

Colchester

Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Study Area 1:

High Street (West) and The Dutch Quarter



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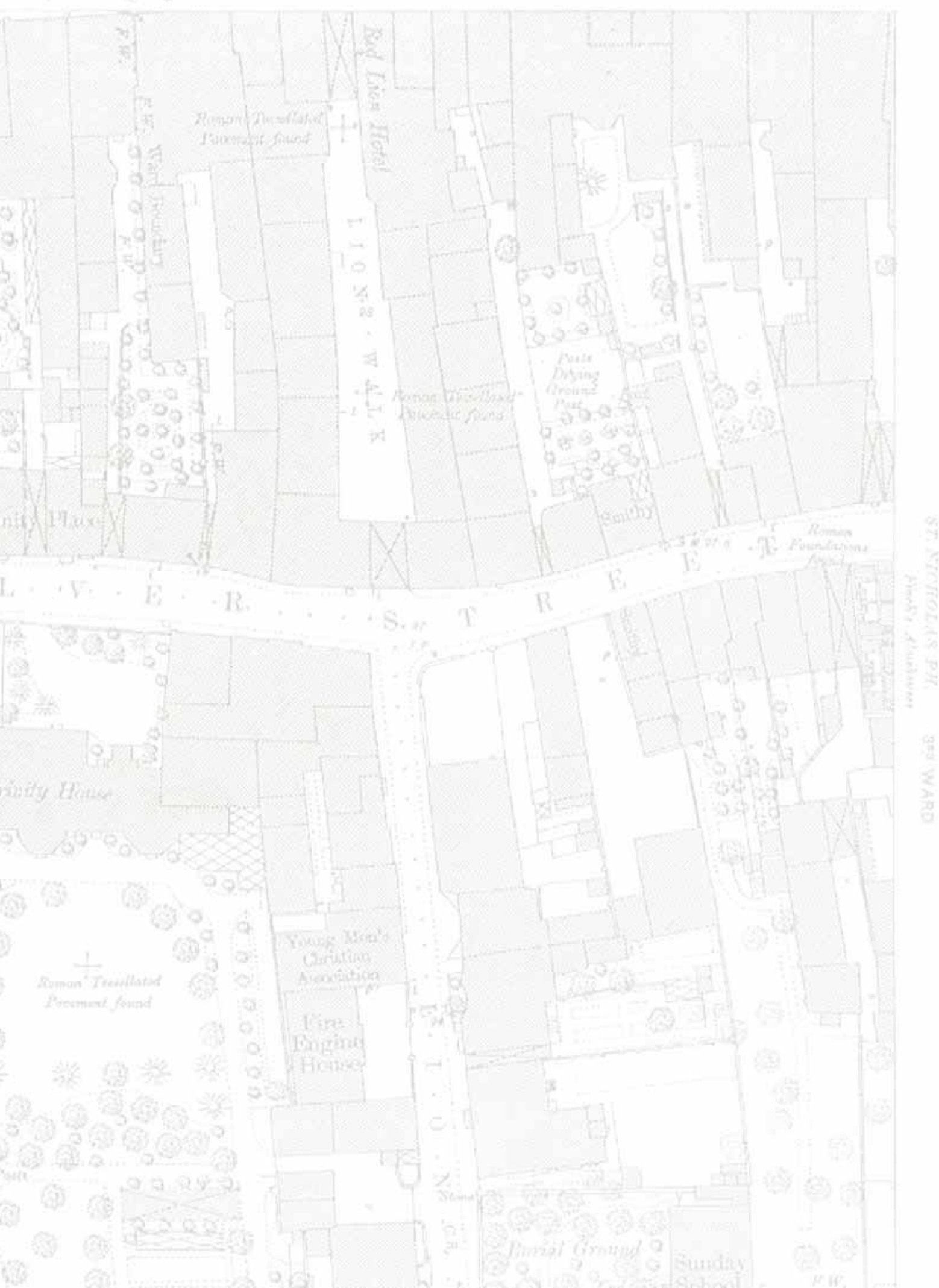
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Colchester Town Centre Conservation Area

1.0 Introduction

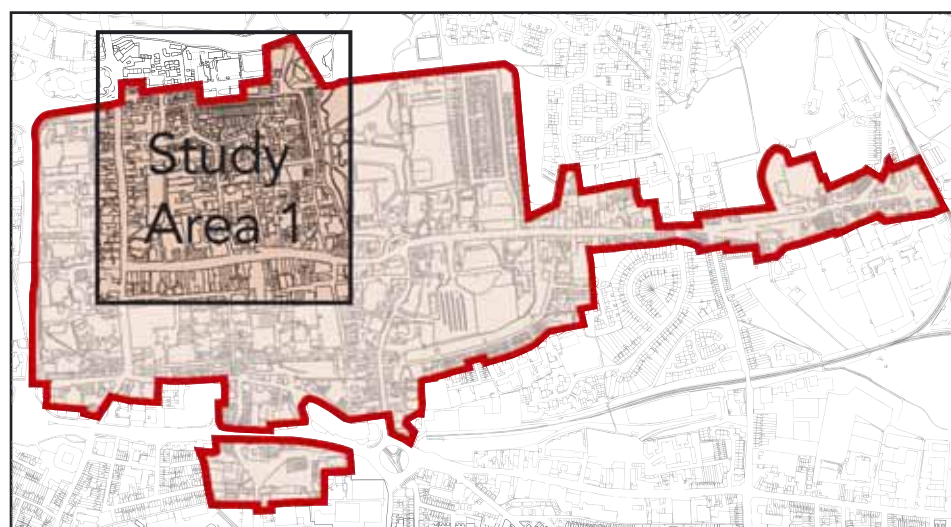


Figure 1: Colchester Town Centre Conservation Area

- 1.1 The Colchester Conservation Area No.1 was first designated in 1968, with amendments in 1978 and 1980. It covers the whole of the ancient walled town and includes parts the historic extra-mural settlements immediately outside the walls, including East Hill, Abbey Gate, St John's Green and St Botolph's.
- 1.2 *'Colchester, though not the county town, is without doubt the foremost town of Essex, and it is, what is more, a town richer than most in the country in traditions and survivals of a distant past.'* (Pevsner)
- 1.3 The Conservation Area includes the whole of the Roman town. Substantial lengths of the 1st century town walls survive, including the very impressive remains of the great west gate, known as the Balcerne Gate. The early date of these walls makes them unique in Roman Britain. However, apart from the town walls, the Roman remains are almost wholly below ground level and the character of the historic town now largely derives from the substantial number of surviving buildings of mediaeval, post-mediaeval, Georgian and Victorian date.
- 1.4 A distinctive feature of Colchester, particularly evident from the north, is its hilltop setting and close relationship with the valley of the River Colne. The High Street runs east west along the spine, with a grid of streets sloping down the hill to north and south. The Conservation Area is bounded on the south and west sides by modern dual carriageway roads, which separate St John's Green from the rest of the Area. St Peter's Street, flanked by modern development, runs along the northwest side, but on the northeast the Lower Park extends the open spaces of Castle Park well beyond the town walls. On the east side, the Conservation Area extends down East Hill and over the River Colne to East Street.
- 1.5 The social and economic development of the town centre can be readily traced through its historic buildings and structures. Roman town walls, Norman Castle, mediaeval churches, abbey and priory, mediaeval inns, the 'Dutch Quarter', Georgian town houses, and Victorian and Edwardian commercial and civic buildings, reflect the main periods of Colchester's prosperity over nearly two millennia from its first establishment as a Roman *colonia*. The Royal Commission lists 264 houses as wholly or partly built before 1714. There are a large number of good quality Georgian houses and a variety of Victorian buildings ranging from artisan terrace houses to the flamboyant Town Hall and massive 'Jumbo' water tower.

- 1.6 Like many towns, Colchester suffered from poor quality town centre redevelopment in the post-war years, but in recent times the town has demonstrated its ability both to protect its heritage and retain its vitality and significance as a retail centre, by the restoration of historic buildings and the sympathetic incorporation of a number of major developments in the historic core.

The Conservation Area Appraisal

- 1.7 There are continuing pressures for change and development, which will need to be addressed. Colchester is a town of national significance and it is vital to ensure that its character and appearance are protected and that any new development accords with the principles of preservation and enhancement inherent in its designation as a Conservation Area.
- 1.8 Following guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG15 1994), the Borough Council has decided to prepare a Conservation Area Appraisal. The purpose of the Appraisal is to describe the historical development and townscape of the area and to assess its special character and significance. It should also draw out any issues that might affect the protection and conservation of the Area.
- 1.9 The Conservation Area covers a large area of diverse character. In order to assess its character and significance in greater detail, the Area is divided into six study areas based on the historic quarters and thoroughfares of the town. The study areas are covered in five separate volumes:
- Vol.1** High Street (West) and The Dutch Quarter
 - Vol.2** North Hill, Head Street and Balcerne Gardens
 - Vol.3** Culver Street, Trinity Street, Scheregate and St John's Green
 - Vol.4** High Street (East) and The Castle. East Hill and East Street.
 - Vol.5** Queen Street, St Botolph's and Vineyard Street Area.
- 1.10 Each volume contains a brief history of the town followed by a more detailed description of the historical development of the study area. This is followed by a street-by-street analysis of the townscape character of the area. A key part of the Appraisal is the statement of significance of the area and its surviving features, above and below ground. Buildings and spaces are classified according to their contribution to the character of the area and the Appraisal concludes with a statement of issues and recommendations for the future of the area.
- 1.11 An appendix sets out the current statutory protection and planning policy for the Conservation Area and includes select references.
- 1.12 Maps are included showing those buildings and spaces that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and those that detract from the area. Additionally, maps are included showing the area as it was in the 1870s at the time of the first large-scale edition of the Ordnance Survey.

2.0 Colchester: Historical Development

- 2.1 The origins of the town of Colchester lie in the establishment of a legionary fortress by Claudius after his successful invasion of Britain in AD 42. The site occupied a good defensible position on a spur of land with an east-west ridge, sloping steeply to the River Colne on the north with more gentle slopes to the south and east. On the east side was a large annexe, about a third of the size of the fort, though its purpose is not clear. The fortress and annexe were of identical construction with earthen ramparts and a V-shaped ditch.
- 2.2 Late in the fifth decade the legion was moved to the west of Britain and a *colonia* or chartered town was established in the now redundant fortress. Some of the military buildings were reused, but the legionary defences were filled in and a new street grid laid out, dividing the town into rectangular blocks of property or *insulae*. The annexe was given over to public buildings, including the temple of Claudius and probably a theatre.
- 2.3 The town was almost completely destroyed in the Boudiccan Revolt but rebuilt soon afterwards. Between about AD 65-80, a freestanding masonry wall, the first of its kind in Britain, replaced the earthen ramparts. The new walls and ditch enclosed the site of the fortress and annexe in a great rectangle and had six gates and between twelve and twenty-four towers. The street plan remained much the same as before, but at least one new street was constructed, a north-south street east of the temple, leading to a new south gate. The town appears to have had a piped water supply from an early date.
- 2.4 In the 2nd century the growing prosperity of the town was marked by the construction of several large, well-appointed town houses and there was a remodelling on a grand scale of the southern side of the precinct of the Temple of Claudius. In the second half of the century the town defences were strengthened by the construction of an earth bank inside the masonry wall.




