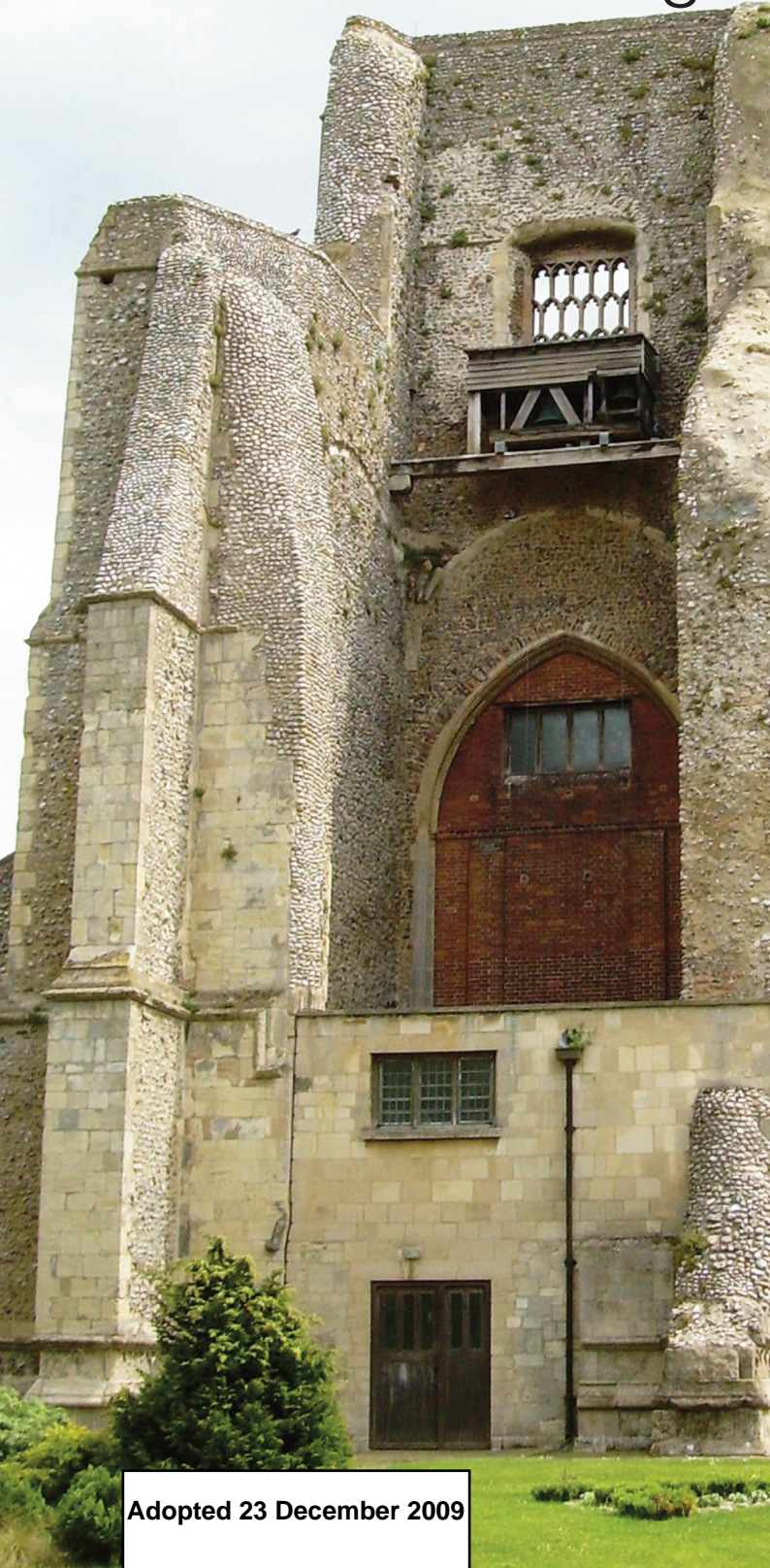


NORTH WALSHAM Conservation Area



Character Appraisal and Management Proposals



Adopted 23 December 2009

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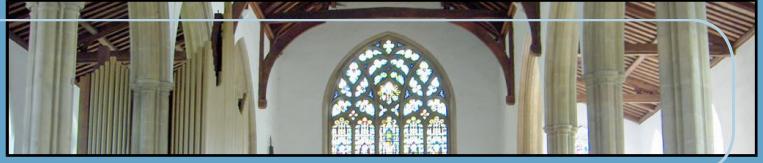
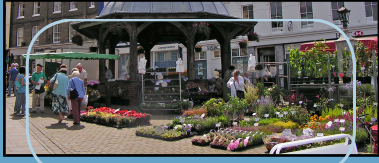
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PART 1 CHARACTER APPRAISAL





North Walsham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

1: Summary

1.1 Key characteristics

This Character Appraisal of North Walsham concludes that the following are the key characteristics of the Conservation Area:

- Growth has in the past been centred around the open spaces of Market Place and Market Street
- The Market Place exudes the best characteristics of the relationship between space and built form with a good sense of enclosure.
- The main roads radiate away from these open areas.
- The majority of the housing in the centre is of a common scale and period, from the late 18th to early 19th century. It fronts directly onto the street. These buildings have a range of classically influenced facades. A high percentage of houses in the market area have ground floor shops.
- The church and churchyard are located to the north side of the Market Place.
- Paston College occupies a significant area to the south of Market Place.
- Visually intrusive modern developments have intruded into the historic core: a shopping arcade, St Nicholas Court, a car park on the south side and a large retail outlet.
- Housing outside the centre is less concentrated, with more trees lining the sides of the roads.
- Some poor townscape surrounds the conservation area to the north and east sides.
- There are no through roads within the conservation area, although the Market Place is used as a short cut through the town (despite the introduction of a no parking zone in 2000) consequently causing congestion at certain times.
- There are some good examples of terraced housing of the 19th century.

1.2 Key issues

Based on the characteristics outlined in this report, the following issues have been identified. These form the basis for the management proposals in the second part of this document.

- Large retail developments encroaching into the historic core and detracting from its character.
- Incongruous modern shopfronts, signage, and colouring of facades.
- Permitted development resulting in loss of architectural details and boundary treatments, detrimental alterations & extensions: need to protect identified areas through Article 4(2) directions.
- Need for design of new housing to relate to historic context and prevailing character.
- Need to ensure consistent quality of street furniture and road surfaces.
- Condition and maintenance of public spaces.
- Need to review the Conservation Area boundary.
- The need to re-consider pedestrianisation of the Market Place.

2: Introduction

2.1 The North Walsham Conservation Area

The North Walsham Conservation Area was designated in May 1972. It covers the historic core of the town, centred around the Market Place and Market Street, and includes the majority of the town's listed buildings. The Conservation Area also incorporates an area of housing to the south of the Market Place, bounded by King's Arms Street, Grammar School Road and Yarmouth Road. To the north of the Market Place, a small area of housing, a modern shopping arcade and the churchyard are included, with Church Street, Vicarage Street and part of the Mundesley Road serving as its boundaries. The town centre has domestic architecture from the late 18th to early 19th centuries, which gives it a strong historic character.

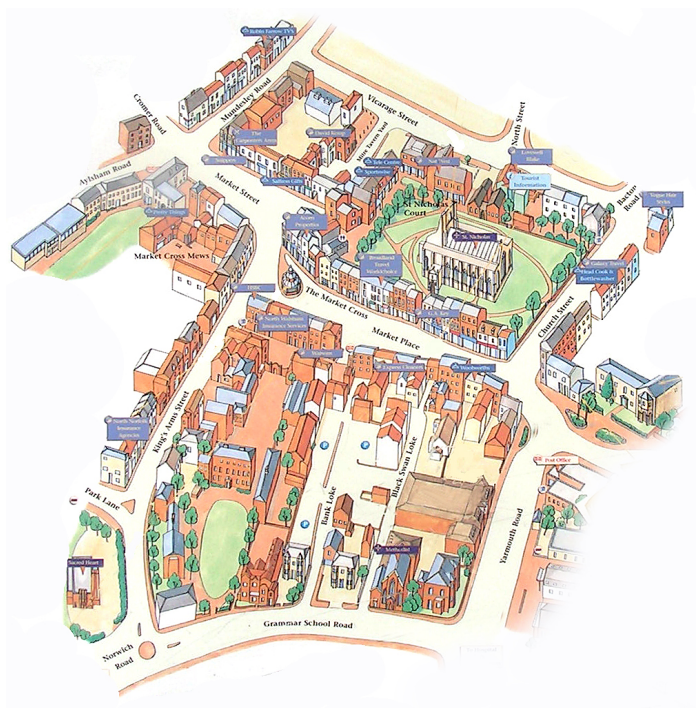


Figure 1 : North Walsham Street plan

The first appraisal of the conservation area was adopted in November 1998. The author recommended a number of improvements to the town, some of which were carried out as part of a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme. This scheme also gave grants to help restore a number of the town's historic buildings.

2.2 The purpose of a conservation area appraisal

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



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

In response to these statutory requirements, this appraisal document defines and records the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area and identifies opportunities for enhancement. The appraisal conforms to English Heritage guidance as set out in Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals (February 2006) and Guidance on the management of Conservation Areas (February 2006). Additional government guidance regarding the management of historic buildings and Conservation Areas is set out within Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15). Government advice on archaeology is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology (PPG16). A revision of both PPGs 15 and 16 is expected in 2010.

This document therefore seeks to:

- Define the special interest of the Conservation Area and identify the issues which threaten the special qualities of the conservation area (Part 1: Character Appraisal)[1]
- Provide guidelines to prevent erosion of character and achieve enhancement (Part 2: Management Proposals).

Please note - no character appraisal can ever be completely comprehensive and omission of any particular building, feature or space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

2.3 The planning policy context

This appraisal provides a firm basis on which applications for development within the North Walsham Conservation Area can be assessed. It should be read in conjunction with the wider development plan policy framework produced by North Norfolk District Council. That framework is set out in a number of documents:

- North Norfolk Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (adopted 2008)
- North Norfolk Local Development Framework: Site Specific Proposals (timetabled for adoption December 2010)
- North Norfolk Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2008)
- North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2009)
- Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning
- Heritage White Paper, March 2007. 'Heritage Protection for the 21st Century
- Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning for the Historic Environment

3: Location and setting

3.1 Location and context

North Walsham is the largest town within North Norfolk, with a population of around 11,000. It is located 10km inland from the coast and 26km north of Norwich. Most of the town is located immediately to the west of the B1145, B1150 and A149 main roads which link it to the coast and to the cities of Norwich and Yarmouth. North Walsham is on the “Bittern Line” railway running between Sheringham and Norwich.

The town has health, education and leisure facilities which also serve the surrounding area.

There is a large industrial estate on the north-west side of the town, and North Walsham is a major provider of employment. About half the town’s workforce is employed locally.

3.2 General character and plan form

The oldest part of North Walsham is centred around the Market Place and Market Street. Development here was initially linear, following and extending away from the Market Place, which runs from east to west. This area is the focus for the town’s main roads, three of which converge at each end of Market Place/Market Street. The layout of the roads and housing also acknowledges the location of the church and churchyard, sited on the north side of Market Place.

Most of the houses in the centre are from the 18th and early 19th centuries. Modestly sized, often with classically inspired facades and arranged in terraces, they front directly onto the street. This is the architecture of a moderately prosperous market town; there are no major houses erected as showpieces to an individual merchant’s success.

The Market Place is the core of the town. It has a good sense of enclosure provided by a cohesive relationship between built form and space.



Figure 2 : The Market Cross surrounded by produce on market day.

In plan the Market Place resembles two elongated triangles, the apex of one connecting with the base of the other. At the east end is a narrow “pinch point”, after which the thoroughfare opens out until about half way along, where a row of buildings on the south side projects out, narrowing the road. After this, Market Place widens again, to end where it joins King’s Arms Street. At the west end of Market Place a large timber market cross serves as a central



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point for the weekly market, and as a meeting point for the local community. Market Street is a short wide road which appears very much as a continuation of the Market Place, with a similar architectural character. The ground slopes up to the east, so that Market Street rises to meet Market Place which is in turn inclined so that the east end is higher than the west. These subtle slopes add visual interest to the townscape.

The church is screened from Market Street by a narrow row of houses, although its partly ruined tower is highly visible in the town. The church porch can also be glimpsed down a passageway opposite the Market Cross. The churchyard is a shallow rectangular grass mound, almost featureless apart from a few street lights, as all the gravestones have been removed to the south side. It serves as a small informal park although lacks facilities, particularly seating.

On the north east side of the churchyard is St Nicholas Court, a mid 20th century shopping arcade centred around a paved courtyard. The architecture is undistinguished and a poor interruption to the historic core. Little of the Court is visible from the central streets; it is connected to them by narrow lanes leading from the Market Place and Market Street.

The roads leading off from the Market Place and Market Street contain a higher proportion of late Victorian buildings than the centre. As the roads pass outside the Conservation Area, the townscape is generally of lower visual quality.

To the south of the Market Place, older buildings have been cleared away to create a car park and space for a large store, Roys of Wroxham. There are historic buildings nearby, such as at the entrance to the Market Place, but their positive character is diluted by the modern encroachments. There is a similar situation at the rear of the Mitre Tavern Yard, where early buildings mix with the back of the modern shopping arcade and a scruffy area used as a car park.

The Paston Sixth Form College occupies a considerable part of the Conservation Area to the south of the Market Place. While it contains a good deal of open space and some fine buildings, these have relatively little impact on the streetscape. Apart from a tree bedecked entrance on Grammar School Road, and an inter-war block fronting King's Arms Street, much is hidden from public view.

Leaving aside the St Nicholas Court shopping arcade and car parking areas to the south, the historic character of the Market Place and the smaller side roads within the Conservation Area is largely intact. There are no other large scale developments from the Victorian or later periods. Late 19th and 20th century additions to the town have followed a roughly concentric rather than linear plan, radiating away from the historic core. Larger facilities, which might have been expected within the Conservation Area, such as the Post Office, Town Hall and Library, are all located on the periphery.

3.3 Landscape setting

North Walsham is surrounded by relatively flat arable land, with a mixture of rich loam and sandy soils. The landscape has a generally homogenous character, comprising fields with hedgerows and isolated trees, and the occasional house or farm building. On the north east side a gentle slope leads down to the river Ant. To the east is the former North Walsham and Dilham canal, although only part of the watercourse now survives. There are also small areas of woodland to the east. No commons survive; three commons belonging to the town are known to have been enclosed c.1830 and were subsequently built upon.

4: Historic development and archaeology

4.1 The origins and historic development of the area

The church and village of North Walsham are mentioned in a royal charter of 1047. In 1080 the village was included in the Domesday survey as Walesam. By 1381, during the East Anglian peasant uprising, the settlement is referred to as “Walsham Market”.

During the Mediaeval period cloth manufacture brought wealth to Norfolk, and North Walsham grew in importance due to its weavers, who produced “Walsham cloth”. The scale of the town’s church, started in the 14th century, is an indicator of the prosperity of the town. The 14th century also saw Henry III grant a market where cloth and other produce could be sold.

The town has associations with the Peasant’s Revolt of 1381, particularly the final battle between the peasants and forces led by the Bishop of Norwich. This took place close to the town, and it is said fleeing peasants were slaughtered as they tried to shelter in the town and the unfinished church.

On 25th June 1600, a fire destroyed much of the North Walsham. 118 houses, 70 shops and other structures were lost, but the church survived largely intact. Around the market place, the town was rebuilt on its Mediaeval footprint, which is preserved today in the pattern of the older streets and buildings.

There were some positive aspects to the fire. It created the space to build a free grammar school, founded by Sir William Paston, and the market cross destroyed by the fire was replaced by a new and particularly fine design in 1602.

