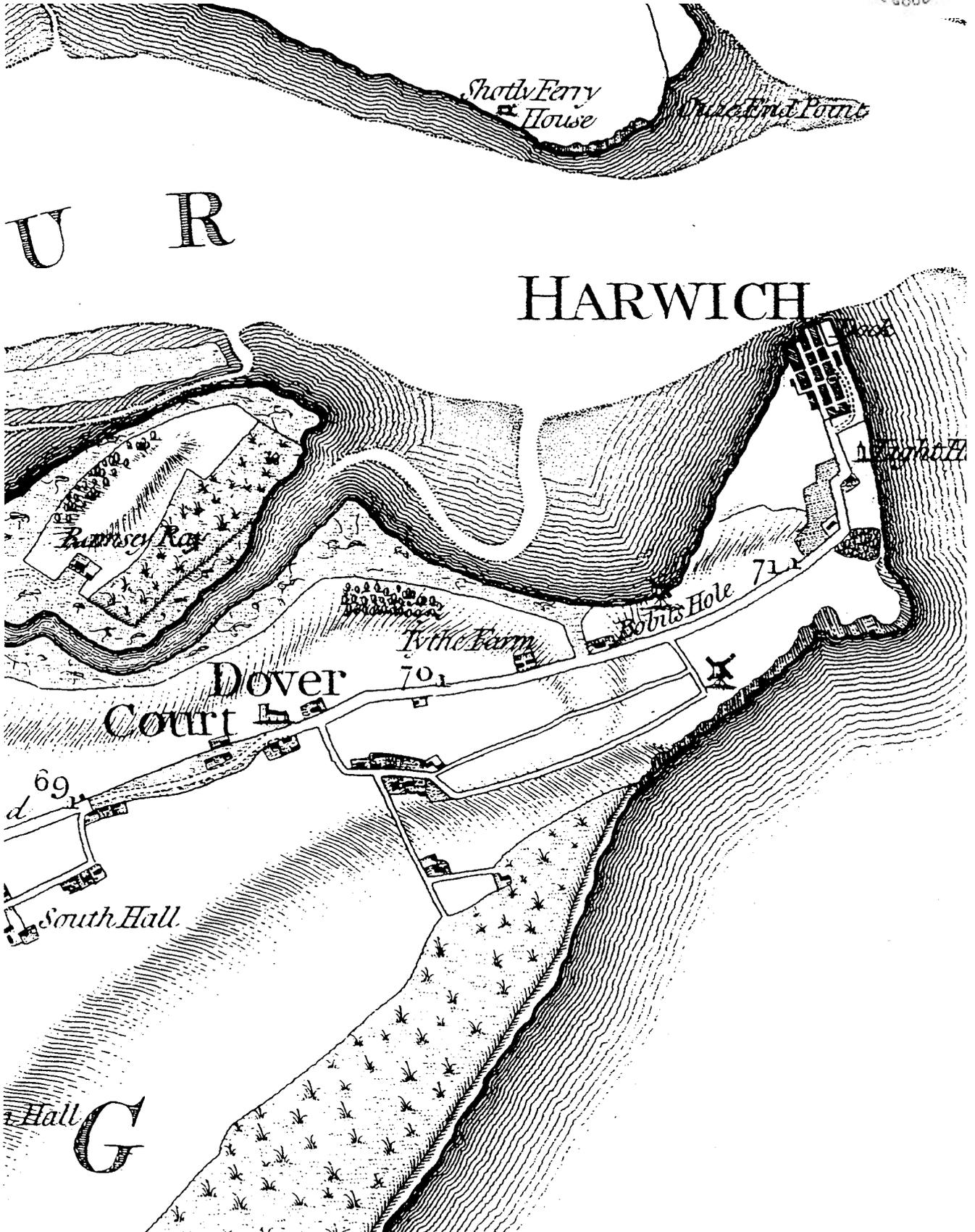




Harwich Conservation Area



Harwich 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

Harwich is a fine example of a medieval planned town, inextricably linked with its maritime connections past and present, with a wealth of important and historic buildings grouped round the original street pattern. A large number of alleyways survive to interconnect the regular medieval streets. Much of the appearance of the town however dates from the recasting of facades in the 18th century. The intimate scale of the streets is contrasted with the larger bulk of buildings historically associated with the quayside and with the extensive areas of open space on the south and east of the town centre.