Figure 2: Roman Colchester in about AD 250

- 2.5 Towards the end of the 3rd century, the town, like others in Roman Britain, appears to have entered a period of gradual decline, which was never really to be reversed. In increasingly troubled times, the defences were again improved and the town ditch widened. Many houses were demolished without replacement and the size of the cultivated areas within the walls appears to have significantly increased. The suburbs suffered dramatic decline, partly perhaps through clearance of buildings to improve the town's ability to withstand a siege. Burials now took place much closer to the walls.
- 2.6 In the 4th century there was a concentration of occupation along the main street (High Street), with small houses on either side of the street, a pattern that anticipated the later post-Roman town.

- 2.7 The Roman way of life may have continued for some time after the break with the Roman Empire, but the evidence for the first Anglo-Saxon occupation in the mid 5th century, for example 'sunken-featured buildings', suggests that settlement was not concentrated in any one area but scattered amongst the ruins of the former town. It is possible that, by the 8th and 9th centuries, occupation was centred on St Runwald's Church and the lord's hall, close to the centre of today's High Street. The principal Roman streets, such as High Street, North Hill and Head Street, which connected the main gates (East Gate, North Gate and Head Gate), survive to this day. Queen Street connected the High Street with South Gate and to an extent seems to have followed the route of its Roman predecessor.
- 2.8 In 917 Edward the Elder drove out the Danish army that had occupied the town, though there is no trace in the archaeological record of the Danish presence. Edward, like his father Alfred, adopted a policy of creating fortified *burghs* as a way of consolidating his gains and allowing the local people to resist Danish reconquest. The Roman town defences were repaired, new streets laid out and new properties created.
- 2.9 The town continued to develop its commercial role and, sometime in the 10th century, High Street was widened to create a market place. This would have involved the realignment of the street and the demolition of frontage properties. Culver Street was laid out as a back street serving the new building plots on the south side. Other separate developments included the creation of Trinity Street, Lion Walk and Long Wyre Street on the south side of the town and East and West Stockwell Streets and the southern end of Maidenburgh Street on the north side.
- 2.10 By the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, Colchester had the status of a borough and was an important administrative and commercial centre. Besides St Runwald's, several other churches had been founded including Holy Trinity, St Peter's, St Nicholas', All Saints' and possibly St James'.
- 2.11 Following the Conquest, the town saw numerous changes under the lordship of the Norman Eudo Dapifer. He used the great podium of the Roman Temple of Claudius as a base for his new Castle and the High Street was diverted southwards to make room for the construction of the bailey bank and ditch, the diversion clearly visible today. He founded St John's Abbey (1095) and the leper hospital at St Mary Magdalen, and restored St Helen's Chapel, which may have stood on the site of a Roman chapel. The parish church of St Giles was founded in the cemetery of the abbey some time in 1171.
- 2.12 St Botolph's Priory was founded between 1100 and 1104 and has the distinction of being the first Augustinian foundation in England. It was formed by a small group of priests who were probably serving an existing minster with its origins in pre-Conquest times. It may even be on the site of a Roman church or *martyrium*. At the Dissolution, the nave of the priory church was preserved and used for parish and civic services for another hundred years.



Figure 3: Colchester in the 17th Century

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- 2.13 The overall pattern of streets and building plots established during the late Anglo-Saxon and early mediaeval periods lasted pretty well intact until after the Second World War. However, although the frontages of the principal streets were built up, a considerable amount of land inside the walls was taken up with gardens and other cultivated areas. One substantial area, now the Bus Station and gardens of East Hill House (formerly known as the 'Berry Field'), seems to have remained open since Roman times and was for many centuries the site of St Denis' Fair. The town walls were repaired and strengthened in the 1380s at the time of the Peasants' Revolt.
- 2.14 The surviving, ruined Roman buildings provided a ready-made source of stone and tile for the construction of the principal buildings such as the churches and castle.
- 2.15 In the Middle Ages the prosperity of the town was based on the cloth trade, its markets and the presence of the religious institutions. However, in the 14th and 15th centuries the Black Death dramatically reduced the population of the town and the economy must also have been severely affected by the closure of the Abbey and Priory at the Dissolution in the 1530s. However, the town received a boost with a reinvigorated cloth trade, particularly in the late 16th century with the arrival of refugees from the Low Countries fleeing religious persecution. Many of them settled in the area north of the High Street, still known as the 'Dutch Quarter'. They introduced the 'bays and says' for which the town became famous and which were the mainstay of the economy throughout the 17th century.
- 2.16 A substantial number of houses dating from the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries survive in the main streets, particularly in North Hill, Trinity Street, Scheregate, the east end of High Street and East and West Stockwell Streets. A number of suburbs had grown up outside the town walls, for example East Hill which also retains a number of mediaeval and post-mediaeval buildings.
- 2.17 The characteristic buildings of the 15th to 17th centuries are timber-framed, often jettied, with steep-pitched tiled roofs and plastered, gabled fronts. The mediaeval pattern of narrow-fronted 'burgage' plots at right angles to the street can still clearly be seen in several of the main streets including High Street and Long Wyre Street. Many of the mediaeval High Street properties would have had shop with chambers over on the street frontage, with an open hall behind, and further buildings at the rear. Away from the High Street where the pressure on land was less intense, many of the superior houses had halls built parallel to the street with cross wings at one or both ends, sometimes often with projecting (jettied) first floors.
- 2.18 Later, with the introduction of chimneys, open halls were floored in and new houses built with two full storeys, sometimes with continuous jetties. The fashion for jetties continued into the late 17th century.
- 2.19 The Siege of Colchester in the English Civil War resulted in the destruction and damage of many key buildings, including St Botolph's Priory, where the former priory church was almost destroyed. The mediaeval East Gate was damaged in the Siege and cleared away in 1674. In 1722 Daniel Defoe reported that the town 'still mourns in the ruins of a civil war' and referred to its 'battered walls, breaches in the turrets and ruined churches'.
- 2.20 The local tradition of building timber-framed houses, plastered on the outside, continued into the 18th century. The recovery of the economy in the 18th century is demonstrated by the number of good quality Georgian houses erected in the principal streets and also in the fashionable 'modernising' of older properties. Red brick was the predominant building material, with plain clay tiles for the roofs, but stucco also became fashionable, particular towards the end of the period. There are good groups of Georgian buildings in East Hill, North Hill, the east end of High Street, Queen Street, East and West Stockwell Streets and Abbey Gate Street.

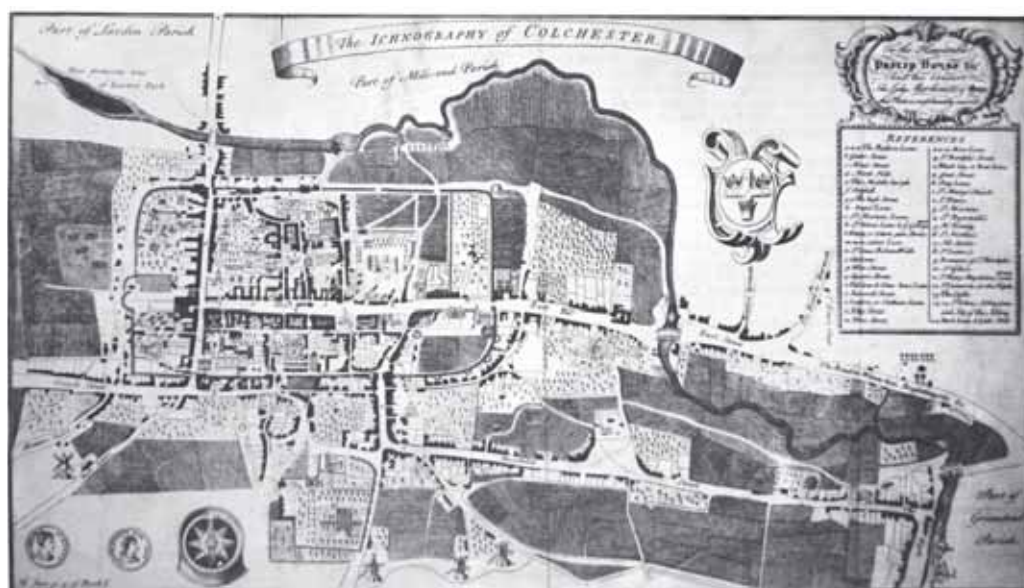




Figure 4: Colchester in the 18th Century

- 2.21 In the early 19th century, a grand new Corn Exchange was built at the North Hill end of the High Street (later the Essex and Suffolk Fire Office). The Theatre Royal was established in Queen Street in 1812.
- 2.22 Under the Improvement Commissioners, established in 1811, the main streets were paved, obstructions removed and street lighting introduced. The town walls, no longer needed for defence, were neglected, built over, or robbed for stone. With the growing demands of traffic in and out of the town, all the remaining gates, except Scheregate, were demolished.
- 2.23 Deane's plan of 1748 (*figure 4*) shows the frontages of the principal streets largely built up. But it also shows just how much of the town was still undeveloped and given over to gardens. A large part of the garden of East Hill House, built in the early 18th century, survives to this day.
- 2.24 The 19th century was a period of significant expansion. Colchester became a garrison town during the Napoleonic Wars, with the first barracks to be erected since the Roman occupation. The military presence was expanded during the Crimean Wars and later in the century, and to this day Colchester remains an important garrison town.
- 2.25 The century saw a boom in retail trade and commerce and the coming of the railways and the development of The Hythe provided the essential transport for the developing industries, such as flourmills, breweries, foundries and engineering works.
- 2.26 In the High Street many older buildings were demolished and replaced with new shops and banks in the confident styles that characterise Victorian and Edwardian architecture. The Corn Exchange moved to new premises in the High Street in 1844 and the local Cooperative Society opened its first shop in 1861. Queen Street, Long Wyre Street and St Botolph's Street also have good groups of substantial shop buildings in a variety of styles and materials.
- 2.27 A number of churches and chapels were built, reflecting the religious revivals throughout the century, including St Botolph's Church, the Baptist Church in Eld Lane, the Roman Catholic Church in Priory Street and a new Congregational Church to replace the old Meeting House in Lion Walk.

