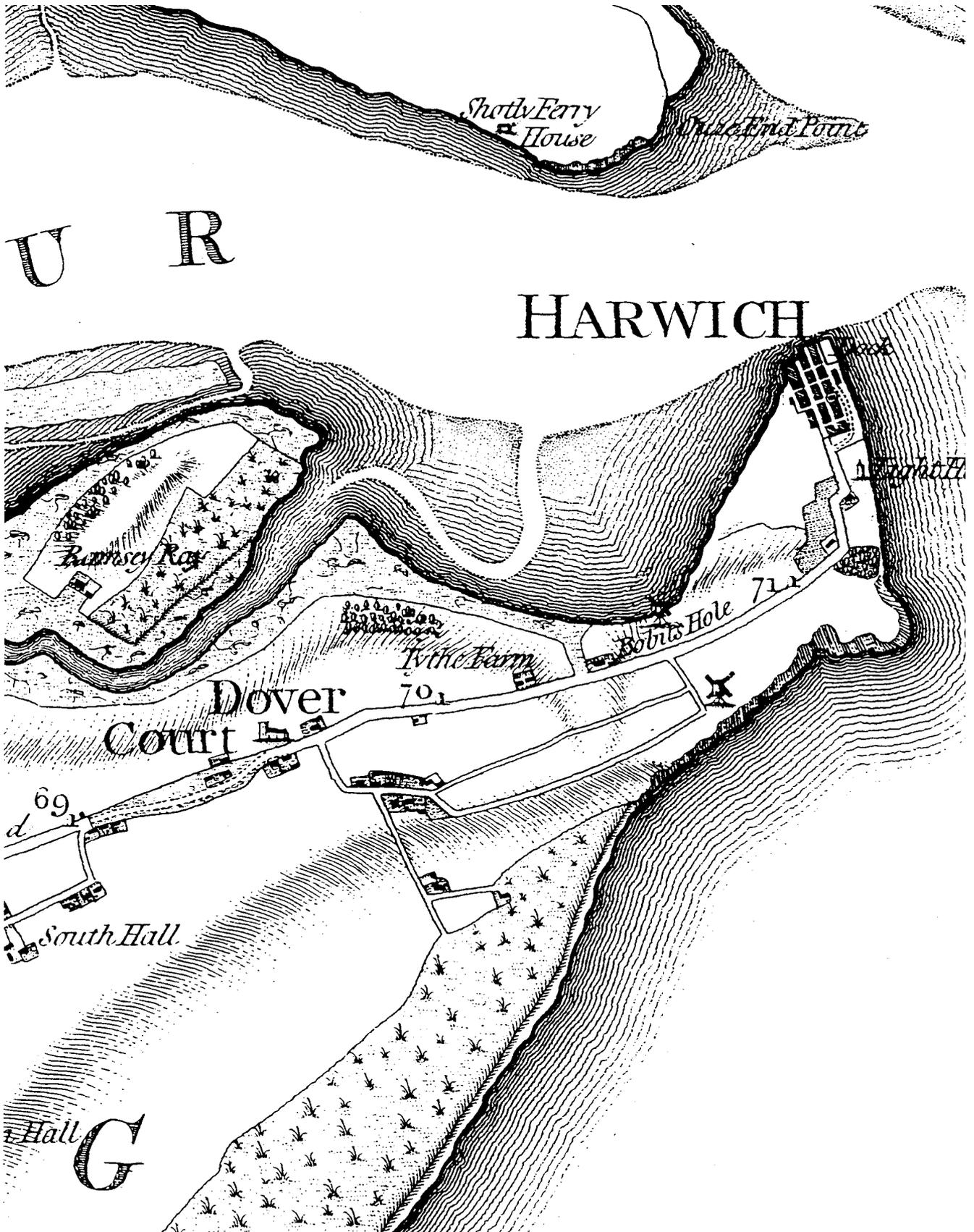




# Dovercourt Conservation Area



## **DISCLAIMER**

### **CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISALS**

**This Conservation Area Character Appraisal adopted by the Council in March 2006 and appearing on this WebPage is derived from an earlier document produced for the Council by consultants Smith Stuart Reynolds in 2001. Subsequently, the Council published these documents for consultation purposes in late 2005. These were then partially updated and amended to reflect the comments received from town and parish councils and other interested parties. No comprehensive revision and updating of the 2001 documents took place.**

**The Council recognises that over time changes have taken place to various buildings referred to in the Appraisals so that certain comments / statements made in relation to those buildings are now, no longer applicable. For up to date information relating to planning applications, permissions or other developments on individual buildings referred to in the Appraisals you are advised to use the Council's planning public access search engine at [www.tendringdc.gov.uk/TendringDC/Environment/Planning+and+Buildings/](http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/TendringDC/Environment/Planning+and+Buildings/) or contact Regeneration, Planning and Community Services on 01255 686161.**

### Dovercourt Conservation Area

This Conservation Area Character Appraisal has been produced by the District Council but is based on earlier work by consultants Smith Stuart Reynolds in 2001. These earlier documents contain the views of the consultant and did not necessarily reflect the Council's Officer's views. Although these documents have existed for some time they had no formal, planning status.