Harwich Conservation Area

LOCATION

Harwich is located at the north eastern tip of the Tendring peninsular, on a spit of land jutting out into the extensive anchorage formed by the confluence of the River Stour and the River Orwell to the west of Landguard Point. The topography is generally level, the land only rising to Beacon Hill to the south east and towards the ridge on which Dovercourt has developed to the west.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Harwich Harbour, the Stour and Orwell estuaries as defined by Harwich and by Landguard Point, is the finest natural harbour between the Thames and the Humber. There is place-name evidence for a Roman army camp at Harwich, documentary references to the fine natural harbour in the ninth and tenth centuries, and a chapel was recorded in 1177. Because of its lack of fresh water, it is likely that the area was not settled until the town was founded as an economic rival to Ipswich by the Earls of Norfolk in the early thirteenth century. Laid out as a regular grid of streets with open space on the west, the town is mentioned in 1229 while its charter was granted in 1238. Confined by sea on three sides, Harwich has been densely developed with tight house plans, small yards, and particularly efficient staircases. Harwich became an important supply base for ships involved in continental campaigns over the next three hundred years, and ship were being built here by the 15th century.

Harwich was made a naval base and dockyard from 1657, though the Navy Yard closed in 1713. The Napoleonic Wars led to the construction of several fortifications around the town, including the Redoubt of 1808-10, with barrack blocks being constructed for army personnel. Shipbuilding continued in the former Navy Yard under private ownership until 1827, fishing and trade continued, and a regular cross-channel service to the Low Countries was developed.

Harwich obtained its railway line from Colchester in 1854. Despite initiatives such as the Great Eastern hotel by Thomas Allom in 1864 and the opening of the train ferry in 1924, with bridge equipment brought from Southampton and from Richborough, Harwich has always struggled to maintain its position, particularly after the development of larger quays and a new station and hotel at Parkeston in 1883 which have allowed continental traffic to bypass the town.

CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES

The Conservation Area was first designated in June 1969, with extensions in 1982, 1986 and 1995. It includes the whole of the headland, including the medieval town and the Green, though with the exception of Navyard Wharf, down to and not including the railway lines at the station, the backs of properties on the north side of Station Road, and the housing development surrounding the Redoubt.

REPLACEMENT LOCAL PLAN POLICY CONTEXT

Harwich is very much a working port. The Conservation Area covers the whole of the "Old Town" including the adjoining Gas House Creek to the west. Navyard Wharf occupying the North East extremity of the town has been excluded from the Area.

The whole of the Conservation Area falls within the Harwich Master Plan area and Urban Regeneration Area. The Master Plan's main proposals are referred to in the Replacement Local Plan. These proposals range from short to longer term schemes and include the redevelopment of sites along Harwich Quay, Navyard Wharf, area around the station and various other sites. Other land allocations shown in the Local Plan comprise car parking areas (existing and proposed), a new bus/rail interchange, an area for new yacht moorings, the extent of the small boat harbour development as Gas House Creek (which is linked to the Bathside Bay Container Port Scheme) and the sites of various scheduled ancient monuments. A town centre boundary is also delineated for Harwich in the Local Plan. Gas House Creek (and Bathside Bay) to the west and the foreshore to the south east of the town are both designated as sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Harwich is also identified as one of three Historic Towns by Essex County Council and within the defined historic centre any proposals for development will require an appropriate level of archaeological mitigation prior to development.

AREA APPRAISAL

General comments

Harwich is basically a planned town, with a regular street pattern of parallel streets running north west-south east, tied together with narrower lanes and paths at right angles. Many of these linking paths have happily been preserved or created in most-war redevelopments.

The prevailing scale of buildings is most attractive in the more intimate street scenes: conversely they are rather lost in larger areas with highway geometry (George Street) or on edges of larger areas (Harwich Green)

Small property plots have become fused together at the quay to produce the sites for the former Great Eastern Hotel, for Trinity House and their neighbours.

Building details

The town is still very much a late medieval area, though the overriding impression is the refrontings from the Georgian period.

The prevailing impression is of homely-scaled properties fronted in either colourwashed render or warm red brick. Sash windows and front doors in beautifully detailed doorcases are common. Medieval origins are apparent in houses with visible roofscapes and small dormers: sometimes the Georgian refrontings have retained these eaves details, though often they are hidden behind parapets with simple cornice details and occasionally blind panels.

Paving surfaces

Various kinds of unit paving are evident in the town: some have a long history, such as the beautiful glazed gutter details either placed to either side or arranged in a central strip in the roadway. Brick and concrete paving has also been used, with some granite kerbing.