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- 2.28 The density of building increased as the back yards and gardens were developed as tenements of cheap housing, for example Smith's Yard and Albion Court off Long Wyre Street and All Saints' Court off Culver Street. By the 1870s the area around Vineyard Street and Osborne Street had become densely built up with houses and cottages backing onto the town walls and packed into courtyards. Later in the century, terraces of houses were built in Priory Street and Northgate Street. As might be expected there were numerous inns and drinking houses.
- 2.29 The predominant building material was still red brick but, with the ability to transport materials over greater distances, grey gault brick became increasingly popular in the first half of the century, together with slate for the roofs. In the second half of the century, stone became fashionable as a decorative material.
- 2.30 By the turn of the century Colchester had acquired two of its best-known landmarks, the 'Jumbo' water tower and the Town Hall, and the main built-up parts of the town centre and inner suburbs had become quite densely developed. However, it is remarkable how much open space still remained, even in the middle of the town. In 1892 Castle Park was opened and augmented by the creation of the Lower Park in the following year.
- 2.31 A number of buildings on the north side of the High Street were demolished to make way for the impressive War Memorial designed by H C Fehr and unveiled in 1923. The Memorial also includes the Castle and Hollytrees, acquired for the town by Viscount Cowdray.
- 2.32 Colchester was subject to a number of bombing raids in the Second World War, with the area around St Botolph's Green, Magdalen Street and Mersea Road suffering particularly heavy damage. In common with many other historic towns, historic buildings that had not been damaged were still the subject of redevelopment schemes and the quality of much of the rebuilding in the 1950s and 1960s was poor. The loss of St Nicholas' Church, demolished in 1955 was perhaps the most dramatic single loss which the town suffered, but many more modest buildings of historic interest were lost, for example in Queen Street, where a Georgian terrace was pulled down to make way for flat roofed 'modern' shops, totally out of character with their surroundings.
- 2.33 In 1966 a new multi-storey car park was opened in Nunn's Road. New office blocks were constructed in St Peter's Street to provide municipal offices and the huge Telephone Exchange 'tower', which dominates views from the High Street, North Hill and the Dutch Quarter, was built despite local opposition. In common with other historic towns, the quality of many of the new buildings constructed in the 1950s and 60s was generally poor and paid little regard to the historic character of the town.
- 2.34 There was, however, one particular scheme of which Colchester can be proud. In the 1950s, the restoration of over forty of the old houses in the Dutch Quarter gained a Civic Trust Award and later, the Borough Council built several infill developments of flats and houses, constructed in vernacular style sympathetic to the character of the historic area.
- 2.35 A report of 1968, prepared by the County and Borough Councils, recognized that steps had to be taken to preserve Colchester's heritage and proposed that parts of the town centre should be designated as a Conservation Area. The report also contained proposals for the redevelopment of the Lion Walk, Culver Street, St Peter's Street, St John's and Vineyard Street areas and for the construction of an inner relief road with peripheral multi-storey car parks. The south and west sections of the Inner relief Road were completed by 1981, cutting through existing road patterns and neighbourhood areas and requiring extensive demolition of houses, shops, businesses and other properties, including a church, cinema and four public houses. Multi-storey car parks were built in Queen Street (closed 1992), St John's Street, Middleborough and Balkerne Hill.

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- A detailed historical map of Colchester Town Centre, showing the layout of streets, buildings, and green spaces. The map is oriented with North at the top. Key features include the 'Young Men's Christian Association' and a 'Fire' station in the upper left, a 'Roman Tessellated Pavement found' in the center, and 'Holy Trinity Church (Rudely)' with a 'Site for 400' in the lower left. A 'Roman Foundation' is marked near the bottom left, and a 'T R' label is visible near the bottom center. The map uses various hatching and symbols to represent different types of structures and archaeological findings.
- 2.36 Between 1968 and 1980, total commercial floor space increased by 45% in the central area. The Lion Walk shopping precinct was opened in 1976 and non-food retail space increased by 35.6% in the same period.
- 2.37 By 1984 parts of the plan had been amended because of financial constraints and a recognition that large-scale comprehensive redevelopment was not the solution in a town with an intricate and small-scale mediaeval plan. The later developments of the Culver Street shopping precinct and St John's Walk have been more successfully integrated with the historic character of Colchester. Since 1980, the importance of conserving Colchester's heritage has been recognized by the designation of the whole of the walled town and the historic suburbs as a Conservation Area.

3.0 Character Appraisal: High Street (West)

- 3.1 The High Street was the *Via Principalis* of the Roman *colonia*. From its junction with North Hill and Head Street, the High Street runs eastward along the main ridge of the town, with the land falling away to north and south. The width of the street reflects its commercial importance and its function as the site of the town's markets throughout the centuries. The main retail and commercial area effectively ends at Cowdray Crescent and All Saints Church.
- 3.2 East of the Town Hall, the street widens to what was once the central market place and site of the church of St Runwald, an Anglo-Saxon foundation that survived until 1878. Here also stood the houses and shops known as Middle Row, which included the mediaeval butchers' shambles, removed in the 1850s.
- 3.3 Approaching from the east, the former All Saints Rectory and the Castle Public House form a gateway to the High Street. The Town Hall with its magnificent tower projects into the street and plays a pivotal townscape role, acting as a focus in sequential views along the street. Beyond the Town Hall, views are closed by the buildings on the west side of North Hill and Head Street and dominated by the impressive bulk of the 'Jumbo' water tower.



High Street looking west

- 3.4 From the western end, the gentle double curve of the street results in a series of unfolding views framed by predominantly 18th and 19th century buildings of three and four storeys. From the junction with Museum Street, the street narrows as it curves to the south around the line of the castle bailey and the view eastwards is focussed on the tower of All Saints.
- 3.5 The mediaeval layout of long, rather narrow 'burgage' plots fronting onto the High Street is still evident today, especially on the south side, where many of the properties extend to Culver Street, which was the back or service lane for the High Street. A number of timber-framed buildings from the 15th to 17th centuries survive, most notably the Red Lion and The George hotels.
- 3.6 When the Improvement Commissioners paved the main streets in the early 19th century, many of the projecting shop fronts, bay windows and porches were removed. Shopkeepers took advantage of the compensation paid by the Commissioners to fit fashionable flat windows into their shop fronts. At the same time, many of the old timber-framed buildings were either underbuilt or cut back to accommodate new fronts, the timber frames plastered over, complete with inserted sash windows in the fashionable Georgian style. New buildings were faced in stucco or grey gault brick and the whole aspect of the High Street must have changed considerably at that time.



High Street looking east



- 3.7 Major changes again occurred in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Besides the magnificent Town Hall and Grand Theatre (now The Hippodrome), several handsome banks and shops were constructed. Comparison of the present plan with the 1876 OS map shows that, whereas the street frontage line has remained the same, there has been considerable redevelopment at the rear, much of this in the last fifty years. Despite the insertion of a number of poorer quality modern buildings, and the generally poor quality of ground floor shop frontages, the street retains much that is of interest and of a quality and character that stands comparison with any other English historic town.
- 3.8 The Council has recently carried out an extensive improvement scheme in the High Street. The carriageway has been narrowed and good quality paving and street furniture introduced. Although there is still a steady stream of (one-way) traffic, the environment for pedestrians and shoppers has been much improved.

South Side

- 3.9 The south side of the street has an almost continuous frontage, broken only by three narrow passageways - Bank Passage, Pelham's Lane and St Nicholas Passage – and contains a mix of buildings of varying dates and styles. Several are listed and most of the others make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the street. A number of the modern buildings, although of no great quality, have a neutral impact, but there is one block that really does detract from the street scene.



Nos. 1 – 10



Nos. 11 – 20

- 3.10 The oldest building to survive is the Red Lion Hotel. This is one of the most impressive buildings in Colchester and is rightly listed Grade I. The original house was built c1470 and the remains of the hall and screens can be seen in the ground floor dining room. About 1500 the house was turned into an inn and the main block constructed, with a jettied front on to the street and a carriage entrance in the centre. The frontage has been underbuilt at ground floor level but much of the original timber framing, with traceried panels, survives at first and second floor level. The sash windows date from the Georgian improvements and the tiled roof has four 18th century hipped gables.

- 3.11 Many original interior features survive, including a number of original windows, and there are earlier cellars of c1400. The property to the rear has been redeveloped and the carriage entrance now forms a pedestrian way through to the Lion Walk shopping centre.
- 3.12 Nos.45-47 (Robert Dyas) adjoining the Red Lion, are of 16th century origin, timber-framed and plastered, though much altered in the early 18th century and later, with very little detail remaining on the front elevation. The east side of the rear wing has some good 17th century pargetting and there are cellars dating from the 14th century.
- 3.13 Nos.11a and 11b (Burger King) were originally one house, dating from the 17th century. There is a good late Georgian front, of three storeys with moulded cornice and parapet, in grey gault brick now part painted. In the centre is a double height semi-circular oriel window with arched treatment, fluted columns and decorative medallions and swags. The ground floor shop windows are poor and do not relate to the building above. It would be good to see the front of this building restored to its former appearance as one building.



Nos. 20 – 26



Nos. 23 – 32

- 3.14 Nos.28-30, originally one build, date from the early 18th century and are part timber-framed and plastered, part brick. The front has been much altered but Nos.28 and 29 (Scroogies and Edinburgh Woollen Mill) retain a parapet cornice and plat band between first and second storeys. No.29 has a central parapet gable with horizontal sliding sashes and tall double-hung sash windows at first floor.
- 3.15 Nos.56 and 57 (Optical Revolution and Toni & Guy) show the change from timber framing to brick construction in the early 18th century. The three-storey red brick front of No.57 has a moulded eaves cornice and brick band between second and third storeys with a row of recessed panels. The tall sash windows at first floor are typical of the period. Like a number of other properties, the building sits on mediaeval cellars.
- 3.16 No.22 (Superdrug) has a late 18th century grey brick front. At first floor there is a fine bow window with segmental arched heads to the windows and a decorated entablature. No.58 (Panasonic) is also in grey brick, but of the plainer style favoured in the early 19th century. No.54 has a plain rendered and painted front. No.21 (Impressions) is in dark grey brick, with four-light composite classical windows with columns, capitals and decorated entablatures, the first floor window with triangular pediment. No.3 is a substantial four-storey mid/late 19th century building in yellow brick with stone dressings, still in the classical style of earlier years. No.4 (Bottoms Up) is smaller scale and rendered; it retains its rusticated panels and bracketed flat pediments to the windows at first floor level.

- 3.17 Towards the end of the century, the building designs become more elaborate and decorative and, sometimes, more colourful. No.5 (Saffron Walden Building Soc) has a late 19th century front in red brick with contrasting stone banding and window heads. Nos.14 (Moss), 15 (Hughes), 16 (Bakers Oven) and No.59 (Café Rouge) have arched windows with heavily moulded rendered surrounds, cornices and stringcourses. No.14 is particularly elaborate and appears to retain much of its original shop front. The central part of Nos.35-37 (McDonald's) is in similar style and is dated 1879; the remainder was rebuilt in 1983.



Nos. 33 – 39



Red Lion Hotel to No.50

- 3.18 Nos.33 and 34 (Freesspirit) show a number of distinct phases of development. The original building probably dates from the late 17th century. The first floor front of No.33 shows 18th century alterations. The property was later divided into two and the larger part (No.34) was remodelled in 1879. The architecture is most curious. At first floor there are twin shallow oriel windows with winged beasts on the upper corners, below two semi-circular gables with broken pediments. Three similar beasts act as gargoyles. These interesting buildings are spoiled by the modern shop front, which extends across the whole property.
- 3.19 Nos.17/18 (Millets), dated 1901, is in a Northern Renaissance style. It has ball finials above the fascia, decorative panels at first floor and an elaborate shaped gable with scrolled shoulders and ball finials. The modern shop front is of poor quality and detracts from the fine façade above.
- 3.20 There are four typically solid and impressive bank buildings dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. No.9 (Barclays) is in an Italianate style with rusticated stone ground floor, brick first and second floors with shallow projecting side bays, stone quoins and window surrounds and heavy modillion cornice. Nos.12/13 (now Waterstones) is neo-classical with double height columns with Corinthian capitals under a balustraded parapet with decorative finials. The three arched openings at ground floor level have been nicely adapted to provide full-height entrance and display windows.
- 3.21 No.25 (Nat West) is a striking building of c1900, the upper stories in banded brown and white stone. Here, the side columns have become buttresses, surmounted by small lead pepperpots. There are two double height canted bays at first and second floor level, recessed under a heavy cornice supported by a large central caryatid. The severe granite faced ground floor is at odds with the rest of the front. No.27 (Lloyds TSB) dates from c1925, still in classical style, stone-faced, but with Art Deco touches and newly fashionable metal windows.



