Character area C – Civic

Development history

Prior to the building of the large civic buildings this area was occupied by a few buildings in large plots. For example prior to the Civic Centre there was a private dwelling (Rainsford House, demolished in 1961) with large gardens to the rear and at the end of Fairfield Road there was a dwelling owned by a builder next to his yard. Cottages preceded the library building and Fairfield Road was actually a quiet cul-de-sac lined with terraced two-storey Victorian dwellings.

The Anne Knight Building built in the 1820's had a cemetery to the west, presently the gravelled car park plus five burial plots to the front of the building by Duke Street.

The present bus station was constructed in the 1930's and expanded in 1938 through the purchase of adjacent land to meet Fairfield Road which involved the demolition of a couple of houses including the three storey building Fairfield House. A bus station has existed on the site since 1918 when the National Omnibus Company purchased the previous timber merchants yard and premises.

Description of the character area

The third distinctive character area in the West End comes from a sequence of public buildings along the south side of Rainsford Road and Duke Street. The uses include places of worship, Council offices, theatres, transport, higher education, hotel and offices and this swathe of civic activity extends beyond the conservation area to County Hall. In a sense, the southern part of the West End represents the start of a city character, the public symbols, attractions and cultural life.

Off the Civic Centre buildings only the former library, now the Civic Centre entrance building, on Duke Street is included within the conservation area (from February 2005). The ornate stone fronted entrance and former library turning the corner to a tree lined Fairfield Road has been included within the conservation area due to its architectural interest and contribution to townscape.

The other Civic Centre buildings include a five storey brick office fronting Duke Street and also stretches along Coval Lane. There are two theatres in the buildings fronting Fairfield Road bringing concentrations of street activity at relatively short periods prior to and following performances. At the southern end of Fairfield Road there are surface car parking areas.

Rainsford Road, Duke Street and the northern part of Victoria Road South are the only other parts of this character area within the conservation area. The quality of architecture and coherence of this character area is highly variable. This character area also contains two major development sites, the bus depot and university central campus, where major change will consolidate the city character. The conservation area provides an important context for this new development.

Rainsford Road provides the main western entrance into the West End and is the main road into Chelmsford for those areas to the north-west and towns beyond.

The Methodist Church and the County Hotel along with Hodgson House on the corner mark the western entrance into the West End, and are now within the conservation area. The south side of Rainsford Road is a mixture of offices and retail.

The area to the east of the viaduct is, for the time being, largely in educational use, Anglia Polytechnic University, announced by the classical style Anne Knight Building.

This building group starting on Duke Street and turning the corner along Victoria Road South to the University quadrangle is a historic urban block with original boundaries firmly defined by building frontages. The Victoria Road South street frontage has a consistent rhythm, proportion and red brick is the dominant material.

The Frederick Chancellor Building, Law Building, Central Baptist Church have provided the visual context for more recent development at the Marlborough House site and the Royal and Sun Alliance building.

Along with the modern County Hall buildings opposite, the massing, close fitting and civic style of the buildings provide a sense of formal enclosure. This creates the start of the more tightly knit town centre.

Townscape – the quality of streets and spaces

The western entrance off the Parkway is formed by an office building on the northern side creating a strong corner and a line of Monterey Cypress trees on the street edge opposite which provides a visually strong block of greenery, albeit in poor condition. There is reasonable width to the street that contributes to the character of the area.

Beside the Trinity Methodist Church and its Trinity Link hall, on Rainsford Road, there is a hard surface space offering some street seating and the entrance to the church with an adjoining street frontage space to Trinity Link being used as a parking forecourt.

The townscape along Rainsford Road and Duke Street is framed by the Civic Centre on the right with the cathedral spire visible as a focal point in the distance, the spire also strikingly visible from further west including from Primrose Hill.

The building line of the southern side of Rainsford Road continuing in to Duke Street is set back and allows for the wider footways and forecourt areas compared to the opposite side of the street.

Continuing on from the Western entrance into the West End, the wide pavement space in front of the Civic Centre contains the war memorial and is a highly meaningful civic space for the town. Some recent public realm works have been carried out to enhance the spaces to the frontage of the Civic Centre and Old Library building.

The Civic Centre acts as an important focal point and vista when viewing south down Broomfield Road and dominates the character of the streetscape and this characteristic is an important element of the conservation area.

Civic character area



The western entrance into the West End. Hodgson House on the left and Trinity Methodist Church.



Duke Street, southern side – designed spaces fronting the civic offices.



Victoria Road South - Buildings with great townscape value. (right) Restful square to the rear of Marlborough House accessible by a back lane (Cannons Path) serving the APU campus.



The former library (Civic Centre entrance building) is the key to the strong edge of the southern side of Duke Street and Fairfield Road. The building along with the adjacent space and street trees of Fairfield Road creates a valued contribution to townscape. This has recently been included within the conservation area. The strong street edge continues further south along Fairfield Road adjacent to the conservation area boundary.

To the east of the viaduct, the setting of the Anne Knight Building is of great importance. It is framed by the Railway Tavern and viaduct on its west side and the Victorian block on its east side, including the surrounding preserved trees, not only because it is a listed building but also due to its prominence as the first building visitors see as they arrive in the town from the train station opposite.

The buildings of Victoria Road South provide an interesting skyline with varied heights, gabled ends, tower heads, good frontages consisting of high ground floors situated close to street edge, large glazed windows. These buildings provide a good sense of enclosure on the east side of Cannons Path, with the opening of a landscape designed space with plantings at the rear of Marlborough House. There is planting and hedging at the northern end of Cannons Path in the grounds of the Anne Knight Building and also fronting the Chancellor Building which contrasts with the urban hard paving of the northern frontages and Duke Street.

Buildings

Building	Description	Significance and opportunity
Buildings contributing to character		
Hodgson House, Riansford Road	1990 office buff brick building re-established the street form at the entry point from the west into the West End.	Architectural merit and townscape significance.
Trinity Methodist Church, Rainsford Road	1950s style modern church with striking decorative glazed elevations enclosing courtyard and a strong brick and column face to the street.	This building has architectural and townscape significance. Pursue enhancement of setting.
War memorial, Duke Street	Limestone memorial with stepped plinth, erected in 1920's commemorating First World War fallen, further inscription added dedicated to those killed during Second World War.	Historic, community and townscape significance.