The Council subsequently agreed in 2005 to prepare Conservation Area Character Appraisals for each of its Conservation Areas and as a forerunner to updating the above consultant's documents a consultation exercise took place in late 2005 / early 2006. This involved town and parish councils and certain local amenity bodies. The results of the consultation exercise were reported to the Council's Planning Portfolio Holder when the document was formally considered for adoption as Council planning policy. As a result of this consultation the Appraisal documents have been amended and updated in the light of the comments received from consultees and as a result of certain changes, which have taken place since 2001. Much of the descriptive material used in the original SSR documents has been retained.

Proposals originally put forward by the Consultant involving suggested changes to Conservation Area boundaries, enhancement works or proposed Article 4 Directions have been retained in these latest documents. However, it is recognised that town or parish councils do not support some of these suggestions and this is referred to in the appropriate document. Their inclusion in the documents as suggestions only does not indicate that the District Council supports such proposals at this time. They will be subject to further consideration by the Council in due course. Indeed all such proposals for boundary changes, and any new Article 4 Directions will be required to go through quite separate, statutory processes which will also be carried out with further public consultation.

This document has been formally adopted by the Council as part of its planning policies for this conservation area under the provisions of Section 71 of the Planning [Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas] Act 1990. It will therefore be an important material consideration in relation to the assessment and determination of planning and related applications in the Conservation Area.

#### **SUMMARY**

**Dovercourt Conservation Area covers those parts of the town centre most closely associated with its early development as a seaside resort. These include Orwell Terrace as erected by John Bagshaw, and the adjacent Cliff Park Gardens created from his former private garden after his bankruptcy, and the High Street and the station approaches with their interesting blend of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century architecture. High Street forms the core of the Area, shoppers and traffic contributing to its character. Cliff Park Gardens leads on to Beacon Hill, where an important coastal defence site is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a wildlife habitat.**

# Dovercourt Conservation Area

### LOCATION

Dovercourt stands across the neck of the peninsular which projects into Harwich harbour and contains the town of Harwich. The centre of the town is at the narrowest part of this isthmus which is bisected by the B1352, formerly the main road to the port. The terrain slowly rises to the west of Dovercourt centre to the ridge occupied by Upper Dovercourt, a small historic settlement now surrounded by modern suburbs.

### DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

There is evidence of prehistoric activity in the Harwich area, especially around Dovercourt.

Septaria stone was mined at Dovercourt in the Roman period and shipped around the county, and chance Roman finds suggest a sizeable Roman settlement here. There is also evidence for an early Saxon burial ground, and the Domesday Book records the village.

These references are likely to be to what is now Upper Dovercourt, as the 1777 Essex Map of Chapman and André shows a small settlement around All Saints Church and around the junctions of Fronks Road with Manor Lane and Hall Lane. A windmill is shown standing at the place where Orwell Road and Marine Parade meet today.

By the time of the First Edition 6" Ordnance Survey Sheet of 1874, Dovercourt has a Marine Parade, a considerable amount of development either side of its High Street, a Station and Hotel, and a new straight road connecting it with the town centre of Harwich. Much of the building was created by Mr John Bagshaw, MP for Harwich, whose grandiose plans for Dovercourt New Town, stimulated by the coming of the railway, included the laying out of promenade walks, the development of Orwell Terrace and Gardens and the construction for himself of a palatial residence called Cliff House. After his bankruptcy his house was demolished and landscaped as Cliff Park Gardens and opened to the public in 1911. From these beginnings, Lower Dovercourt continued to develop between the railway line to the north and the Marine Parade to the south.

The shores around Harwich harbour have always been vulnerable to invasion, and have been the setting for defensive schemes for the past 1000 years. Beacon Hill, a prominent point opposite Landguard Point at Felixstowe, provided the setting in 1889 for a radically different kind of defensive emplacement. In contrast to the visible, almost monumental defences at Landguard Fort, the new defences at Beacon Hill battery employed the new doctrine of invisibility, with accurate powerful guns mounted on disappearing carriages in pits. Beacon Hill continued to be modified through two World Wars and is now of great historic interest as well as an important wildlife habitat. The defences on Beacon Hill are now scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

### CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES

Dovercourt Conservation Area includes Beacon Hill and the stone breakwater stretching into the estuary towards Landguard Point. Running westwards, it includes Cliff Park Gardens and Orwell Terrace, as well as the next section of High Street from Victoria Street to the junction with Kingsway. The north end of this section includes the Station: the opposite boundary includes properties on the south side of High Street, the Co-op building on the south-west corner of the High Street Kingsway junction and what is now Kingsway Hall.

### REPLACEMENT LOCAL PLAN POLICY CONTEXT

Beacon Hill, Cliff Park and the Marine frontage are all identified as protected open space. The High Street and parts of Kingsway are designated as within the Town Centre Boundary, while the buildings on the High Street either side of Kingsway are protected shopping frontages. Beacon Hill is sown as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Those parts of the Town Centre in the Conservation Area are also within an Urban Regeneration Area. Policies in the Plan also refer to the proposed environmental improvements and town centre traffic improvements envisaged in a Town Centre Strategy. A separate policy also covers Beacon Hill Fort supporting a museum and heritage complex. Reference is also made in the Plan to the Council serving an Article 4 Direction on properties in Victoria Street.