Nos. 51 – 59



No.58 to St Nicholas House

- 3.22 Nos.31-32 (Burton) and Nos.38/39 (Marks & Spencer) are similar to No.25 in style and date. Burton's has a large projecting clock at first floor level. The ground floor needs a unified shop front design that relates to the upper storeys.
- 3.23 Nos.1 & 2 (Britannia Building Soc) is a modest but well-proportioned modern red brick building in 1930s Neo-Georgian style. It has just sufficient presence to make a successful corner with Head Street. St Nicholas House, at the other end of the High Street, also exhibits the pre-war classical style still favoured in the 1950s, but cannot make up for the loss, in 1955, of St Nicholas Church, particularly its spire that was such a prominent landmark. No.51 (Priceless Shoes) is in the 'modern' style and cheap construction of the late 1950s and 1960s.
- 3.24 Of the later buildings, No.26 (HSBC) takes its cue from the Lloyds bank next door, but the use of concrete and lack of quality detailing means that it just does not stand comparison with its older neighbours. No.38 (M & S extension) in dark red brick has projecting oriels at first floor and a false mansard roof, but the upper storeys appear unsupported by the flimsy shop front. Nos.19/20 (Next) in yellow brick with reconstituted stone details harks back to the 19th century neo-classical traditions.
- 3.25 The one really poor building that looks totally out of place is Nos.48-50 (Abbey and others), a block of three shops in bright red brick, with slate-clad false mansard roof in a style typical of the early 1970s. This building extends over three former plots and is over-scaled; it is too loud and domineering in the street frontage. The shop fronts lack proper framing and, overall, the detailing is poor.

North Side

- 3.26 From the High Street there are inviting views to the north down East and West Stockwell Streets and Maidenburgh Street. Thankfully, the bulk of the Telephone Exchange does not generally intrude on views in the High Street, though it does loom over the passage entrance to Williams & Griffin between Nos.149 and 150.
- 3.27 As on the south side, the north side contains a mix of buildings ranging in date from the 15th century to the present day. However, this side includes the town's principal public buildings – Town Hall, Theatre and former Corn Exchanges. Comparison with the 1876 OS map shows a considerable amount of change, particularly at the rear, where very little evidence now survives of the historic burgage plot boundaries. However, there appear to be one or two survivals of 19th century industrial or warehouse buildings at the rear of Nos.119-121.



Nos. 108/109 to George Hotel



George Hotel to No. 121

- 3.28 The earliest surviving property is the George Hotel which, like the Red Lion opposite, is timber-framed and dates originally from the 15th century, built over earlier cellars. It is listed Grade II*. It now has a handsome five-window wide early 18th century plastered front, enhanced by a decorative cast iron balcony at first floor level and projecting bracket topped with a figure of a man and his dog, the man in red frock coat, wig and tricorne hat.
- 3.29 There are a number of other surviving early timber-framed buildings behind later facades. Nos. 117 and 118 probably date from the 16th century. The former, which is now part of The George, has a plain, rendered front, whilst No. 118 (Roxi) is in painted brick with decorative eaves cornice below the parapet and a modern shop front. Originally dating from the 15th century, No. 136 is rendered with a shop front of c1840.
- 3.30 No. 156 (Wig & Pen) dates from the early 19th century. It has a painted, rendered front framed by shallow pilasters and a sunken central panel. A canted French bay window on the right hand side first floor leads onto a cast iron balcony across the whole width of the building. The left hand ground floor retains an arched doorway with rusticated stone architrave.



No. 122 to Town Hall



Nos. 130 – 137

- 3.31 The front of Nos. 158/159 (Taylors) is of similar date, though the house might have an 18th century origin. This also is of painted render, though the entry in the Statutory List for both this building and for No. 156 describes the frontages as being of grey gault brick.
- 3.32 The former Essex and Suffolk Fire Office (Nos. 157 and 156b,c,d) is one of the finest buildings in Colchester. Built in 1820 as the Corn Exchange and designed by David Laing, it was originally two-storey: the third storey with central pediment and small open pediments at each end being a later addition. The front has a nine-window range of double-hung sashes with glazing bars and green painted shutters. A ground floor colonnade with cast iron Greek Doric columns extends across the pavement. There is an entry through to St Peter's Churchyard at the rear.

- 3.33 Next-door is the later Corn Exchange of 1845, designed by Raphael Brandon. In 1925/6 it was adapted as an art gallery and is now occupied by the Cooperative Bank. Although only single-storey, it is an impressive building with a sturdy portico with Ionic columns. At the rear, but not visible from the High Street is a public hall, built in 1851, with apsidal north and south ends.
- 3.34 A number of other properties were redeveloped in the 19th century. No.112 has a rendered front with moulded window surrounds. Nos.119 (Ladbroke's) and 120 (Fish & Chips), both in painted brick, have poorly designed modern windows. Nos.123 (Mann's Music) and 124 (Thomas Cook) form a three-storey pair, in painted brick, with arched window heads, double-hung sash windows and a deep parapet cornice. No.124 retains its original shop surround. No.125 (Red Lion Books) retains its original pattern sash windows.



Nos. 138 – 145



Nos. 145 – 149

- 3.35 Nos.133 and 134 form a pair of good quality stucco houses in classical style, with rusticated ground floor. Flat side pilasters with plain capitals support a banded frieze with deep overhanging cornice. No.137 is later, the first floor in red brick with yellow brick details. No.146 (Fenn Wright) has a three-window wide painted brick front with parapet, probably with an older core. The first floor windows have tall double-hung sashes with glazing bars.
- 3.36 The first floor of No.150 (Radcliffe) is in gault brick, with round-headed windows. The east side is weather boarded and there appears to be earlier wing at the rear. Adjoining is No.151 (Kurt Geiger) with a much-restored timbered gabled first floor with modern windows above a shop front that extends into No.150. Both these properties have character, and both may have older cores, but the ground floor fronts detract because they are not related to the upper storeys.
- 3.37 The Town Hall is certainly the most impressive building in the High Street. Built in 1898, in red brick and Portland stone, and designed by the architect John Belcher, it is an exceptionally rich design in free classical style. The Victoria Tower rises to 162 feet and is topped by a statue of St Helen. Left of the entrance is a Portland stone lantern column also designed by John Belcher, bearing three bronze plaques of the Borough's arms. The 1876 OS map shows the smaller Town Hall of 1843, which was demolished to make way for the new one, and which itself stood on the site of the ancient Moot Hall.
- 3.38 Two other impressive buildings date from the same era. G H Page designed No.126 (The former Bay & Say PH) for the Colchester Brewing Co. Ashlar-faced, it is in Baroque style with some Art Nouveau details to doors and windows. It is now a bar called 'After Office Hours'. Adjoining is the Hippodrome. This was designed by J W Stuart as the Grand Theatre and opened in 1905. It incorporated a reconstruction of an 1889 theatre by the celebrated Frank Matcham. The asymmetrical Edwardian Baroque façade is in red brick with stone dressings. The rich interior has Neo-Rococo style decoration and a ceiling probably by Hoffman of Vienna.



Nos. 150 – 156



Nos. 156 – 159

- 3.39 Nos.147 and 149 are now part of Williams & Griffin department store. The stepped pediments and metal windows are typical of Art Deco influenced 1920's design.
- 3.40 Modern Council Offices have been developed at Angel Court (1988), on the site of the old Angel Hotel. The colourful modern entrance contrasts well with the historic frontage buildings that have been successfully incorporated in the development.
- 3.41 There are three modern buildings that might be considered to detract significantly from the appearance of the street. The mixed yellow and grey brick and horizontal windows of Nos.108/109 (British Heart Foundation) are wholly out of character with neighbouring buildings. The entrance front of Williams & Griffin (Nos.152/154), with its narrow concrete fins, lacks any real quality, but the main problem is with the high, stark flank walls which intrude in views from the east along the street.
- 3.42 However, the worst building is Greytown House (Nos.138-144), which stands on the site of the historic Cups Hotel, demolished in 1972. Its gross dimensions, featureless frontage and utter blandness are accentuated by its position next door to the architectural flamboyance of the Town Hall.

4.0 Character Appraisal: The Dutch Quarter

- 4.1 The area to the north of the High Street has come to be known locally as the Dutch Quarter. The first wave of Dutch refugees, fleeing persecution in their homeland, arrived about 1570, bringing with them their skills in manufacturing new draperies and the 'bays and says' for which Colchester became famous. More refugees arrived in the 17th century and settled in this area. The renewed economic fortune of the town is reflected in the substantial timber-framed houses built at that time, many of which still survive.
- 4.2 The three principal streets running down from the High Street towards the town walls – Maidenburgh Street and East and West Stockwell Streets – were all in existence before 1500, as were St Helen's Lane and Nunn's Road and the intramural Northgate Street. The 1876 OS map shows the street frontages generally built up, apart from Northgate Street, but also shows just how much land was still open, particularly the area between West Stockwell Street and North Hill.
- 4.3 Nevertheless, increased population pressures in the 19th century resulted in the development of several areas of backland, for example around Nunn's Road and behind the High Street, for squares and courts of tightly packed artisan houses or tenements. Apart from William's Walk and Walters Yard, these have all now gone, but the tradition of courts and yards is reflected in several of the post-war developments that replaced them.
- 4.4 The general character of the historic streets still derives from the timber-framed 17th and 18th century buildings, overlain with Georgian remodelling. Most of these have plastered fronts in a variety of colours, which gives the area a picturesque feel. There are also a number of later Georgian and Victorian buildings, mostly in red brick, the later ones with slate roofs.



West Stockwell Street

- 4.5 Apart from the Nunn's Road multi-storey car park and adjacent BT blocks and some commercial premises close to the High Street and Northgate Street, the area is almost wholly residential. The old industries – for example the breweries in Maidenburgh Street and the Iron Foundry behind the High Street – have gone, though one traditional builder's yard survives in William's Walk.
- 4.6 Between 1955 and the 1980s, many of the older houses were renovated, and over 150 houses and flats built, in a plan to create a convenient and attractive residential area. In layout and style the new developments are largely sympathetic to the historic character of the area, though generally lacking the quality of detailing of the historic buildings. By any standards, this was a far-sighted plan for which Colchester can feel proud.



Telephone Exchange and BT Offices

- 4.7 The domestic scale of most of the streets is in stark contrast to the huge structures of the multi-storey car park and former Telephone Exchange and Telephone House. The car park, opened in 1966, is dug into the hillside and its impact is relatively localised, but the BT buildings dominate a wide area and intrude on views, not only from within the Dutch Quarter, but also from a much wider area of the town. They are quite simply awful and spread a visual blight over the town centre, which needs to be rectified as soon as possible.