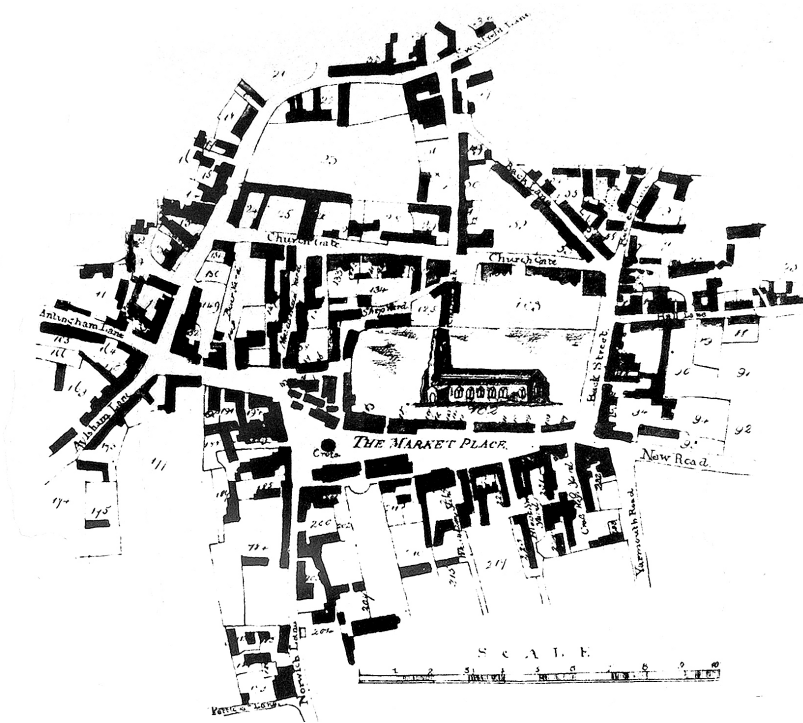


Figure 3 : Part of the enclosure map for North Walsham, showing the town at the end of the Regency period, 1814.



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Norfolk's cloth manufacturing industry declined with the coming of the Industrial Revolution. In North Walsham, agriculture replaced weaving as the main source of income. The town became a centre for the local corn trade and the manufacture of agricultural implements. Trade directories show how the industrial base of the town developed from this. In the mid 19th century, the town had small industries including gun-makers, ironmongers and braziers. By the 1880s, the East Norfolk Iron Works had been established, with the Walsham and Dilham Canal supplying raw materials. Ironmongers F.H. Randell also worked as iron & brass founders, machinists and agricultural machine makers. The building firm of Cornish and Gaymer also enjoyed considerable success in the Victorian period; by the 1880s, it was employing 200 men.

The railways arrived in 1874. The numerous late 19th century buildings along the town's side streets show the town's growth around this time. Railways offered a convenient and practical way of transporting the bulkier products of North Walsham's industries, making them available to a wider market. The ornate late Victorian and Edwardian villas along Yarmouth Road attest to the prosperity of the town at this time.

During the 20th century, as the importance of agriculture to the town declined, North Walsham's manufacturing industries provided the main source of income. The town has subsequently become a major employer in the region, and seen rapid growth, particularly in the second half of the 20th century.

There has been some change to the town centre during the 20th century. Old houses were demolished to make way for a shopping arcade near to the church, and car parks established on the north and south sides of the centre.

Paston College has also grown in size and importance. Once a grammar school serving the surrounding area, it is now a sixth form college. The school has expanded to include the site of a former iron works to the east.

In recent years, North Walsham has attracted large retailers as well as new industry. Stores such as Lidl's, Sainsbury's and Roy's of Wroxham have established themselves just outside the centre. Despite their presence, the town centre appears healthy, with a variety of small independent retailers.

4.2 The archaeological significance and potential of the area

Finds from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods excavated during 2004-5 provide the earliest evidence for human occupation in the North Walsham area. Neolithic or Iron Age pits were also found and some artifacts from the Bronze Age. Aerial photographs have revealed ring ditches which may be the remains of burial mounds from this period. The pits mentioned above contained fragments of Iron Age pottery.

While there is no evidence of Roman remains at present, Roman pottery, coins and jewellery have been found.

The town's church is a reminder that by the Medieval period North Walsham was a prosperous settlement and some medieval artefacts have been recovered. Apart from the church, there is little evidence of medieval buildings as a fire of 1600 destroyed most of the town. Some stones from Medieval houses were incorporated into later buildings as can be seen at Bexley Cottages on Station Road.

More recent archaeology includes the remains of the North Walsham & Dilham Canal to the east of the town, completed in 1826. It was never a great success and fell out of use due to improved local roads and the coming of the railways.

Old maps show that there were once three windmills in the parish, brickworks and a limekiln along with a gibbet, bone mill and workhouse.

A large park which once belonged to a substantial country house, The Oaks, is now the town's Memorial Park. Here there were once pleasure gardens, orchards, a hot house and an orangery. The Oaks was sited on the east side of the town; it was demolished in the 1930s.

Two world wars have added to the region's archaeology. There are pill boxes from both wars; the four which survive from the First World War are considered to be rare examples.

Some of the best finds have turned up by accident, such as the Neolithic or Iron Age pits discovered during pipe laying works. With such a long history, any excavation work taking place within the North Walsham historic core may produce evidence of an earlier settlement, and alterations to older buildings may produce evidence of the town's historic development.

4.3 The conservation area and the relationship with its setting

The expansion of North Walsham, particularly during the 20th century, means that the Conservation Area is surrounded on all sides by commercial and residential development. There is no immediate connection with the surrounding countryside, and the most attractive views out of the Conservation Area are along the tree-lined approach roads, such as Aylsham Road.

Leaving the Conservation Area on the north and east sides, there is an abrupt change of character. Along the Yarmouth Road, large buildings in an exposed setting dominate the view, including new stores separated by car parking and service areas. The Post office and Telecom buildings on the corner with New Road are particularly un-inspiring examples of 20th century architecture; the squat shape and grey-brown colouring of the Telecom building is only slightly relieved by a screen of trees. As the first building one sees on leaving the Conservation Area on the east side, the Post Office is an unfortunate focal point. Worse still are the store opposite and car park behind it, which detract from the character of the otherwise modestly-sized and compact streetscape of the conservation area on the west side of Yarmouth Road.



Figure 4 : Vicarage Street looking to the west, with Vicarage St car park and recent housing developments at right.

Immediately to the north of the Conservation Area is the Vicarage St car park, surrounded by indifferently designed modern housing and unkempt 19th century houses, with little to create a positive or even a definite character. There are a few attractive houses along the adjoining Bacton Road.



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The surroundings of the Conservation Area on the south and west sides generally provide a more sympathetic and near-rural backdrop. After the busy A149 road, the Victorian houses set amongst trees and well kept gardens on the south side of the Norwich Road create a brief, but inviting entranceway to the town. Similarly, at the south end of the Aylsham Road, the few houses left outside the Conservation Area are good examples of inter-war Arts & Crafts housing, with thatched roofs. In the background, a road bridge and railway bridge surrounded by trees provide a reasonable view, save for an accumulation of road signs nearby.



Figure 5 : The south end of the Aylsham Road, with some attractive inter-war Vernacular Revival houses.

On the west side, there is little to distinguish the houses inside the Conservation Area from those immediately outside it. Some good mid to late Victorian houses are set just outside the Conservation Area along the Cromer Road, together with a large chapel. The predominantly 19th century architecture then merges with suburban-style inter-war houses and greenery set further out of the town.



Figure 6 : A good approach to the town along the Cromer Road.



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Unfortunately, the Mundesley Road fails to maintain the standard. Even within the Conservation Area, there is an untidy mix of run down Victorian properties, inappropriate shopfronts and plain modern housing. Leaving the Conservation Area, small groups of attractive Victorian houses rub shoulders with a car park, unremarkable modern houses and a bleak-looking housing estate.



5: Spatial analysis

5.1 Character and interrelationship of spaces within the area

The most important space within the Conservation Area is Market Place. This is a wide street running east-west, incorporating part of King's Arms Street at the west end. Market Place is enclosed on three sides by buildings. Most are terraced and of a similar scale and period. These create a strong sense of enclosure and historic identity. The space is clearly defined, due to a restricted entranceway or "pinch point" at the east end, and the terraced houses of King's Arms Street which face Market Place at the west end. The main focal point is a remarkable wooden market cross, which due to carefully placed seating and partial pedestrianisation, serves as an informal meeting point. Every Thursday, the whole of Market Place becomes a hub of commercial and social activity when the weekly market takes place, and traffic is diverted away from the centre.

Market Street is also a wide thoroughfare, with a very similar character to Market Place, to which it is connected at its west end. Like Market Place, it is bordered on three sides by Georgian/Regency buildings, although Market Street is more open at the west end, where a number of roads meet.

Historically, there were a number of courtyards leading off from Market Place and Market Street, where weaver's cottages were located. This pattern continues today; a number of narrow lanes lead from Market Place and Market Street to small open areas. Some of these are historic, others have recent shopping developments.

On the south side of Market Place are Bank Loke and Black Swan Loke. These appear as small courtyards, but are actually the beginnings of lanes leading to Grammar School Road. Both Lokes are bordered by the rear extensions of shops and occasional outbuildings. Black Swan Loke serves as an informal seating area for the patrons of the Black Swan pub, but the function of Bank Loke is less definite. A new shop built on the south side suggests that it might be developed as a retailing area, although the shop is currently unoccupied.

St Nicholas Court is connected by narrow lanes to Market Place and Market Street. It is screened from the main streets by housing, and is not sited on any convenient thoroughfare leading to the centre. It is consequently isolated from much of the daily life of the town. The small scale of the Court, together with this isolation, creates a sense of privacy. When these factors are coupled with the neglected appearance of the Court, the area attracts antisocial behaviour. There is a sense of general neglect and oversight in this area.



Picture 1 Fig 6: The churchyard is screened by the backs of Market Place houses.

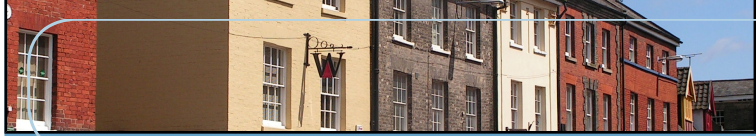
St Nicholas church and churchyard adjoin the east side of the Court. The churchyard is well maintained, covered by grass and occasional flower beds. It is screened by trees or the backs of houses on all sides. The church is set on slightly raised ground at the centre, serving as a picturesque focal point. The gravestones have been moved to one side of the churchyard to create a more open green space. There is, however, no formal seating, and only rudimentary street lights- so that the area seems denuded, rather than uncluttered. Despite the lack of facilities, during the warmer weather the churchyard serves as a simple park where people sit on the grass and socialise.

Paston College includes a number of courtyards, both surrounding the main Nelson building, and as part of The Lawns to the west. The main entrance from Grammar School Road includes a lawn and shrubs, flanked on three sides by schoolrooms. Here the open area serves as a setting for the school buildings. It is designed to impress the visitor, rather than have any recreational use. Between the Nelson building and King's Arms Loke is a walled courtyard. This is entirely covered in tarmac. It resembles a traditional school playground, an impression reinforced by a typical "board school" building on the west side. The area now serves mainly as a staff car park.

The open areas of The Lawns are mainly outside the Conservation Area. Here, the purpose is mainly recreational, and they reflect changing fashions as tennis courts are adapted for basketball. To the south of the Scarborough Building is a formal lawn, designed to provide a pleasant setting for the surrounding buildings. There is a small walled and tarmac-covered courtyard to the north, leading out to Market Street. This does not appear to have any specific role.

The open spaces within Paston College are generally enclosed by buildings, and are only glimpsed from the main road. They help create a pleasant environment for the College, but have little impact on the larger townscape.

The town centre has large car parks on the north and south sides, which lack any form of landscaping or acceptable street furniture. To the north, the Vicarage Street car park falls outside the Conservation Area, but its bleak appearance still detracts from the adjacent streets of the Conservation Area. Its negative effect is compounded by some unsightly car parking areas at the rear of St Nicholas Court.



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Bank Loke is the nearest car park to the centre; its main asset is that it is largely screened from the surrounding roads by buildings. The car park is an irregular shape, partly due to a number of outbuildings scattered across the open tarmac. At the south end, shops are being constructed at the end of Bank Loke, so that it is no longer clear whether this part is intended to continue as a car park or is to be developed as a retail area.

5.2 Key views and vistas

As the Conservation Area is surrounded on all sides by later urban development, there is a limited range of views out of the area. These have been covered in section 4.3. The most important views within the Conservation Area are the approaches to the market area from the east and west sides, at the beginning of Market Place and Market Street.

6: Character analysis

6.1 Activity, prevailing or former uses within the area

North Walsham first grew prosperous thanks to the Norfolk textile industry. Few traces of this industry remain today. Weavers' cottages set around courtyards were once located to the west of the church and south of Market Place. Most of the courtyards have been swept away, although their names survive in later developments, such as Old Bear Yard. A number of old weaver's cottages which remain today form part of The Terrace. There is the outline of a large window at the rear of Mitre Tavern Yard which has been identified as a "weaver's window" and another on the Feathers Inn, but it is not known if there is any factual basis for this. The large church and Market Cross can be viewed as a legacy of the textile industry; their size and high quality are at least in part due to the wealth that weaving brought to the town.

The next phase of North Walsham's history was as a centre for the corn trade which led in turn to the development of small-scale industries (mentioned earlier). Much of the evidence for this part of the town's past has also disappeared. A corn hall of 1848 in Bank Loke has been converted to a warehouse, while the site of the "East Norfolk Ironworks" foundry in King's Arms St is now part of the Paston College. Randell's workshops on Bacton Road, where agricultural machinery was made, has been replaced by a supermarket store.

The present centre of North Walsham reflects the activities and interests of a provincial market town. The most important open space in the centre is reserved for the market, which serves the surrounding villages as well as the people of North Walsham. The architecture reflects a history of commercial activity over several hundred years. The shops on the north side of Market Place preserve the footprint of old market stalls once sited here. The town's larger private houses are centred around and face Market Street and Market Place, where the town's early shops would have been situated.



Figure 7 : Historic buildings along the Terrace.



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Many of the larger houses facing the market were probably erected by local merchants. Their quality of design and materials can be seen as an expression of the owner's success in business. In particular, the classical fronts from the 18th and early 19th centuries- the architectural style of Norwich and London, are a mark of the owner's sophistication and his desire to be seen as part of the larger commercial world. Most have shops on the ground floor, perhaps in some cases a later introduction. From the later 19th century, commercial buildings tended to be purpose-designed, with the shop front as an integral part of the façade, such as at 8, 10 & 12 King's Arms Street. Banks grew in size and importance during the nineteenth century, and their architecture could be designed to impress, such as the HSBC Bank at the west end of Market Place. Like the surrounding earlier buildings, this has a classical façade – but here it is designed to provide a feeling of tradition and stability, and inspire confidence in its investors.

Around the market place are a number of inns. They would have gained considerable trade from visitors to the market. The King's Arms was once an important coaching inn, a place where those travelling along the turnpike road to Norwich could rest or change horses. One of the oldest inns, the Cross Keys is now a Woolworth's store, while the Angel on the corner of the Aylsham Road has been replaced by a housing development.

Visitors to the market might also have attended Fisher's Theatre on Vicarage St. Built in 1828 it has had a number of uses, including a school; it is now a kitchen showroom.

Religious worship has also left its mark on the town. In addition to the church and a former vicarage on Vicarage St, the conservation area includes two chapels, reflecting a strong tradition of non-conformism in Norfolk.

In addition to its role as a market town, North Walsham is also a historic centre for education, thanks to the Paston College, founded in 1686. The scale of the College buildings, the earliest of which is a master's house dating from 1765, shows the economic as well as social prestige of this institution. While much of land in the centre has been intensively developed, the College has kept its spacious grounds.

6.2 Character areas, the qualities of the buildings and their contribution to the area

The Character Areas have been identified according to their present appearance, rather than their historical development. Nevertheless, Areas (1) and (2) are roughly equivalent to the 18th-early 19th century housing in the centre, (3) is primarily later Victorian additions, and (4) represents modern developments.

While these divisions are clear, and are shown on the accompanying maps, they do mean that certain streets, such as Yarmouth Road, fall into two or even three character areas. Rather than dividing the descriptions of some streets into two or three parts, each one has been fully described and placed within its main character area, e.g. the area which covers the major part of the street.

Character Area 1 - Historic Core.

Around the Market Square, compact town houses form almost continuous frontages along the street. A similar arrangement can be found along Market Street, Church Street, the beginnings of Yarmouth Road, Mundesley Road and much of King's Arms Street and Aylsham Road. Where there is late Victorian or modern housing, this has a similar close set character to the earlier housing within Market Place/Market Street.

Character Area 2 - Institutional.

The churchyard, Paston Sixth Form College and the Roman Catholic church consist of large buildings set within spacious grounds. They are also screened and set back from the street.

Character Area 3 - Loose Knit Residential.

Further out of the centre, houses and small groups of houses are set farther apart, sometimes with large gardens and trees. This is primarily Victorian housing, forming a buffer zone between the historic centre and more recent development beyond.

Character Area 4 - Modern Development.