## AREA APPRAISAL

### *Cliff Park*

Cliff Park Gardens has a traditional bandstand in the centre, with single mature trees towards the High Street and a more open aspect to the sea. A grassy bank leads down to the coastal promenade with some beach huts, and rather bland flat-roofed changing pavilions in red brick. The beach itself is mainly sandy, with timber groynes, and good views along the coast south of Dovercourt and right the way across to The Naze. The esplanade here is paved in red concrete setts. The beach walk continues fairly narrowly with tubular railings around the outside of Beacon Hill with its Victorian and twentieth century defences now surrounded by galvanised railings.. Inside the modern railings are remains of the original anti personnel railings which were part of the defences. At the point itself the path gives way to a large paved area which beyond the point turns into red tarmac with a bitumen and pebble bank down to the water. There are fine views over to Felixstowe, and more of the defences are visible from this path, most particularly the tall Control Tower and the most northern of the major gun emplacements. Other than these the defences do not make a great impact as they were designed to be relatively invisible.

Immediately west of these defences, between them and the Cliff Park, the Conservation Area includes a strip of grass with one of two forlorn trees. There is no proper boundary between the Area and another strip of grass which leads to a series of indeterminate buildings and huts some in a poor state of repair. A line of trees by an angled single storey block behind chain link fencing is very important because it signals the start of the ornamental part of the park. At the north east corner of the park is a slightly decrepit single storey hut: its surroundings, including the New Road/High Street frontage, are not particularly attractive. The main High Street frontage to the park is the remains of the original railed frontage, originally of red brick and not in very good condition. The trees within the park are very important in the street scene. The northern part of the formal path arrangement around the bandstand has been taken up and laid to grass. At the north-western corner of the park there is a little precinct separated off with rough stone walls and ornamental planting, with ladies and gents toilets, a little single storey pavilion with decorative barge boards and a small listed thatched lodge with gothic detailing and clinker walls.

### *Orwell Terrace*

The park stands in front of Orwell Terrace which would overlook the park more strongly if it were not for mature trees and a large bank - possibly of building spoil - which is the setting for more mature trees at the seaward end. The Orwell Terrace frontage to the park is now a buttressed brick wall which sits on top of an older brick wall and screens a rather rough grassy lane: only vestiges of the original garden frontages of Orwell Terrace remain. The porch and the basement remains of the property at the seaward end of the terrace, while the blank gable of the next house has been rendered with some rough channelling. The site of the end property is surrounded by rough boarding and is a significant visual problem in a prominent location like this.

The frontages to Orwell Terrace itself are immensely impressive, with massive and distinctive cast ironwork complementing the stucco elevations.

### *High Street, south side*

In line with Orwell Terrace on the High Street is a pair of mid-Victorian houses exhibiting small-paned sash windows in decorative surrounds, with a later mansard behind a cornice. A rough shingled yard on the High Street frontage behind the lodge and toilets to the park badly needs enhancement. Continuing on the south side of High Street is a row of early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century fronts: A two-storey corner block to Orwell Terrace has a typical quadrant corner, and there are remains of heavy rusticated ground floor. No 107 has what looks like its original small shop front, though everything else is rather altered. The wagon entry to rear (Starling's garage) is once again of two storeys and dates from the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with more remains of a shop front. The backs of these properties are of brick and in a very poor state of repair, with tiny back yards, much crumbled brick work, a lot of mortar repair and general maintenance problems. Next is the Queens Hotel, of three storeys, probably of mid Victorian date though with what may be an Edwardian front to one half, and semi-circular windows in rusticated surrounds and piers to the other half at ground floor. The whole façade is of stucco painted red, with white painted details and a timber dentilled cornice. On the corner of Bay Road is Harwich Printing Company, a single storey building with a stuccoed side elevation to Bay Road and a period shop front to the High Street.

Beyond Bay Road on the south-side is the 1930's facade of Memorials and Monumental Masons, then a pair of three storey late Victorian properties, with variously margin lights to sash windows, and a decorative band course above the first floor window heads with original Victorian sashes. The next pair has traces of the original shop fronts and again sash windows to first floor, with a strong plain parapet. Next to a small alleyway leading

southwards to a car park is an older survival, a two storey building with an old sash window in ornamental rendered surround, with a taller rear extension with dentilled eaves course. The detailing of this alleyway is haphazard, with no definition between it and the rears of properties on either side. The backs of these High Street buildings are a jumble of rear extensions, parking and storage. The exception is the rear of no 145 which retains its original cast iron gate piers and a decorative detail announcing the former bakery.

The alleyway has quite a good side elevation to the west, the present Hughes Electrical shop being an attractive building, of brick with good wrought details and stone surrounds to windows. Its projecting bay to the alleyway is dated 1901 at first floor level. Next door are more good early 20<sup>th</sup> century properties: the first is dated 1903, and has a prominent cast iron balustrade to its first floor projecting bay window, and margin lights to the first floor windows, while its neighbour is in Jacobean style with red terracotta and stone details and a projecting two storey bay over a modern shop front. The following properties are slightly dwarfed in this context, of two-and-a-half storeys with decorative slate roof and probably original dormer windows, one of which retains its decorative slating. On the corner is part of the Co-op: it is dated 1912 though it looks slightly old fashioned, of red brick with stone details, projecting bays and an octagonal corner turret with a small spire with attractive lead work details. This makes an excellent pair with the boldly-projecting bay window and the leaded and slated spire of the Co-op department store on the further corner of High Street. This latter building with its prominent hipped roofs and cupola is very fortunate in the street scene because it defines where the High Street angles as it moves westwards. It is dated 1902 on its Hordle Street corner, where a prominent cartouche with wheat sheaves and a spade promotes Labour, Liberty, Unity, and Charity.

