

Gloucester Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal

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A distinctive historic city

The City of Bristol is one of the most historic cities in England. Founded in about 1000AD the city has always been a place of change, economic growth and innovation.

The basis for Bristol’s urban route structure is essentially informed by medieval development, centred on the cross roads of High Street, Corn Street, Broad Street and Wine Street and the core of the historic walled town.

As Bristol grew and expanded beyond its walls, much of the outer developments still corresponded to an historic route structure or early field patterns. Despite centuries of urban growth and changes in built fabric above ground, the core of the city and many of its suburbs still retains much of its underlying route structure.

During the 20th century Bristol has seen its most dramatic changes with the depopulation of the central core, bombing during the Second World War and the dominance of private motor car use. Although this period has continued the process of urban renewal and the replacement of built form it is the Post War highway infrastructure projects that have eroded the physical fabric of the city on a scale unlike any other period.

Within this broad context, Bristol’s character is defined by a variety of distinct neighbourhoods and designated Conservation Areas - areas with a distinctive character informed by their topography, landscape, views, layout, land use and social development, architectural style, materials, etc.

A Character Appraisal is intended to help to explain how a specific conservation area has arrived at its current state from its origins, and highlighting the key features that define the area as it exists today.

This understanding provides the basis from which appropriate changes to the area can be achieved. This will enable development whilst respecting the historic legacy and unique sense of place that make our historic spaces successful places. Ultimately it will help to deliver local plan policies particularly around issues concerning local character and distinctiveness.

Introduction

1



Policy context, scope and status

1.1 Planning Policy Context

The statutory definition of a Conservation Area is “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance” (Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s.69(1)). Bristol currently has 33 designated Conservation Areas, covering approximately 30% of the city.

There is a requirement to review those areas from time to time so that changes in both the understanding of the area and its physical context can be accommodated. This imperative is emphasised in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012.

The 1993 Conservation Enhancement Statements (PAN 2) were the last wholesale assessment of the city’s Conservation Areas. Since 2008, the City Design Group have been undertaking a programme reviewing the city’s Conservation Areas, following English Heritage best practice guidance ‘Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management’ (2005; revised 2011).

Adopted Character Appraisals are Planning Guidance with status as a material consideration in planning decisions. An appraisal provides an evidence base for determining character and context intended to guide and inform Development Management process and appeal decisions.

Character Appraisals also form part of a suite of guidance documents referred to in Policy BCS21 and BCS22 of the Core Strategy and the Local Character and Distinctiveness Policy (DM26) and Heritage Assets Policy (DM31) in the Development Management Policy document. The Core Strategy (June 2011) is the overall approach for planning in Bristol, guiding development and setting out key elements of the planning framework up to 2026 and beyond.

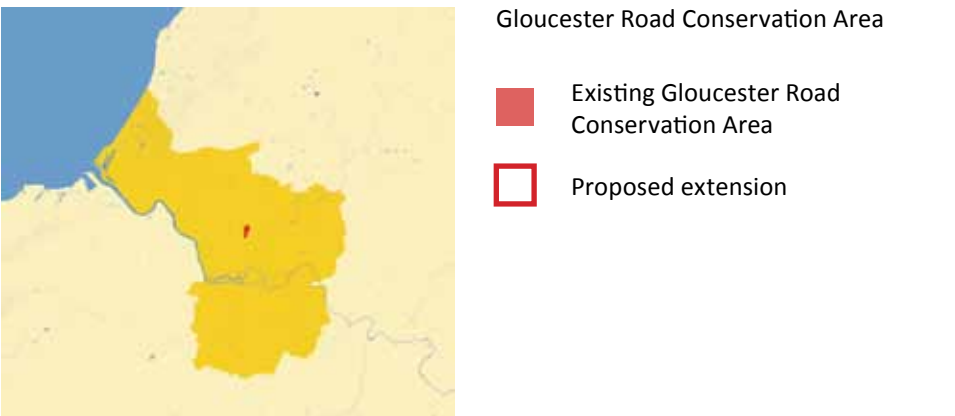
1.2 Purpose and scope

A character appraisal provides a basis from which change can be appropriately managed. Elements that make a positive contribution are identified as are features that offer an opportunity for enhancement.

‘Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area should be treated as substantial harm or less than substantial harm...Taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole’. (NPPF para. 138)

‘Opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas (and their setting) that enhance or better reveal their significance or preserve elements that make a positive contribution will be treated favourably.’ (NPPF para. 137)

Conservation Area designation with an adopted Character Appraisal will also be a tool to help highlight the value and significance of the Gloucester Road Conservation Area, raising its profile, and helping to promote it as a special place worthy of its status as a Designated Heritage Asset.