Occasionally, streets themselves are surfaced with unit paving, as with the herringbone concrete paving in a short section of Market Street to the east of Church Street. Modern "tumbled" concrete pavers have been used to surface the car park on the corner of King's Head Street and St Austin's Lane.

Chapel Lane is a footpath on the west side of West Street with very knobby concrete block paving on either side, not necessarily meant as a deterrent, but as a decorative feature. This does not really succeed in the circumstances it catches too much litter and rubbish, and is not at all traditional as a paving surface.

Overall, while the use of unit paving is welcome, there is a sense that there should be more co-ordination in the choice of colours and textures.

Area 1 The Quay

The heart of Harwich's quayside is The Quay itself, a wide strand framed at either end by the massive derricks and gantries of the Navyard Wharf and by the Train Ferry Berth, and presided over by large buildings filling the blocks on the landward side. Most historic interest is at the north eastern end. At the very corner is the former Angel Inn, now ancillary accommodation for The Pier Hotel and really exhibiting the small-scale grain of the main part of the town. This island block contains a fascinating mixture of styles, from the elegant bargeboards and weatherboarding of the corner building to the plainer finishes of the angel itself with its big first floor bay window. Next door to the south west with its own paved forecourt is the Pier Hotel, Harbourside Restaurant and Halfpenny Bistro. Dating from 1860, it is currently finished in shades of blue, and makes an attractive picture with its outside seats and the cast iron railings to balconies at first floor.

The biggest building on The Quay is the former Great Eastern Hotel, now Quayside Court, with some offices on the ground floor. This is a massive and imposing listed structure of yellow brick and unpainted stucco: most of the striking decoration and the boldly-modelled surfaces have survived in good condition. To the west of the Great Eastern Hotel is the Harwich Haven Authority building, an angular and severely horizontal post-war building with a strong sense of purpose though limited visual appeal. Beyond Kings Head Street is the office of

Trinity House Lighthouse Service, a rather dull two-storey red brick building with most interest in its with green cast iron front railings and two contemporary lampposts. Between Church Street and West Street is "Mermaid" also occupied by Trinity House and again a rather dull brick building this time set behind a tall brick wall which is prominent in the street scene.

A new office building for Trinity House now occupies the site at the northern end of West Street. This was opened in 2005. The seaward side of Quay Street is a concrete panelled balustrade with wide views over the Stour and Orwell estuaries and across to Felixstowe. The Quay is focussed on the Halfpenny Pier, with its attractive collection of single-storey decorative structures. At the south western end of Quay Street is a raised viewing area overlooking the water with seats, flowerbeds and cast iron bollards. Round the corner into the north end of George Street, the scene is overtly utilitarian, with a new buoy depot building overlooking Gas House Quay.

Area 2 Town Centre

West Street

West Street is the widest of Harwich's central streets, and is particularly open at its quayward end which begins with a roundabout. There are substantial brick walls to the Trinity House yards on either side and these are set back behind wide tarmac pavements.

Most properties in West Street have frontages dating from the 18th centuries, with sash windows, elegant doorcases and fine brick details set in well-proportioned facades. Buildings are of two-and-a-half storeys, the top storey in the roof being sometimes visible with dormers, sometimes hidden behind generally plain parapets. Facing materials are usually clay-tiled roofs over wall of red brick, painted brick or render: paint colours are a range from white through yellows, biscuits and beiges to pink. Unusual in this context are nos 35 and 36, a mid-Victorian pair with unusual canted window heads and a striking parapet detail: the brickwork has unfortunately been overpointed.

An important feature of the central part of West Street is the way that the sinuous west side curves back, producing a little widened area in the middle of the street. Chapel Lane on the west side of West Street leads through to part of St Nicholas Court, a post-war redevelopment with quite nicely landscaped grounds and car parking, and typical of the thoughtful approach to much modern intervention in the Area. This development has a well-modelled frontage to George Street though the "grain" of its surroundings is much coarser.

South of Chapel Lane the character of West Street alters as the road bends slowly round towards the west. The street is wider, there is a greater variety of buildings including the red brick late Victorian Haywain Hotel, one or two post-war incursions and a rather unfortunately bland fascia of Ferry Motors of Harwich Limited. By the side of the Haywain Hotel is Golden Lion Lane which is entirely paved in glazed pavers with their cloudy light blue finish. Views of the High Lighthouse open out while the west side of West Street continues round the corner with a range of buildings, some with half-timbered rendered fronts with sash windows with margin lights, Enclosure and interest are maintained by a group of taller Victorian buildings rising from the back of the pavement. On the east side is Fountain Court, a Victorian red brick building with yellow brick details. Apart from its modern double-glazing, this is an attractive group helping to form the setting of the High Lighthouse in its triangular plaza, pleasantly planted up with seats.