Round the corner into Kingsway from "Savers" is a mural fronting an interesting succession of roofs, all part of the same 1912 property. These contrast with what is now the Kingsway Hall, with its big rendered belvedere. Good ironwork survives on the street frontage, although the handrails to the steps up to the main door are rather utilitarian. A horse chestnut tree on the corner of Milton Road acts as an effective foil. Across Kingsway, Barclays Bank on the corner of Hordle Street is a Queen Anne style property with many attractive decorative features enlivening red brick facades above what may be a painted faience ground floor with pilasters.

The remaining buildings in the Area on the south side of the High Street comprise a pair of three storey properties, of brick with stone details and projecting timber bays. Next door, Lloyds TSB occupies a low building with a modern frontage which forms a visual break between the Area and the modern properties beginning with the Nat West Bank and continuing with dull post-war developments further up the street.

### ***High Street, north side***

On the north side of the High Street, starting at the western end of the Area, a rough lane leads onto a small series of buildings in the rear court of the main frontage buildings. These properties, dated 1914 are of two storeys, of red brick with good rubbed-brick details, and attractive classical detailing in stone. Beyond are a pair of Arts & Crafts style buildings, though with modern shop fronts: above are slate roofs with original segmental headed dormers, and pilastered frontages with interesting tiled diamond details which are continued through to the chimney tops. Against this the bakers on the corner of Kingsway with its terracotta details is almost indescribably fussy.

On the north-east corner of Kingsway and High Street stands Lloyds TSB in Jacobean style, with upper floors of red brick with scrolly stone details. The ground floor facade angles out beyond the upper floors and leads to a series of shop fronts on this side of the High Street which project boldly from the buildings above. These properties are all mid to late Victorian, of three storeys with mostly slate roofs although some at the eastern end are replaced in concrete profile tiles. Chimneys generally survive and they are pretty, of decorative red brick with yellow brick details, though none in a good state of preservation. There are scant remains of original shopfronts, though green faience frames a number of shops in the centre. Boots the Chemist has a double frontage of cool grey ceramic tiles: the design is stylish but out of proportion in this location.

The next block on the north side of High Street, between Station Road and Victoria Street, contains a prominent corner block, originally all of red brick with decorative details, including a dentilled eaves course. The corner itself, most prominent in the street scene because of the slight narrowing of the High Street, has been rendered. Beyond this is an interesting block of three properties on the other side of Crown Lane. This is actually conceived as one piece with the centre block slightly recessed. These plain Victorian facades, originally of red brick with yellow brick details, retain much evidence of boldly projecting shop fronts: but much detail has been lost, while the corner property to Victoria Street has sprouted an upper storey to its shopfront.

The final block on the north side of High Street within the Area begins with The Kings Arms pub, with its

typically jolly ground floor facade painted green and cream and above that a fairly straightforward red brick frontage of two storeys with a slate roof. Beyond that a pair of properties probably retains its original dormers though the windows have been replaced. The original Arts and Crafts style sash windows to first floor survive above an undistinguished modern shop front.

### ***Victoria Street***

The western side is a symmetrical terrace. The centre block of four properties is of three storeys with quoins and a decorative cornice with a blank centre pediment. First floor windows are framed under semi-circular arches, while the ground floor windows have cornices with consoles. On either side of this are seven properties of two-and-a-half storeys with dentilled brick eaves, brick surrounds to small-paned sash windows with segmental heads. Surviving original dormers have semi-circular heads. The houses in the northern wing have blank window panels over the doorways. At either end are single properties of three storeys with gables. Many chimneys remain in decorative yellow brick with some red brick details. A significant proportion of the properties are well maintained, with painted brick work in various shades. Front walls contain some original cast iron railings and also some gate piers probably in rendered brickwork. The east side is not quite as simple. There is a matching gabled property at the northern end, and the intermediate houses are similar to those facing them except that there are no blind windows at first floor level and there are eight of them, and no central section. Instead, the rest of this side of the street is taken up with a taller group with similar details, but with a broken eaves line, small gabled dormers and chimneys of red brick with yellow brick details. Virtually all the rendered gate piers survive along this side of the street although the railings themselves are in various states of disrepair.

At the north end of the west side is the Victoria Hotel which has a symmetrical façade facing the railway. It is of three storeys, and finished in cream render. The equivalent block at the north end of the east terrace is a rather badly maintained car park supposedly for pub patrons. In East Street, the backs of the houses in Victoria Street produce an extremely motley appearance with vehicle parking and varied surface materials. The railway land on the north side of East Street is untended with chain link fencing. Crown Lane on the other side of the Victoria Hotel is surfaced in tarmac though with a central gutter of the local glazed tiles. Some rear boundary piers of the Victoria Street properties survive at the southern end, but at the northern end the gardens are generally very open and in poor condition, with parked cars and rubble. The boundary on the east side of Crown Lane is variously of concrete blocks and vertical metal sheeting.