Language of the document

Character/context

The main visual characteristics of an area resulting from the influence of geology, topography, urban layout, plot form, land use, and predominant building ages, types, form and materials.

Heritage Asset

Heritage Assets are irreplaceable and are identified as having degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Designated Heritage Assets include Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens etc. An Undesignated Heritage Asset are those identified by the Local Authority or local communities e.g locally listed buildings or Unlisted Buildings of Merit (see Building Types)

Topography

The physical form of an area defined by natural features of relief and geographic elements such as rivers.

Views

Within the scope of this document views are discussed in terms of locations from which a view to a specific landmark, or series of features (natural or built) is possible.

Landmark

A conspicuous building or structure; one that stands out from the background of buildings due to its scale, function or material detailing; a point of reference in the urban scene.

Local Landmark

A terminating feature in local views or a well known or prominent building in the local context rather than across the wider townscape.

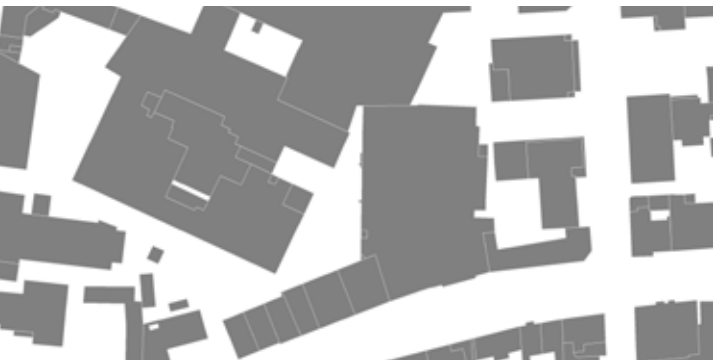
Urban structure

The framework of routes and spaces and the way they relate to one another as defined in ‘*The Dictionary of Urbanism*’ Cowan, R.



Urban grain

The pattern of development in terms of the size of street blocks, building plots and the size of building in relation to its plot as defined in ‘*The Dictionary of Urbanism*’.



Gloucester Road Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Building Types

Unlisted Buildings of Merit – buildings that make a special contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area; usually of particular architectural or historic interest. Categorised as ‘undesigned heritage assets’, they area of material consideration in planning decisions. Their preservation and sensitive adaptation will be encouraged through the Development Management process.

Grouped Buildings of Merit – buildings that form an attractive group and are collectively of significance. It may be their method or date of construction, or distinctive and unifying architectural treatment that is of interest. Also ‘undesigned heritage assets’; where alteration or demolition would undermine the group value, this will likely be resisted.

Character Buildings – buildings that make a positive contribution to the overall character and sense of place of the Conservation Area. Their value is in their overall consistency of scale, form, materials or date which helps to form the built backcloth for the area. It is the specific characteristics that contribute to this overall sense of place that will be encouraged to retain or emulate in future planning applications.

Neutral Buildings – buildings that make neither a positive nor negative contribution.

Negative Buildings – buildings that due to their location, scale, materials form or detailed design, are a negative intrusion on the area and which offer the potential for beneficial change that would enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

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Built Form

Buildings and structures described using the following terms.

Scale

The size of a building described in terms of the number of floors.

Massing

Relates to the building or group of buildings’ volume or perceived volume as a result of its structural form.

Materials

The context study refers to materials in terms of the predominant building materials used in an area for walling, paving and roofing.

Distinctive frontage

A structure or series of buildings such as a terrace that has specific architectural quality, recognisable plot rhythm, consistent use of materials or a combination of the above. A distinctive frontage will make a positive contribution to local street character or even define the local character.

Long view or vista

A channelled view to one of a series of landmarks or landscape.

Conservation area boundaries

1.3 Location

Gloucester Road lies to the north of the city and forms a major traditional shopping approach into the city centre. Passing through the residential suburbs of Bishopston and St Andrew’s, the boundaries take in the main retail area fronting Gloucester Road; from the Arches to Sommerville Road and the residential street North Road.

Gloucester Road is abutted to the south by neighbouring Conservation Areas:

- Cotham and Redland to the south west
- Montpellier to the south east.

1.4 Conservation Area Designations

Gloucester Road was previously part of the Cotham, Redland and Gloucester Road Conservation Area, designated in February 1981.