Turning briefly into George Street, this does not add up as a street as do its neighbours: only at the southern end is there development on the western side to produce a sense of enclosure. These properties, nos 1 to 7, are a three storey brick Victorian terrace, faced by a prominent Salvation Army Citadel with castellated details on the southern corner of the street. Further north there are varied groups of disparate buildings on the east side with gaps leading through to rear areas. On the opposite side of George Street is the substantial yellow brick wall of the former railway yard, with three garages in poor condition.

At the junction of West Street and Main Road, Wellington Street is a short thoroughfare which connects across the southern end of Church Street and leads on to the Esplanade. The atmosphere of a little square is created by a small vacant corner plot turned into a sitting area with cherry trees, aided and abetted by the small front garden of Lilacs which is otherwise undistinguished and a neutral feature in the Area. Enclosure is guaranteed by the prominent front of Wellington House, buildings on the back edge of footpath turning into Church Street and the back of Government House, an important late Georgian building fronting the Esplanade.

Church Street

The southern section of Church Street is curved which puts the spire of St. Nicholas Church into the middle of the scene. On the inside curve approaching the Church is an attractive group of properties, the most prominent of which is the jettied first floor of Forresters, the former Forresters Arms and said to date from circa 1450. This building is now being used as the Headquarters of the Harwich Society. Beyond this narrow section Church Street continues to be slightly sinuous but is much wider, the Church having an open frontage to the street with attractive railed areas on either side.

Opposite the church is a small corner plot, also railed with an old stone plinth wall. Prominent in this 'square' in front of the church are no 6, in pistachio render with small-pane sash windows including painted dummies over the front door, and no 7, a Trinity House property of three storeys, and rendered with an elegant quadrant corner to Church Lane and Church Street. Finally in association with the church is The Three Cups, a former hotel which now presents a two storey rendered front with a fine door-case and small-pane sash windows. Like so many Harwich buildings, an 18th century facade hides more ancient fabric: this inn is frequently mentioned in Harwich records. Opposite, the Chinese takeaway is of two-and-a-half storeys, with a reworked old shopfront, small-pane sashes to the first floor and a decorative eaves detail.

Moving north, the most notable buildings commence with the Guild Hall (Grade I Listed), with its projecting bays in brick framing rubbed-brick blind aedicules surmounting a distinctive timber door-case with gothic details. The main chamber at first floor level and its approach stair are an unforgettable sequence. Opposite is a two-and-a-half storey facade in deep blue, an example of unusual colour sparingly used as punctuation in the street scene. Nearby, and notable for all the wrong reasons, is nos 58-61 on either side of Peri's Mini-Market and Off Licence: this is an extremely unsympathetic three storey post-war development of shops and flats. The back of these flats and their bland rear courtyard have a similarly unhappy effect on the top end of Kings Head Street approaching the side and rear of the church. Next door on Church Street is the prominent gable of no 57, a 16th century timber-framed house with an early shopfront. Its gable is matched by what is now the Stingray Public House.

On the east side of Church Street, north of the Market Street junction, is Nos. 46 to 48A consecutive, a bland post-war two storey block, with rather poorly surfaced parking areas to either side, and a poor neighbour in this context. Opposite is Mayflower House, a Council development with a pronounced Dutch flavour to the roofscape: materials are yellow brick and weatherboarding with a rendered gable over the vehicular entry to the rear. Again, this development has preserved a pedestrian route from West Street to maintain the permeability and interest of the Area.

Apart from the fish shop with its quietly-detailed shopfront, the rest of Church Street appears to be residential, mostly of two storeys and in very attractive Georgian frontages, with some characterful details such as excellent door-cases, small-pane sash windows, recessed panelling under the windows, and rubbed-brick cornice details. The north end of Church Street emerges between the Trinity House buildings and its character is very different. Little Church Street is a tiny dog-leg round the back of the Trinity House depot building and is really no more than a private courtyard. It serves a fascinating pair of weatherboarded houses and the backs of houses on Church Street. The dog-leg part of the access is in a rather poor state of repair with a pile of old building materials.