### ***Station Road***

The forecourt of Harwich Motor Co/Budget Car & Van Rental faces the station and is haphazardly arranged. The junction of Kingsway and Station Road is actually a very wide and rather indeterminate space. Station Road itself widens quite considerably both in terms of the carriageway at the station end and also in its building line, although there is a fairly consistent building line on the west side with a terrace of red brick two storey houses. On the east side, two pairs of red brick villas set back from the road are framed by Budget and by projecting shopfronts on the High Street junction. The villas have entirely lost their frontage walls, and the front gardens are given over to parking with patched concrete and tarmac marked out with white lines. The bay window of the most southerly house has been converted to an entrance door and is now a taxi office. Next door to that is a property occupied by an auction showroom and store with a simply weatherboarded front elevation. The remaining building on this side is of three storeys with a big central gable sporting half-timbered details and projecting bays to the first floor over fairly attractive shopfronts, unfortunately empty. The simple terrace on the west side of Station Road, is of red brick with roofs now of concrete profiled tiles. A few original windows survive, mostly in the centre, with considerable alterations to the front boundary walls as well. At the station end is a set of hoardings and a small concrete area with a green painted flower tub sponsored by the Harwich Society.

### ***Kingsway***

Going westwards from the station forecourt, Station Lane itself is just a rough track, leading to backs of houses on Nelson Road. On the corner is a two-storey brick property with an attractive modern shop front housing a Chinese and pizza take-away. Two more two-storey properties have altered frontages, with a little single storey return to Milton Road. The next group along on the west side of Kingsway are four properties of late Victorian date, staggered in layout with full height bay windows with terracotta details mostly with original details. No. 14 has however been painted and No.16 has lost its front wall and has an unkempt forecourt. Next door again is a community centre: behind the bright frontage is a very distinctive Arts and Crafts house with a Westmoreland slate roof and some rather nice details though much has been lost over the years.

Beyond this is the Royal Mail building and delivery yard, a typical Post Office building of one-and-a-half storeys in brick with tall doors and fanlights in big stone surrounds. The delivery yard is behind a tall brick wall. Next door, the Citizens Advice Bureau, probably retains its original shop front. towards the High Street junction

is an interesting group, the solicitors' also retaining original shop front details and faience stall riser, next door to the Alfresco Restaurant with its 1930's two storey façade all within a big wrought frame and some other original details. Finally, the adjoining clothing shop has a projecting shop front with original details and signs of the original blind boxes. From this part of Kingsway, the corner pinnacle of the main Co-op building on the High Street is a very important part of the street scene.

On the east side of Kingsway the first block behind the High Street frontages is Kingsway House, another interesting Arts and Crafts design with many original features. Then comes a decent row of brick two storey terraces with masonry frontage walls and hedges, In the middle, two of the properties are taken up with a car and cycle accessories shop which appears to have been operating from this location for a considerable time. The final property is a tandoori restaurant. This has a bland concrete forecourt without frontage walls, while a small unkempt corner plot on the corner with the lane at the back of the Station Road terrace is used as parking for the restaurant and could be improved.

## **APPRAISAL PLAN**

The above analysis has been used to generate Maps 1 and 2, indicating the essential structure of the Conservation Area and its relative quality. Included in Map 2 are features regarded as either negative or neutral compared to the character and appearance of the Area, as follows.

### *Negative feature*

#### Orwell Terrace

The collapsed property at the end of Orwell Terrace is a negative feature because of its prominent position, the loss of an interesting building, and the damaging effect on Dovercourt's finest set-piece composition.

#### Victoria Hotel

The building has been badly damaged by fire in 2005. Its future is uncertain.

### *Neutral features*

#### Empty sites, Victoria Street

The site on the corner of Victoria Road and the empty railway land opposite are neutral because they are relatively unkempt and have not been considered further.

#### Station Road

Both the Budget premises and the paired villas to the south are neutral features because of the lack of definition for their curtilages.

#### Tandoori restaurant, Kingsway

The small triangular site next to this restaurant is considered a neutral feature in an otherwise attractive and generally consistent street scene.

#### High Street backland site

This site, running southwards from the High Street to the back of the former Park Hotel on Orwell Terrace, is a neutral feature given its impact on neighbouring listed buildings and the consequent discontinuity in the High Street frontage.

## **SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS: BUILDINGS**

#### Orwell Terrace

The rebuilding in facsimile of the missing southern end of Orwell Terrace would be a fine enhancement of the Area and the Marine Parade as a whole.

#### High Street

Older properties in the section of High Street between Cliff Park Gardens and Station Road have suffered from a lack of investment relative to commercial properties further west. They are part of the continuous development of Dovercourt and their restoration would be of significant benefit to the appearance of the Area. Many however require new uses to be found to sustain this enhancement.

## **SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS: CURTILAGES**

In general, the redefinition of surviving forecourts with suitable boundary treatments would be an enhancement for the Area. Particular examples are the villas in Station Road.

## **SUGGESTED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS**

### Dovercourt Station

The original setting for the station was relatively grand, with Station Road forming a direct axial approach and Kingsway a wide curving access linking directly to the Marine Parade. The eventual development of these roads was not particularly grand or consistent. The station itself is a relatively modest structure like others in the District, while the most substantial structure, the Victoria Hotel, is turned towards the railway as the likely source of custom.

The result today is a location dominated by the substantial areas of tarmac associated with the road network, reinforced by the various empty sites and open curtilages noted above. Given the inherent quality of many of the surrounding buildings, there is the opportunity to reconsider this entire area, including the open areas at the entrance to East Street, and involving the redefinition of carriageways and footpaths and the implementation of a scheme for planting and hard surfacing.