Civic Centre entrance building (former library), Duke Street	Public Library built in 1933 by Cordingley & McIntyre. Two-storeyed, symmetrical, Neo-Georgian. Brick with the centre treated in stone. The steps and ramp to the buildings entrance were designed by the Council's architect in the late 1970's early 80's.	This building has architectural interest and historic townscape significance. Pursue control of changes to fenestration, materials and detailing.
Civic and Cramphorn Theatre, Fairfield Road	1960s Limestone and brick, mid-century modern theatre with fine stone work details. Forms strong street edge. These buildings are connected.	These buildings are architecturally interesting and together help to positively contribute to townscape.
Anne Knight Building, Duke Street.	Grade II Listed Building. Built 1823. Purpose built by Quakers as a meeting house (Quaker meetings held in building 1824 – 1957). Designed by John Collins from Moulsham. Grey gault brick. Timber pitched roof with particularly wide span and slate clad. Front with pedimented gable and blank circular window. Ionic porch with 4 columns. Continuous sill band and four arched recesses to front. Side elevations – each has 5 windows, round headed with small pane sashes, above the sill band.	This building has historic, community and architectural importance. Pursue enhancement of setting.
Corner building, Duke Street and Victoria Road South	Rusticated render and brick building with splayed corner marking entrance into the West End.	Townscape significance as eastern entry to West End.
Marlborough House	Late 20 th century office block based on an asymmetrical truncated H form in a style that respects the style of the neighbouring buildings.	This building has townscape significance.
Central Baptist Church	Historic and townscape. 1908-9, designed by William Hayne of Frinton, who was responsible for extensions to Coval Hall and the Baptiste manse, both in Rainsford Road. Red brick and stone to reflect on the neighbouring Chancellor building. Alterations to the building at the front and primarily first floor side extension in 2000 to give more public access and a more adaptable interior.	This building has architectural and townscape significance.

Frederick Chancellor Building	Built in 1902-11 as the Library, Museum and art school for the Chelmsford Corporation, designed by Frederick Chancellor. Red brick with stone dressings. Rooflights and tall wide windows allows light into interior for art school.	Historic, architectural and townscape significance. Pursue control of changes to fenestration, materials and detailing.
Law Building	1931 likely that it was an extension to the art school. Art Deco style with much masonry detailing. Well defined entrance bay, headed with an impressive glazed panel lighting the period stair hall inside. Attached to the west side of the building are two brick and stone arched bridges linking to the West Building 1938 similar but less inspired façade.	Historic, architectural and townscape significance but will be lost in forthcoming redevelopment. Any change must respect context and importance to detail.
Buildings which neither enhance nor detract from the character of the area		
County Hotel, Rainsford Road	Mixture of building styles dominated by domestic style front. The Masonic Hall has strongest street presence but blank facades.	Encourage bringing Masonic Hall into hotel use and continuing enhancements to the hotel front.
Civic Centre, Duke Street	Built in 1962 by Jackson & Edmunds. The building replaced the Edwardian property Rainsford House which also acted as Council offices towards the end of its life. The red-brown brick building which is of a good height acts as a vista when viewing south down Broomfield Road.	This is an integral part of the building block fronting Duke Street and is of townscape importance.
Negative buildings		
Trinity Link hall, Rainsford Road.	Poor siting and appearance	Investigate potential for redevelopment and creation of an enhanced space.

3.5 Character area D - Modern

Development history

The listed building adjacent to Parkway on Broomfield Road is the only pre 20th century building and the development in this area has largely been piecemeal and infill during the second half of the 20th century.

Description of the character area

This character area forms the northern edge to the West End. It is mainly characterised by secondary uses of a town centre location, such as offices and residential.

The large box shaped buildings of Britvic, a company who have a long association with Chelmsford, and a lower box building opposite in retail warehouse use, jars with the domestic scale buildings either side.

There are two late twentieth century residential blocks at two and three storeys plus a two storey terrace of matching architecture leading towards the neighbouring residential Steamer Terrace. A mixed-use block on the bend opposite Marconi Road is nearing completion and continues the recently created strong built frontage along this side of Glebe Road. The surface car park between Steamer Terrace and Glebe Road is allocated for development.

Townscape – the quality of streets and spaces

Entering the West End from the north along Broomfield Road (buses and pedestrians only) there is a building block (including the listed building) with very strong character including several pleasant but disparate landscaped seating spaces have been created to complement these buildings.

These buildings are visually separated from the rest of Broomfield Road due to the over-bearing office building of Britvic and the Gainsborough Carpets building opposite creating a major change in character along Broomfield Road. These sites are adjacent to the conservation area boundary enabling appropriate control over the design and appearance of any proposals for redevelopment.

Public realm works around the Britvic building has improved the appearance of this section of Broomfield Road particularly at street level.

There are green areas alongside the Parkway consisting mainly of London Plane trees which once mature will provide even more importance to the urban setting.

The access road next to Gainsborough Carpets leads to a rear parking area and a 1980s (Citizens Advice Bureau) building by the borough architect fronting the Parkway but rather detached from the street pattern. The building has an awkward appearance as the original design was not complete which included extra bays on the eastern side to help balance the building.

Modern character area



Glebe Road (adjacent to the conservation area) - new developments, with a retained old wall separating two of the blocks. (right) A view to building rears (64-66 Broomfield Road) but also forming public realm.



Top end of Broomfield Road to Parkway – the contrast between the traditional domestic scale of the West End and later twentieth century office block. (right) A view into the top end of Broomfield Road showing the block (64-66 Broomfield Road) developed in context with the adjoining listed building on Broomfield Road.

Villas character area



Cedar Avenue – villas on the eastern side within the original conservation area.