West Stockwell Street

- 4.8 The Town Hall dominates the entrance from High Street. There is a particularly fine entrance to the Law Courts with rusticated stone surround, steps with curved railings and a pair of lamp standards with columns designed as bundles of *fascies*. The adjoining former library is in contrasting dark red brick, with gables, decorative plasterwork and fancy bargeboards in 'Tudorbethan' style, erected at the same time (1898) as the Town Hall, on the site of the old Blue Boar PH.



Former Library

- 4.9 Continuing on the west side, the small, detached graveyard of St Runwald's Church is on the corner with **St Runwald Street** (qv). It is well maintained and retains its gravestones, stone walls and gate piers and iron railings. The adjacent Town Hall Chambers dates from the 19th century and, unusually, has a gambrel roof. On the far side of St Runwald Street, the rather handsome late 19th century building with a gault brick front, that is now Pizza Express, retains double height pilasters and showroom windows between each bay.
- 4.10 The old Telephone Exchange, linked to St Martin's House, is a good example of 1930s neo-Georgian, in red brick with rubbed brick arches to the windows, which have timber sashes with glazing bars. The quality of the work far exceeds most post-war buildings. St Martin's House (No.63) is a fine quality town house dated 1734, in red brick with grey brick panelled parapet and heavy wood cornice. Steps with handrails lead up to an imposing door with rusticated surround. The house is set back behind a garden enclosed by low brick walls and iron railings, with entrance gates that lead to the side and rear areas, now used for car parking. However, it is impossible to avoid the view of the post-war Telephone Exchange looming over the site.
- 4.11 No.62 is a detached house of about 1600, refaced in the late 18th century, with a rough cast front and plain Tuscan doorcase. BT House dominates the view between this house and Nos.59 and 60, which were originally one house, built in the mid 18th century for Samuel Wall, attorney. The wide front is in red brick with a modillion cornice and pediment and central Venetian window. There are two good door cases with open pediments, panelled reveals and semi-circular fanlights.



View towards High Street

- 4.12 No.58 is timber-framed and plastered, probably 17th century, whilst No.57 dates from the 18th century. No.56 is 16th century and has a rear extension of about 1700. The jettied front has one large gable and one small. The adjoining three properties (Nos.53-55) were probably originally one house, with 15th century hall and cross wings to north and south.
- 4.13 Between Nos.56 and 57 is the entrance to **Walters Yard**, a narrow lane dominated by the east flank of BT House. Nos. 4, 5 and 6 are shown on the 1876 OS map, though the name does not appear. Between No.53 and the modern No.52 is an alleyway with concrete 'bollards' leading to the surface car parking off Nunn's Road. Graffiti scars the walls.



Walters Yard



View south to High Street

- 4.14 On the corner as the street turns northwest, is the former Nelson's Head PH, in robust 19th century style with projecting timbered gables and original windows, including a first floor oriel. A shaped brick panel on the corner presumably carried the inn sign.
- 4.15 Returning to the High Street end, the east side, now part of Angel Court, incorporates an older building (No.1) with banded brickwork and applied timbering that is reflected in the design of the modern infill. No.2 is a three-storey mid 19th century house in gault brick, which contrasts markedly with the adjoining impressive timber-framed 15th century house (Nos.3-5), which is listed Grade II*. This double-gabled, jettied building has exposed timbers, traceried windows and entrance door and passageway with four-centred heads.



Nos.3-5 West Stockwell Street

- 4.16 No.6 has a two-storey plain rendered front, whilst No.7 is tall, timber-framed and plastered, with a good 18th century doorcase with semi-circular fanlight and open pediment. Next is a fine early 18th century red brick house, later divided into two (Nos.8 and 9). The central adjoining doorcases have contrasting details, one Ionic, the other Tuscan. The rear may be earlier, 17th century.
- 4.17 The rest of the frontage as far as Quakers' Alley is taken up with the former St Martin's Church and its surrounding graveyard. The church is listed grade II* and is of early 12th century origin. The stone rubble walls incorporate much reused Roman brick. The upper part of the west tower is missing, having fallen into ruins in the 17th century. The graveyard retains its low stone walls and iron railings and gates, and the mature trees make a fine feature in the street scene.
- 4.18 The forecourt and west side of the Essex C.C. Town House building is the only really ugly feature in the street.

- 4.19 Nos.11 and 12 are a pair of 18th century red brick houses with blank windows above the doors. A plaque records that Jane and Ann Taylor, authors of 'Original Poems for Infant Minds' lived here between 1796 and 1811. The adjacent house, No.13, is a typical 'Georgianised' 17th century house, timber-framed and jettied, with a wide gable onto the street.



View north: No.62 (l), Nos.11&12 (r)

- 4.20 Nos.14-17, with an entrance to Sanderson Mews at the rear, is an example of the modern 'picturesque' infill, typical of the Dutch Quarter. One pleasant feature is the path at the side of No.13 with an attractive iron gate and archway beyond. The Stockwell Arms dates originally from the 15th century, though is much altered. The building has exposed, painted studwork, two gables at the south end and a jettied cross wing at the north on the corner with Stockwell. On the 1876 OS map this is not shown as a pub, but was three separate buildings, still clearly evident from the outside.
- 4.21 Timber-framed and plastered, Nos.19-21 date from the 17th century and form a picturesque group, closing the view of the street from the south. Looking back up the street, the view is of the Town Hall's soaring Victoria Tower.
- 4.22 The street bends to the northwest before turning north again where it meets Nunn's Road. It is not clear why the street deviates in this way, but the street line has been established for several hundred years.
- 4.23 The northeast side of the street has been widened and straightened to accommodate the post-war frontage development and Wat Tyler Walk at the rear. On the southwest side there is a row of three houses (Nos.48-50, Nelson Cottages), in good red brick with darker headers and rubbed brick arches to the windows. Nos. 46 and 47 are a mid 19th century pair with slate roofs, No.46 now with painted brickwork.



View west from Stockwell Arms



View south from Northgate Street

- 4.24 The northernmost section of the street runs from Nunn's Road to Northgate Street. On the east side, Nos.29-31 (listed Grade II*) form a picturesque timber-framed group of c1600 with three gables above a continuous jetty carried on elaborately shaped brackets and moulded bressumer. A plaque records a Civic Trust Award in 1959 for the restoration of 42 houses in the Dutch Quarter. There is sympathetic infill development on either side. No.35 on the corner with Northgate Street is also timber-framed and plastered and (with No.21 Northgate Street) was The Locomotive Public House in the 19th century.
- 4.25 On the west side there is a terrace of four red brick, slate roofed cottages (Nos.40-43, Belvoir Cottages) dated 1871. No.43 has painted brickwork. No.38 is 18th century or earlier, with a rendered front, whilst Nos.36/37 on the corner with Northgate Street dates from the early 16th century but has a 19th century shop front.
- 4.26 Unfortunately, the view up the street from the Northgate Street end is marred by the looming horror of the BT buildings.

East Stockwell Street

- 4.27 The street runs downhill from the High Street, at first with a gentle slope and then more steeply lower down. The subtle curves make for a series of unfolding views, framed by the buildings stepping down the hill, with views to the slopes of the town north of the river. Ascending the street, the view towards the High Street focuses on the timbered front of the Red Lion Hotel.
- 4.28 The entrance from High Street is dominated on the left by the high rear sidewall of the Hippodrome. Although the ground and first floors have been painted, more could be done to lessen its impact. Opposite, the flat-roofed Mann's Music building and adjacent yard used for parking detracts from the scene. From Mann's, the whole block of property on the right hand side as far as William's Walk, has been redeveloped for housing (Frank Naylor Court and Clement Mellish House). Like earlier infill developments, this scheme incorporates a variety of styles reflecting the older buildings in the area. The use of painted render, red brick, jetties and gables creates an interesting street scene and the detailing is much better than some of the earlier work, though the effect is let down by the use of incongruous top-hung sash windows.



Nos.44-46 (l), Mellish House (r)



Old Schoolhouse

- 4.29 On the left hand side beyond the Hippodrome are three listed timber-framed and plastered houses of the 17th and 18th centuries (Nos.44-46), followed by Stockwell House (No.43), which has a fine early 18th century brick front on an earlier timber-framed house and is listed Grade II*. No.43a, dating from the late 18th or early 19th century, but unlisted, is set back from the street. The single-storey red-brick Old Schoolhouse (an Infants' School in 1876) and adjacent gate pier is also unlisted, but certainly of local interest. It dates from the 19th century and has diamond shaped lattice windows, curvy bargeboards and fancy ridge tiles.
- 4.30 Between No.43a and the Old school House, there is an open site used for car parking. There are views of the former St Martin's Church and, unfortunately, of the Telephone Exchange. The trees in the car park mitigate to some extent the problem of such a gap in the street frontage.

- 4.31 **Quakers' Alley** (formerly St Martin's Lane) runs between East and West Stockwell Streets. The very poor post-war Colchester Town House (Essex C.C.) runs almost the whole length of the Alley and gives it a most uninviting atmosphere. The flat roofed featureless street façade is wholly out of character with the street scene.



Quakers' Alley

- 4.32 The whole east side (Nos.7-12) between William's Walk and St Helen's Lane is listed. This is a fine group of timber-framed buildings of 17th and 18th century date. Nos.8, 9 & 10 have a late Georgian red brick front, the others have painted plaster.



View north from St Helen's Lane

- 4.33 The former Stockwell Congregational Chapel occupies an impressive site on the corner with St Helen's Lane. Originally dating from 1816-17, a new front was added when the Chapel was improved in 1824 and 1826.
- 4.34 Beyond the chapel, No.15 is timber-framed, of 17th century origin. No.16 is early 19th century in red brick, whilst No.18 (St Edmond's) dates from the 18th century and has a plastered brick front. In contrast, No.17 is a poorly maintained modern building marred by graffiti in the entrance passage.
- 4.35 On the left hand side, opposite the entrance to St Helen's Lane, Nos.37 and 38 form a picturesque 16th century pair, with jettied fronts. Lower down, No.30 is also listed. It is the earliest building in the street, with parts dating from the 15th and 16th centuries and incorporating part of a 14th century hall. Nos. 28, 28a, 29 and 36 are pleasant unlisted 19th century buildings that contribute to the street scene.



View south towards High Street

- 4.36 The properties are generally well maintained and one of the highlights of the street is the variety of doors and doorcases on the older buildings.
- 4.37 The street does not continue the whole way to Northgate Street, but turns sharp left into Stockwell and thence to West Stockwell Street. However, there is a pedestrian way through to Northgate Street via Ball Alley.
- 4.38 Two sections of the street, the top most part and the part between William's Walk and St Helen's Lane, are paved in red brick and small element concrete slabs. The surface has been patched, in places with tarmac, and the effect is now rather poor. The other sections are in tarmac. A coordinated repaving would help restore the unity of the street and it should be possible to reduce the number of bollards that add unnecessary clutter to the street.

Stockwell

- 4.39 Formerly known as Stockwell Street, this short street links East and West Stockwell Streets and appears to be of similar antiquity. On the south side (Nos.1-7) there is a good group of 18th century timber-framed and plastered cottages. The gap in the street formed by the car park and entrance to Nos.9 and 11 ('The technique Building') spoils the frontage. Though not of great age, the weatherboarded and tiled No.11 is of some interest.