### Pedestrian walkway, Bagshaw Road

The small walkway from the car park in Bagshaw Road to the High Street is a valued resource. Along with the backs of High Street properties, it is overdue for reconsideration in design terms.

### Cliff Park Gardens

The High Street/New Road frontage to these attractive formal gardens needs some attention, particularly the north east corner where it is most unkempt. The reestablishment of the original frontage treatment to High Street would be a very significant improvement.

The site to the north east of the Gardens and the simple grassed area leading to Beacon Hill is not particularly well-maintained and the Gardens suffer from a lack of boundary definition. Suitable long term proposals for this site would enhance the Gardens as a whole.

## **BOUNDARY REVIEW**

Given the parameters set out in the summary, it is not considered that there is any opportunity for the extension of the Area to the north, east or west. The adjacent developed areas do not have the consistency of interest of the links with the town's early development that would be required for an extension to be contemplated.

Extensions have been suggested to the south west of the current boundary, to include Hordle Street/Hordle Place/Empire Road and also Cliff Road.

### ***Hordle Street/Hordle Place/Empire Road***

Hordle Street runs from the back of the Co-op off the southern section of Kingsway. It is a street of relatively plain two storey terraced houses with varied details such as originally red brick facades in Flemish bond, slate roofs, decorative chimneys with blue and yellow brick details, projecting band. Some properties have pedimented stone heads to the door and ground floor windows with a stugged finish, others have brick arches giving a slight camber. A great many properties have painted or rendered front elevations.

Just beyond cross roads with Empire Road the western section of Hordle Street has the remains of an original shop front, but very few other original details apart from frontage walling. Mill Lane is little more than an alleyway connecting from the High Street down past the end of Hordle Street, serving the backs of houses in Empire Road and Cliff Road. The rear boundaries of Cliff Road properties have generally been removed to make way for run ins with various self-seeding sycamores and other substantial greenery.

Hordle Place has small groups of terraced houses, with some original sash windows remaining. It is dominated by the backs of bland post war blocks on the High Street. Empire Road on the south side widens out beyond the cross roads: there is a glazing firm and an unkempt, derelict yard with weeds and rubble, but the rest of the street is really all of one piece with red brick facades, arched front door heads, paired windows and a good deal of the original fenestration. Given this consistency, it is sadly impossible to tell what the original front boundary wall

treatment would have been. At the top end of the road a buttressed wall with greenery closes the view, framed by two pairs of cottages breaking forward on either side; only one of these houses has any original frontage details. At the top end to the east a rough lane leads to a parking area and to the west a short dogleg leads back to Mill Lane. This area is dominated by a four storey block of flats red brick with maroon aluminium window details: Mill Lane turns into a pleasantly paved and planted walkway which leads to the sea through a brick arch under the Marine Parade.

### ***Cliff Road***

Cliff Road mostly comprises substantial late-Victorian houses. Those on the west side at the south end are very attractive, with sash windows with margin lights set variously in openings with rubbed brick voussoirs at ground floor level and distinctive semi-circular stuccoed surrounds at first floor. Original dormers are set within gabled roofs now covered in concrete profiled tiles. Opposite, on the east side, is a group of four pairs of paired villas of three storeys with central stacks: three are of red brick with yellow brick details, although the most northerly is all of yellow brick and in a much more robust style altogether. Nos 10 and 12 have had the centre of each front almost entirely re-cast with modern bay windows and some rather poor semi-circular headed windows at the top level. Beyond a nicely proportioned three storey block of flats, probably from the 1950's, there is more late 19<sup>th</sup> century housing, the most prominent being a terrace reminiscent of Victoria Street, with gabled properties at either end flanking a central group of eight two-and-a-half storey buildings. Front elevations have a variety of finishes, the mansard roofs have suffered a great deal of alteration and few if any original windows have survived.

Development on the west side of Cliff Road is much less exciting. Behind a flat roofed three storey post war frontage on the High Street there is an empty plot, and then pairs of two-and-a-half storey terraces and a single house. Beyond another gap are two recent groups of flats in a poor debased classical style with little sense of proportion. One half of another pair of houses has been turned into community centre offices. It has its own parking bay, but with some attractive ironwork details reinstated. Then comes a pleasant symmetrical group of four properties with gables either side and balustraded first floor frontages with bay windows.