Buildings

Building	Description	Significance and opportunity
Buildings contributing to character		
62 to 72 Broomfield Road.	Onslow House (fronting Broomfield Road) is a Grade II LB. 1838, 3-storey, grey gault brick. Grey slate hiped roof. Vertical sliding sashes with glazing bars. No's. 64-66 1990 development 3 storey, complementing LB.	Architectural and historic importance. Ensure changes to fenestration, materials and detailing are controlled. Listed Building consent needed for any changes to the listed element.
Buildings which neither enhance nor detract from the character of the area		
47 Broomfield Road	The Citizens Advice Bureau is sited off a side access road but does front the Parkway.	Encourage extension to meet initial design vision.
Negative buildings		
43, 45 Broomfield Road (Gainsborough Carpets)	Inappropriate scale.	Encourage redevelopment as part of a wider development opportunity.
50 – 60 Broomfield Road (Britvic)	Inappropriate scale.	Seek improvement opportunity.
Rear of 34 Broomfield Road	Poor appearance, highly visible from Railway Street.	Encourage wider development opportunity.

3.6 Character area E – The villas

Development history

The majority of this area was originally part of the grounds of Coval Hall. The villas that exist today are dated between 1913 to 1929 with the more recent addition of Spalding Court in the late twentieth century.

Description of the character area

Cedar Avenue on the western edge of the West End is a medium-density residential neighbourhood consisting of early twentieth century detached and semi-detached housing plus the three storey L-shaped sheltered housing block (Spalding Court) erected in the grounds of Coval Hall.

This area is visually detached from the main commercial areas of the West End and is more characteristic with the residential development to the north across Parkway including Cedar Avenue West.

The area on the east side of Parkway is a contained residential area and is part of the conservation area

Coval Hall once provided the dominant building for this part of the West End. Its set back position to Rainsford Road is still maintained however since the early twentieth century it has largely been surrounded by development.

Townscape – the quality of streets and spaces

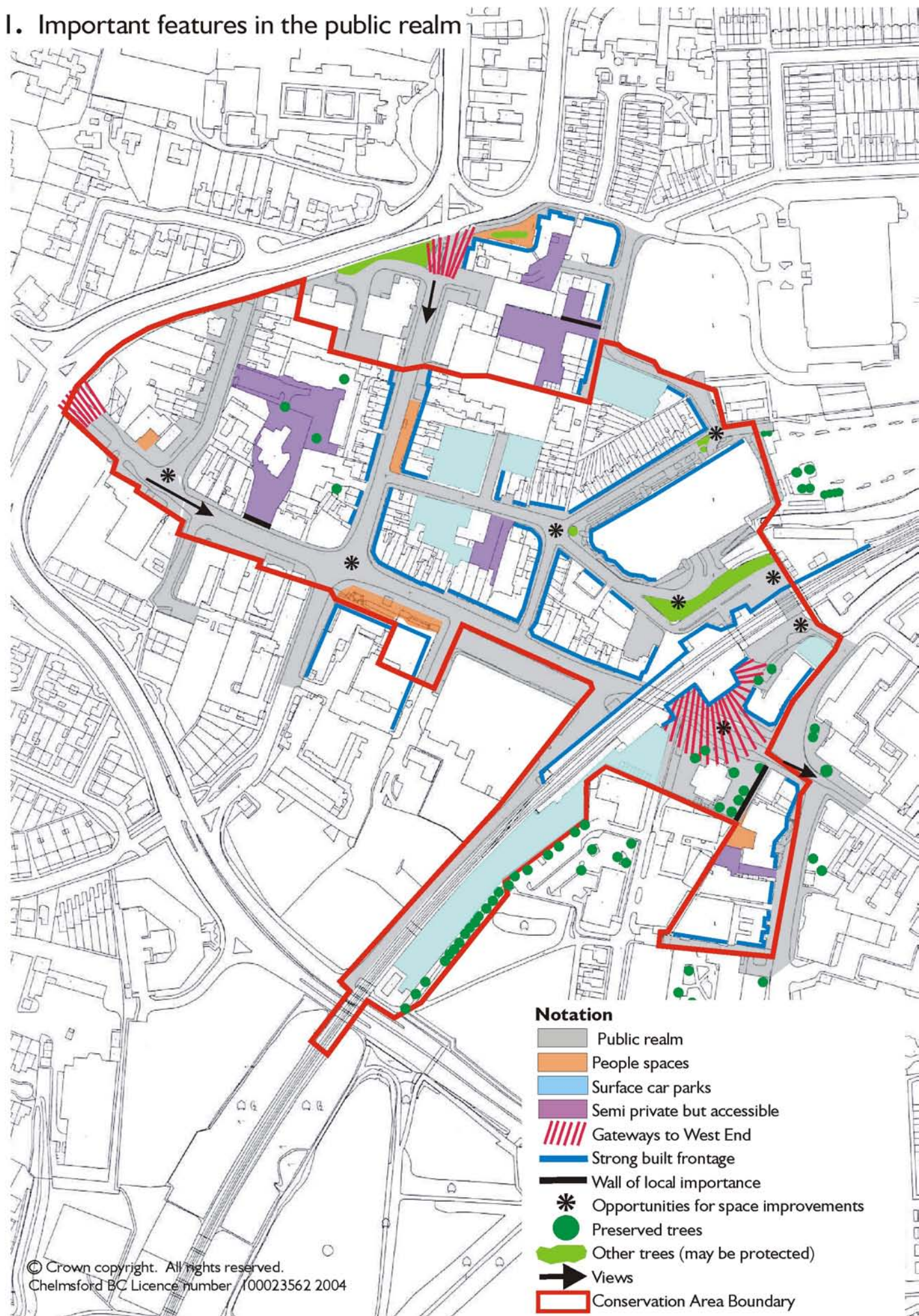
Cedar Avenue consists of private residential front gardens with driveways, some of the front boundaries are open, some with low fencing, there is street parking and pedestrian access to the Parkway.

London Plane trees again provide an important edge to the Parkway and one also provides a vista for the residential street.

Spalding Court contains a landscaped space consisting of parking, private gardens of the apartments and Coval Hall. Although the rear of Coval Hall was already compromised by extensions this space has tried to address the setting of the listed building. The access off the street is bounded either side by a close boarded fence. This block together with several trees provides the backdrop when viewing towards the perimeter development that surrounds it.