Kings Head Street

Turning into Kings Head Street from The Quay, the scale of the old centre of Harwich is quickly re-established. The northern part of this significant medieval street is now surfaced in concrete pavers, giving a small square grid pattern, with glazed bricks forming the gutters. Beyond the Trinity House and the Harbour Master's houses, the street is quite narrow with no. 21, the home of Captain Christopher Jones, Master of the Mayflower, on the right hand side leading to a good terrace with varied facing materials. There is one fine Georgian frontage, of a red brick facade of two storeys with a good door-case: the rest are mostly rendered, though there is a pair of weatherboarded cottages, of three storeys with small-sash windows. Beyond The Alma, celebrating the historic role of the Army in this maritime setting, is No. 26, a 16th century house listed Grade II* with timber clerestory glazing details in a gable: this contrasts with a flint wall painted black and very attractively decorated with hanging baskets. On the other side there is The Old Swan House, of 15th century date, also listed Grade II* with projecting bays on either side and carved bressummer beams identifying a former jettied first floor in the centre. No 13, on the corner with Hopkins Lane, dates from the 17th century and is extremely prominent with its double-jettied façade. Opposite is a former chapel building with tall blank pointed arched windows, now occupied by Harwich Chandlers Limited. Beyond this is a parking area with paving setts, bollards and three new whitebeams.

The small-scale street paving finishes at this point with a line of glazed bricks. The central section of Kings Head Street has been entirely redeveloped, on the west side with three storied housing in yellow grey brick with some dark stained timber panelling details, and on the east in red brick with yellow render details and projecting bays. Both sets of buildings are set back from the building line behind cobbled strips, compromising the sense of enclosure. The narrow part of Kings Head Street resumes at the junction with Market Street, and becomes more of a lane leading towards the back of the church. No 41, Corner House, is a modern building is jettied and fills the view from the north very well. Market Street between Church Road and Kings Head Road contains clues to its former commercial character, in particular Old Harbour Antiques, with a lovely faience shop front containing decorative pictorial tilework, the name "Smith" in tessellated paving in the shop entrance and attractive timber-framing to the window. The properties on the Kings Head Street corner have been altered unsympathetically, and the whole site with its yard requires visual enhancement.

The southern section of Kings Head Street runs south towards the church attractively surfaced in small scale pavers with a central gutter of glazed brick. There is a strong sense of enclosure from period properties in brick or render lining the street. Towards the church, rear boundaries to properties on Church Street need some attention in general. For example, the rear boundary wall of The Three Cups is entirely rendered and not very attractive, while the brickwork on the elevation facing the Church is rather patchy in this prominent location. The public right of way crossing the churchyard to the east end of the church is attractive with diamond pattern engineering bricks. The cast-iron bollards and gate piers with ball finials at either end are a notable feature though the piers facing Kings Head Street lack a strong visual and physical connection with their immediate surroundings.

The Vicarage at the northern corner of the churchyard is Victorian gothic in style, of red brick with blue and yellow brick details. Its north elevation has seen some alteration. It has a rather interesting boundary wall with decorative cornice details and brick piers, though its surroundings are rather spoilt by a poor brick garage.

North of the Vicarage, Kings Quay Street is paved in brick pavers, once again with the glazed brick gutter details, and Blanc-de-Bierges footway paving. There are a surprising number of garages in a very prominent position opposite the Electric Cinema. The next section of Kings Quay Street is more attractive, with a former bank building, now Harwich Antiques, in French Renaissance gothic style, facing the former School.

Castlegate Street is lined on one side by good rows of terraced houses, one half of them brick and the other half rendered, one of which is in very poor condition. The street is surfaced with concrete pavers with a central gutter of glazed brick. Opposite the houses is the boundary to the former Great Eastern Hotel, provided by a 1.5 metre red brick wall with incidental trees. The southern end of East Gate Street is made very narrow by the angled placing of No. 7 and the pinch-point is improved by the attractiveness of the buildings on the other side, particularly No. 2, a five bay red brick house of three storeys with sash windows and a good door-case. Looking northwards along East Gate Street is the back of The Alma Inn, beyond which is a rather bland block with a gambrel roof and a gable in modern common bricks leading back to the Port Authority building on Quay Street.