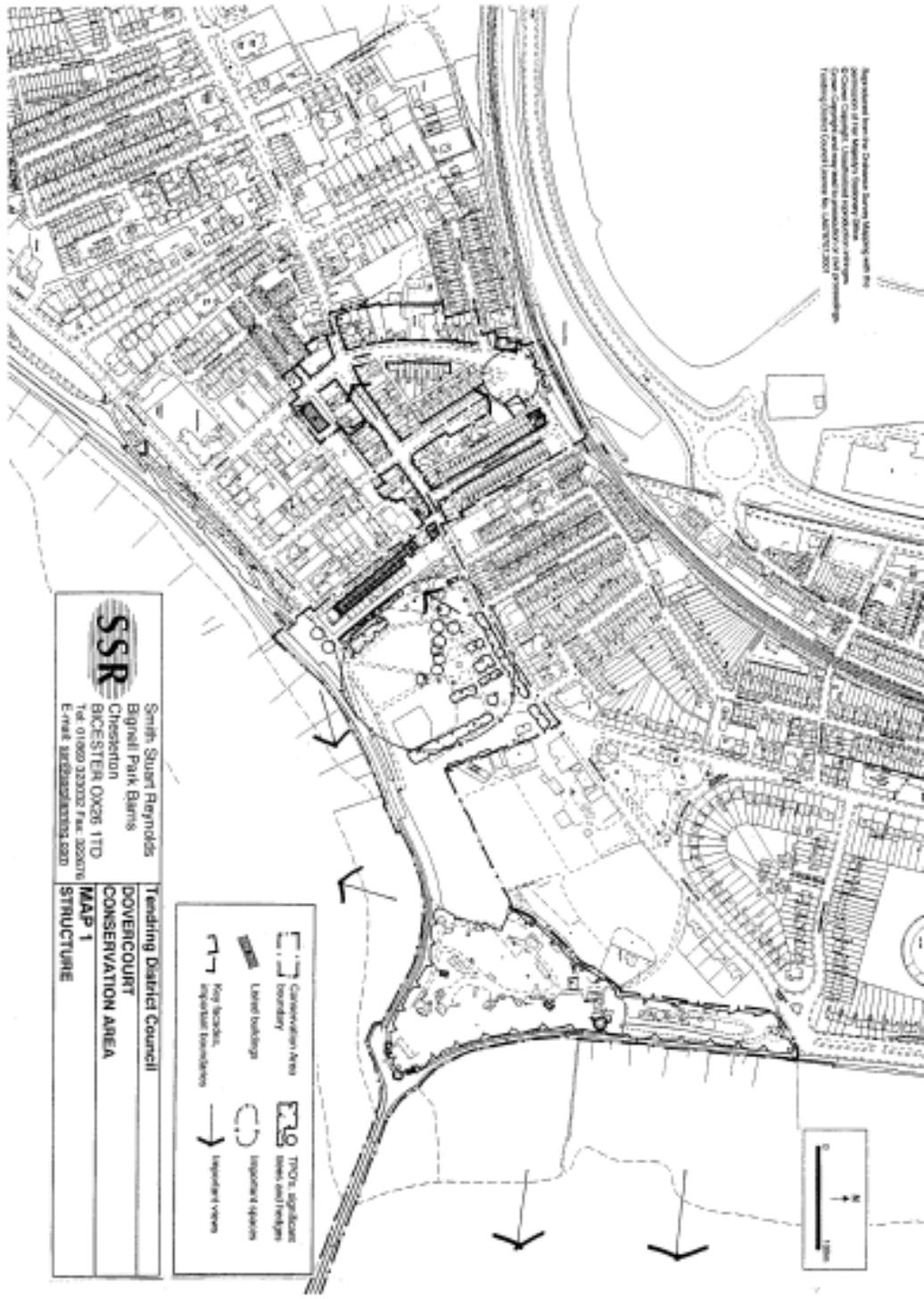
### ***Analysis***

Both the areas put forward for consideration are distinctive and contain significant numbers of properties with considerable character and charm. While Cliff Road appears to be part of the development of Dovercourt as a resort, Hordle Street/Empire Road have a smaller, intimate character associated with artisan housing. Empire Road gives the greatest impression of consistency, though there are good groups of well-maintained buildings in both areas.

### **Further Information**

For further information about the Conservation Area Reviews please contact Tendring District Council's Heritage and Conservation Manager on 01255 686170.

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 Conservation Services Department  
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Smith Stuart Reynolds  
 Bagnall Park Burnes  
 Chesterton  
 BACESTER OX26 1TD

Tel: 01865 262002 Fax: 262001  
 E-mail: [enquiries@ssr.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ssr.co.uk)