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act sets out the requirement for Local Planning Authorities to review its designated Conservation Areas from time-to-time so that changes in both the understanding of the area and its physical context can be accommodated, boundaries adjusted, new issues captured, and policies, management and proposals for intervention updated accordingly.

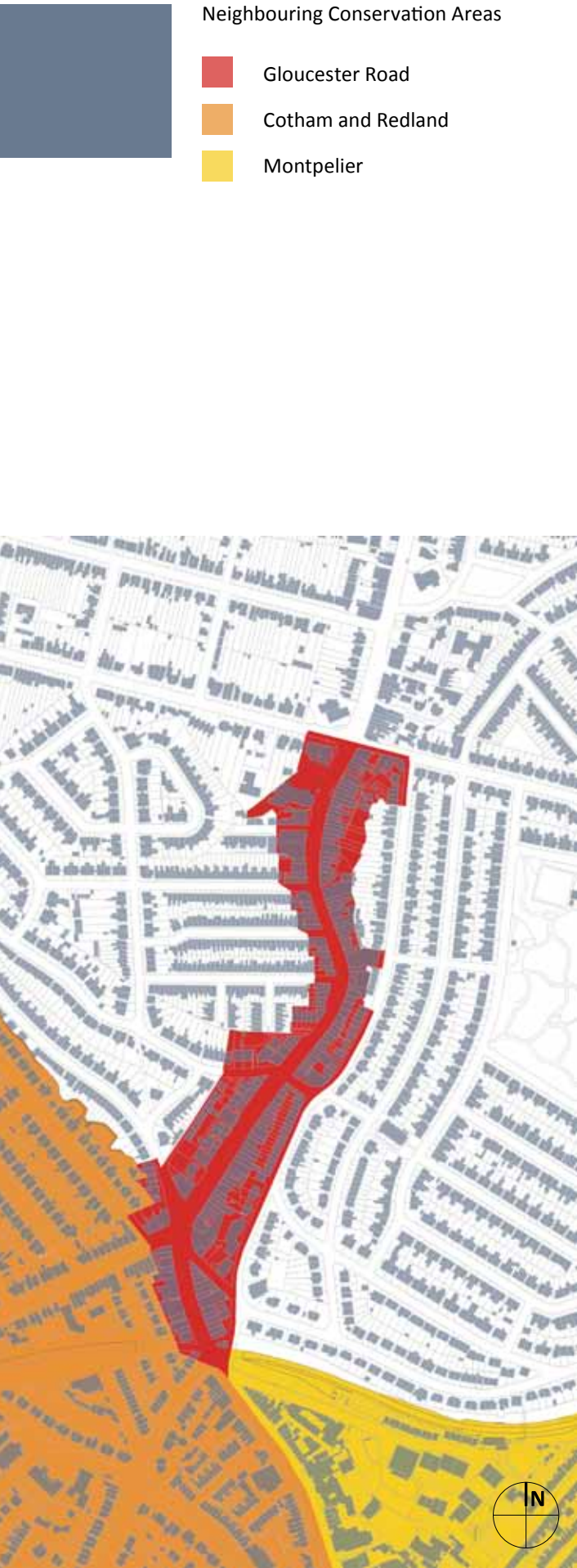
Through the character appraisal process, the boundaries were reviewed and subject to alteration in September 2011 , when the Gloucester Road area was considered to warrant a separate Conservation Area in its own right.

The boundary of the Conservation Area has been reassessed as part of this character appraisal process, and reviewed using the parameters of:

- Surviving historic route structure
- Street layout built fabric that was extant prior to the OS 1880 map;
- Built form that makes a specific contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the local context.

This process revealed that a significant portion of historic townscape was omitted. The new Gloucester Road Conservation Area boundaries reflects the designation extension to:

- Gloucester Road North (Character Area 2) the continuation of Gloucester Road curving beyond Meridian Terrace, defined by fine grain gable fronted terraces and book ended to the north by larger scale buildings including the Bristol North Baths and new Library.



Local character and distinctiveness

2



1	3	1 Former Victorian villa fronting Claremont Road
2	4	2 Architectural details and historic shopfronts
		3 Semi detached villa behind modern shop unit
		4 Distinctive gabled roofline

Summary of positive context

2.1 Summary description

The predominant character of the Conservation Area is derived from the main retail area fronting Gloucester Road with residential streets behind.

The route of the road has been defined by the course of the now culverted Cutlers Mill Brook creating a series of deflected views from the Arches to the junction of Sommerville Road.