This includes larger areas of non-traditional building, such as Roys of Wroxham and St Nicholas Court, and a large car park to the south of Market place.

6.2.1 Character Area 1: Historic core

New Road

The north side of New Road, between the junction with Church Street and the Town Council offices is included in the Conservation Area. The corner building with Church St is three storeys high in a discoloured white brick. The corner wall is curved, extending for the width of one bay along New Road. This creates a building of considerable visual interest. This is the most attractive part of New Road. Beyond this, most of the houses are unremarkable modern designs, while on the opposite side is a succession of modern public buildings, which have little visual or architectural appeal.

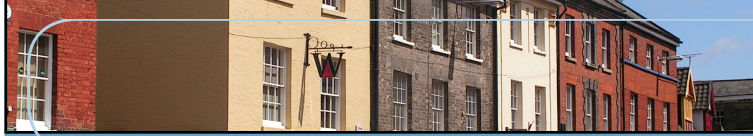
Market Place



Figure 8 : Market Place. Looking east, on market day.

Market Place is the historic centre of the North Walsham. It is both a main road through the town and a public space where the weekly market is held. There is a narrow entrance road to Market Place from the east, which effectively hides New Road and Yarmouth Road from view. As the road enters Market Place, it is joined by Church Street, where the trees along the churchyard wall enhance the view. To the west, the Market Place opens out until about half way along, where a row of buildings on the south side project out. Market Place then widens again, passing either side of the mediaeval Market Cross. At its west end, Market Place terminates where it meets King's Arms Street.

The north and south sides of the Market Place are lined with terraced houses; all front directly onto the street. Most have a classical, or later Georgian character, and are of a similar scale, with shops in the ground floor.



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Market Place slopes up from west to east, so that the Market Cross is situated at the lower end. But clearly, from its scale, position and remarkable design it is the main focal point in the street. Another focal point, the ruined church tower, can be seen over the house roofs to the north.



Figure 9 : Poor shop fronts in Market Place.

The houses which line one side of King's Arms Street effectively form the west side of Market Place. Due to this screen of houses and the narrow entranceway at the east end, Market Place is a well defined, visually contained space.

A number of small passageways lead off on the north, west and south sides to small, partly enclosed spaces. Those on the south side connect with Bank Loke, Black Swan Loke, the car park which adjoins them, and the houses of The Terrace. In the centre on the west side a passage leads to Market Street Mews, a modern shopping development.

On the north side there is a lane leading to the church, which provides a particularly fine view of the colourful porch.

The Market Place has been subject to a number of improvements in recent years as part of a HERS scheme. One of the most noticeable improvements has been to the area round the Market Cross, which has been pedestrianised, set with good quality clay pavers.

Behind the projecting row of buildings on the south side, King's Arms Loke runs between The Terrace and the front of the King's Arms pub.

Most of the houses in Market Place are of red or white brick, or have rendered upper floors. They generally relate well to one another, but there are a few exceptions, such as the three shops at the north-east end. These have a coarse roughcast render which greatly devalues their historic appearance. There is less harmony at street level. It is not clear how many of these houses had some form of shop front from the outset; the majority of shop fronts are Victorian or later.

In general, the earlier shop fronts which occupy only a part of the whole frontage marry better with the upper floors. More modern shop fronts demonstrate a tendency to try and fill the whole of the ground floor, such as the bright blue front of a building society. The result is a disjointed facade, where there is no pleasing relationship between the ground and upper floors.

Some shops imitate the design of late Victorian shop fronts, but the proportions of details such as consoles and pilasters tend to be crude. Other shops make little concession to traditional design, such as the severe rectilinear framing of the windows and doors at “Keys Estate Agents”. A few have what might be described as purely functional fronts, eg. The Jolly Swagman. These appear particularly out of character with the area, surmounted by large and brightly coloured fascia boards.

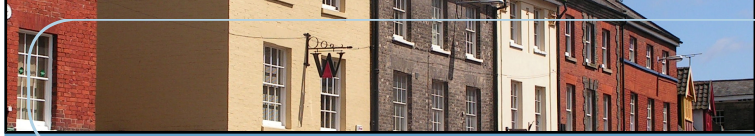
Market Place (south side)

On the south side, starting at the east end, the first houses are two storeys with simple shop fronts. The projecting rectangular bays of the blue-painted charity shop at No. 2 have a particularly appealing vernacular character. The adjacent three storey house has a vegetable shop with an equally pleasing, although battered front. During the day, there is a picturesque display of produce occupying most of an adjoining alley. After this, the largely Victorian façade of the former Woolworths provides a strong contrast. This former 17th century inn retains its tall brick chimneys, but little else. Refronted and with a new shop front, the large ground floor windows lack glazing bars, and are large gaping spaces in the façade. The new recessed entrance at the west end is hidden in the shadows. Next to this is a late Victorian red brick and stone façade. This has an excellent late Victorian or Edwardian shop front, with fine carved woodwork over the door.



Figure 10 : Waterloo House, Market Place.

There follows a row of five shops. While the upper floors of red and white brick are attractive, the shops have indifferent or poor facades and large and highly coloured fascia boards. Coral bookmakers once had a fine ground floor to match its first floor display window, but the new ground floor windows are heavy and crudely detailed. Only the stone front of Barclays Bank in the centre of the street raises the standard, relating well to the stone window surrounds on the floors above. Even here the large ground floor windows lack detail, appearing stark and intrusive. Boots pharmacy next door is of more interest, with the gilded sign “R.M. Ling” in the light above the door. Regrettably, the next shop once again has an uninspired and recent front. A large first floor window above the shop front has lost all its glazing bars, further reducing its attractiveness.



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Figure 11 : Market Place, southeast end. Good shop fronts.

After this, houses project out into the street. Waterloo House, a large and robust red brick building of 1790 occupies the corner site, with a good traditional style shop front. It has an attractive entrance on the corner, with some decorative cast iron spandrels. Next is a smaller cream coloured building with an excellent shop front. This is followed by the substantial Lloyds Bank, with upper floors in white brick. Sadly, the brick at ground floor level is a dark and inappropriate colour, and the doors and windows of indifferent modern design. The bank is followed by a rendered building with blue painted stuccowork quoins. The shop front, possibly from the inter-war period, has some wide steps, stone cladding on the stall risers and a modern door that are detrimental to its character. Ending this side of the street is the HSBC Bank, with a grand “palazzo” style façade. The bank front is partly original at the east end, but a new and very plain façade in polished stone occupies most of the ground floor; a regrettable addition.



Figure 12 : The Kings Arms, with poorly designed railings and phone box in front.

Partly obscured by the bank is the King’s Arms Hotel, which is set back on the corner with King’s Arms St. The hotel has a fine rendered front with an attractive fascia board. This is unfortunately supplemented by an accumulation of blackboards and a banner advertising

satellite television. There are some good clay pavers in front of the Hotel, but their positive effect is dispelled by poor utilitarian-looking railings next to the bank and a modern glass and metal phone box.



Figure 13 : Kings Arms Street forms the west end of Market Place. A mix of good and indifferent shop fronts.

Market Place (north side)

Starting at the east end, the first three houses are slightly smaller in size than the remainder of the terrace. Once very attractive traditional buildings, they now have a coarse roughcast render on the upper floors. The three shop fronts are modern and unremarkable, with large windows and low stall risers.



Figure 14 : Market Place, north-east end, an attractive group of buildings.

Five three storey houses follow. The first two have red brick upper floors, the third is rendered with stucco work pilasters, followed by one of discoloured white brick; the last is of painted brick. Despite the variety of wall treatments, they are an impressive group. Only the variable quality of the shop fronts undermines the overall quality. Two shop fronts stand out, Francis Jones Jewellers, a single fronted inter-war front, and the well-detailed front of Watson's Estate Agents with its coloured glass lights. It is not just the proportions and detailing that makes these fronts exceptional, it is also their tasteful and subdued colour schemes.



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Next to the end terrace a passageway leads to the church, offering a good view of the painted and carved porch. After the passageway are two three-storey red brick houses; the first has a parapet in front of its low roof, the second has prominent stone or stucco window surrounds. There is a good, probably late-19th century, double-fronted shop on the second house.

Next are two houses of two storeys. The first shop front is particularly poor; the second is very good. After this, the next house, Moonshine, stands out, due both to its size and its fine appearance. Three low key but attractive shop fronts blend well with the upper floors. A two-storey canted oriel bay forms the central feature on this well-designed building.

Two red brick buildings follow, then one rendered; all have particularly poor shop fronts. The end house has a gable facing the street with a modelled open pediment. There follows a passage leading to St Nicholas Place. Fortunately the passage is narrow and little can be seen of this unappealing shopping arcade.

The remaining houses on this side of the street present a less coherent character. Following the passageway, the end house appears more neo-Georgian than Georgian. The shop front has half round pilasters at each end and a prominent entablature with dentil mouldings. This seems to be a Victorian front where the shop has inter-war and post-war additions.

Market Place (west side)

At the south end, the first building is two storeys. It has a late Victorian character. The white brick façade has windows with painted, probably stucco work flat arches, and there is a canted oriel bay at the north end. Adjoining this is a large 3-storey rendered building. In the ground floor are two doors with attractive doorcases. At the north end is a particularly good shopfront with fluted half columns. Next is a white painted brick building with moulded pilasters. At the south end, the building projects awkwardly over a passageway leading to a modern shopping development, Market Cross Mews. There are two shop fronts which may be 19th or early 20th century. Their general shape is good, but some later details, such as the brick step within the lobby, are poor. At the corner with Market Street is a particularly pleasing 17th century house. After this is a charming small single storey bowed shopfront on the corner, adjoining the Feathers Hotel.

The Terrace

The Terrace starts as a tarmac surfaced lane leading away from the south-west side of Market Place. To the east is a three-storey rendered gable end. Facing this is a very attractive two storey house with a fine late Victorian corner shop.

The first buildings in the terrace on the east side are not promising. After this, a wall marks off the rest of the lane as a private area, and the quality of the houses rises significantly. There are two large three-storey Georgian or Regency semi-detached houses. After a short space filled by a possible late Victorian single storey building, there is a similar pair of houses. In front of these houses, the lane narrows to an unmetalled path. There are attractive gardens to the west. In the background, completing a pleasant scene, are the roofs of Paston College.

The buildings on the west side contribute less to the area. At the rear of the building fronting King's Arms Loke is an ill-maintained parking area. Beyond this a single storey building with a pitched roof fronts the lane. Beyond this is a large shop window and projecting sign. At the time of survey, there was a row of wheelie bins on the concrete forecourt. This unappealing single storey building, together with the concrete, detracts from what is otherwise a generally attractive lane.

King's Arms Loke

King's Arms Loke starts at the junction with the Terrace, passes behind the projecting buildings on the south-west side of Market Place and ends at King's Arms St. Most of its surface is recent, of diamond cut blue clay pavers.



Figure 15 : Right: The charity shop is a poor building at the centre of The Terrace.



Figure 16 : King's Arms Loke, looking east.

Overall, the Loke has an uninviting appearance, literally overshadowed by the backs of the houses to the north. This is reinforced by the heavy duty grilles over most of the ground floor windows and the collection of first floor extractor fans.

Bank Loke (north, or market end)

A narrow covered passage through the buildings on the south side of Market Place leads to Bank Loke. The passage has blue clay pavers, and plain walls of red brick. The initial view is of part of a modern block, including a toy shop. Immediately after the passageway is a



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small courtyard with a mixture of tarmac and concrete surfaces. It is contained on three sides by buildings; those on the east and west sides are a combination of older, mainly Victorian outbuildings and some more modern developments. Between the buildings can be seen the car park to the south.



Figure 17 :Bank Loke: Looking back towards the Market Place from Bank Loke car park.

On the east side is a pleasant mid-Victorian red brick structure which started life as a corn hall, and was later converted for use as a warehouse. Beyond is the modern development first glimpsed along the passageway. This is in an unremarkable semi-traditional style, with large shop windows and brickwork at ground floor level; the first floor is rendered with red brick quoins. To the rear of this, although not visible from the courtyard, is an old narrow outbuilding.

On the west side is a flat single-storey rear extension which connects with two red brick Victorian outbuildings separated by a small parking area.

The view looking back to Market Place is filled by the rendered rear elevation of Barclays Bank. This is well maintained, and a projecting rear wing adds visual interest. Unfortunately, its appearance is diminished by utilitarian-looking and inappropriate modern windows.

Black Swan Yard (north, or market end)

A passage leads from the south side of Market Place to Black Swan Yard. The first view of the Black Swan is inviting. Only part of the building can be seen, and the viewer's eye is drawn to the well-painted pub sign. The passageway has attractive blue clay paving. The side walls are less promising; the west wall is of roughcast concrete and there is a much patched red brick wall facing it.



Figure 18 : Black Swan Yard, as viewed along the passage from Market Place.

The passage leads to a small yard in front of the pub. The ground surface is a mixture of flint cobbles and fragments of concrete set in a “crazy paving” pattern. Adjoining this to the east is a plain area of concrete with a barbecue-style table and benches set on it.

A closer view of the front of the Black Swan confirms the initial impression that this is a fine traditional building, but within a very poor setting.

The rear wings of the shops to the east can be considered a slight improvement. Here is an irregular group of one and two storey extensions; some are probably 19th century, others are more recent. A few have flat roofs, the remainder are pitched and of slate.



Figure 19 : The Black Swan.

A narrow road curves around the east side of the Black Swan, and connects with the main part of Black Swan Loke. The rear wing of the Black Swan faces the road; it has a poor facade. Opposite this is a large single storey building which serves as an additional bar for the Black Swan. In front there is an area of concrete paving slabs with more picnic-style tables and benches.



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To the south of this is the Black Swan car park, surfaced in tarmac. Beyond this again is the Bank Loke/Black Swan Loke car park, described in a later section.

Market Cross Mews

A passage beneath the extended cornice of a shop leads from Market Place to Market Cross Mews. The entranceway is paved with a mixture of brickweave and paving slabs, and the immediate view is of an unremarkable modern red brick building with shops.

Once through the passage, there is more visual interest. To the north, the red brick rear wings of the Market Place shops are picturesquely grouped and vary in height.



Figure 20 : Market Cross Mews. The initial view after leaving Market Place.

The rear wings of buildings on the north side connect with some modern single storey shops, which then join a squat main building with a low hipped roof at the rear of the yard. This has a number of small shops in the ground floor.

The rear part of the yard is lower than the front, and reached by a short set of steps.

To the south is an open and partly overgrown area. First there is a small brick and cobble outbuilding, largely covered by creepers, a short length of breeze block wall, then a small car parking area. A fence and gate separate this group from an open area with wild grasses, buddleia bushes and small trees. This surprisingly rural feature serves as an informal car park and storage area for wheelie bins. To the west are the unappealing rear elevations of some long low buildings belonging to Paston College.

Viewed as a whole, this is an area of contrasts, without a single defining character. The attractive rear elevations of older buildings in the Market Place lead on to an undistinguished courtyard and modern building with shops; this is in turn flanked by an unkempt but still attractive area of greenery.

Market Street



Figure 21 : The east end of Market St, with the unfortunate no 4 in the centre.

Market Street is very much a continuation of Market Place. The road from Market Place makes a sharp bend and enters Market Street at the south-east corner. While there is a geographical separation between Market Place and Market Street, the two areas are linked by a similar character. Like the Market Place, Market Street is a roughly triangular open area with terraces of buildings on three sides. Most of the houses are late 18th-early 19th century, two to three storeys in height.

While there are some variations in wall treatments, with rendered, colour washed brick or plain brick, most houses share a similar understated classical character. The majority of houses have shops in the ground floor. Unlike the shops in Market Place, most shops in Market Street retain their Victorian or early 20th century fronts, resulting in a much more attractive streetscape. The street is on a slight slope, rising up towards the east end, which adds visual interest.

On the east side, a group of houses have their rendered gable ends facing the street. Differences of height and detail add to their picturesque qualities. This characterful group is the first thing seen by anyone entering the street at the west end; the present ruinous state of No.4 is therefore visually as well as historically significant for the town.

A passage runs between 4 and 6 towards the church. This should be an attractive area, with an interesting semicircular shop added to an early building on the south side. The shop is closed and in poor repair.



Figure 22 : The road between Mitre Tavern Yard and Vicarage St. Indifferent quality buildings and poor surfaces.



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At the north-east corner, two adjoining houses have been combined to form one shop with traditional shop fronts. On the north side of No.6 is an arched passageway leading to Mitre Tavern Yard. The passageway is surfaced with blue clay paving and offers a good view of the historic buildings beyond. Further to the west, all the buildings in the terrace have good qualities, with top floors of brickwork or render set over pleasant shop fronts. Some unsympathetic colour schemes detract from this otherwise excellent group.