Stockwell looking west

- 4.40 Until comparatively recently the land on the north side was undeveloped. The street appears to have been widened and straightened on this side when the modern John Ball Walk housing was built.

Maidenburgh Street

- 4.41 The entrance from the High Street is unpromising, flanked on the left by the high plain side wall of Nos.108/109 High Street and on the right by the open forecourt of the modern Castle Methodist Church, which was designed to relate more to the Castle Park than to the street. However, there are glimpses of new and old buildings stepping down the street which attract the visitor to venture further and, between the High Street and **Swan Passage**, there is one of the few surviving sections of early 19th century paving, using Montsorrel granite sets. Swan Passage, with its cracked concrete, needs resurfacing.



Entrance from High Street



View north from Swan Passage

- 4.42 From Swan Passage to William's Walk, there is a tarmac surface. Below William's Walk, traffic is restricted and the street is surfaced in red brick and small element concrete paving as far as St Helen's Lane. The lower half of the street has a tarmac surface with double yellow lines on the east side and on-street parking bays on the west.
- 4.43 Both sides of the street between Swan Passage and William's Walk (and beyond on the west side) have modern infill development that generally maintains the historic building line and reflects the local historic architectural styles and use of materials, though is lacking any real quality in the detailing.
- 4.44 Opposite the turning to William's Walk is a tall red brick former industrial building with large metal windows, dating from the late 19th century, which extends through to Ryegate Road (No.14). Adjoining is Roger Browning House, a residential conversion of one of the old Castle Brewery buildings, spoiled only by the concrete tiles to the roof. Next is No.7, the former Ship Inn, a timber-framed building probably of the 17th century, behind a later pub front.
- 4.45 On the west side is a group of 19th century red brick houses (Nos.69-74) with one recent infill. Nos.71 & 72 are dated 1868. A large information board shows the buildings to be on the site of the Roman theatre, the outline of which is shown by dark coloured bricks in the street surface.
- 4.46 Next is St Helen's Chapel, in rubble with bonding courses of flat bricks, rebuilt c1290 but probably founded in the 12th century or earlier. The buildings that once stood next to the Chapel on the corner with St Helen's Lane have been removed, opening up views of the north side of the chapel and the old graveyard beyond. The building now serves the local Greek Orthodox community.
- 4.47 From here the street curves downhill, opening up a series of views to the trees of the Lower Park at the foot of the street and beyond across the river valley to the north. The houses step down the hill and the mix of gables and jetties, brick, plaster and render, tiled and slate roofs and the wide range of colours, create a most picturesque scene.



View north down lower part of street



East lower side

- 4.48 Apart from a few modern infill buildings, almost all the houses on the east side are listed and date from the 17th and 18th centuries. They have plastered or rendered fronts and tiled roofs and most have 18th or 19th century sash or casement windows. Nos.14 & 15 and 23 & 23a retain jettied fronts; No.16 is single storey with two gabled dormers. No.21 has semi-basement windows and a fine tall door case with flat canopy. At the lower end of the street, Nos.30-32 are early 19th century, in brick (the lower two painted), whilst No.33 is slightly earlier. The street terminates with Nos.39 & 40, a symmetrical pair, late 18th century, in red and blue brick with paired doors under a triangular pediment and original pattern sash windows with glazing bars.

- 4.49 On the west side are two good groups of unlisted 19th century buildings, separated by a number of infill buildings that form the entrance to Ken Cooke Court. Nos.57-68 are mostly pairs of houses, in red brick, the earlier houses having tiled roofs and small pane sash windows, the later ones with slate roofs and large pane sashes. Nos.64 & 65 (Alford's Place) are dated 1884, though they look earlier.



West lower side



View of Lower Park

- 4.50 Nos.47-50 (Rectory Buildings) has a three-storey centre block with moulded brick pediment and the date 1898, and two-storey wings. The rendered front has a fancy stringcourse at first and second floor level and the windows have contrasting brick or terracotta keystones. Nos.41-46 are mid-late 19th century red brick cottages, a number now painted. Most have original pattern windows and panelled doors.
- 4.51 At the foot of the hill, the street turns left into Northgate Street and the iron railings and trees of the Lower Park provide a pleasant visual stop to the street.

Northgate Street

- 4.52 This is an ancient intramural street, like Eld Lane on the southern side of the walled town. As the 1876 OS map shows, the north side was largely built up, but the eastern half of the south side was open land until the Victorian terraces were built late in the 19th century. For much of its length, the northern side of the street is on the line of the town wall, though nothing is visible except short sections exposed at lower level in front of Claudius Court and at the rear of Nos.10 & 12.

- 4.53 On the north side, starting from the North Hill (west) end, is a terrace of five modern cottages in 'traditional' style. The over-heavy glazing bars and absence of reveals to the windows mar the designs. Nos.2 & 4 are a conversion of a late 19th century industrial building on the site of a saw mill. Nos.10 & 12 are 18th century, timber framed, though No.10 might be earlier.



View west towards North Hill

- 4.54 On the south side, the bulky 1970s Wickham House office block, in pink brick and heavy slate-faced upper storey, is quite out of character. The adjacent open car park also detracts from the appearance of the area. Sandwiched between the car park and Short Cut Road is No.3, a typical 18th century timber-framed and plastered house.

- 4.55 The modern **Short Cut Road** makes an open gash in the frontage on both sides of the street, with unattractive views to north and south. Beyond, on the north side, Nos.22 & 22a date from the early 19th century, but modern windows spoil No.22. Adjacent is a late 19th century two and a half storey terrace, in red brick with steps up to recessed doors with moulded brick arches. The original windows survive throughout.



Short Cut Road



Council Offices and Ryegate House

- 4.56 The rest of the north side is composed of blocks of modern development. Claudius Court is pleasantly designed, but not really in keeping with the Victorian character of this part of the street. The Council Offices and Ryegate House, which front onto **St Peter's Street** (qv), are both eyesores. The poor quality railings to the street and open views to the office blocks on the far side of St Peter's Street also detract. These buildings are excluded from the Conservation Area.

- 4.57 No.25 (St Peter's Street) is a modern block of little quality. By contrast the modern terraced houses fronting Castle Court, have been sympathetically designed in 19th century style to fit in with the character of the street.
- 4.58 From Short Cut Road, the south side (Nos.9-21 including Nos.35 & 36 West Stockwell Street) has a fine group of mainly 17th and 18th century timber-framed and plastered buildings (Nos.17 and 17a are later, in brick).

17th and 18th century houses

Victorian terraces

- 4.59 Most of the rest of the south side is composed of five terraces of late Victorian red brick houses (Nos.23-95). Park Terrace (Nos.37-67) is dated 1894. Some retain their original sash windows and four-panelled doors. Others have replacement aluminium or UPVC windows and doors that spoil their appearance. Originally, all had brick garden walls and gate piers; restoring them would add greatly to the appearance of the street.
- 4.60 The east end of the street opens up to views of the **Lower Park** with the ornamental Rye Gates, presented to the town by Capt. H S Naylor Leyland in 1892. On the south side are No.97 (Castlegate Cottage) and Nos.99 & 101, a fine early 19th century pair of houses, with good simple doorcases and original pattern small-paned sash windows. The traditional tiled street nameplates are attractive and record the former name of the street, Dutch Lane.



Nos.99 & 101



Middle Wall

- 4.61 To the north is **Middle Wall**, which runs alongside Lower Park and to a bridge over the river. Situated just outside the town walls, this has a quite rural and picturesque character with green spaces and lots of trees and a group of three 18th century weatherboarded and rendered cottages (Nos.3-5).

George Street

- 4.62 This is an old established street, linking High Street with William's Walk and Maidenburgh Street. The side of the George Hotel has a number of early windows and a blocked carriage arch. The Hotel is let down by the three-storey wing at the rear, which is particularly ugly; a fresh colour scheme might help a little. The open car park would benefit from an enclosing wall along the street front.



View from High Street



Rear of George Hotel

- 4.63 On the east side, No.1 (Colchester Billiards & Snooker Club), probably dating from the 1920s, is set at an angle to the street, as was its predecessor. Nos.5 & 6 form a substantial three-storey late 19th century block, in red brick. The sash windows and rendered door and windowsurrounds, complete with scrolled pediments, add quality to the building. Adjoining, Nos.7 & 8 are an earlier pair of houses, with original sash windows and bracketed eaves. A plaque records that the 'late Astronomer Royal' Sir George Biddelaing (1801-1892) lived here. Modern infill housing completes the frontage towards Maidenburgh Street.

William's Walk

- 4.64 This is a narrow cross street linking East Stockwell Street with Maidenburgh Street. On the south side, the modern infill houses with continuous jetty reflect the traditional character of the area. There are two gaps in the frontage, one of them the rear entrance to Frank Naylor Court, with unsatisfactory views of the backs of High Street properties, including the George Hotel. At the east end is a late 19th century red brick hall, with rusticated quoins and tall piers to large dormer windows. William's Walk has traditional street nameplates in tiles.



View west along William's Walk



Nos.1-9, artisan housing

- 4.65 On the north side, No.12 is a converted industrial building dating from the 19th century, set back from the street. It has black weatherboarding and a pantiled roof, with a hoist above a central circular window under a small gable. The brick outbuildings, at right angles to the street, are in Flemish garden wall bond. No.11, which is listed, is 18th century, timber-framed and plastered. No.10 is a tall late 19th century red brick building.
- 4.66 Nos.1-9, along a short lane at a right angle to the street, are a surviving remnant of the 19th century artisan housing developments of which there were once several in the area. Opposite is a builder's yard, again a survival of a previous age. The street surface is poor and the front boundaries of the properties lack any real definition.

St Helen's lane

- 4.67 St Helen's Lane is another historic cross lane connecting East Stockwell Street and Maidenburgh Street. On the north side at the rear of the Chapel, is the former Stockwell Chapel Sabbath Schools, dated 1867. The building has ranges of round-headed windows with original pattern casements, moulded heads and rusticated keystones. The former graveyard has been turned into a small car park.



View west along St Helen's Lane



Taylor court

- 4.68 The street then widens out losing any sense of enclosure. Though pleasantly designed, the pair of bungalows (Nos.1 & 2) and the maisonettes of Taylor Court have a suburban feel, out of character with their town centre location.
- 4.69 On the south side, the Club Valentino with its exposed ducts and flat roof detracts from the appearance of the street. By contrast the adjacent Victorian school building has much of interest, including the tall arched door with decorative iron hinges. Unfortunately, the diaper-patterned brickwork is all but obscured by dreadful cement pointing.
- 4.70 The former graveyard of St Helen's Chapel is a pleasant open space, with a number of substantial trees and simple rustic railing, but there are no seats.

Nunn's Road

- 4.71 Formerly known as Nunn's Cut, Nunn's Road is a long-established street. Unusually, the entrance from North Hill is through a carriage arch, which is part of Nos.19 & 20 North Hill. The construction of Short Cut Road and the entrance to the multi-storey car park has destroyed the sense of enclosure and much of the historic character of the street. Views of the car park and the BT buildings dominate.