Area 3 Eastward

Where the main road curves from Kings Quay Street to Wellington Road in front of Angel Gate Cottages, is a rather strange and rather forlorn area. The New Bell Inn has been heavily altered at the front, with a car park tucked against the side wall of the Cottages. To the west is a strange little sitting-out area with bollards and some flat-roofed lock-up garages. The landward side of Angel Gate Cottages has been decorated with a large and prominent mural. The Cottages themselves are Victorian barrack properties, of two storeys in red brick with yellow brick details and slate hipped roofs. They are surrounded by a very high wall except to the north where the Cottages open up around three sides of an attractive courtyard. Additional enclosure is provided by the massive tower of the Harwich Port Authority set in landscaped grounds which complements the treatment of the courtyard. Immediately adjoining the cottages to the south is a yard with a sectional corrugated asbestos building in a slightly unkempt car parking area. Landscaping is more considered in front of the Old Lifeboat House Museum.

Southwards from Angel Gate Cottages, there is a boat compound fronted by the former Infants' School of 1875, now the Church Hall. This is not in good condition.

Area 4 Harwich Green

The open spaces south of Angel Gate Cottages flow into Harwich Green, a major open space overlooked by some historic properties. At the north end, however, is Esplanade Court, a three storey post-war block of flats,

fronting a barren car park and excessively utilitarian though of a scale to complement the splendid group of former sea captain's group of Georgian properties with big bow fronted windows. The larger of these fine properties are Esplanade House, with green paintwork, and High House, of yellow brick above a stuccoed ground floor with excellent Regency ironwork.

These houses are complemented by Government House with its formal forecourt. The remaining houses overlooking the Green from the town centre are average interwar houses, though their front boundary walls are evidence of the former garrison quarters in this location.

Area 5 Cox's Pond

Harwich Green connects to Main Road south of the High Lighthouse, where there is an area of grass with a large buoy as sculpture, paving and strips of granite setts and bollards. The green opens up with views across to Felixstowe docks, but the west side of the Green ends in a rather rough area with some parking, and a row of inter-war houses again set behind an old buttressed brick wall. At the northern apex of this part of this part of the Area is some rather ramshackle paving fronting Anglia House (M.P.H. Limited), a dull two-storey factory building with its own parking set in rather shoddy grounds with one or two posts and some broken chains. The area also includes Bernard Uniforms Ltd's building which fronts Harbour Crescent with rather dull chain-link fencing. The chain-link fencing continues around the west side of this factory area where it adjoins Cox's Pond, a surprising and charming element in the street scene.

Area 6 Station

Off Main Road to the west is the station forecourt, which consists of a triangular area of grass with a listed cast-iron drinking fountain in the middle. The station building itself is a single storey building, of yellow brick, with a slate-roof painted with bitumen. The northern end is to let but the rest is still a functioning station but all on a very small scale. The northern edge of the forecourt is rather unkempt, with some self-seeded sycamores and views to more unkempt rear curtilage areas, comprising the backs of 1 to 7 George Street. The forecourt also serves S.T.R. Recovery and Service Centre in a small brick shed, and the bus station. Both are simple utilitarian buildings with no historic interest. The station forecourt is an important open space and a gateway to the Area, and these elements do not improve its visual quality.

The former goods yard and the Old Goods Shed are significant areas for the future character and appearance of this part of the Area. The Old Goods Shed itself is a prominent building and its retention will assist in the assimilation of any redevelopment proposals into their context.

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. Map 1 indicates the sheer wealth of historic buildings and the importance of street frontages of all kinds and periods. Only the major viewpoints can be indicated: almost every street contains its own sequence of views of interest and importance.

Included in Map 2 are features regarded as either negative or neutral compared to the character and appearance of the Area. While the initial impression of Harwich is of domestically scaled buildings lining relatively narrow streets, there are important and long-standing contrasts set up by the larger buildings and depot areas associated with the quayside, and by Harwich Green and the Esplanade which are also historic features.

It is remarkable that relatively few false notes exist in the Area. This is because of the generally neighbourly quality of post war developments which have preserved street frontage lines and the interconnecting footways. Even those modern developments set back from the original building line, for example either side of the central section of King's Head Street, are otherwise so appropriately scaled and detailed compared with so much post-war development that they have been regarded as positive elements in the Area.

Negative factors

The only real disappointments are therefore the post war infills at 46-48 Church Street and associated with Peri's Mini-Market opposite the Guild Hall. These developments make no concessions to their historic context.

Neutral factors

Lock-up garages

While the need for garaging is acknowledged, there are two areas of lock-up garages which are unduly

prominent and a visual problem in the street scene. The first is opposite the Electric Cinema, while the other is on Kings Quay Street. The latter location is admittedly dwarfed by the substantial boundary of the Navyard Wharf, but is part of the general breakdown in the built fabric of the town at this point.