Two prominent landmarks bookend the Conservation Area; the Arches railway bridge to the south and the former Bristol North Baths and associated chimney to the northern end.

The properties along the east side of the street are generally purpose built two storey shops, gable fronted, many with barge boards, and other individual three storey buildings with good architectural details.

The west side is more varied particularly with the properties between Elton Road and Claremont Road. These are earlier semi-detached three storey villas where the former front gardens have been built over for single storey retail units in the twentieth century.

To the west there are several streets that are aligned perpendicular to Gloucester Road, the layout of which responds to the former field alignment and small holdings recorded on the mid nineteenth century tithe map.

The residential streets to either side of Gloucester Road are predominantly two storey, bay fronted, pennant sandstone or brick, semi detached and terraced properties. This creates a tight, more intimate character immediately off the busy Gloucester Road.

2.2 Positive context

- Prominent, distinctive gateway to the south formed by the Arches.
- Grade II listed former North Baths and associated chimney forming prominent landmark to the North.
- Quality of Undesignated Heritage Assets, particularly groups of distinctive frontages.
- Surviving tradition shop fronts and architectural detailing above shops.
- Active frontages containing a diverse range of businesses and independent retailers.
- Series of deflected views and vistas along Gloucester Road responding to the curved route defined by the meander in the river valley.
- Legibility between main route and smaller scale, quiet residential side streets behind.

2.3 Negative Features

- Traffic volume and conflicts between pedestrian/ cycling and vehicular movement
- The pavements are also quite narrow along the street and where there are wider areas refuse storage and general clutter is having a negative impact on the public realm
- South end of Gloucester Road dominated by two significant road junctions.
- Poor maintenance and use of inappropriate materials of traditional buildings
- Poor quality shopfronts and signage along Gloucester Road frontages
- Oversized commercial signage and hoardings
- Poor air quality largely resulting from the high traffic volume



Landscape

2.4 Topography

Gently sloping southwards towards the City Centre, Gloucester Road sits at the low point of a valley with the surrounding residential streets rising up on either side. The streets to the east tend to follow the contours while those on the west cut across resulting in relatively steep streets.

With the route largely defined by the Cutlers Mill Brook the curving form reaches a low point and levels out where the Horfield Brook joins at the Zetland Road junction.

Following the course of Cutlers Mill and Horfield Brook, geologically the Gloucester Road area cuts through 4 types of bedrock from the Jurassic Blue Lias, forming the higher ground to the north, through to the lower Triassic Mercian Mudstone to the south.

2.5 Views and vantage points

Resulting from the curving geometry of the Brook, the length of the Conservation Area along Gloucester Road is characterised by a series of deflected views.

Largely contained by the 2-3 storey scale terrace development there are some longer views that open up to the south west which are terminated by the building group at the Zetland Road junction and treeline along the railway embankment.

2.6 Landmarks

The Grade II listed Bristol North Baths forms a distinctive landmark to the north of the Conservation Area due to its scale and Edwardian Baroque architectural detailing.

The associated Chimney due to its scale and location forms a prominent feature in the townscape and skyline both within and into the Conservation Area.

Either side of this building is the locally distinctive Bristol Flyer public house and the former Methodist Chapel on the corner of Berkeley Road which serve as local landmarks.

Falling outside the Conservation Area the David Thomas Memorial Church Spire forms a prominent feature in the skyline from the north of the conservation area and also features prominently in views from Claremount Road and Overton Road, accentuated by the level change across Gloucester Road.