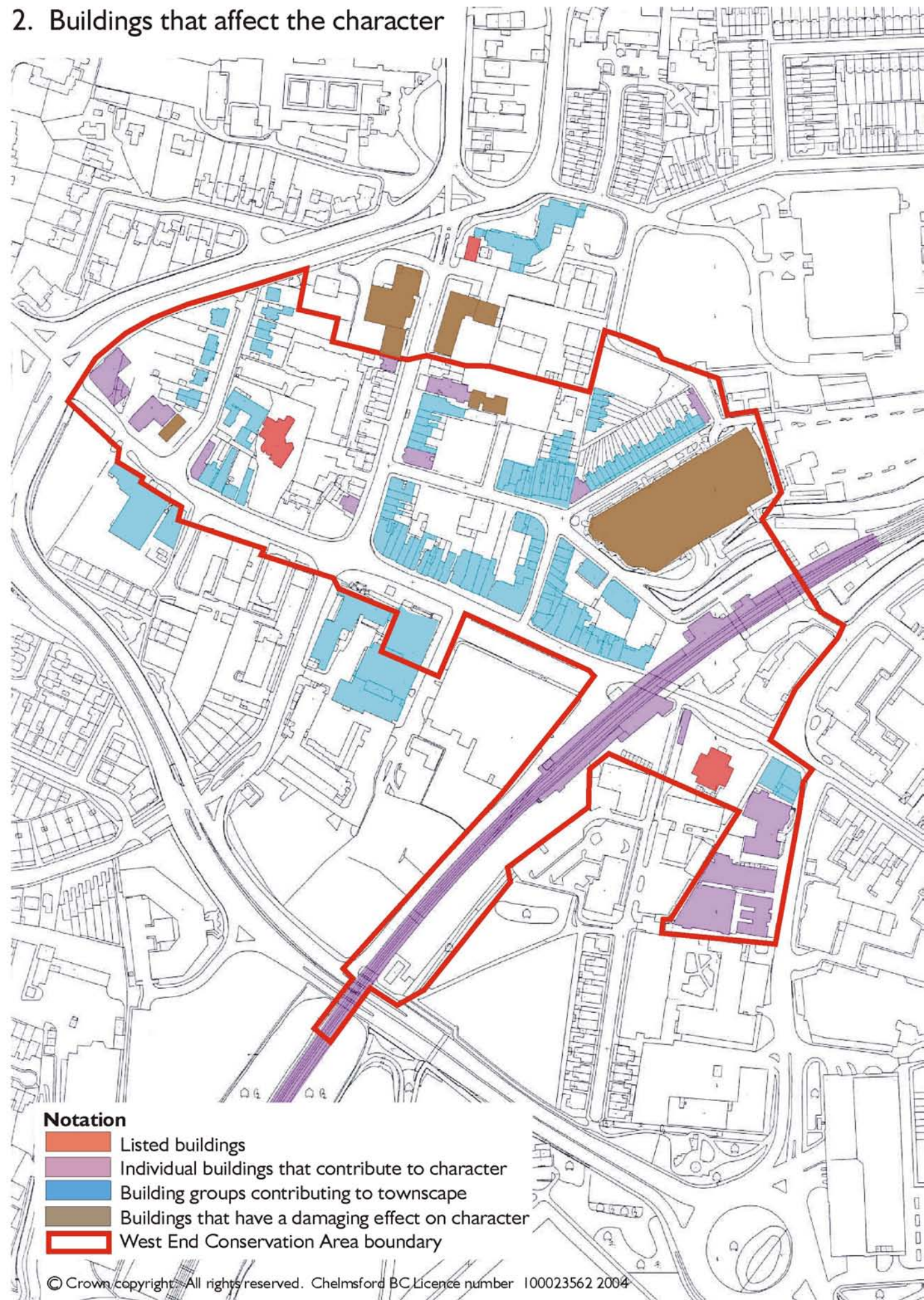
The character of the West End

I. Important features in the public realm



The character of the West End

2. Buildings that affect the character



Notation

- Listed buildings
- Individual buildings that contribute to character
- Building groups contributing to townscape
- Buildings that have a damaging effect on character
- West End Conservation Area boundary

SECTION 4 – TOWNSCAPE AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

4.1 Building materials and details

There is a wide variation of details using principally the same components and traditional materials - brick, stone, render, wood and metal, tile and slate.

The majority of buildings are predominantly red brick, including street frontages of Victoria Road South, Duke Street, Broomfield Road, Rainsford Road, Cedar Avenue, Wells Street, Townfield Street and Railway Street. Although a number of the buildings on these streets have been painted a variety of colours, some being covered in render, some pebbledash.

It is common practice for 19th century buildings to consist of 'posh' bricks to the fronts and cheaper bricks to the sides and rears. Examples of this, where gault bricks face the street and red brick to sides and rears include, the Anne Knight building, the Civic Centre and the listed building at the top of Broomfield Road. The modern blocks in the northern part of the West End are largely yellow brick.

Roofs are dark machine-made tiles and slates. Slate arrived with the introduction of the railway to the town as the cheap material from Wales could then easily be transported about and became extensively available for the first time. The older buildings in the terraces have original slate roofs which allowed for a lower pitch and wider span.

A number of buildings have metal Crittall style windows which were introduced in the 1920's. Prior to this period windows would have mainly been timber of which a number are still present.

The railway viaduct is a major structure that cuts right through the West End. The red-brown brick sets the scene for the significance of brick in the West End. Walls also have value in their own right in the area. The ones remaining of historic importance include the front boundary wall of Coval Hall and to the side by Frenches Works, the wall associated to the viaduct marking the northern edge of the taxi waiting area for the station, a retained low red-brown wall in Glebe Road marking the boundary between two residential redevelopments and another beside the Anne Knight building alongside Cannons Path. The condition of these walls gives some cause for concern.

4.2 Shopfronts

Shop frontages in the conservation area are generally poor in appearance, design and quality and do not relate well to the immediate building and the street and surroundings. There are a few that are original or sympathetically designed.

Some particularly poor examples are the shop fronts of the block 27 to 38 Duke Street. Although the building frontage at first floor level does contain an element of character and this needs to be taken into account in any change to the shop fronts themselves to enable more valuable contribution to the streetscape. Other particularly poor examples are the shopfronts opposite the Civic Centre entrance.

One shop front that is of a sympathetic design to the building and the street is that of number 46 Duke Street (Verdes restaurant). Co-op, number 40, is an example of a sympathetic re-build and includes bow fronted windows which are replicas of the

originals. Number 38 Duke Street, on the corner with Wells Street, is a building of special character where there is great contrast with the modern shop fronts.