Tending District Council

DOVENCOURT  
 CONSERVATION AREA

MAP 1  
 STRUCTURE

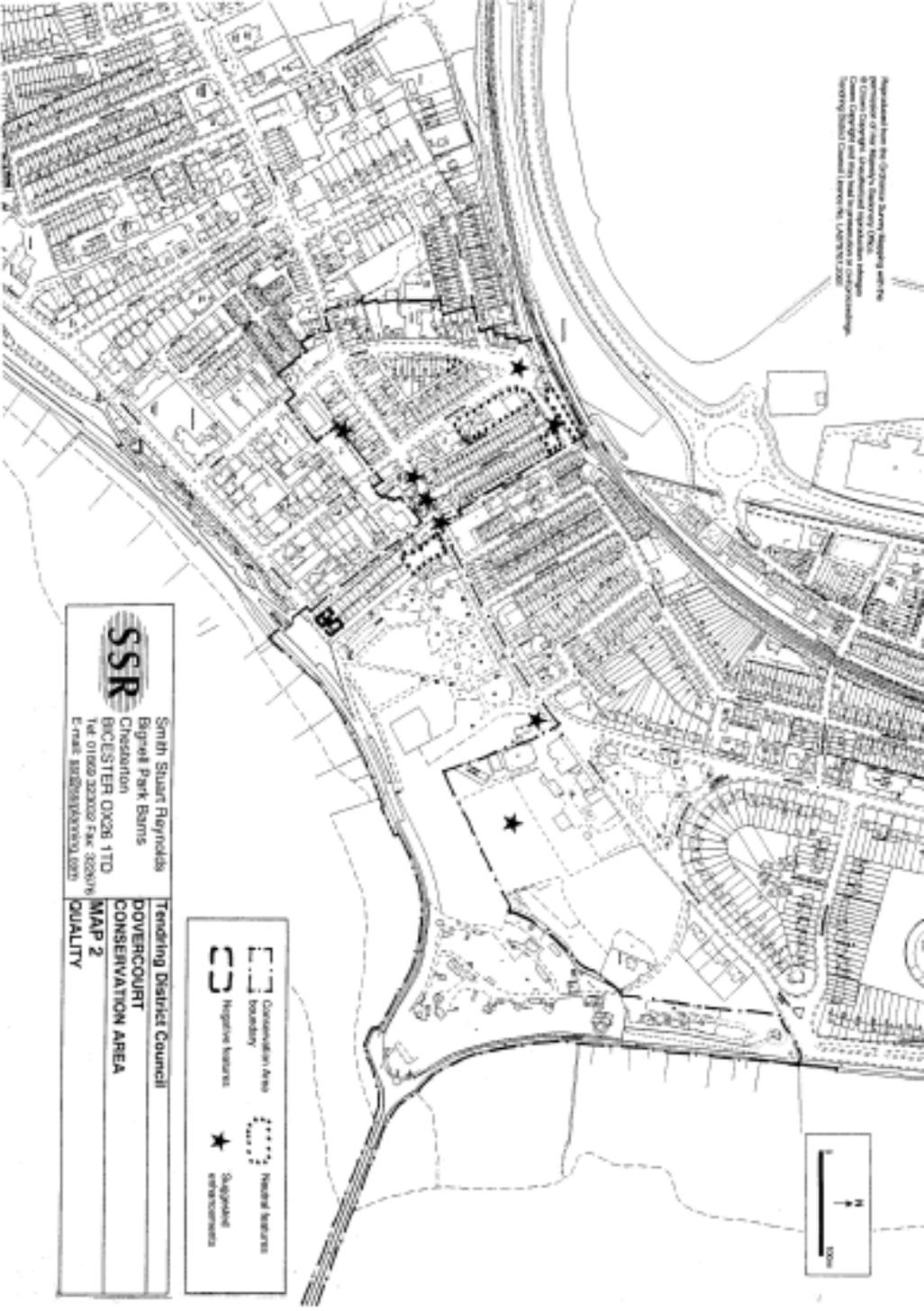
	Conservation Area Boundary		Listed buildings		TPOs, significant trees and features
	Key buildings important foundations		Important spaces		Important views





	Conservation Area boundary		Nearest bus stop
	Negative features		Designated environment

	Smith Stuart Reynolds Bigwell Park Barns Chesterton BICESTER OX28 1TD Tel: 01865 20200 Fax: 0203016 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@ssr.co.uk">info@ssr.co.uk</a>	Tendring District Council POWERCOURT CONSERVATION AREA MAP 2 QUALITY







1. Cliff Park Gardens from the end of Marine Parade. Prominent in this view are the beach huts, the mature planting of the Gardens and the visible parts of the fortifications on Beacon Hill. The paths are simply surfaced in good quality materials, which is very appropriate in the circumstances.



2. The street frontage of Orwell Terrace. This impressive structure gains significance from the strong contrast between the stucco facades and the distinctive cast iron details including the axe-head finials to the front railings. The raised pavement in front of the terrace still survives, though it has lost most of its original guard rails.



3. These properties on High Street at the foot of Orwell Terrace date from the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They are an important survival of the early development of Dovercourt, but are sadly in poor condition.



4. Further west along High Street, Victorian buildings are jumbled with those from the turn of the last century. They retain many interesting and distinctive features both in their shop fronts and in the upper floors. The corner turrets of the Co-op main building and its electrical store are important landmarks.



5. The north side of High Street. These late Victorian properties were originally houses, with the front gardens redeveloped as shops at a later date. Shop fronts on the left retain many original features, while the property on the right has been redeveloped in an unsympathetic manner, probably as the result of enemy action.



6. Shopping frontages on the High Street at the western end of the Conservation Area. The classical detailing of the nearer building is in strong contrast to the Arts and Crafts leanings of the property behind. This variety is part of the character of this Area as it is indicative of the continuous development of Dovercourt.



7. The west side of Victoria Street from the south. Even though there are minor detailed differences between the various facades, this is the more consistent of the terraces lining this interesting street. The east side retains a greater proportion of its front boundary walls and rendered piers.



8. These 19<sup>th</sup> century villas in Station Road have been shorn of their chimneys, while their setting has been altered out of all recognition by the removal of front boundary walls and the provision of parking areas. This adds to the relative air of bleakness surrounding the Station forecourt and the streets giving access to it.



9. Varied frontages line the west side of Kingsway north of High Street. Most prominent is the two storey façade of the Al Fresco Restaurant in the centre of the photograph.



10. In contrast to the general high level of maintenance of Cliff Park Gardens, the frontage of the Gardens to High Street suffers from a combination of poor design and low maintenance. The rather inconsequential eastern boundary of the Gardens at this point does not assist in the maintenance of its appearance.



11. The Victoria Hotel and the Station from the northeast. This view includes the unkempt ground next to the Station itself, and the vacant parking lot on the corner of Victoria Street and East Street, and is considered for comprehensive improvement. The Victoria Hotel has recently been badly damaged by fire.



12. The rear elevations of properties on the south side of High Street near Orwell Terrace. This part of the High Street is older and in greater disrepair than the section further to the west, and a lack of investment over many years is evident in this photograph.