Topography and landmarks

Local topography

Positive landmark buildings

1 Former Methodist Chapel

2 Bristol North Baths

3 Bristol Flyer public house

4 Former Congregational Chapel, now David Thomas House

5 The Arches



Historic development

3



First Edition Ordnance Survey, 1880s

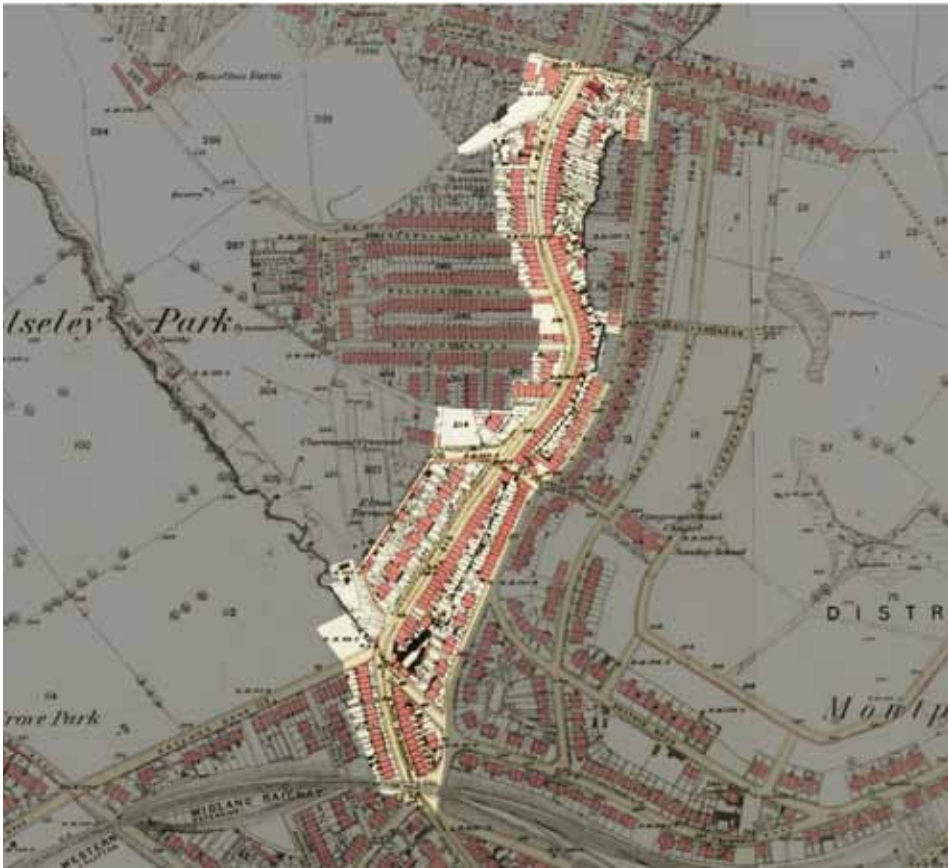


- 1 1840s Horfield Tithe map
- 2 1880s Ordnance Survey plan
- 3 RAF aerial photograph, 1946

Evolution of route structure



- 1840s**
- Gloucester Road is a historic route into Bristol. The route is largely defined by the winding course of the Cutlers Mill Brook visible to the east of the road on the Horfield Tithe Map, 1840.
 - At this date there was relatively little development in this area of Horfield parish, but an area of smallholdings with associated individual dwellings had been established on the valley slopes to the west and perpendicular to the Gloucester Road. All these properties are listed as houses and gardens on the tithe map apportionment.



- 1880s**
- Rapid development up the Gloucester Road had occurred by the 1880s and most of the existing properties within the mapped area date to this period.
 - The earlier smallholdings had been replaced by the terraced streets of Raglan Road, Wolseley Road and Shadwell Road. The layout of these streets follow the pattern of the former house and garden plots.



- 1946**
- The view from 1946 indicates little change to the area since the Victorian period and that Bishopston had survived largely unscathed by the aerial bombing attacks of the Second World War that did so much damage to other parts of the city.

The area of Neylor’s Cottages as shown on the Horfield Tithe Map, 1841. The Gloucester Road Conservation Area is shown in red.