Further Information

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

however from the important open space, and earlier boundary walls have been retained, so that they cannot properly be described as entirely negative.

MPH and Bernards Uniforms, New Road

This area of industry, replacing Army Ordnance buildings destroyed in the last war, are suitable for their purpose but do not relate positively to their surroundings. The north and east sides of the MPH building are poorly maintained which has a detrimental effect on the character of Harwich Green.

Station Forecourt

The vehicle service centre and the bus depot are again useful elements of Harwich's economy, but their layout and appearance are not in character with the scale of the station forecourt as a whole.

SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS: BUILDINGS

Various initiatives have been taken over the years to improve and support investment in the built fabric of the town. Problem buildings have been identified and a considerable amount of excellent work has been carried out. In these circumstances it is not considered appropriate here to make a further list of properties which might benefit from enhancement. Only one location noted on Map 2 concerns buildings, and this is the prominent site on the corner of Market Street and Kings Head Street, which has been poorly maintained with some unsuitable alterations, while its yard on Kings Head Street is unkempt and derelict.

SUGGESTED ENHANCEMENTS: CURTILAGES

West Street

A boat yard at the north end of the east side of West Street is rather poorly maintained at this significant junction between the quayside yards and the resumption of historic frontages. Just south of Custom House Lane is the car park to the Samuel Pepys Inn which is surfaced in unattractive tarmac. It has a poorly maintained planting box on the street frontage and a considerable amount of weedy vegetation around the edges.

George Street

The rear gardens of 1 to 7 George Street are in poor condition and are unfortunately visible from the station forecourt. The rather unkempt northern boundary of the forecourt itself requires further consideration in terms of design and maintenance.

Angel Gate

The yard to the south of the Cottages is in a poor state which is unfortunate given the prominence of the site and its proximity to the Lifeboat Museum.

SUGGESTED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Station forecourt and surroundings

Tree planting, and improved paving and bus waiting facilities are intended to provide a sense of enclosure, improve the setting of the listed fountain and create an attractive gateway to the town.

George Street

Additional tree planting is proposed at the corner with the northern end of the bypass.

Outpart Eastward, Wellington Road

The small area of open space opposite the mural has insufficient visual interest for its prominent location. It appears to be the site of demolished buildings and is not sufficiently integrated with the closely-textured townscape to the west. The Harwich Master Plan proposes new development on this site.

Surface treatments

In general terms, and as indicated above, there is a case for the better co-ordination of the colours, types and textures of hard surfaces used in the Area. This issue is being addressed in the forthcoming Harwich Master Plan Design Guide for the Public Realm.

Harwich Master Plan

The Master Plan contains proposals to enhance the Conservation Area in various locations principally at The Quay, the Esplanade and The Green as well as various redevelopment sites.

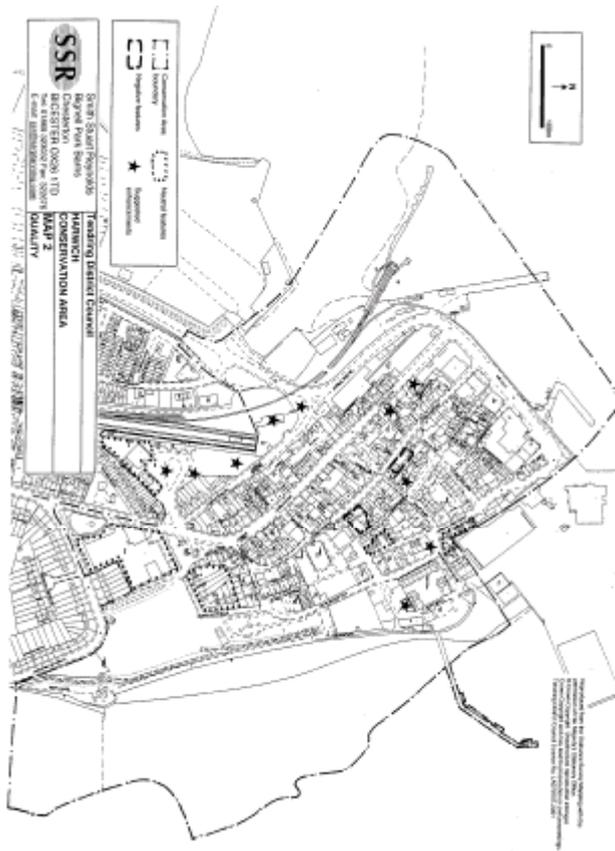
BOUNDARY REVIEW

The current Area boundary is defined by the historic centre of Harwich and its associated port facilities and Harwich Green which are an essential part of its

history and development. It is not considered that there is any reasonable scope for the exclusion of any designated areas.