4.3 Street surfaces

Streets are generally tar macadam top with granite kerbs and concrete pavements on the footway.

Cobbles mark part of the edge of the bus station forecourt apron, and also form the drop kerbs and the edge of the presently one open arch along Viaduct Road.

4.4 Street furniture and signs

Historically street nameplates in the West End have been mounted on walls or buildings. This works extremely well and is far more successful than the use of free-standing poles or posts. The predominant style is white metal plates with a simple serif black typeface. There are also a number of nameplates outlined in black and the more recent ones are often freestanding and use a less appealing serif typeface.

4.5 Negative features

The threats to the character of the conservation area come mainly from unsympathetic buildings and shop fronts, car parking, street surfaces, street furniture and signage.

Duke Street, Rainsford Road and Broomfield Road have very poor standard concrete footway paving and black top carriageway surfacing. All the street surfaces are patched and inconsistent and detract from character. Traffic signing is intrusive, there are some damaged or redundant signs.

Surface car parking areas create gaps in the street frontage damaging the coherence and legibility of the original street pattern. The public car parks on Railway Street and Glebe Road are examples of this.

Private car parks and frontages – the car park at the front of Coval Hall, and car parking at the Railway Street side of the Original Plough pub detract from the setting of the buildings adjacent.

The north west edge to Parkway was left with small left-over areas and boundaries to private gardens which undermine a coherent landscaped corridor.

Townfield Street multi-storey car park – although the huge bulk of the car park is a negative feature the building was built to address the form and alignment of the adjacent Townfield Street and Railway Street properties. However its street frontages offer no activity at street level.

Areas around Chelmsford Station – the station extension building is not distinguished but is not negative in itself. However, the vehicle concourse including the taxi rank, plus the station car park on the east side of the viaduct are important but disordered semi-public spaces that have a negative impact on the character of the area and detract from its important function of a place of arrival and departure.

Poor buildings – the Britvic office building disrupts the scale and character of the conservation area and presents a blank elevation to prominent public view along

Broomfield Road. The other poor buildings that have a negative impact are Gainsborough Carpets, the church hall at the corner of Cedar Avenue. Shopfronts – the appearance of terraced buildings in the West End is damaged by crude fascias, advertising, in Duke Street in-particular.

Replacement windows – Duke Street in-particular has some very unsympathetic examples.

Lack of, or poor, maintenance is a widespread issue of building frontages, as well as the streets themselves. Duke Street in-particular suffers from a poor standard of maintenance of both.

The side street beside Beacon House, Rainsford Road – here the railings at the road edge, the concrete ramp dead space and boundary timber fencing creates an unsympathetic appearance to the street.

SECTION 5 – ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

The appraisal shows where there have been elements of erosion where it is particularly important to seek improvements to ensure major enhancement of the area.

The following pages set out streetscape principles and components, and then outline specific proposals indicating improvements to be drawn up with the aim of achieving enhancement of the area.

5.1 Streetscape improvements: Principles to be adopted

The West End has street spaces that along with well-designed improvements will enhance character. The Council will produce streetscape improvement proposals for consultation and for funding bids, to be implemented in phases to co-ordinate with progress on the bus station development and the central campus development.

Initiatives will include:

- high priority to be given in the West End to the creation of people friendly spaces that are comfortable and safe.
- guidance and control over new shopfronts and shop signs
- guidance on traffic signs and lines, plus a co-ordinated pedestrian signage system.
- introduction of public art.

To achieve a successful streetscape, these following objectives need to be met:

- comfortable and safe environment for pedestrians and disabled
- visually simple and free of clutter
- well cared for streets, well maintained, and not degraded by utilities and non-essential advertising
- appropriate to local character – street design to acknowledge local vernacular
- not dominated by any one function – ability to accommodate all sorts of functions
- providing for access, deliveries and storage of vehicles.

Circulation issues, this is key to ensure improvement to the West End:

- reduce traffic flows through West End, reduce traffic speeds, re-design to include shared surface streets and pedestrian priority.

Car parking strategy to address:

- is there a need for all the car parking that presently exists in the West End
- if so how should this be accommodated – surface parking areas should be redeveloped – disguise by building underground and to the rear of blocks fronting the street as part of redevelopment schemes.

The elements of the streetscape to focus upon in an improvement scheme include:

Floorscape – establish a range of materials, colour and style appropriate for the area, ensure organised and coordinated maintenance and reinstatement.

Street furniture – establish a collection of agreed styles, location and design of particular importance, minimum rather than maximum to reduce street clutter.

Signage –

- nameplates to be mounted on walls and buildings, avoid use of free standing poles, establish legible font to be used throughout.
- directional signage – position in locations where most needed, to be highly legible.
- traffic signage – streets to function with simple traffic management and minimal use of signage, to be of a design appropriate to scale and character of local context.

Advertising – street free of non-essential A-boards, hoardings and intrusive signs. Produce guidance on what is acceptable to provide rational and consistent basis for decision making.

Planting – well placed, selected species, co-ordinated maintenance.

Car parks – these are arrival points for people into the West End and must be people friendly. External car parks should be a main contributor of green to the West End and should be landscaped designed with good legibility to the areas they serve.

Lighting – wall-mounted with consistent fittings and mounting height, lighting schemes to highlight those particular buildings of special interest

Street frontages – creation of active frontages, entrances, windows, lighting, facades, no blank fronts or flanks.

Shopfronts –

- Produce design guidance for shopfronts.
- Enforce planning control on inappropriate unauthorised changes to shopfronts.
- Subject to securing funding devise a grant scheme to encourage the improvement of shop fronts. Such a scheme would need to:
 - a) define the properties that would qualify;
 - b) define the range of works that would be supported; and
 - c) set a percentage limit on funding.

Public art –

- focus in the arts and cultural core (Fairfield Road area) with opportunities sought in spaces and on buildings elsewhere in the West End. Target through redevelopment opportunities.
- public art and buildings - target those buildings that stand out from the range of terraced buildings that give the West End its character. Also target dead fronts and flank walls to introduce greater interest.
- Aspects of street furniture to be developed by artists.