The next group of houses is equally good, although the inter-war front of building at the end, the Chubby Panda, appears rather brash next to the subdued Georgian/Regency style of its neighbours. Once again, paintwork diminishes the effect of the group; the mid blue quoins and architraves and white walls of William H. Brown's shop create a harsh colour contrast for an otherwise traditional front. There is also a satellite dish on the otherwise excellent Carpenter's Arms.



Figure 23 : The Feathers Hotel, at the south-east corner of Market St

On the south side, the street starts at the west end with The Feathers, a very well presented 17th century building with a charming bow-fronted shop on the corner. A passage on the west side leads to a garden at the rear, and allows a glimpse of some fine outbuildings set at right angles to the street. The first house next to the inn has some interesting decorative iron railings above the shop front. This is part of another good group of 18th-early 19th century buildings. To the east side of Emery's butchers shop is a narrow infill building, perhaps inter-war. Emery's shop has a modern front, but it is well designed - possibly reproducing an older front - and complements its surroundings. The shallow bow window at first floor level is particularly attractive.

Next is part of Paston College; a former girl's school. The main part is set back from the road behind a high wall, followed by a side wing with its gable end to Market St. Despite an impressive doorcase with Doric columns, this is a drab looking group. The school sign at the centre of the end gable wall seems oddly placed.



Figure 24 : Mitre Tavern Yard, looking back to Market St.

Mitre Tavern Yard

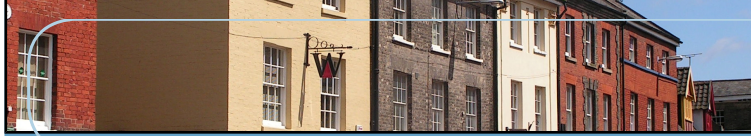
Mitre Tavern Yard is reached by a covered passageway from Market Street. The passage and the yard immediately following are paved with blue clay setts. Looking down the passage, there is a limited view of a group of fine traditional buildings.

The small yard immediately beyond the passage is flanked by white painted houses, which help create a light and airy space. The house on the east side is obviously early in date, with mullion and transom window frames. Those on the west side have a more Victorian character.

Beyond the courtyard, Mitre Tavern Yard changes to a narrow road, and tarmac and double yellow lines replace blue clay setts. The road curves round the end gable of a building to the east, then continues at its former alignment to join Vicarage St. The view looking to the north is the worst feature of this otherwise attractive yard. It consists of the uninspired modern housing on Vicarage Road and a bleak car parking area to the east enclosed by scaffolding railings.

A group of three houses lining the west side are more in character. Each is stepped out a little farther than the last, creating a gradual and very welcome sense of separation between the yard and the area beyond. Only a nondescript modern shop front with overlarge signage on the end house slightly detracts from the group.

Beyond this on the west side is a small car park and a modern housing development, Old Bear Court. This is largely hidden behind brick walls, but appears unremarkable. The road beyond Mitre Tavern Yard is a great disappointment; it is undoubtedly the worst part of the Conservation Area.



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Church Street



Figure 25 : Attractive houses on the east side of Church Street.

Church Street is one of the main entrance roads to the town. It continues away from the town as Bacton Road. While there is a good deal of greenery along Bacton Road, the view is dominated by large shops and the bleak expanse of the Vicarage Street car park.

The Conservation Area begins at the junction with North Street, where a terrace of attractive two and three storey 18th century houses introduces the small scale domestic architecture of the town centre.



Figure 26 : The churchyard flanking Church St. An attractive combination of an old brick wall and mature trees.

The east side of Church St and part of the west side is lined with two and three storey houses from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. These have a common and attractive character, with walls of red brick or pastel colour washed brickwork or render. On the east side, No. 14 with its shaped gables, and The White Swan, are good buildings at the centre of the street. However, at the south end, similar and otherwise charming houses are overwhelmed by modern shop fronts, advertising and obtrusive fascia boards. The 1960s ground floor of the North Walsham Chiropractic Clinic is particularly regrettable.

The west side of the street contains only pleasant contrasts. It starts with a fine group of buildings which including a very well presented, probably mid -19th century shop front. Then there is Church End House, a good modern building in traditional style, followed by the churchyard. Here mature trees spread into the street over the weathered churchyard wall; a strong and bucolic addition to the townscape.



Figure 27 : Approaching the centre along Kings Arms St. The junction with Park Lane.

King's Arms St

On the west side of King's Arms St, and for much of the east side, the buildings are similar in character to those of the market area; houses set in short terraces punctuated by occasional open areas.

The Conservation Area includes the beginning of Park Lane. The north side of Park Lane starts with a small red brick building, followed by the brick and cream rendered terrace of Weaver's Court. All these houses are modern, two storeys high with traditional features including sash windows and four-panel doors. They are well-proportioned and attractive, although the lack of chimneys makes the red roofs of Weavers Court rather monotonous. In front, set near to the kerb are a large number of unappealing concrete bollards.

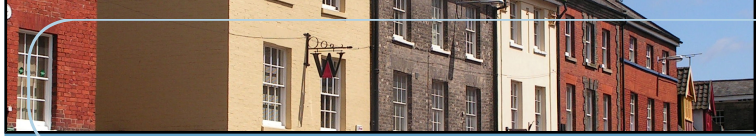
The main area of housing in King's Arms Street begins after the junction with Park Lane. The first house on the west side has a prominent painted and rendered end wall; this is the first of three 18th-early 19th century houses, all have good traditional shop fronts. Beyond this, a building has been demolished and an unremarkable new house is being built, set back from the road next to a Victorian terrace. It is understood that another building is to be built in front of this, next to the road.

The open space created by this development does at least allow for a clear view of a fine late-Victorian "vernacular revival" brick and flint house nearby. Next to this is a less showy early 18th century house with shaped gables and painted brickwork. This excellent group is completed by a narrow building with a pleasant 19th century shop front.

After this is a small car park surrounded by bland single storey buildings, including a Registrar's office. The lack of appeal of this area is brought home by a nearby group of four Victorian red brick buildings with decorative facades. Three have good shop fronts which preserve much of their original character, although the Job Centre has a crude fascia board and poorly maintained stallriser.

Sandwiched in the narrow space between this group and the traditional houses facing Market Place is a poor inter-war flat roofed building and a single storey café. While the café has a pleasant appearance, overall the building is a poor design by contrast with the larger houses in the market place.

Much of the east side of the street is taken up by Paston College and its attendant greenery. The more concentrated area of housing begins with No.17, a freestanding rendered building with shallow moulded pilasters and overhanging roof. Next, a modern building presents a



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three-storey gable to the street. Its style reflects the surrounding traditional architecture well. Adjoining this are three older three-storey rendered buildings. They include good details such as a rusticated door surround and a small late 19th century shop front.

The end of the street is marked by the King's Arms Public House and yard. The rear wing of the building facing King's Arms Street has interesting details, particularly the unusual round headed rusticated windows with vermiculated keystones. The pub yard is less positive. There is a small area of blue clay paving and seating immediately to the rear, but most of the yard has a patched concrete surface with parked cars and numerous bins, enclosed by an almost featureless high pink wall.



Figure 28 : An attractive vernacular revival house, Kings Arms St.

Aylsham Road

Aylsham Road is the most rural of the roads leading to the town centre, and for much of its length is an attractive mix of houses and boundary walls in red brick, mature trees and gardens. At its north end, the housing has very much the same character as the market area.



Figure 29 : Terraced housing at the north end of Aylsham Rd

The southern end of the Aylsham Road is outside the Conservation Area. This begins just before the Willows, and includes a semi-derelict farm building. The Conservation Area then ignores all buildings, both good and indifferent, and covers only the hedgerows and older brick walls on either side of the road. It only acknowledges the surrounding buildings when it reaches a pair of listed houses mid way along the road. While the recent houses of Simpson Close are unlikely to merit Conservation Area status, a particularly fine group of inter-war houses to the south, Nos. 19 - 23 and 16 and The Willows could be included.

The more built up part of the Aylsham Road starts with the listed buildings mentioned above; two fine 18th century red brick houses. On the west side, No. 14 is a fashionable town house, distinguished by its prominent doorcase incorporating Ionic columns and a spoked fanlight above the door. Ivy Cottage on the east side is earlier, with a more subtle appeal. It includes traces of early features within the brickwork, and a shaped gable end.

On the west side, No. 14 is followed by a plain modern house set back from the road, then a good freestanding late 18th or early 19th century house. Following this, a gap between the houses affords a distant view of the Victorian chapel on the Cromer Road, and part of a rear garden used for car parking.

The road narrows after this, with late 19th century terraces on both sides. These have a common scale; their plain fronts are relieved only by the detailing of the arches above the windows and doors. The majority have inappropriate replacement windows and in some cases also replacement doors. There is one undistinguished double fronted shop on the west side.

Near to the junction with the Cromer Road and Market St, the terraces finish. On the east side is a substantial 18th or early 19th century house with large sash windows with cut and rubbed brick arches, followed by a similar house incorporating brick and cobble walls.

The west side finishes with a well detailed three storey block of flats and then the housing development of Angel Court. The quality of design and detailing is such that these buildings fit into, and reflect their surroundings well.



Figure 30 : The west side of Mundesley Road.

Mundesley Road

On the corner of the Mundesley and Cromer Roads is Kett House, a thatched house which dates in part from the 17th century. Adjoining this on the Mundesley Road is a terrace of late 18th - early 19th century houses, followed by a late Victorian example. All have painted brickwork, which helps unify the group. Their quality is, however, diminished by poor quality modern shopfronts. The most regrettable addition is the pizza & kebab shop set into the thatched corner house.

Further along the street, at the edge of the Conservation Area, the houses are mid-late Victorian with uninspired, largely modern, shop fronts.

On the east side, there are two late commercial buildings. The inter-war corner building has a strong façade facing Market Street, but the side gable facing the Mundesley Road is plain. Next is what seems to be a former 19th century warehouse, where 3 poor shopfronts have



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been inserted. Between this group and the entrance to Vicarage Road- which marks the boundary of the Conservation Area - is Paston Court, an unremarkable modern block, followed by two reasonably attractive detached Victorian houses, one of which fronts Vicarage Rd.

Cromer Road

A short length of Cromer Road is included in the Conservation Area. To the west of Kett House, there is a single storey house, then a pair of semi detached houses; all are late Victorian in date. They have a similarity of design and pleasant character, although there are some poor replacement windows.

On the opposite side is Angel Court, which has its upper floors jettied out over the street, with well detailed supports and iron railings along the footpath. Regrettably, after such a visually interesting beginning, the modern houses which follow have bland and monotonous facades.

Vicarage Street

Only the south side of Vicarage Street is included in the Conservation Area. At the east end is a fine row of late 18th - early 19th century houses. The first pair is in red brick, with good shop fronts, followed by a pair of large houses with rendered and pastel-coloured fronts. The houses have awkwardly proportioned small windows, but good wooden doorcases. On the west side is a brick archway leading to a courtyard, then a single-storey red brick extension. The next two houses are very similar in character.



Figure 31 : Angel Court, a successful modern development in

After this, the character of the street fragments. The last-mentioned house is followed by a rudimentary car park with a mix of concrete and shingle surfaces. To the rear is a moderately attractive group of single-storey buildings which includes the rear of the church hall. One building has a good shop front, the Saddler's Shop.

Immediately to the west is another, larger car park, flanked on two sides by the rear elevations of St Nicholas' Court. The buildings of the Court are tall, with a very plain utilitarian character. A continuous row of windows is set below the eaves, and there are raised roof lights. An area of grass and a small tree by the path does little to soften the blandness of these buildings and the adjoining car park.



Figure 32 : Vicarage St: The backs of the St Nicholas Court shops and car parking areas.

Beyond the first part of St Nicholas Court is a lower flat roofed block with a simple colonnade facing the street. While it is in a different style to the other buildings of St Nicholas Court, it is equally obtrusive and ugly.

After the buildings of St Nicholas Court comes a bland car park - an area of rough ground with a scaffolding fence. To the rear is another large building forming part of the arcade, then the smaller houses of Mitre Tavern Yard. A narrow road links the Yard with Vicarage Street. At the junction of the two roads is an uninspired block-shaped modern house. Next along Vicarage Street is an older white painted house, but very plain and with u-PVC windows. After this is a pink-coloured warehouse-like building set back from the road, occupied by Arden Kitchens. It was once an early 19th century theatre, and later became a school and then church rooms. The best feature of this building is the large roof lights. The less inspired front has bland modern windows and a curious wide hood over the main entrance. Next to this is a small open area of grass, with a lacklustre view of the houses of Old Bear Court in the background. Finally, at the junction with Mundesley Road is a late Victorian red brick house.

Overall, the south-west part of Vicarage Street appears neglected, an impression reinforced by the large car park on the opposite side of the street and an uninspired assemblage of 19th century and modern housing.

6.2.2 Character Area 2: Institutional

Paston College: main buildings between Grammar School Road and Market Place

Main entrance and courtyard leading off Grammar School Road.

At the south-west corner, with its side wall facing Grammar School Road is what may have been a stable block for the school. This has white painted walls and a black glazed pantile roof. There is a high brick wall immediately to the east, then a lower wall with an entrance flanked by pillars bearing small statues of griffons.



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Figure 33 : Main entrance to Paston College.

The entrance leads to a rectangular courtyard, partially enclosed on three sides by buildings. At the centre is an oval lawn with a hedge and shrubs, surrounded by a horseshoe-shaped tarmac path. There are small areas of garden next to the south wall, and along the east and west sides.



Figure 34 : The Nelson Building.

The Nelson Building, one of the oldest parts of Paston College, is centrally placed at the north end of the courtyard. Its austere, near-symmetrical facade dominates the view. It is three storeys high, of red brick with a black glazed pantile roof.

Next to this is a passage leading to what appears to be a late Victorian house facing Aylsham Road.

South of the passage is a two storey block of 1939, the “Expressive Arts” department. To the south is the possible former stable block mentioned earlier. Most of the east side is occupied by a high brick wall, partly obscured by trees and bushes. Beyond these can be seen the backs of houses along Grammar School Road, and new developments in Bank Loke car park. Set near to the Nelson building is a red brick two-storey block of 1928.

Courtyard between the Nelson building and Grammar School Loke

Hidden behind the Nelson building is a small tarmac surfaced courtyard, reached by walking between this and the 1928 block. It is marked out with car parking spaces on three sides. At the north end of the courtyard an old wall contains the Paston Gate, an ogee-shaped brick arch and doorway leading to King's Arms Loke. At the north-east corner, part of the rear of a modern building on the Loke intrudes into the courtyard, with a lean-to extension for students' cycles next to it.



Figure 35 : Courtyard to the north of the Nelson building.

The main buildings in the courtyard are along the west side. There is a single storey 1908 building in red brick, with a two-storey gabled centre section and flat-roofed entrance porch. This is recognisably in the “board school” style. At the south end is a two-storey building of 1906, with its gable end facing the courtyard. This has distinctive high chimneys at each corner. Most of the roofs are of slate; the remainder are of matte grey pantiles.

On the east side of the courtyard is an old high wall, partly covered by trees and shrubs which have spread from the gardens to the east.

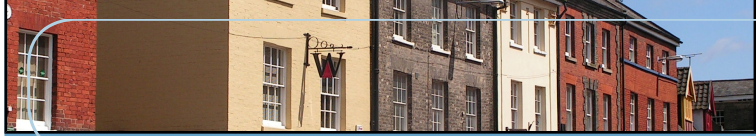
The rear of the Nelson building has a less coherent appearance than the front. Some windows at the east and west ends have been replaced by poorly-detailed fire doors and metal fire escapes. To the north, beyond the boundary wall are the roofs of buildings fronting the Market Place. They add visual interest and create a sense of detachment from the bustle of Market Place.

Park Lane entrance and the Lawns

The conservation area includes the greenery and trees which border a tarmac footpath leading from Park Lane to the main college buildings, together with some college buildings to the north. It includes a significant number of mature trees. A small part of this area is used for car parking.

To the west of the path is a recreation area, including a basketball/tennis court and a student centre, together with a small lawn set with picnic tables.

After the recreation area, the buildings to the north are grouped around three sides of a lawn. Only the north half of the lawn and the buildings on the north and east sides are included in the Conservation Area. The buildings on the east and west sides are 20th century. Those set within the Conservation Area on the east side are particularly unremarkable, built in a pinkish-grey brick, with uPVC windows and orange-coloured pantiles – an unattractive combination which relates poorly to the historic Scarborough building. Between these buildings and the Scarborough is a small patch of greenery, beyond which can be seen some of the small houses outside the school grounds.