Nunn's Road



BT offices and multi-storey car park

- 4.72 What remains of interest is on the south side. Nos.1-5 are a terrace of three cottages, dating from c1880. They retain their original panelled doors and sash windows. The Old School was built as the Ebenezer Primitive Methodist Chapel. It has a plain gabled red brick front, with tall pointed windows and arched door. Nos.7-13 are two pairs of mid 19th century cottages, part of a longer terrace called Wedgwood Cottages on the 1876 OS map. No.21 is a rather handsome late 19th century double fronted red brick house.

- 4.73 The modern housing development on the east side of Short Cut Road and north side of Nunn's Road is of poor quality and design compared to other examples in the area. The more recent Priory Court tries hard but is let down by the details.

St Runwald Street

- 4.74 In 1876 this street did not exist. It was presumably laid out when what is now the Pizza Express building was constructed (see West Stockwell Street). The street leads into a large car park and service area at the rear of Greylow House and Williams and Griffin department store (see High Street). The backs of these buildings, together with the Telephone Exchange rising above on the west side, create a very ugly scene.



St Runwald Street



Car park

St Peter's Street


- 4.75 There is little of interest in this street. The modern residential developments are undistinguished and the eastern end of the street is dominated by the 1960s office blocks which have now been converted to residential use. The large advertisement hoardings do not enhance the entrance to North Hill.



View east along St Peter's Street

5.0 Significance

Above ground features

- 
- 5.1 The Roman town wall is the oldest feature above ground level and is a scheduled ancient monument. However, in this area, only two visible fragments survive, in Northgate Street. High Street is on the line of the *Via Principalis* or main street of the Roman town.
- 5.2 The mediaeval street pattern is largely intact. East and West Stockwell Streets, Maidenburgh Street, Northgate Street, Nunn's Road and St Helen's Lane are all ancient streets and, apart from where some widening has taken place since the Second World War, the street lines have probably changed very little since the streets were first established. Several of the streets retain historic property boundaries, including evidence for 'burgage' plots in the High Street.
- 5.3 The earliest buildings to survive are St Martin's Church and St Helen's Chapel. At least one house (30 East Stockwell Street) has remnants from the 14th century. A number of buildings have their origins in the 15th century, for example the Red Lion, the George Hotel and 3-5 West Stockwell Street. There are good groups of timber-framed houses dating from the 16th to 18th centuries in East and West Stockwell Streets, Stockwell, Maidenburgh Street and Northgate Street.
- 5.4 The Georgian period is well represented, the early ones in red brick (for example St Martin's House, West Stockwell Street), later ones often in grey brick for example 22 High Street or in stucco, for example the former Essex and Suffolk Fire Office. Victorian terraced houses and cottages contribute significantly to the character of The Dutch Quarter, particularly in Northgate Street, Maidenburgh Street and Nunn's Road. There are also good examples of 19th century chapels and school buildings.
- 5.5 Much of the character of the High Street now derives from the 19th and early 20th century commercial and retail buildings, including four impressive banks. The Hippodrome is an important example of theatre design whilst the Town Hall must one of the most impressive in the country for a town of Colchester's size.
- 5.6 In East and West Stockwell Streets and Maidenburgh Street, the combination of topography and buildings of different ages and styles creates a picturesque scene that has been largely maintained, even where modern development has taken place.
- 5.7 The significance of most of the surviving historic buildings is recognized in their listing. However the significance and quality of many of the later buildings is not generally appreciated and, at the moment, lacks any formal recognition.
- 5.8 A number of green spaces with mature trees make a significant contribution to the character of the area, for example the former graveyards of St Martin's, St Runwald's and St Helen's Chapel. The Lower Park forms a splendid setting for the northeast part of the Conservation Area.

Below ground features

- 5.9 The remains of the Roman Theatre have been recorded in Maidenburgh Street. There have been several other finds noted and there are likely to be extensive Roman deposits across the whole area. St Helen's Chapel may be on the site of a much earlier church. The properties on the High Street and other streets close to the centre are likely to be on the site of mediaeval or earlier buildings and any rear yards or gardens are likely to retain evidence of occupation.

**Open spaces:
Contribution to the area**

- 5.10 The open spaces have been assessed for their intrinsic quality and for their contribution to the special character of the Conservation Area. Several of them make a positive contribution and these are shown on Map 1. However, there are a number that detract from the area, including some that are used for car parking. These are shown on Map 2. It is the intrinsic value of these spaces that is reflected in the schedules and not their condition or management.

Spaces that make a positive contribution:

- St Martin's graveyard
- St Runwald's graveyard
- St Helen's graveyard
- Garden of St Martin's House, West Stockwell Street
- Open space at corner of St Helen's Lane and Taylor Court
- Lower Park
- Land beyond 3-5 Middle Mill

Spaces that detract from the area:

- Car parks and other areas around Nunn's Road multi-storey car park and BT buildings
- Car parks and service areas off St Runwald Street
- George Hotel car park
- Car park and other areas behind and at side of Wickham House, Northgate Street, Short Cut Road and Nunn's Road
- Area to side and rear of St Peter's Street Council Offices

**Buildings:
Contribution to the area**

- 5.11 The individual buildings and other structures have been assessed on their intrinsic architectural and historic interest and on their townscape contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. They include both listed and unlisted buildings.
- 5.12 The buildings in the first schedule (red for listed buildings, blue for unlisted buildings) are those that make a positive contribution to the character of the area and are shown on Map 1. The listed buildings are Grade II unless otherwise shown.
- 5.13 The buildings in the second schedule (green) are those that detract from the character of the area and are shown on Map 2.
- 5.14 The remainder of the buildings and spaces, uncoloured on the maps, are judged to have a neutral effect on the character of the area.

Buildings that make a positive contribution to the area:

High Street

High Street (South Side)

- Nos.1 & 2
- No. 3
- No. 4
- No. 5
- No. 9 (Barclays Bank)
- No. 10
- Nos.11a & 11b (Grade II*)
- Nos.12 & 13
- No. 14
- No. 15
- No. 16
- Nos.17 & 18
- Nos.21 & 21a
- No. 22
- No. 25 (Nat West Bank)
- No. 27 (Lloyds TSB)
- Nos.28-30
- Nos.31, 31a & 32
- No. 33
- No. 34
- Nos.35-37
- No. 38 (part of Marks & Spencer)
- Nos.42-44 (Red Lion Hotel) (Grade I)
- Nos.45-47
- Nos.52 & 53
- No. 54
- Nos.56 & 57
- No. 58
- No. 59

High Street (North Side)

- No. 112
- The George Hotel (Grade II*)
- Nos.117 & 118
- Nos.123 & 124
- No. 125
- No. 126 (former Bay & Say PH)
- No. 131 (Hippodrome Theatre)
- Nos.133 & 134
- Nos.135 & 136
- No. 137
- Town Hall (Grade I)
- Column & Street Light, right of entrance to Town Hall (Grade II*)
- No. 146
- Nos.147 & 149
- Nos.150 & 151
- No. 156 (Wig & Pen)
- No. 156A (St George's Hall)
- The Albert Hall (Co-op Bank)
- No. 157 (former Essex & Suffolk Fire Office) (Grade II*)
- Nos.158 & 159

The Dutch Quarter

East Stockwell Street (East Side)

- No. 7
- Nos.8, 9 & 10
- Nos.11 & 12
- No. 13 (Tudor House)
- Former Stockwell Congregational Chapel & Sunday Schoolhouse
- No. 15
- No. 16
- No. 18

East Stockwell Street (West Side)

- Nos.28, 29 & 29a
- No. 30
- No. 36
- Nos.37 & 38
- Old School
- No. 43a
- No. 43 (Grade II*)
- No. 44
- Nos.45 & 46

George Street

- Nos.5 & 6 (Colne House)
- Nos.7 & 8

Maidenburgh Street (East Side)

- Former Warehouse
- Nos.6a & 6b (Roger Browning House)
- No. 7 (former Sun Inn)
- Nos.11 & 12
- Nos.14 & 15
- Nos.16-18
- Nos.19-22
- Nos.23 & 23a
- Nos.24-26
- No. 30
- Nos.31 & 32
- No. 33
- No. 38
- Nos.39 & 40

Maidenburgh Street (West Side)

- Nos.41-46
- Nos.47-50
- Nos.57 & 58
- Nos.59 & 60
- No. 61
- Nos.62 & 63
- Nos.64 & 65 (Alfred's Place)
- Nos.66 & 67
- No. 68
- St Helen's Chapel
- Nos.69 & 70
- Nos.71 & 72
- No. 73 (Parkside House)

Middle Mill

- Nos.3-5

Buildings that detract from the area:

High Street

High Street (South Side)

- Nos.48-50

High Street (North Side)

- Nos.108 & 109
- Nos.138-144 (Greylow House)

The Dutch Quarter

East Stockwell Street (West Side)

- Nos.39-42 (Colchester Townhouse)

George Street

- Rear wing of George Hotel

Northgate Street (South Side)

- No. 1 (Wickham House)

St Peter's Street (South Side)

- No. 21 (Council Offices)
- Ryegate House

Off Nunn's Road

- Former Telephone Exchange and adjacent office block
- Multi-storey car park

St Helen's Lane

- ClubValentino

St Runwald Street

- Rear elevations of Greylow House, Williams & Griffin department store and adjoining buildings

Northgate Street (South Side)

- No. 3
- Nos.9 & 11
- Nos.13 & 15
- Nos.17 & 17a
- No. 19
- No. 21
- Nos.23-29 (odd)
- Nos.31-35 (odd)
- Nos.37-67 (odd)
- Nos.69-81 (odd)
- No. 97 (Castlegate Cottage)
- Nos.99 & 101

Northgate Street (North Side)

- Nos.2 & 4
- Nos.10 & 12
- No. 22a
- Nos.24-32 (evens)

Nunn's Road

- Nos.1-5 (odd)
- Old School House
- Nos.7-13 (odd)
- No. 21

St Helen's lane

- Former School

St Runwald Street (North Side)

- Pizza Express (former Victoria Chambers)

St Runwald Street (South Side)

- Town Hall Chambers
- Small warehouse adj. Town Hall Chambers

Stockwell

- Nos.1-7

West Stockwell Street (East Side)

- No. 2
- Nos.3-5 (Grade II*)
- No. 6
- No. 7
- Nos.8 & 9
- Former Church of St Martin (Grade II*)
- Nos.11 & 12
- No. 13
- Stockwell Arms Inn
- Nos.19-21
- Nos.29-31
- No. 35

West Stockwell Street (West Side)

- Nos.36 & 37
- No. 38
- Nos.40-43
- Nos.46 & 47
- Nos.48-50
- No. 51 (former Nelson's Head PH)
- Nos.53-55
- No. 56
- No. 57
- No. 58
- Nos.59 & 60
- No. 62
- No. 63 (St Martin's House)
- No. 64 (former Library)