5.2 Proposals for improving specific sites

Spaces

Public realm surrounding train station –

- potential for redesigning taxi rank area including the ramp to multi-storey and create a public square, investigate opportunity to incorporate into a new linkage from station to the north, also investigate opportunity of creating a new car park entrance.

- bicycle parking is starting to spread both sides of the viaduct and a strategy to rethink the bicycle parking for users of the station is needed to ensure that it is well designed.
- street windows of Global Marine office block are presently dead frontage however they are in fact very important as they are the first thing that addresses visitors to the town and need activity and attractive lighting, ideally retail units or at least publicly accessible units.

The space to the front of *The White Horse public house*, end of Townfield Street – very bulky planter separating Townfield Street to access road for multi-storey. Untidy street end including, bollards and surfacing.

Land at the southern end of Glebe Road around the back of the multi story – grassed area, over dominant concrete columns holding overhang of multi-storey, potential for the creation of a square where there is pedestrian access into the multi-storey.

Townfield Street (picture below) – redesign street space to address needs of users and the character of the neighbouring buildings.



Wells Street / Royal Steamer cross roads (picture above) - redesign as a space.

Duke Street / Broomfield Road / Coval Lane cross-roads – redesign as a space, safety will be a critical element of any design.

Broomfield Road – shared surface, forecourts to be part of this coordinated surface – arrangements to ensure opportunities maximised e.g. planning applications, assistance with funding (CBC put in a third etc).

Space beside Trinity Methodist Church and Trinity Link:

- potential for creation of a square - an option could be to bring the building line of Trinity Link forward to enclose the existing space and to achieve the feeling of a square
- the junction of Cedar Avenue with Rainsford Road should be redesigned as a space as it presently feels like an over large engineered junction.
- Rainsford Road should also be redesigned – narrowed, a street that is more pedestrian and cyclist friendly, street trees and coordinated street furniture.

The side street off Rainsford Road beside Beacon House - redesign, scope at the end of the street where a TPO exists for a square.



Space to the front of Coval Hall (picture above)– used as a private car park for the commercial use in the building, highly visible from the street, landscape design this space, resurface in natural material, enhance the setting of this listed building.

New pedestrian routes

Land adjacent to railway to the north – explore the potential for opening up access for pedestrians and cycles from the station to New Street, whilst also creating public realm, in association with future redevelopment of Marconi works.

Viaduct Road to Central Park North – a link is needed through the viaduct between Viaduct Road and Central Park North.

Encouragement and guiding new development

Enhancement of the conservation area will be achieved through sensitive development of gap sites where new building will be encouraged to re-establish building lines and skylines of appropriate scale.

The Council will use the conservation area appraisal to work on site briefs to indicate possible development opportunities. In-particular development opportunities may arise on the west side of Broomfield Road and on both sides of Rainsford Road. The Council will also produce additional briefing for all the land under railway authorities control around the station and viaduct, and for the future development of the Marconi works.

Corner site Rainsford Road / Broomfield Road (Perrys) – development of the long vacant site overdue.

Railway Street car parks – following re-provision of car parking elsewhere, take into account previous building grain, buildings to create street edge, creation of a public space with buildings fronting to the north of Railway Street.

Glebe Road car park – similarly, re create a street edge after parking has been relocated.

Conversion, change of use and alterations

The old station building opposite Railway Tavern is an important building in terms of first impressions of what visitors by train first see when they arrive in the town. Promote re-use of the building, for perhaps A3 ground floor use to address active street activity.

Address *usage of viaduct arches* including those of the rail company, including to introduce a related use such as a bicycle centre for bike hire, sales and repairs in one of the arches in the station forecourt area, perhaps alongside the taxi rank.

47 Broomfield Road, Citizens Advice Bureau – add extra bays on building to create symmetry and to also help close off the view of the rear extensions of Coval Hall.

Multi-storey car-park –

Townfield Street and Railway Street elevations – ground floor uses, introduction of glass and maybe even retail units into long stretches of blank walling encouraged to help bring activity to street level as well as creating greater visual interest. The building was designed to take more levels and so the displaced parking from potential retail units could be added as an additional level in the middle of the large block away from the street front. If the ramp alongside the railway side of the car park is removed development could be brought forward to front the public space / a new square whilst ensuring better access is sought between the station and land to the north including the Marconi site.

Hide car parking

Marconi land adjacent Glebe Road (outside CA) - very open with surface parking for Marconi workers with large modern building set in the middle of the site – potential for street frontage building to help create an enclosed street and to strengthen its character.

Glebe Road South car park – potential for development to address the context of the neighbouring 2 storey terraces to strengthen street character.

Tree planting

More London Planes *alongside the Parkway* to provide some visual cohesion for users of the Parkway and also for containment of the Parkway edge of the West End.

Boundary treatments

Townfield Street – front curtilage is presently mixed, encourage black timber picket fencing on front boundary with low hedging behind.

Steamer terrace alleyways – potential for creating a stronger continuous alleyway edge with quality timber fencing and greenery.

Cedar Avenue – presently a mix of front boundary treatments to street. Careful consideration should be given to ensure appropriate enclosure to the street, with a mix of mainly yellow stock brick low walls, low black railings and low hedging.

The close boarded fence bordering the access driveway to *Spalding Court* should be replaced with a wall and greenery.

Reinstating architectural detail

Wells Street – great care is needed regarding the details of the frontages of the older buildings on the eastern side of the street - retain the original features of the building frontage particularly the windows, doors, tile roof, chimneys, gated entrances and reinstall those features that have been lost. An Article 4 (2) Direction will be considered.

Townfield Street, west side – great care is needed regarding the details of the frontage of this terrace – retain the original features particularly windows, doors, slate roof, chimneys, brickwork and reinstall those features that have been lost and control unsympathetic changes including satellite dishes. Also the front gardens are a main part of the appearance of the street and changes, and changes such as gates, fences and hard surfacing can affect this.

An Article 4 (2) Direction giving the Council control over such alterations will be considered.

Viaduct arches – produce a code for the design of arch frontages.

Shopfronts

15-19 Railway Street – redesign frontage of commercial units to complement neighbouring Townfield Street terrace frontage.

Generally there is a need for improvement to the shopfronts throughout the conservation area.