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The south front of the Scarborough building faces the lawn. The original building was symmetrical and it is two storeys high, built in white brick with a low parapet partly concealing the slate roof. The ground floor sash windows are large, extending down almost to the ground. There is a central doorway set within a round arched porch. All openings have cut and rubbed brick arches. At the west side is a narrow wing with a steeper pitched roof of dark pantiles. This has a more “vernacular” character than the main building, with tall chimneys; it has a shallow bow window on the ground floor.

Courtyard facing Market St

To the north of the L-shaped Scarborough building is a small courtyard which opens onto Market St. This is only accessible from the south by going through the building.

The tarmac courtyard is bordered on the south and west sides by the Scarborough building which forms an L-shape. On the east side is a weathered brick wall, with the rendered side gable of a Market St building just beyond. The wall on the north side is of white brick, with flat topped pillars and a wide entranceway. Like the Scarborough building, the wall is grade II listed. Between the entrance pillars the shops at the west end of Market Street can be seen.



Figure 36 : The Scarborough building viewed from Market St.



Figure 37 : The north side of Grammar School Road, solicitor's office and Methodist Church.

Roman Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart

A strongly designed red brick building of 1935, the church is set at the junction of Grammar School Road and Kings Arms St. The church is screened from the road on the north and east sides by trees and low hedges.



Figure 38 : Roman Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart

The main access road to the church is from Kings Arms St, with low hedges on both sides. It is followed by a large gravel car park, which extends up to the side of the church. Behind the church, on the west side, is a large well-tended lawn, bordered by trees and bushes.

There is a single storey church hall on the south side, a modern and undistinguished design. The path between the hall and the main entrance to the church is of paving slabs.

The grounds form a good setting for this Grade II listed building. The greenery to the west is a particularly attractive backdrop. The only improvement which could be made is to move the edge of the car park further away from the church wall, so parked cars are not set as close to the building.

6.2.3 Character Area 3: Loose knit, residential

Grammar School Road and the junction with King's Arms Street

Grammar School Road is notable for its attractive mix of trees and buildings. While the adjoining side roads do give occasional glimpse of some less pleasing developments, this is an interesting and generally positive approach to the town. Its weakest feature is the view of Lidl's supermarket at the east end.

The south-west corner of the conservation area covers the junction with King's Arms Stand Grammar School Road. This is one of the main entry points into the town for traffic leaving the A149. At the beginning of King's Arms Street is a Roman Catholic church. This is a strong red brick building of 1935, although largely hidden by substantial hedges and tall conifers. After this, the street changes character; small houses front the road on the west side, faced by the inter-war buildings and grounds of Paston College on the other.

Grammar School Road is a wide and generally busy road, as the variety of road signs on the north side attest. On the south side of the road, the majority of houses are Victorian. Apart from an initial pair of single-storey houses, all houses are of two storeys. They are set back from the road with small gardens enclosed by low brick walls. Between the houses at the west end are open areas of hard standing leading to a builder's yard, which is followed



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by mature gardens and more greenery nearer to the Yarmouth Road. The houses are pleasant, but of unexceptional designs. The most regrettable element is at the corner with the Yarmouth Road, where an interesting villa has acquired a small and unattractive flat-roofed extension.

The larger scale and more varied architecture on the north side of Grammar School Road attracts more attention. At least during the summer months, it is difficult to see the buildings of Paston College, set behind mature trees. Its brick boundary wall is plain, but enlivened by the griffons on the gateposts.

There is an attractive white brick villa set well back from the road, although it is partly hidden behind a less appealing wooden fence set on concrete blocks. Next to this is Bank Loke, which allows a view of modern commercial developments and serried ranks of parked cars. Another white brick building follows a mid 19th century solicitor's office with a classical doorcase set between prominent bay windows. Regrettably, this lacks much of its boundary wall, removed to permit off street parking. To the east is Black Swan Loke; a number of unremarkable recent buildings can be glimpsed along it. Beside the Loke is a plain Victorian Methodist church and a 20th century Church Hall. The final building before the junction with Yarmouth Road is a pleasant late 19th century villa almost hidden behind a brick wall and well tended

Yarmouth Road (south)

An important entranceway to the town from the south, this extension to the Conservation Area includes the grounds of the detached Victorian/Edwardian Villas with some fine specimen trees. This part of the Conservation Area also incorporates seven buildings proposed for Local Listing, including the Old Court House.

6.2.4 Character Area 4: Modern developments

Yarmouth Road (north end)

This part of the road contains elements of three character areas. It starts in the south with a large Victorian villa on the corner of Grammar School road, typical of the more dispersed housing of Area (3). A large modern retail outlet, Roys of Wroxham is at the centre, identified as area (4). The street ends with more modestly-sized late Georgian housing typical of the market area, grouped as area (1). The street has large, non-traditional buildings on both sides which are considered to define the main character of the area.

The fine Victorian villa on the south west corner has been described in the section on Grammar School Road. Its garden has trees on the north side, which screen it from Roy's store beyond. Roy's of Wroxham is a long red brick building with prominent brown triple Roman tiled roofs. It includes some traditional features, but the long frontage, minimally-detailed shop fronts and brightly coloured new materials mean it sits awkwardly in its surroundings. Beside this is Roy's concrete surfaced courtyard. To the rear can be seen the older buildings of Black Swan Yard, while to the north is a plain modern red brick outbuilding and a high brick wall. What attracts most attention, however, is the unattractive mix of industrial-looking metal containers, bins and parked cars which border the yard.

After the courtyard is a short modern building with an archway leading to Trafalgar court, a recent housing development tucked almost unnoticed behind older houses. The older houses start with a red brick building with hipped roof at the south end. Another notable building is a rendered and white painted town house with a symmetrical composition with shallow doorcase and projecting hood.

St Nicholas Court

St Nicholas Court is a mid-20th century shopping arcade which has replaced older housing. Its centre is set immediately to the west of the church, and part of the arcade extends about a third of the way along the north side of the churchyard. The arcade is reached from the centre by a passage at the west end of Market Place or a lane which runs between the older houses at the east end of Market St. The backs of the arcade buildings are set towards Vicarage St.



Figure 39 : Yarmouth Road looking north, Roy's of Wroxham at the centre

St Nicholas Court is typical of numerous post-war retail developments which have been well-intentioned but are visually disastrous attempts to improve the range of shops in town or city centres. It fails to reflect the identity of the historic centre, into which it intrudes, and has destroyed a traditional street pattern.

The dull two-storey architecture has large areas of red brickwork in plain stretcher bond, combined with pitched roofs of dark “triple Roman” tiles or flat roofs. The shop fronts are bland, and there is no attempt to maintain a consistent style. The more recent first floor windows are of uPVC. Flat-roofed blocks on the north and east sides have colonnades in front of the shops, with battered-looking concrete pillars.

The courtyard at the centre has ageing concrete paving slabs and two rectangular areas of planting. These are filled by shrubs whose main advantage seems to be their ease of maintenance. There are also dated-looking cylindrical litter bins with rough cast surfaces, located near to bench seats with concrete supports and wooden slats.

Around the exterior of St Nicholas Court, there are rough areas which serve as car parks. They suggest that the development was never adequately finished, and that no real thought was given to its impact on its surroundings.

St Nicholas Court represents a serious error in town planning during the post war period. It is extraordinary that it was placed so close to the town's fine church and churchyard. Any attempt to improve the area would be extremely difficult, so it is recommended that this area be completely redeveloped.



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Figure 40 : Part of St Nicholas Court viewed from the east.

Bank Loke car park including the south ends of Black Swan Loke & Bank Loke

Bank Loke and Black Swan Loke are narrow lanes leading north towards Market Place from Grammar School Road. Most of the early buildings at the centres of the Lokes have been demolished, creating the space for a car park.

The car park is roughly rectangular. Black Swan Loke serves as its boundary on the east side. This Loke connects with Black Swan Yard and the Market Place. The centre of Bank Loke is less well defined. Its pavements, kerbs and double yellow lines are reduced to markers showing the route to different parts of the car park, rather than the course of a historic lane. The car park is a large area of grey tarmac, with few features to break the monotony. Nearer the centre is a CCTV camera and a smaller street light, together with small groups of signs, litter bins and a ticket machine.

The car park is obviously a recent intrusion into the street plan; flanked on all sides by the rear elevations of buildings and incorporating a few isolated outbuildings.

On the north side are the backs of shops on Market Place. For the most part these are plain rear wings with few window openings.

At the centre there is an opening leading to the north part of Bank Loke, through which a modern house and the rear elevation of Barclays Bank can be seen.



Figure 41 : A composite view looking north across Bank Loke car park. In the centre is the north end of Bank Loke. At far right are the outbuildings at the rear of the Black Swan.

At the north east end of the car park, irregular pantiled roofs form a more welcome backdrop, grouped around the higher pitched roof of the Black Swan. Some pleasant rustic-looking outbuildings to the rear of the Black Swan flank the car park on the east side, hiding Black Swan Loke from view. To the south is Roy's of Wroxham, a plain low modern building,

together with a mixture of smaller, older buildings including an electricity sub-station. The south end of Black Swan Loke is hidden by new developments which extend round from the east side of Bank Loke.

The car park projects out along the west side of Bank Loke, where the white-painted side wall of a building ends the view.

The most attractive view from the car park is the row of buildings of Paston School on the west side, where attractively weathered houses alternate with trees and shrubs.

Bank Loke (south end)

A short group of modern houses is built along the east side of the Loke. Attached to the Victorian house on the corner with Grammar School Road is Canada House, a plain modern two-storey office development in pink-coloured brick. This is followed by a high brick wall, concealing some outbuildings. Next is a large development. It consists of a two and a three storey block with red-brick ground floor and rendered top floors. These curve round to meet an electricity sub-station on Black Swan Loke.

While this building incorporates some traditional features, such as canted oriel and dormer windows, viewed as a whole, it is undistinguished. Its scale makes it a focal point; a dominating presence amongst the lower buildings and surrounding car park.

Black Swan Loke (south end)

At the junction with Grammar School Road, there is a Victorian red brick church hall on the east side. This has had a recent extension at the rear to create a community centre. The high and relatively featureless brick walls of the church hall are briefly interrupted by a timber fence and passage, to be followed by the equally bland red brick side wall of Roy's of Wroxham.

At the corner on the west side is a white brick building housing a solicitor's office. The boundary wall has been removed to create a car parking area, which extends down the side of the building facing Black Swan Loke. Behind this is a further small car park with low brick boundary wall set to the rear of the offices facing Bank Loke. This is followed by part of the larger public car park, enclosed on three sides with an old storage building and walled electricity sub station to the north. On the west side is the large building being constructed on Bank Loke (mentioned above). To the north are the outbuildings of the Black Swan, along with yet another car park for its patrons.

The southern ends of Bank Loke and Black Swan Loke now serve only as access routes to the car park and the shops beyond. What were once characterful historic lanes now have a number of poor modern buildings and unattractive car parking areas. The design of this area, or more accurately, the lack of any overall design, is disappointing.

6.2.5 Character Area 5: Important Public Spaces

St Nicholas church & churchyard

The churchyard is screened from view on three sides by houses and shops. It is only on the east side that the churchyard contributes to the larger townscape. Here, trees spill over the churchyard wall, enriching views along the street. The church makes a more consistent contribution. The ruined tower is visible along most approaches to the town, and due to its location on raised ground, the main body of the church is visible from Vicarage Street and the car park to the north.



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Figure 42 : Churchyard viewed from the west side.

The churchyard is a long rectangular expanse of grass, broken at the west and south-east ends by flower beds. Tarmac paths cut across the corners of the churchyard, linking the entrances on each side. The main entrance to the church and churchyard is to the south, where a paved path from the Market Place leads to a finely decorated porch.

Apart from the north east and south east corners, the churchyard is bordered by rows of medium sized to large trees, which screen the churchyard from the poor views of the St Nicholas Court shops on the west and north sides.

The gravestones have been moved and set in a line along the southern edge of the churchyard. Beyond these is a narrow path connecting the backs of the shops.

The church is built of “rubblework” i.e. flint cobbles, with Barnack stone quoins. Small flint cobbles have been used, which form an interesting contrast with the large limestone blocks. The ruined tower is picturesque, although a more recent flat-roofed stone building, set within its base, is less pleasing.

The views looking out from the churchyard vary in quality. On the south side, the backs of the Market Place houses form an almost continuous terrace. Their weathered elevations contain a number of features of visual and architectural interest. To the east is Church Street, a pleasant backdrop glimpsed between the mature trees. Part of the north side includes the gardens and houses at the east end of Vicarage St, followed by the unremarkable single-storey church hall, of which the older part is in brick and flint, while the more recent is of red brick. On the north-east and east sides is St Nicholas Court, described in more detail elsewhere. The church is set on higher ground than the arcade and the trees set at the edge of the churchyard, therefore partly screening views of the St Nicholas Court. Nevertheless, these are sufficient to give the impression of a neglected area.

War Memorial Park, Yarmouth Road

This main approach from the south is overhung with mature trees. On the eastern side mature oak and beech run along the boundary of War Memorial Park. The Memorial Garden with its monument and parkland trees makes a significant contribution to the character of the area and is an important green space within the town. For these reasons It is proposed that the boundary is extended to include the memorial garden and mature tree boundary.



Figure 43 : Memorial garden, Yarmouth Road

6.3 Key unlisted buildings

The following buildings are considered of local architectural and/or historical interest and are recommended for inclusion the local list. While this does not provide the same protection from alteration or demolition as national listing, it is still a material consideration in the planning process.

A small number of buildings may be worthy of national listing, these have been indicated by an asterisk.

***Aylsham Rd:** Pair of houses, probably 17th or 18th century, at north-east end of street, now part of Paston College. Single storey building attached at north end. Brick and cobble walls with traces of early window and door openings. Sash windows are of early type with exposed sash boxes, set near to the wall surface.

17 Aylsham Rd

18 Aylsham Rd

19/21/23 Aylsham Rd

Black Swan Yard: Black Swan public house, early-mid 19th century.

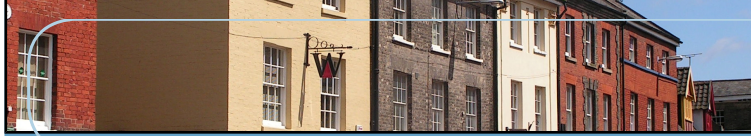
16A, Church St. Chapel of 1820, enlarged 1828. Mid/late Victorian additions. Now with two shops in ground floor.

Cromer Rd, Congregational Church

***17/19 Grammar School Rd:** Pair of semi-detached houses, 18th-early 19th century. Simple wooden doorcases.

Grammar School Rd, Tudor House (Further education dept, Paston College): Said to have been constructed in 1879, this may have started life as a mid-Victorian villa which was extended. Known to have been built by Cornish & Gaymer.

4 Grammar School Rd: Detached house, probably mid-late Victorian, with paired bay windows, wooden doorcase.



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Grammar School Rd: Methodist church of 1890 (originally Primitive Methodist Chapel).

***11 King's Arms St:** House, probably late 18th or early 19th century, with stuccowork front including pilasters. Windows replaced by uPVC.

8 King's Arms St: Late Victorian building possibly with later shop front. Roof with shaped gable half dormer. Unusual roof with lights, possibly a later addition or much altered.

8a King's Arms St: Purpose-built late Victorian commercial building. Unusual first floor round-headed window. Possibly shop front is a later addition.

10 King's Arms St: "Ye Olde Town Hall", 1901. Red sandstone dressings, good shop front.

12 King's Arms St: House of 1890 with good ornamental brickwork. Brick doorcase in Queen Anne Revival style. Ground floor windows replaced with uPVC. (nos 8-12 form a good group)

5 Market Place: Commercial building with late Victorian front. Well detailed and original double-fronted shop.

5a Market Place: Commercial building with late Victorian front. Some original mouldings above fascia, but modern shop front.

12 Market Place: Barclays Bank. Probably early-mid 19th century with 20th century stone faced bank front in ground floor.

20 Market St: Commercial building, constructed in 1906. Damaged by fire and rebuilt/refronted 1921 in late Arts & Crafts style. Good shop front.

Mitre Tavern Yard : House, possibly early-mid 19th century with pattern of blue-black overfired brick headers in brickwork. Modern door.