William's Walk

- Nos.1 & 2
- Nos.3 & 4
- Nos.5-9
- No. 10
- No. 11
- No. 12
- Hall

6.0 Issues and Recommendations


Buildings and Townscape

- 6.1 The area contains a significant number of listed buildings: it is essential that they are preserved and maintained in good condition. Very few buildings dating from after 1840 are protected through listing, except really outstanding buildings such as the Town Hall and Hippodrome.
- 6.2 The contribution of Victorian and Edwardian (and sometimes later) buildings needs to be recognised. They are marked on Map 1 and set out in the schedule in Section 5. Since they are within the Conservation Area and subject to a number of local plan policies, they have some limited protection, for example against unauthorised demolition, but it would be a good idea to make a 'Local List' of these buildings, with a brief description and photographic record. This would prove useful in considering any future proposals for these buildings, particularly for alterations that might affect their character.
- 6.3 Generally speaking, the buildings appear to be structurally sound and in fair or good condition. Many of the 19th century properties retain their original style of windows, but others, for example in Northgate Street, have been spoiled by replacement windows in aluminium or UPVC, in styles completely at odds with the character of the building. These windows can affect the value of a property, and there are alternative solutions that would provide modern levels of insulation, but still retain the character of the originals at a reasonable cost. The local authority could consider introducing an 'Article 4 Direction', which would enable these alterations to be brought under control.
- 6.4 There are a number of post-war buildings that, because of their size, position, style or materials, detract from the Conservation Area. These buildings are shown on Map 2 and in the schedule in Section 5. Where the opportunity arises, every encouragement should be given to their replacement with buildings that respect the character of the area. The worst offenders are clearly the former Telephone Exchange and adjacent office block, the impact of which is felt over a wide area. If the land surrounding these blocks is included, there is potentially a very large site available for redevelopment. Experience in other historic towns suggests that redevelopment for residential purposes could well be an economically viable proposition.
- 6.5 A particular issue in the High Street is the poor quality of many of the shop fronts, particularly those that do not relate to the style or design of the buildings of which they are part. Design guidance could be drawn up that would guide new proposals as they are made and positive encouragement should be given to property owners to tackle the worst examples.
- 6.6 The open spaces that contribute to the character of the area need to be protected and arrangements made for their long-term maintenance. Former graveyards are particularly vulnerable. The car parking areas at the rear of the George Hotel, off St Runwald Street and at the side of Wickham House, all detract from the appearance of the area. If they are to stay in car parking use, they need to be improved, through landscaping and other environmental improvements.

Street Pattern and Property Boundaries

- 6.7 Apart from the buildings and open spaces, it is the historic street pattern and property boundaries, which survived largely intact until the 20th century, that give the town its unique and distinctive character. These should be protected and reflected in any new development. The 1876 Ordnance Survey provides a useful starting point.

Environmental Matters

- 
- 6.8 The appearance of the ground surfaces, signage and street furniture is critical, not just for the appearance of the street, but also in maintaining investment in the properties and the amenity of residents and visitors alike.
- 6.9 Throughout the Dutch Quarter, there is a variety of paving materials and street signage, partly arising from the one-way traffic systems and other restrictions, resulting in one or two of the streets losing some of their identity. In several streets the condition of the surfacing is poor and some areas of brick paving have been repaired in tarmac. Yellow lines and directional arrows detract from the quality of the street scene and there are a number of redundant lighting columns. A coordinated paving and signage scheme is recommended, especially one that would obviate the need for yellow lines.
- 6.10 The new paving and street furniture in the High Street is of good quality and well laid out, but is being spoiled by deposits of chewing gum and other stains. High quality schemes need high quality maintenance and there is no substitute for regular cleaning and repair. Though not widespread, there are a number of areas that suffer from graffiti. Experience elsewhere shows that the only real solution is to get rid of it quickly, preferably within twenty-four hours.

APPENDIX A

Statutory Protection and Planning Policy

Conservation Area: the Colchester Town Centre Conservation Area was designated in 1968. It was amended in 1978 and 1980.

Ancient Monuments: the Colchester Town Wall; Colchester Castle and Park; the Benedictine Abbey of St John; St Botolph's Augustinian Priory; Southeast corner of Roman Town in East Hill House gardens.

Listed Buildings: those buildings that are included in the Statutory List of buildings of special architectural or historic interest are shown in red in the schedule of buildings in Section 5.0 and on the accompanying maps.

Parks and Gardens: the Castle Park is included in the national Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Planning Policy: the most recent local planning policies for the area are set out in the adopted Colchester Borough Local Plan. The following policies are of particular relevance for the Conservation Area:

- **Policy UAE1** protects the buildings, open spaces, trees and views that go to make up the character of the Conservation Area
- **Policy UAE2** sets out criteria against which planning applications will be judged in order to protect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- **Policy UAE3** sets out the (very limited) circumstances in which consent might be given for the demolition of unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area
- **Policy UAE4** states the presumption against the demolition of listed buildings
- **Policy UAE5** sets out criteria against which applications for listed building consent will be judged in order to preserve the special interest of the building
- **Policy UAE8** sets out the presumption against development that would adversely affect ancient monuments and their settings and includes requirements for archaeological assessments and mitigation strategies
- **Policy UAE11** protects sites on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens

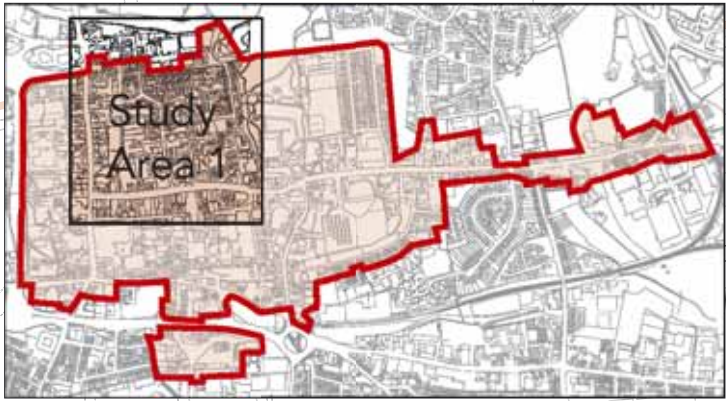
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Colchester

Town Centre Conservation Area



Conservation Area boundary

Study Area 1: High Street (West) and The Dutch Quarter

Map 1: Positive Contributions

- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Listed buildings
- Other buildings of historic or architectural interest
- Spaces making a significant contribution to Conservation Area

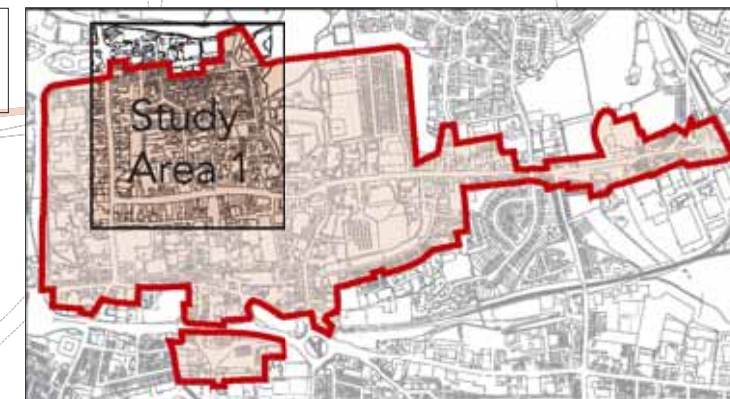
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Colchester

Town Centre Conservation Area





Conservation Area boundary

Study Area 1:

High Street (West) and The Dutch Quarter

Map 2: Negative contributions

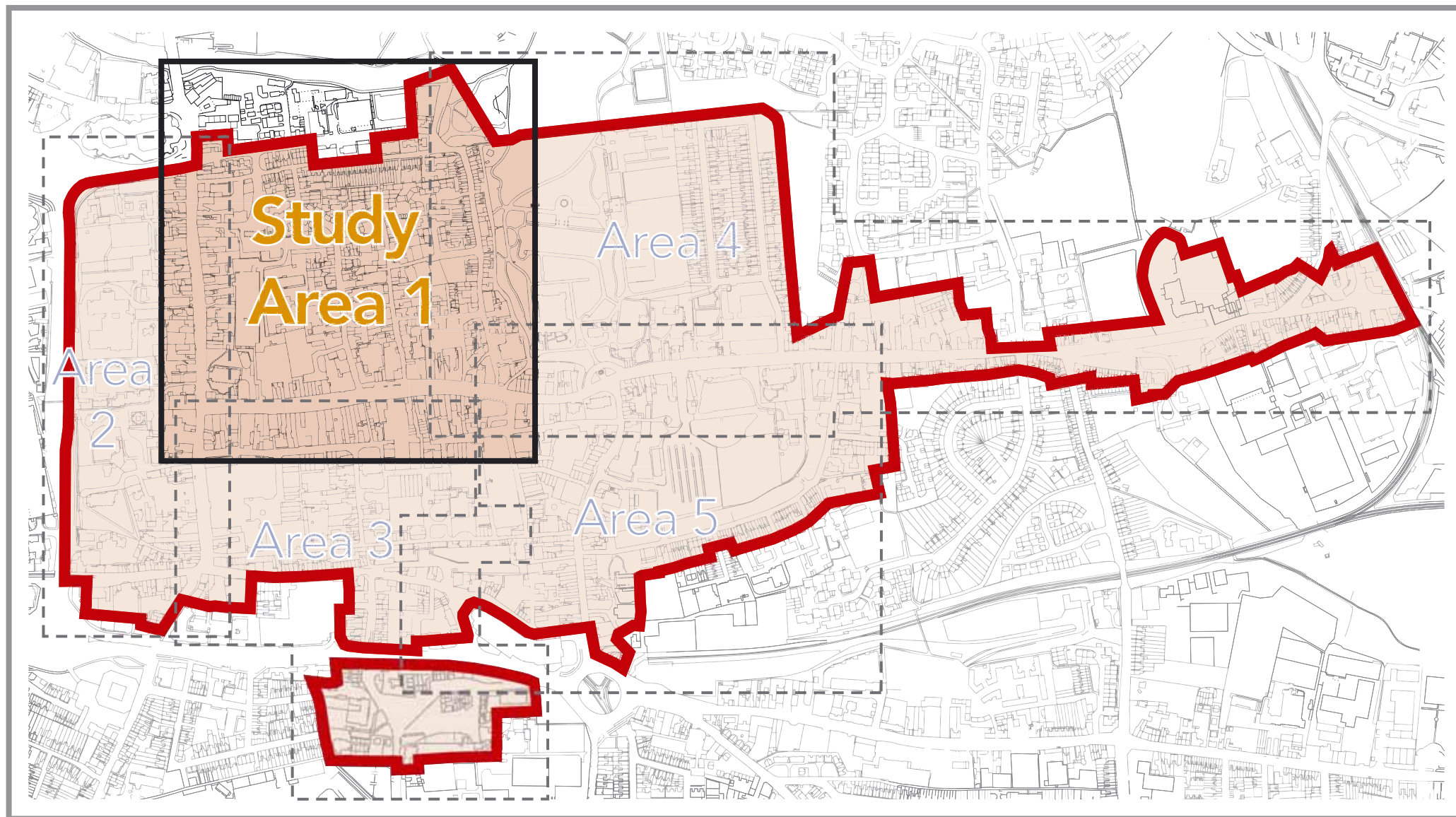
-  Buildings detracting from the Conservation Area
-  Spaces detracting from the Conservation Area

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High Street (West) & The Dutch Quarter

Map 3: Colchester 1876 Ordnance Survey





Colchester Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal Study Area 1