The Area can only be expanded to the south. This area was developed from the mid-Victorian period onwards on either side of the New Road that formed a more direct link between Harwich and Dovercourt. These areas do not share in the medieval origins and maritime activity which characterise Harwich Conservation Area and thus cannot be considered for designation. The Harwich Redoubt is of course an important link with these essential features of the history of the town, but it is fully protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, it has little townscape impact given its intended low profile, and it is isolated and furthermore surrounded by a housing estate of no intrinsic merit. No recommendation for the expansion of the Area can therefore be made.







1. The Quay looking south westwards towards the listed Train Ferry Terminal. Expansive vistas up the estuaries of the Stour and the Orwell are matched by the robust materials chosen for the public vantage points.



2. The Pier Hotel on The Quay is typical of the confident Victorian architecture in this part of the Area. This building and its ancillary accommodation are in good condition, with an attractive seating area outside.



3. Typical Harwich properties in West Street, showing how medieval buildings were recast in the Georgian period with sash windows and fine front door treatments set in brick facades.



4. An angled property in Eastgate Street produces a relief from the street's pinch point and adds to the attractiveness of the street scene. The patched tarmac of the carriageway and the modern windows of the house on the right are relative disappointments.



5. A glimpse of the rears of properties from Little Church Street indicate the variety and interest of this essentially medieval town.



6. Medieval buildings, a variety of frontage treatments within a limited palette, and the special care taken with paving materials combine with the military history of Harwich to produce an unforgettable scene in King's Head's Street.



7. Once the heart of commercial activity in the town, Market Street is relatively deserted today. Care with paving materials has retained the intrinsic character of this part of the Area.



8. The view of King's Head Street as it curves towards St Nicholas' Church. Here the typical glazed bricks of the District have been used as a central gutter. The yard on the right shows that gaps in the frontage need not be problems in townscape terms.



9. The High Lighthouse is associated with a small, attractively-laid-out triangle at the corner of West Street and King's Quay Road. These enhancements may have been carried out some time ago and might be considered for revision with suitable modern materials from the wider range available to Harwich.



10. The fine captains' houses at the southern end of King's Quay Street. These distinctive properties, along with Government House and the nearby church, have the scale to relate to the wide public spaces to the east.



11. The George Street elevation of St Nicholas Court shows how development of a scale suitable for the more intimate streets of Harwich is less appropriate for the wider approaches. The brick built buoy depot has since been demolished and replaced by a new office building.



12. The entrance to the churchyard from King's Head Street runs between rear boundary walls which might be improved in visual terms. There is also a slight mismatch between the various improvements already carried out, which could be remedied with a comprehensive scheme.



13. Harwich Green looking north westward from near the Low Lighthouse. The taller scale of development associated with Government House and the captains' houses is evident. The Green itself has a rough and ready character which is part of its appeal.



14. A boat yard south of the Lifeboat Museum is an important indication of the maritime importance of Harwich, though its boundaries might with advantage be improved.



15. The junction of West Street and St Helen's Green: this view shows the interesting survival of front boundary walls, but also the relatively unsympathetic character of the houses developed behind them. That these houses face the Green is very much in their favour in townscape terms.



16. Another view of the junction between West Street and Harwich Green. This and the north elevation of the factories are rather unkempt and greater attention could be given to surfaces and design treatment generally. The houses in the background are those surrounding the Redoubt.



17. 46-48 Church Street are post-war houses of a depressingly conventional nature which make no concession to their historic setting. The small yards on either side have not been considered positively and the development is a negative feature in the Area.



18. Both the built development and the rear yard associated with Peri's Mini Market are extremely intrusive in the visual appearance of both Church Street and King's Head Street. These structures have also been identified as a negative feature in the Area.



19. Well-considered paving details and appropriate planting produce a slight improvement to the appearance of the lock-up garages in their prominent location opposite the Electric Palace. Otherwise, these structures do not enhance this part of the Area.



20. The vehicle repair business and the bus station, together with their yards and surroundings, could be reorganised and visually improved. They are at present a neutral feature given the condition of the station forecourt as it exists today.