***Mitre Tavern Yard:** House, probably late 18th or early 19th century. With later shop window, modern chimney. Good stuccowork detailing.

***Mitre Tavern Yard:** Possibly 18th century building, may originally have been a warehouse. Modern shop fronts in ground floor. End gable has interesting early brickwork.

2 Norwich Rd

6/8 Yarmouth Rd

14/16 Yarmouth Rd: Two early 19th century buildings, red brick, original timber sash windows, later extensions to the north and south elevations, both with modern porch's.

18 Yarmouth Rd: Formal Georgian building, Golt bricks, original sixteen pane sash windows, central porch doorway in Doric order with decorative cornice, doorway complete with scroll consoles.

22/24 Yarmouth Rd: Early 19th century, red brick with slate roof, original sash windows, rubbed brick arches over windows and doors, no. 24 with later addition porch no. 22 without.

28/28a: Yarmouth Rd: Late Victorian/early Edwardian Villas, knapped flint walls with red brick quoins, red pin tile roof, original timber sash's.

30/30a: Yarmouth Rd: Late Victorian/early Edwardian Villas, knapped flint walls with red brick quoins, red pin tile roof, original timber sash's.

Old Court House, 34 Yarmouth Rd: Built 1903, red brick, slate roof, stone eaves cornice detail, central bay with gable and stone parapet. Stone doorway surround with arch pediment, Doric pilasters.

The Grange, 48 Yarmouth Rd: Dated 1893, red brick, clay tiles, three floors, three bays with two stone pediments complete with swag detailing, central bay stone clad with later addition dormer inserted into roof. The north elevation has been altered with the addition of a flat roof extension.

6.4 Public Realm

Surfaces

Outside the centre, the paths and roads have tarmac surfaces. Some of the paths have gravel mixed in with the tarmac. There are a few red granite kerbs, but for the most part the kerbs are of moulded concrete.

Nearer to the centre, along Market St, Church Street and at the north end of Yarmouth Road, the majority of kerbs are of red granite dating from the later Victorian era. Interspersed with these are a small number of concrete kerbs. Here, the paths are formed of concrete paving slabs alternating with squares of red concrete brickweave. This is an improvement on tarmac, but appears rather dated when compared with the new paving in the centre.



Figure 44 : Good surfaces and poor railings and street furniture.

The centre of the town around Market Place has been refurbished as part of a District-Council led HERS scheme. The paths have good quality York stone paving, and the red granite kerbs have been retained and relaid. Around the Market Cross there are yellow-grey ceramic setts, similar in colour to the York stone, marking out a pedestrianised area. To the south of the Market Cross, the road surface is of red ceramic pavers, which extend east as far as Waterloo House, although somewhat detracting from the effect is some unfortunate white lettering indicating a “loading bay” across some of the pavers. To the east of Waterloo House



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the road surface is of tarmac with red granite chips. A path of red clay pavers crosses the pavement diagonally just to the east of Waterloo House, leading to The Terrace. Safe crossing points are marked out by yellow coloured tactile surfaces next to dropped kerbs.



Figure 45 : Excellent features within Market Place-the Market Cross & fountain.

As part of the HERS scheme, the passages leading off the Market Place have diamond-cut blue clay setts. Similar blue clay pavers are laid along King's Arms Loke. A path leading from Market Place to the south porch of the church has worn stone paving, and there is similar paving around the entrance to the Paston School from King's Arms Loke. Within the courtyards adjoining Market Place and Market Street the surfaces are less satisfactory.

Bank Loke: tarmac, with some old blue clay kerbs on the east side.

Black Swan Loke: tarmac road, with areas of concrete at the sides. In front of the pub is an area of flint cobbles with a diagonal path made from broken concrete paving slabs.

St Nicholas Arcade: tarmac path, followed by concrete paving slabs in the main court.

The Terrace: reddish-grey tarmac path, with patches of concrete at the sides.

Market Cross Mews: the entrance has plain blue clay bricks; the courtyard has a mix of concrete paving slabs and grey-brown brickweave.

Car parking areas to the south of Vicarage St, by St Nicholas Court: deteriorating concrete and tarmac surfaces.

Street Furniture

There are two notable groups of street furniture. As part of the paved area around the Market Cross, there are some excellent purpose-made brown-stained wooden benches and matching octagonal-section wooden bollards. The litter bins nearby and further along Market Place are covered by wooden slats and have a slatted convex cover. Along the west side of the

paved area are some wooden planters, resembling half-barrels. These fit in well with the other wooden furniture. Less successful is a curiously shaped metal post with multiple arms for hanging baskets, placed just to the east of the Cross. Nearby is an older piece of street furniture, an attractive stone drinking fountain of 1911. Sadly, the light on top of this is disused, and electrical cables have been carelessly stuffed into the lantern.

After all the work to improve the area around the Market Cross, the railings around the edge of the path by the HSBC bank are a great disappointment. They are a very plain, utilitarian design. A modern glass and metal phone box next to the railings is equally inappropriate in this historic environment.

The second main group of street furniture is centred around a rectangular area of planting in St Nicholas Court. This presumably dates from the later 1960s or early 1970s, when the Court was new. The benches are unremarkable, with concrete supports holding wooden slats. The litter bins are cylindrical, with a rough concrete casing, an unsuccessful and dated attempt at “modern” design. The planting consists of two small trees with some shrubs, and appears overgrown and uncared for.



Figure 46 : Town sign in New Street

At the junction with Yarmouth Road, New Road and the entrance to Market Place, there are areas of planting set into the pavement, some flint cobbles and the town sign. Although there is a lack of coordinated design here, these are relatively pleasant features at the meeting point of two otherwise unappealing entrance roads to the town.

Lighting

Within the centre, along Market Place and Market Street, most of the street lights are attached to the upper floors of the surrounding houses. As a result, they are fairly unobtrusive during the day. The lights are, however, of a common “highways” type, and make no concession to their historic surroundings.

Along the roads outside the centre, the lights are freestanding, both small scale on narrow aluminium posts, such as along Yarmouth Road, or larger versions as can be seen in Vicarage St. Again, these are of a common “highways” design.



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Signage

Within the centre, a definite attempt seems to have been made to keep traffic signs small scale and unobtrusive. In Market Place, larger signs are only to be found at the east and west ends, and there are a limited number of large signs along Market St. Outside the centre, as one would expect, signage tends to be concentrated at road junctions.

The least appealing areas of the public realm are the car parks, particularly the car park on Bank Loke. This car park interrupts several older lanes. The result is disjointed areas of pavement set within larger areas of tarmac. Within this are set occasional freestanding streetlights, CCTV cameras and ticket machines.

On a more positive note, some pleasing details enliven the public realm within the centre, such as the old K2 telephone box on Church St, and the Edwardian post box set into the wall at the west end of Market St.



Figure 47 : Kett's House, Mundesley Road

6.5 Local details, styles and building materials

Vernacular buildings

Early houses in North Walsham would have been timber frames, clay lump, or flint cobbles with locally made brick dressings. Roofs would have been of thatch or perhaps pantiles. As most early buildings were destroyed by a fire, which swept through the town in 1600, little if anything survives from before the 17th century apart from the church, which combines flint cobbles with Barnack stone.

Kett's House on Mundesley Road has part of a timber frame from the 17th century, and is the only early building which still has a thatched roof. It has a later brick front, however, so that much of its original appearance is lost.



Figure 48 : Coursed and uncoursed flint used with brick, Bank Loke car park.



Figure 49 : 3 Market Place. A refronted house where the roof pitch has been changed.

There are few examples of flint being used for wall construction in North Walsham. Brick and cobble walls are found as part of houses at 43-5 Market Place and on the north-east corner of Aylsham Road. One of the Paston School buildings facing Bank Loke car park has coursed cobbles at the beginning of the wall, with uncoursed cobbles above. The cobbles are combined with bricks placed end on to help tie the inner and outer layers of the wall together. At the north west end of Mitre Tavern yard is what may be the small area of an old brick and flint wall incorporated into a later building. This example is of particular interest, as it also has galleting, or small flakes of flint, placed into the mortar.

It is difficult to date such walls, as brick and cobble construction seems to have changed little from the 17th to the mid 19th centuries. Some brick and flint walls may show how parts of earlier houses integrated into later structures, or that some of the Georgian or Regency houses with “classical” fronts were, at least in part, constructed of brick and cobbles. It is hard to tell what lies beneath most rendered fronts.



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The brick and cobble wall of a house at the corner of Aylsham Rd includes the outlines of a doorway with a round headed rough brick arch and window openings with segmental rough brick arches.



Figure 50 : Ivy Cottage, Aylsham Road. An early 18th century cottage.

Apart from Kett House, as mentioned earlier, there is limited evidence for thatch on North Walsham's older buildings. There is possible evidence of this at 3 Market Place, where a house has been refronted and the angle of the roof raised. The original outline suggests the roof was thatched, as this required a steep angle. Pantiles, however, could cope with a shallower pitch, giving the owner the opportunity to enlarge his house. Other early houses, such as the 17th century 26-7 Market Place and the Feathers Hotel still have steeply pitched roofs suggesting they may originally have been thatched.

The material of choice for North Walsham's houses from the 18th century onwards was brick. The all-brick Ivy Cottage in Aylsham Road has been dated to the early 18th century, but its shaped gable reflects a style used for Norfolk houses a century earlier. There appears to be the outline of an original doorway with brick pilasters and a segmental pediment, but the house lacks the more ordered appearance of North Walsham's later 18th century architecture.

Ivy Cottage has brick laid in English garden wall bond and Flemish bond, but most of North Walsham's brick houses just use Flemish Bond, which was thought at the time to be the most visually pleasing of brick bonds. One brick building at the north end of Mitre Tavern Yard has walls of English bond.

The earliest houses in the Market Place and Market St have been dated by English Heritage to the 17th century. Examples include the Feathers Inn and nos. 2, 26 & 27 Market Place. They tend to have more steeply pitched roofs than 18th century houses, and the former Cross Keys Inn has some fine multiple chimney stacks. A characteristic of these early buildings is the sash windows set close to the surface of the wall, with their sash boxes exposed. Most sash windows on North Walsham's houses have the windows recessed back from the front, and the sides of the sash boxes concealed by brickwork. This change is due to Acts of Parliament of 1709 & 1744, which ruled that on London houses, windows should be set back from the house front, and the sash boxes covered, to reduce the risk of fire. This legislation did not apply outside the capital, however, and it was left to fashion to dictate the change in provincial towns such as North Walsham.



Figure 51 : Classical doorcase with fanlight breaking into open pediment at 14 Aylsham Rd.

The classical town house, 18th-early 19th century

Most of North Walsham's older town houses show a strong classical influence. The shape of the vernacular house had been dictated primarily by practical considerations, for instance, the type of building materials used. Georgian and Regency fashions dictated that houses should, as far as possible, have a symmetrical arrangement of multiple-paned sash windows, preferably with a vertical emphasis. Roofs should be low pitched, (sometimes with a pediment) and that any decoration such as the doorcase should incorporate forms from the classical world. In some cases, houses were refronted, rather than completely rebuilt; White's 1836 Directory of Norfolk noted that in North Walsham "many of the old houses have been re-built with handsome fronts".



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Figure 52 : Plain classical front with parapet hiding the low-pitched roof. The window recesses at the centre may have been introduced for reasons of symmetry, rather than being blocked to avoid paying window tax.

Most houses probably acquired their style from one of the numerous pattern-books of the day, perhaps combined with observation of fashionable town houses being built in Norwich. The designers and builders were limited by the lack of a local building stone. The only readily available stone was flint cobbles, which were hardly suited to their “sophisticated” classical designs. As a consequence, brick remained the material of choice for walls. Stone would have been expensive, transported by cart or canal boat, so it was used sparingly, for details such as lintels and keystones. For cheapness, stucco work might be substituted.

The older houses tend to be in a red coloured brick, which would have been made locally. A smaller number of houses use white brick, which was popular from the second half of the 18th century, as it was considered nearer in colour to stone. This may also have been produced locally. The chalky soils of Norfolk were capable of providing brick earth for white as well as red bricks, and some small brickworks produced both colours.

Particularly during the Regency period, it was fashionable to cover the fronts of buildings with a coat of render, or stucco. This reflected the enthusiasm for Italianate styles, and also allowed inferior building materials to be disguised under a coat of plaster. The plaster can be scribed to imitate ashlar blocks. Stucco was also used for modelled details, including column capitals and window surrounds. Where a front was completely rendered, stucco is occasionally used to imitate raised stone quoins.

A few town classically-fronted houses have details made from what appear to be moulded brick “specials”, such as at 6 Market Street, where a string course between the first and second floors may be ovolo-shaped sections of brick. Moulded brick is not common, however, until the later Victorian era.

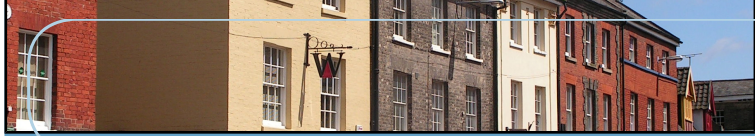


**Figure 53 : 44 Market Place:
Stucco-work with moulded
pilasters.**

Slate was the roofing material of choice for Georgian and Regency houses. This would have been difficult to obtain locally. While there are references to Welsh slate being supplied by boat along the Norfolk coast, it would still have to be transported inland by cart. This would have added considerably to its cost, a situation not remedied until the coming of the railways. It is therefore not surprising that the builders of North Walsham continued to use pantiles. Pantiles were widespread in East Anglia by the 18th century, and local brickworks produced red clay pantiles as well as bricks. In North Walsham, there are also matte grey glazed pantiles and glossy black glazed pantiles. While there may have been practical advantages in glazing the surface, such as frost resistance, this was also a way of making pantiles a more “select” product, nearer in colour to slate. Some houses have glazed pantiles at the front, and plain red pantiles at the rear. It seems possible that in North Walsham glazed pantiles persisted after the Regency period. The matte glazed pantiles on 6 Market Street appear very regular and machine made; perhaps dating from the 20th century. Slate does occur on some 18th century houses, although it has been suggested that most of these houses were reroofed in the later 19th century, after the arrival of the railways.

The majority of Georgian and Regency houses have relatively plain fronts, showing the “implied order” popular from the early 18th century. In such cases, there are no pillars or pilasters, and the division between the ground floor (representing the plinth or platform) and upper floors can be marked out by a modest feature such as a brickwork string course. The entablature is represented by a cornice set at eaves level. There are also houses where brick or stucco-work pilasters are placed at the ends of the front. This is derived from the “giant order” façade, where columns rise up through the first and second floors.

Much of the ornamentation shows Baroque influence, and doorcases tend to be aedicular. One of the best examples is at 14 Aylsham Road, where the mid 18th century door surround has Ionic columns, and a (blocked) fanlight intrudes into the open pediment. The majority of doorcases are simpler, made of wood where shallow rectangular pilasters support a plain entablature and hood.



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The Baroque influence is particularly evident on the façade of 44 Market Place, which has stucco-work columns at first and second floor levels with Corinthian capitals. Another feature which may draw its inspiration from the Baroque style is the practice of detailing a central window to make a strong focal point.

The top floor windows of North Walsham's town houses tend to be smaller than those on the other floors, but this is probably more due to their lack of importance rather than any system of classical proportions. Where ground floors survive, the windows tend to be the same size as those on the first floor.

Georgian window arches are often formed from “cut and rubbed” gauged brick, a technique derived from stone working, where the surfaces were rubbed to create a thin joint. In Norfolk this practice seems to have continued until the close of the 19th century.

While classical styles were in widespread use for 18th - early 19th century town houses, it is unlikely that vernacular building styles died out. Less prestigious buildings hidden away from public gaze probably continued to be built using traditional methods, such as the smaller outbuildings now to be found in the Bank Loke car park.



Figure 54 : 6 Grammar School Road

Mid – Late Victorian

Houses from the early-mid Victorian period tend to be relatively conservative, often continuing Regency styles. 6 Grammar School Road is probably mid Victorian, but includes a classically influenced doorcase typical of earlier buildings.

One house on the corner of Grammar School road has “constructional polychrome” decoration characteristic of the mid-Victorian era, where white and vitrified blue-black bricks have been used to decorate the red brickwork.

Brick production continued in North Walsham during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. With the coming of the railways, North Walsham could also be supplied with a wide range of building materials from further afield.