Duke Street, where there is considerable scope to improve the floorscape and shop frontages. To the right is the bus station site which is to be redeveloped and where there will be a new street frontage.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1 - Extracts from Essex Heritage Conservation Record

The following are locally important archaeological finds:

Monument name

Chelmsford-Railway Street-Steamer Terrace

SMR Number 5799

Description

18th-19th century well found during building work under offices at this address-the well was 13ft (c4m) deep, constructed in dry brick-similar to a well excavated in Moulsham Street (site of old prison) in 1980, this was 17th-18th century in date (see TL70-001, 0000). This well was dry at the bottom, filled with mud and originally had been deeper. The shaft was 4ft (1.2m) wide, was dome-shaped at the top, the dome continuing to a small opening c1ft (30cm) wide. This shows that a pump had been used originally <1> <2> Site Assessment = In good condition. Was found during underpinning of a building but was unaffected <1>

Monument Type(s)

WELL (Dated 1540AD to 1900AD)

National Grid Reference

Square: TL70NW

Ref: 70460720

Monument name

Chelmsford-Rainsford Lodge Car Park

SMR Number 5821

Description

Modern red brick arch revealed in trench dug through car park, presumably part of a cellar from a demolished building on the site

Monument Type(s) CELLAR

National Grid Reference

Square: TL70NW

Ref: 70400710

Monument name Not given

SMR Number 5556

Description

Burgess well a culvert to the Priory, licence for construction granted in 1341. Pump visible but in poor state in 1975. <1> In 1341 the Dominican Priory was granted a licence to construct a culvert from a spring in the town field to the priory. The spring is presumably the Burgess(es) well <2><3>.

Monument Type(s) WELL (Dated 1341AD)

National Grid Reference

Square: TL70NW

Ref: 70250693

Monument name Marconi's

SMR Number 15671

Summary

Early C20 offices and laboratory by Dunn and Watson, the world's first purpose built radio factory.

Monument Type(s)

SITE

OFFICE (Dated 1912AD to 1912AD)

LABORATORY (Dated 1912AD)

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING WORKS (Dated 1912AD)

National Grid Reference

Square: TL70NW

Ref: 70800735

Monument name

Townfield Street Maltings

SMR Number 15046

Description

Yellow brick-built four storey malting owned by T. D. Ridley and Sons. The original malting was erected in 1875 and had the steeping pit and drying floors to the east, paired kilns in the centre and a malt store beyond. A separate barley store was added in 1912 and this housed the cleaning and screening machines; a kiln for barley drying? stood at its east end. Internally the floors were supported on cast iron columns and the kilns were heated by anthracite burners. Both buildings have been demolished and the site developed. <1>.

Monument Type(s)

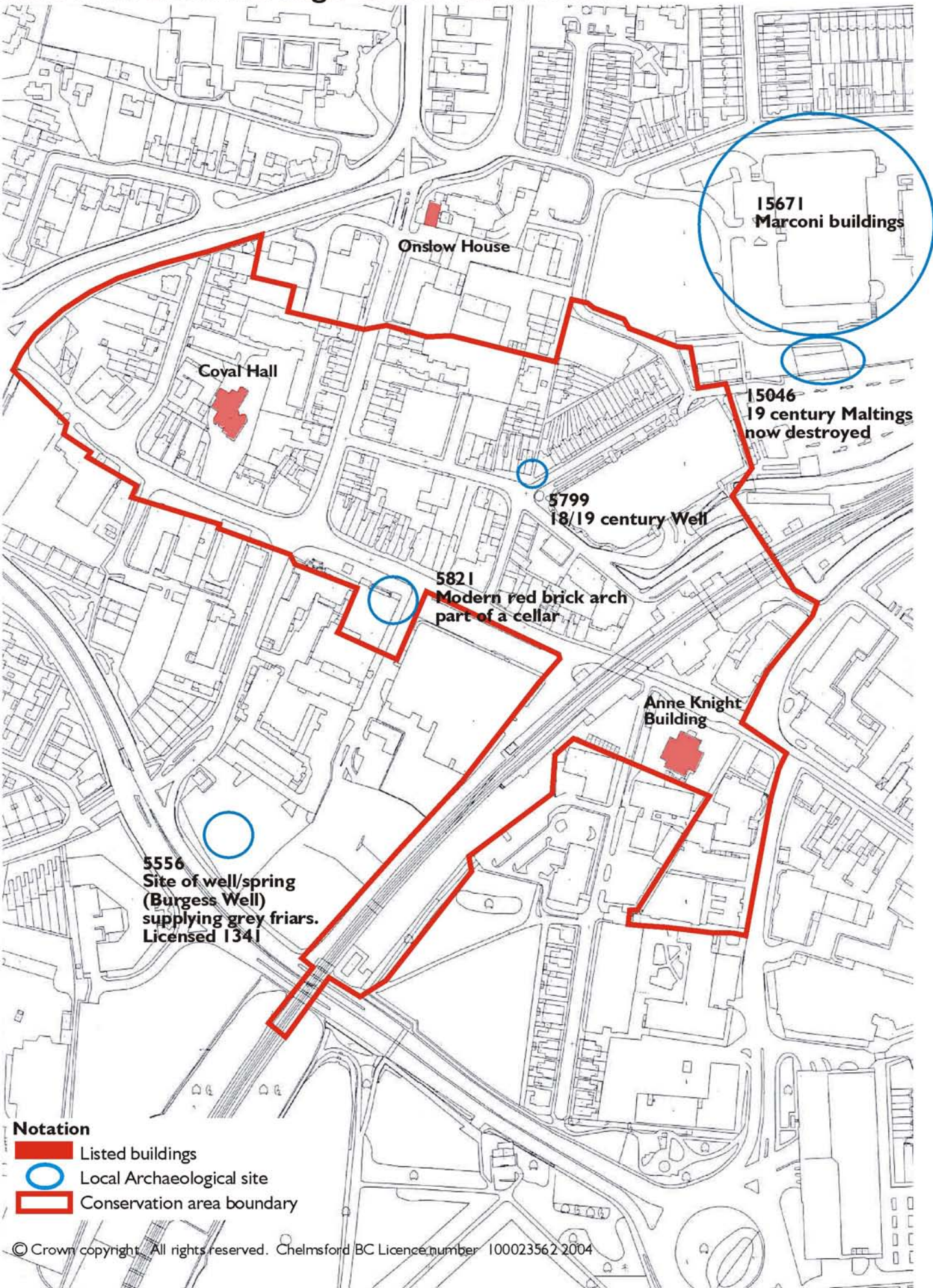
MALTINGS (Dated 1875AD to 1875AD)

National Grid Reference

Square: TL70NW

Ref: 70650725

Sites from Essex Heritage Conservation Record



Appendix 2

Listed Buildings

Coval Hall, Rainsford Road

Grade II.