8, 8a, 10 & 12 King's Arms Street show some of the range of materials available to the later Victorian builder. No 10 is a private house decorated with ornamental brick. The classical door surround here reflects not the town's Georgian/Regency past, but the influence of the fashionable “Queen Anne Revival”. The shops to the north have similarly decorative fronts. The moulded, or ornamental brickwork includes string and eaves courses and ball finials. The window arches are of cut and rubbed brick. No. 8a has red sandstone detailing, including a well carved door lintel, while 10 and 12 have limestone details.

Slate was now readily available for roofs, and where clay tiles were used, they were likely to be plain tiles rather than pantiles. It is possible that “triple Roman” tiles were also used at this time.

Within the conservation area, there are two chapels in the Gothic Revival style. They are detailed with a variety of ornamental brick, both white and red in colour.

Render had generally fallen out of favour after the Regency period, but was reintroduced in the later Victorian era, partly as a result of the Old English and Queen Anne Revival styles. No 6 Market Place, has lower floors of red brick, with a rendered top storey.



Figure 55 : Bank. Late Victorian or Edwardian Baroque.

At numbers 21 & 22 Market Place is a Victorian building with a renewed classical influence. This stucco-fronted building is in the “palazzo” style, and probably owes its appearance to the new enthusiasm for the Baroque at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The style was seen to express the grandeur of the empire. In provincial towns it was generally used for official buildings such as banks and post offices.

The later years of the 19th century saw a great interest in vernacular building styles and techniques, leading to what became known as the Arts & Crafts movement. A former telephone exchange in King’s Arms Street was built by local builders Cornish & Gaymer in a strong “local vernacular” style. It has knapped flint walls with brick quoins, crow stepped gables and a variety of casement windows set in mullion and transom frames. The arrangement of windows has a deliberate asymmetry, designed to enhance the house’s picturesque qualities.

North Walsham’s best late Victorian architecture is unfortunately outside the conservation area. The infant and junior schools on Hall Lane are good examples of the Gothic Revival and Queen Anne Revival. To the south of Grammar School Road, Late Victorian/Edwardian villas on the south side of Yarmouth Road show a range of Domestic Revival and Arts & Crafts influences.

Inter-war and post war

There is little distinctive architecture from between the wars in the conservation area. The Roman Catholic church on King’s Arms Street is a striking design of 1935 by local builders Cornish and Gaymer, constructed entirely of red brick



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A large commercial building at 20 Market Street was refronted during the inter-war period. This has adopted a number of Arts & Crafts features, such as window arches incorporating clay tiles. It is an interesting period piece, but the detailing appears clumsy next to the understated classicism of the earlier houses nearby.

A number of buildings were added to the Paston School during the inter-war period. These are mildly attractive, but appear to be inspired mainly by the design of Victorian and Edwardian board schools.

The best work from this time is at the south end of Aylsham Road, where the Arts and Crafts influence is used for some late vernacular revival houses with thatched roofs.

During the inter-war period, the continuing interest in Arts & Crafts styles encouraged the use of pantiles for roofs. There is also some evidence of “triple Roman” tiles being used.

Post war architecture in the town centre is unremarkable. The St. Nicholas Court is typical of 1960s shopping arcades, but the design is uninspired, and it has become a neglected environment. There are a few recent and attractive buildings in traditional style, such as Angel Court, and Church End House in Church St. However, most modern imitations of traditional architecture within the town are badly proportioned and detailed.

Shop Fronts

Shop fronts form an important part of any streetscape, particularly around market places as at North Walsham. Despite this, there has been a tendency to undervalue traditional shop fronts, and some good examples have been lost from North Norfolk’s towns in recent years.

It is not clear how many of the older houses along Market Place and Market Street originally had shop fronts. Some may have started out as merchant’s houses with a front door and sash windows in the ground floor. Most traditional shop fronts which survive are late Victorian or inter-war, but a few may retain earlier features. The shallow bay windows of 2 Market Place could be Regency or early Victorian, but they have probably been considerably altered or added to over the years.

7 Market Place has substantial half-round pilasters with ionic capitals at the sides of its windows. Elsewhere in North Norfolk, this style is known from the 1830s-40s, although the original windows would probably have had additional glazing bars and smaller panes of glass. House of Hobbies, at 24 Market Place has similar pilasters at the sides of its canted bay windows.

The double fronted central shopfront of “Moonshine” could be from the same period –similar shopfronts are recorded from other North Norfolk towns during the 1870s.



Figure 56 : Excellent, possibly inter-war shop front with coloured glass lights. Market Place.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the availability of mass produced components results in shop fronts with a more standardised appearance. Single or double fronted, the door is partly glazed. Where the shop interior is large enough to permit it, the door can be set within a shallow lobby. The windows can have either simple canted-section mullions or narrow colonettes, often with triangular spandrels at the top. This arrangement continued into the inter-war period, when polished stone stall risers became popular. Particularly good examples are “the drugstore” in the Market Place, Dale’s Estate Agents and Watson’s. The shopfront of Watson’s has unusually thick colonettes and coloured glass transom lights – details which may show it is an inter-war design.



Figure 57 : Detail of carved woodwork.

Coral bookmakers in Market Place has a Victorian first floor display window. This originally continued the original window pattern and colonettes of the ground floor. Regrettably, the ground floor windows have been clumsily replaced, destroying the relationship between the two floors.

A variety of details enliven late Victorian shopfronts. The doorway of the drugstore has an ornate carved wood entablature and swan neck pediment, while the name of a former chemist, “R.M. Ling” is preserved in gilded lettering in the top light of no 13. Even where a shop front has been largely replaced, there may still be original features such as consoles at each end of the fascia, or a line of ornamental brickwork above the fascia.



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6.6 The contribution made by greenery and green spaces and ecology and biodiversity value

The centre of the conservation area is very much an urban environment. The main green space is the churchyard, which is covered by well-tended grass and a few flower beds with trees along the sides. As this is separated from most of the main streets by terraced houses, the only area where it directly impinges on the centre is along Church St. Here, trees set against the churchyard wall greatly enhance the street. Apart from this, there are small flower beds in St Nicholas Court and at the junction of Yarmouth Road and New Road. This makes a small decorative contribution to the town, but any biodiversity value is minimal.

Moving out from the centre, there is more greenery. Yarmouth Road and the south end of King's Arms Street are well provided with roadside trees, and in Grammar School Road, a number of houses have front and rear gardens. There are also lawns, areas of planting and trees in the grounds of Paston College. While these areas comprise mainly cultivated rather than wild plants, they still have an ecological value. Town gardens can provide a habitat for wild birds, and in Norfolk, goldfinches are often found here. Such gardens also support insects such as bumble bees, which are thought to have diminished in numbers in the countryside due to the use of agricultural pesticides.

A more varied ecology can be found at the south end of Aylsham Road, and where Grammar School Road and King's Arms St. Here, there are hedgerows, trees and small areas of rough ground supporting wild plants.

The trees and gardens along the roads leading to the centre, particularly along Yarmouth Road and Aylsham Road help create a pleasant entranceway to the town. They are a reminder that although the town centre is now surrounded on all sides by urban development, North Walsham was once much smaller, and surrounded by open fields.

6.7 Erosion of character

Large redevelopments which have taken place in the second half of the 20th century have seriously affected the quality of the Conservation Area. In some cases, developments on the outskirts, such as the Vicarage car park, the Post Office and Lidl Supermarket have blighted the approach to the centre. In other cases, such as St Nicholas Court shopping arcade and the Bank Loke car park, visually negative schemes have replaced once characterful areas of townscape. The generally poor quality of townscape surrounding, and in some cases intruding into, the Conservation Area is undoubtedly the greatest threat to North Walsham's historic character.

Looking in more detail at the centre, the majority of houses along Market Street and Market Place are listed, so that unfortunate changes which can affect historic buildings, such as replacement windows, satellite dishes etc. have been kept to a minimum (with a few regrettable exceptions such as the satellite dish on the Grade II listed Carpenter's Arms). Unfortunately, many shop fronts were altered or replaced before listing, so that there is a legacy of poor or indifferent quality shop design. Even where old shop fronts survive, they can have inappropriate colour schemes and overly large or luridly coloured signage.

Along the side streets, such as Grammar School Road, King's Arms Stand Aylsham Road, there are fewer listed buildings. As a result, there has been more alteration. The most common change is the replacement of wooden windows with uPVC. In some cases traditional doors have also been replaced. Other unwelcome alterations include the loss of some boundary walls and the occasional replacement of older tile or slate roofs with modern concrete or ceramic tiles.

The side streets are also the main location for new buildings. While there have been a few excellent buildings in traditional style, e.g. Angel Court, Weaver's Court and Church House, the general standard is unimpressive. All too often, new buildings are weak versions of traditional architecture, lacking inspiration and relating poorly to their surroundings – the house currently being erected in King's Arms Street is a good example. In some cases, the location of the new housing appears ill thought out, almost unplanned. The new offices and shops extending along the south end of Bank Loke seem to have grown without any consideration being given of their relationship to one another, or how good design might be used to enhance the bleak open space of Bank Loke car park.

Due to a recent HERS scheme, there is a high standard of street surfaces and street furniture in the centre. It was noticeable, however, that during a recent visit one of the purpose-made benches had been damaged, and that the limestone paving was badly stained. Without a long-term programme of maintenance and repair for North Walsham's town centre, the gains made by this scheme could easily be lost.

6.8 General condition

Overall, North Walsham's historic buildings appear in good condition. There are, however, some notable exceptions. The partial collapse of the listed no 4 Market Street is distressing, and a shop with curved bay at its side also seems at risk. There is also an outbuilding in very poor condition to the rear of 7 Market Place, fronting Black Swan Yard. While it is unlisted, it still deserves urgent attention. Such buildings create a very poor impression on visitors.

A number of houses are in need of modest levels of maintenance or repair. Some shop fronts would also benefit from maintenance, or even just a coat of paint, such as along the Mundesley Road.

The 20th century buildings of St Nicholas Court are particularly run down. Concrete details such as pillars have become discoloured or chipped, and shop fronts neglected or half-heartedly replaced.

The road surfaces and street furniture are generally in good condition, although there is a need for more cleaning and occasional maintenance here.

6.9 Problems, pressures and the capacity for change

The main pressures on the Conservation Area are due to North Walsham's role as a main service and retail provider for the surrounding area, and the increase in the town's population during the 20th century. This has led to a demand for car parking space within the centre and a greater variety of shops. As a consequence, historic areas have been sacrificed for car parks and large regional or national stores.

The adopted Core Strategy identifies North Walsham as one of four principle settlements in the District where the majority of new commercial and residential development will take place. Ways must be found to enable new development whilst preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the historic core.

Within the centre, there are still a good number of small shops which give a strong local character to the town. These should be promoted, and where necessary, traditional shops adapted for new uses without destroying their character. The Griffon Partnership has already produced an excellent leaflet promoting local shops (North Walsham Shoppers Guide).



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In the longer term, it would be beneficial both for the historic environment and for the unique character of North Walsham if ways could be found to reintroduce good quality shop fronts, particularly in Market Place. Some suggestions have been made to this effect in Part 2, Management Proposals.

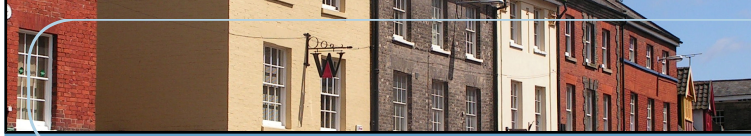


7: Community Involvement

Involving the community is an important part of the appraisal process.

How have community involvement and the public consultation been undertaken?

- Information leaflets will be made available from key public buildings.
- Making contact with key community groups and providing briefing sessions.
- Holding a public exhibition.
- Publishing the draft appraisal on the council's website, accompanied by an electronic comments/feedback form.
- Use of media and press releases.
- Evaluation.



8: Recommendations/Conclusion

8.1 Suggested boundary changes

It is recommended that the boundaries stay as they are at present, with three additions:

- The inclusion of the late Victorian and Edwardian Villas on the west side of Yarmouth Road, together with the Memorial Park on the west side.
- South end of Aylsham Road, to include three good inter-war vernacular revival houses, The Willows, 19-23 (Calthorpe Cottages) & no 16.
- The south-west corner of Grammar School Road, linking with the A149. This provides a pleasant and green entranceway to the town. Includes three attractive buildings.

8.2 Summary of issues - SWOT analysis

Strengths

- Excellent range of historic buildings dating mainly from the late 18th-early 19th centuries, giving a strong and distinctive identity to the town centre.
- Market Place.
- Good, well-defined space at centre of town, serving as the site for the weekly market.
- Good range of small & specialist shops.
- Moderate traffic through centre.
- Weekly market and fortnightly farmer's market.
- Good facilities for surrounding area, including Paston College.
- Ease of parking near to centre.

Weaknesses

- Poor surrounding townscape, including St Nicholas Court shopping arcade, car parks and large stores on periphery.
- Poor replacement shop fronts.
- Replacement of traditional features on unlisted buildings.
- Indifferent or poor siting and design for new houses.
- Condition of surfaces, particularly in courtyards adjoining Market Place/ Market St.
- Unappealing views out of centre, e.g. Vicarage St car park.

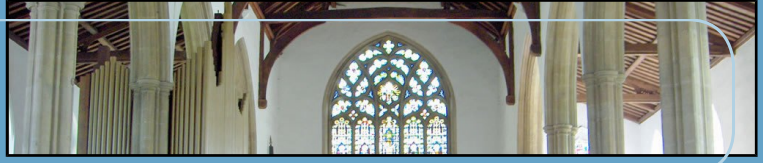
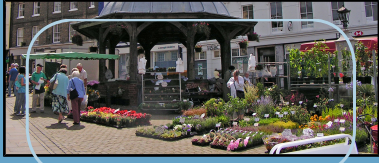
Opportunities

- Marketing/promoting the strong Georgian character of the town centre.
- Possible redevelopment and/or landscaping of car parks, particularly Bank Loke car park.
- Replacement of poor quality shop fronts.
- Redevelopment of St Nicholas Court.
- Possible redevelopment of Paston College Lawns site.
- Further enhancement of public realm, e.g. better street surfaces, lighting.

Threats

- Erosion of character through further inappropriate redevelopment.
- Loss of town centre shops due to large stores on outskirts.
- Lack of maintenance leading to town centre having run-down appearance.
- Continuing erosion of architectural character due to inappropriate changes to unlisted historic buildings.

PART 2 MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS



1: Introduction

The first part of this document identified the qualities of the North Walsham Conservation Area that make it special and distinctive. Part two of the appraisal identifies the Management Proposals which were agreed at the Councils Development Control meeting of 23 December 2009.

A positive future of the Conservation Area is best achieved by raising the interest and involving the community in its surroundings. In addition to the more practical proposals outlined below, it is recommended that greater advantage be taken of the strong Georgian/Regency character of the town. Perhaps events could be organised with a “period” theme, designed to appeal to all age groups, together with historical tours, etc.

When researching this appraisal, it was found that there was relatively little material available relating to the town’s past or its architecture in both library and local bookshops. A basic guide to the town, particularly its architecture, could become a positive tool. Pevsner’s guide to North Norfolk is not particularly complementary about North Walsham, and there is a need for a more positive introduction. Perhaps the North Walsham Historical Society could be involved here.

It is important that local people are involved with the town’s heritage, and that it is not seen as the exclusive concern of The District Council officers. The care of the town’s historic environment should be a collaborative venture.



2: Issues and recommendations

2.1 Review of Conservation Area boundary

The following five extensions were added to the existing Conservation Area boundary:-

- South end of Aylsham Road, to include three good inter-war vernacular revival houses, no.16, The Willows and no's. 19-23 Calthorpe Cottages. These are unusual and well crafted inter-war houses, and form part of a good entrance to the town.
- The south-west corner of Grammar School Road, linking with the A149. This provides a pleasant and green entranceway to the town. Includes three attractive buildings with some original garden design.
- The inclusion of the late Victorian and Edwardian Villas on the west side of Yarmouth Road, together with the Memorial Park. The Villas provide a positive entranceway to the town and trees make a positive contribution to the character of the area.
- Inclusion of two listed buildings on New Road, the (depot and no. 9).
- The remainder of the Paston College Lawns site for its historic value and contribution to the setting of the town centre.

2.2 Alterations to unlisted buildings and Article 4(2) direction

Many of the unlisted buildings in the conservation area have been adversely affected by the loss of original architectural details and original building materials. This includes the replacement of original timber sash or casement windows and doors and the inappropriate treatment of historic frontages.

Where buildings are not in multiple occupation or commercial use, such alterations can usually be carried out without planning permission. Development of this kind is called "permitted development" and falls into various classes, listed in the Town and Country Planning (GPDO) Order, 1995.

Powers exist for the Council, known as article 4(2) directions, to withdraw some of these permitted development rights in the interest of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Further investigation should be carried out on the possible introduction of Article 4 Directions to the following residential streets within the Conservation Area:-

- Aylsham Road, west side: no's 2-12.
- Aylsham Road, east side: no's 1-13, also part of Paston School at north end.
- Aylsham Road, southern end, east & west sides: The Willows, no's 18, 19-23 & The Willows (at present outside the conservation area).
- Grammar School Road: all buildings on east and west sides.
- Grammar School Road, Paston School: all extensions/buildings on north and south sides of Grade II listed Nelson building.
- Kings Arms St, west side: no's 12-42 inclusive.
- Kings Arms St, east side: no 11.
- Yarmouth Rd, west side: no's 6,8 (adjoining listed building at no 2).
- Yarmouth Rd, west side: no 2.
- Yarmouth Rd, west side: no's 14-The Grange (at present outside the conservation area).

These directions should generally cover front and prominent side elevations, and important boundary treatments.



Figure 58 : Poor modern house designs along the south part of Bank Loke

2.3 Buildings of Local Interest

Key unlisted buildings within the Conservation Area are marked on the map and listed in section 6.3. Particularly along Market Place and Market Street, some buildings have been selected partly for their group value with the surrounding listed buildings.

The following buildings were added to the Councils Local List:-

- * Alysham Rd, two properties (north east end, part of Paston College)
- 17 Alysham Rd
- 18 Alysham Rd
- 19/21/23 Alysham Rd
- Black Swan Yard
- 16A Church St
- Cromer Rd, Congregational Church
- *17/19 Grammar School Rd
- Grammar School Rd, Tudor House
- 4 Grammar School Rd
- Grammar School Rd, Methodist Church
- *11 King's Arms St
- 8 King's Arms St
- 8a King's Arms St
- 10 King's St
- 12 King's Arms St
- 5 Market Place
- 5a Market Place
- 12 Market Place, Barclays Bank
- 20 Market St
- Mitre Tavern Yard
- *Mitre Tavern Yard
- *Mitre Tavern Yard
- 2 Norwich Rd
- 6/8 Yarmouth Rd
- 14/16 Yarmouth Rd
- 18 Yarmouth Rd
- 22/24 Yarmouth Rd



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- 28/28a Yarmouth Rd
- 30/30a Yarmouth Rd
- Old Court House, 34 Yarmouth Rd
- The Grange, 48 Yarmouth Rd

Buildings marked with an asterisk may be worthy of national listing.

2.4 Development pressures and negative areas

North Walsham is identified as a principal town for growth in the Local Development Framework. Within the Site Specific Proposals of the LDF, two sites have been identified for development within the Conservation Area for a mix of commercial and residential development; the Vicarage Road car park and Paston College Lawns site. This document is due to be examined and adopted in 2010.

In the light of the proposed developments, much needs to be done to create a consistent high standard of design for new buildings. Developments such as Angel Court, Weaver's Court and Church House have certainly been successful. But set against these are the uninspired houses of Old Bear Court and poor designs such as the house currently under construction at the south end of Kings Arms St. There is also a prominent row of commercial buildings along the south end of Bank Loke, all of which are remarkably unappealing interpretations of traditional house designs.

It is recommended that all new development conforms to the advice in this Appraisal, as well as to the North Norfolk Design Guide.

New developments, and for that matter extensions or alterations to existing buildings, should reflect their surroundings and be well-considered designs. The North Norfolk Design Guide 2008 provides guidance for everyone involved or interested in the design or alteration of the built environment with the objective of raising the quality of design in the District. Further information is available in English Heritage's document "Building in Context" and the Royal Institute of British Architects publication "Capital solutions".

Once it becomes clear which of the town's car parks are likely to be retained, rather than redeveloped, a design brief, which should involve advice on scale, form, landscaping, and street furniture.

2.5 Buildings at Risk

At the time of writing there are two buildings considered to be 'at risk' within the Conservation Area:-

- 4 Market St (now partly demolished)
- Outbuildings at the rear of 7 Market Place

2.6 Tree management

There are currently no tree preservation orders in the North Walsham Conservation Area. Anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree in a Conservation Area is required to give six weeks notice to the local planning authority (subject to a range of exceptions including small trees or dead, dying or dangerous trees).



2.7 Public realm and green spaces

The Council will work in conjunction with Norfolk County Council Highways, residents, other statutory undertakers and the Council's own Property Services team; to ensure that street surfaces are properly repaired and cleaned, and street furniture is kept in good order.

There is scope to improve the surfaces of a number of small courtyards within the centre, e.g. Black Swan Court, Bank Loke etc. Courtyards with poor surfaces are marked on the accompanying maps. The appearance of the town centre would be further improved if the high quality paving used in Market Place was also used in the surrounding streets. As a main shopping street and high profile area within the town, Market Street should be made a priority.

Shop fronts play a large part in creating positive perceptions of a street. Due to the large number of poor shop fronts, particularly in Market Place, it is recommended that a gradual programme of replacement and improvement be undertaken. As part of this, a design guide could be produced, covering acceptable new designs for shop fronts, colour schemes and well-designed fascia boards.

St Nicholas Court offers opportunity for redevelopment and enhancement of the public realm.

Further enhancement, to build upon the work undertaken through the HER scheme (2000-2002) should be considered on the Market Place.



3: Monitoring and review

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

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

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

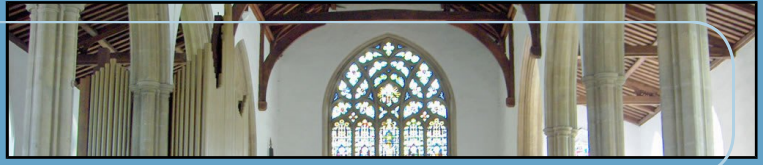
The success of this document will be dependent on its adoption by local residents, regular monitoring and an effective enforcement strategy to ensure that recommendations are achieved.



4: HELM as resource

Further extensive guidance on the local management of the historic environment can be found on the online resource Historic Environment Local Management at www.helm.org.uk.

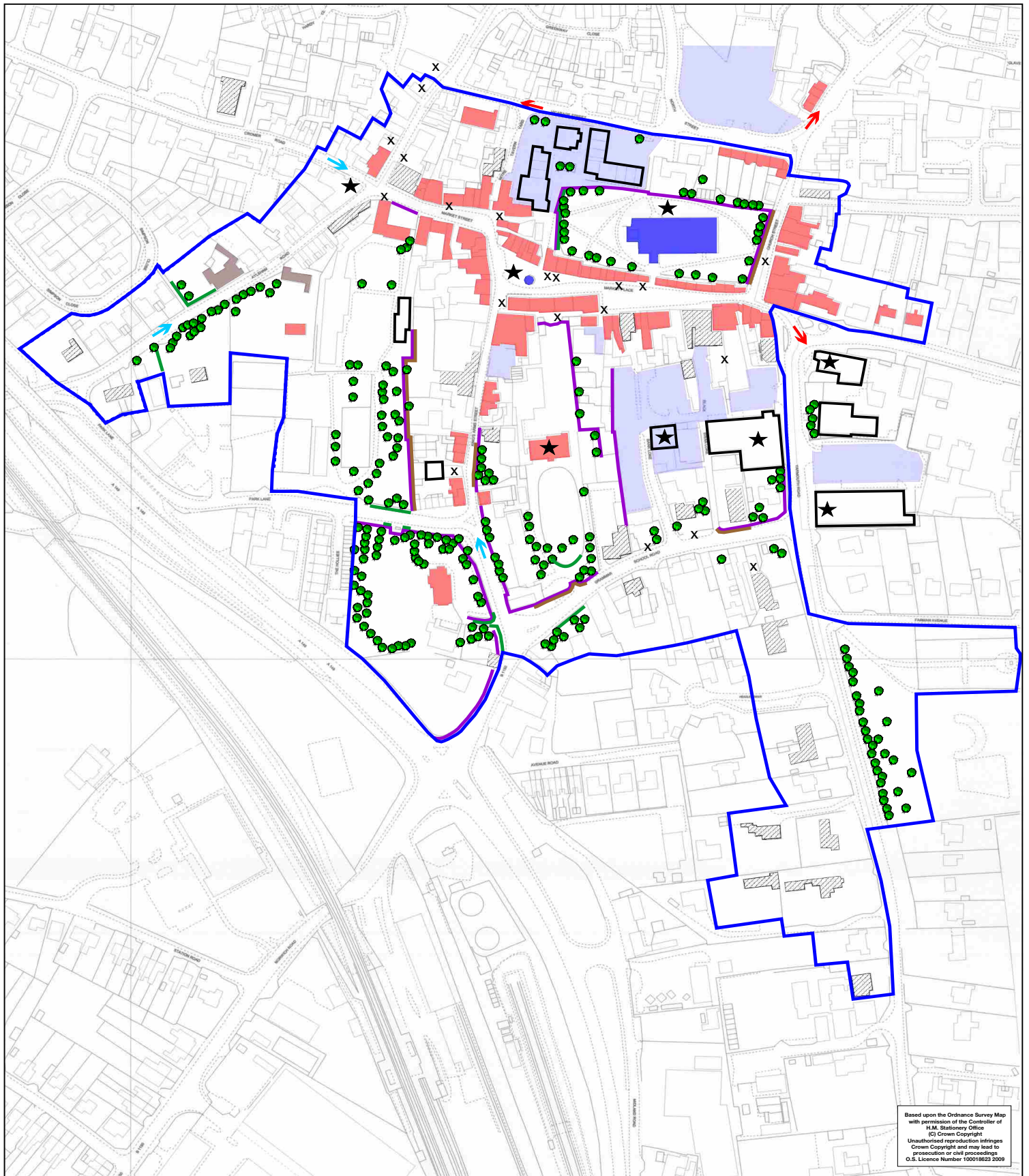
APPENDICES




















Appendix 1: North Walsham Conservation Area Map's

Map 1: Listed Buildings/Townscape Features



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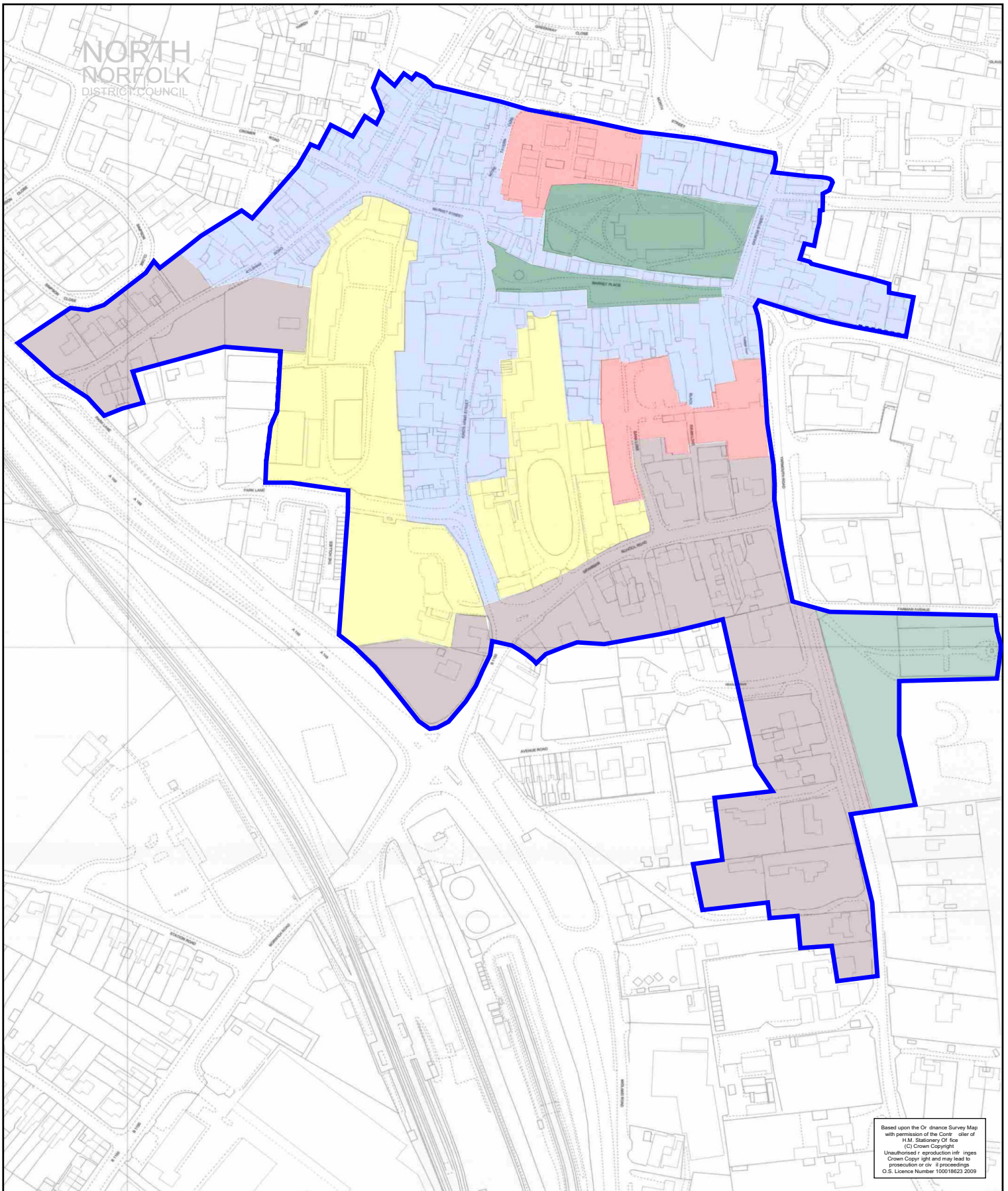
- | | | |
|---|--|--|
|  Conservation Area Boundary |  Negative Space |  Listed Building Grade I |
|  Important Boundary |  Good Brick Wall |  Listed Building Grade II |
|  Important Trees |  Buildings of Local Interest |  Listed Building Grade II* |
|  Focal Point |  Negative View |  Positive View |
|  Hedge |  Negative Feature | |
| |  Buildings not reinforcing prevailing character | |





North Walsham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan

Map 2: Character Areas



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- Conservation Area Boundary
- Character Area 1 - Historic Core
- Character Area 2 - Institutional
- Character Area 3 - Loose Knit Residential
- Character Area 4 - Modern Development
- Character Area 5 - Important Public Spaces

Appendix 2: Sustainability

Environmental Sustainability is an issue which is growing in importance in relation to the built environment. Buildings have a significant impact on the environment, from their construction throughout their useful life to their eventual demolition. A large proportion of energy is used to heat and power buildings, which contributes to emissions of greenhouse gases, and the construction sector is globally one of the largest users of energy and producers of waste.

In many ways sustainability, as with conservation, is best achieved by early planning. Careful consideration of the materials to be used and the design of new development can greatly reduce impact on the environment. For example, maximising passive solar gain or providing shelter from prevailing winds can reduce heating needs thus using less energy. Choice of materials can also help reduce energy requirements, for instance high levels of insulation can ensure that buildings require less energy to heat, but also prevent excess heating in summer.

There are many measures to improve sustainability which also meet objectives relating to conservation. An example of this is the use of traditional materials and construction methods. These can result in high levels of sustainability, by using renewable resources like timber or low-embodied-energy materials such as lime, instead of synthetic materials such as plastic and concrete. The same is true for the re-use of buildings which both conserves traditional architecture as well as reducing the need for new-build structures. The use of locally sourced materials is another example, which helps to reinforce local distinctiveness, but also requires less fuel to transport materials over long distances.

Sticking to simple principles like using high quality materials can meet requirements for both sustainability and conservation, as they are more durable; require replacing less often, are more energy efficient and often more aesthetically pleasing.

For more detailed information on the issues relating to sustainability and the built environment consult the North Norfolk Design Guide.



Appendix 3: References and Sources

Barringer, C (ed): North Walsham in the 18th Century (N. Walsham WEA, 1983)

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Unknown: North Walsham Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (NNDC, 1999)

Warren, P (ed): North Walsham in the 19th Century (N. Walsham WEA 1993)

Listed building descriptions prepared by English Heritage.

Trade Directories including Universal British & Kellys, 1793-1930.

Websites:

Helm.org.uk

Norfolkcoast.co.uk

Norfolkwildlifetrust.co.uk

Northnorfolk.org.uk

Appendix 4: Contact Details

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The Conservation and Design webpages offer links to all main heritage and conservation bodies for advice, guidance and information.

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