C18 building externally with an earlier structure date. External walls of white painted brick. Two storeys, the eastern elevation is a 7 window range, with double-hung sashes thinly barred beneath cambered heads. On the southern elevation there are 3 parallel wings all with hipped and peg-tiled roofs. Wings are of different lengths producing a much returned irregular plan. Central timber portico glazed in with 4 circular columns. C17 chimney stack in the east wing. Inside stone flagged entrance, stairs with turned balusters, bracketed tread-ends. Much softwood panelling. Heavy moulded ceiling cornices, of circa 1700.

Anne Knight Building, Duke Street

Grade II.

Early C19, of grey gault brick. Purpose built as a meeting house, (Quaker meetings were held in this building from 1824 to 1957) with a large open hall. Front with pedimented gable and blank circular window. Ionic porch with 4 columns with entasis. Continuous sill band, and 4 arched recesses to front. Side elevations each of 5 windows planed above the sill band, round headed with small pane sashes. Roof pitched and slate clad

No62 Onslow House (Formally listed as Nos 66 to 72 (even), Broomfield Road

Grade II.

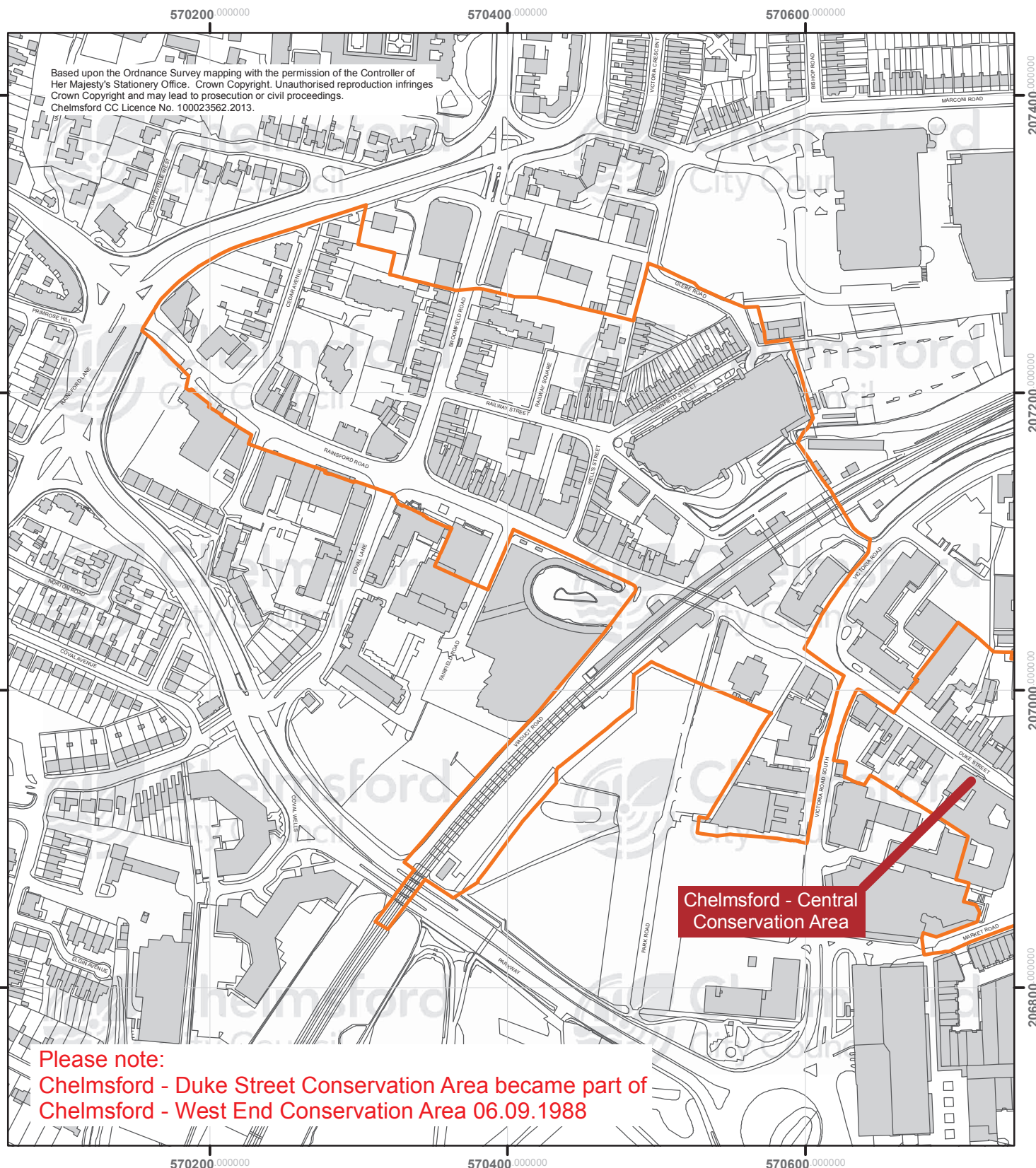
Terrace of 4 town houses. Built 1838, in grey gault brick with grey slate hipped roof. 3 storeys, 4 window range C19 vertical sliding sashes with glazing bars. One C20 casement. Central tunnel access. Original doors have simple doorcases with pilasters, frieze and flat hoods. Grey gault brick chimney stacks. Late C19 extension at rear with grey slate hipped roofs.



The West End in 1874.

Chelmsford - West End Conservation Area

Reference	G018
Designated	06.09.1988
First amendment	05.02.2003
Second amendment	02.02.2005
Third amendment	-



0 100 Metres
JULY 2013

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