Summary of historic development

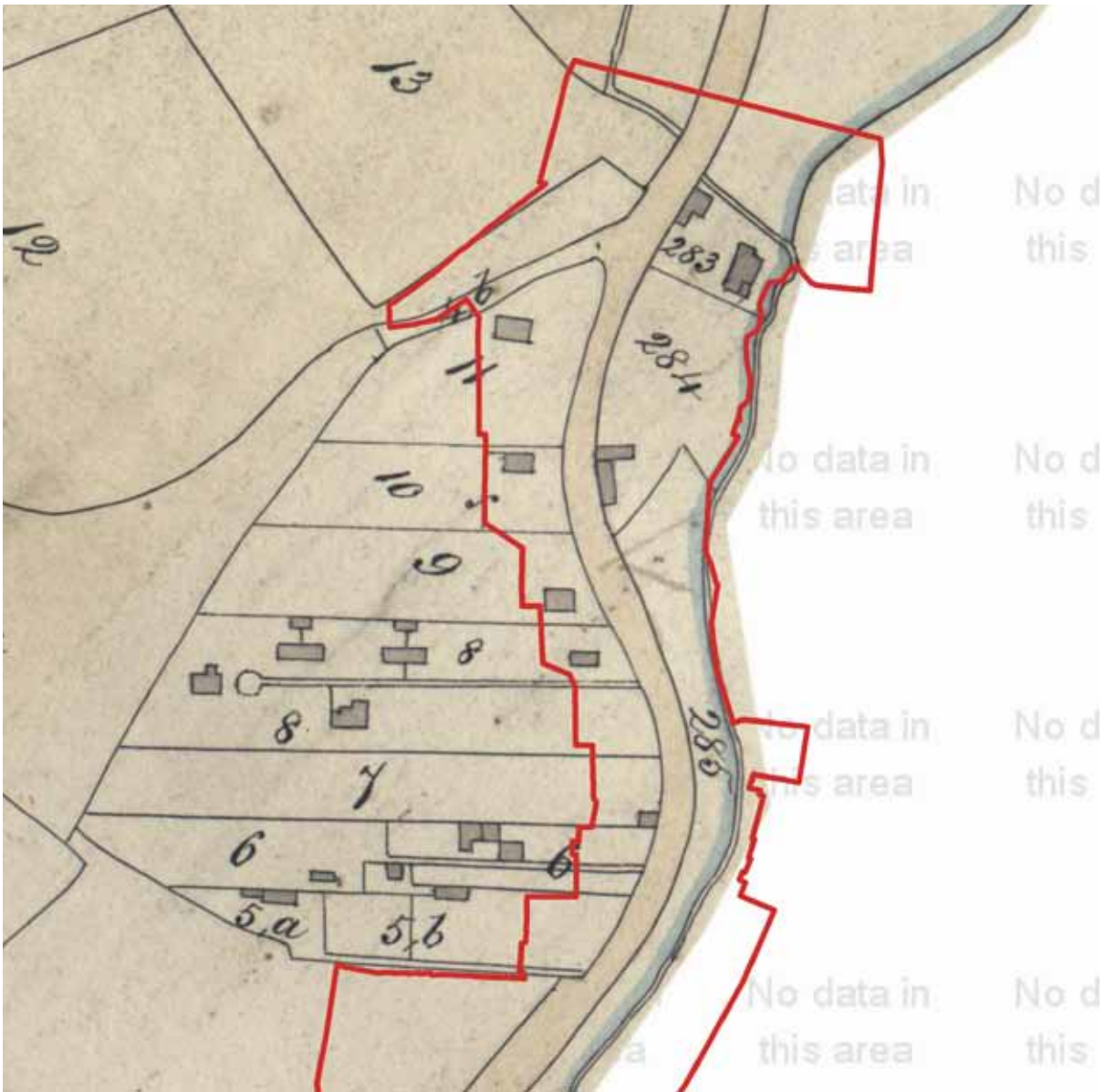
Gloucester Road is an early north-south route along the Horfield valley, however, development along this section of highway did not begin until the 1820s.

The industrialisation of central Bristol led to the expansion of the urban area and speculative developments along key routes into the city. Some of the earliest of these developments in Horfield were Neylor’s Cottages, built by Henry Neylor in about 1823. This development within a series of strips to the west of Gloucester Road is shown on the Horfield Tithe Map of 1841. These properties were redeveloped before the first Ordnance Survey in the 1880s, although Shadwell, Wolseley and Raglan roads retain the alignment of some of the original Neylor’s Cottages strips.

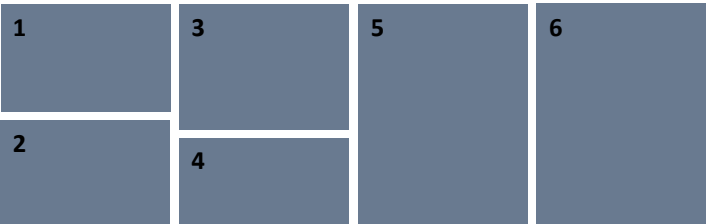
Further development to the south of Neylor’s Cottages took place in 1851 with a series of semi-detached villas along the west side of Gloucester Road. These two-storey buildings survive to the rear of the shops of the Promenade.

By 1880 the area had become fully developed. The Temple Meads to Clifton Down Midland Extension passenger railway line opened in 1874 introducing the ‘Arches’ viaduct over the Cheltenham Road/Cromwell Road junction. At about the same time the first shops along Cheltenham Road and Gloucester Road opened.

Later developments saw the construction of the Bristol North Baths in 1912 (now Grade II Listed) and the Pringle’s Picture House (later the Scala) opening on Cromwell Road in 1910. The cinema was demolished in 1974.



Historic development



- 1 Gloucester Road, c.1920s. Bristol North Baths on the left and the Methodist Chapel beyond at the junction with Berkeley Road. Vaughan Collection postcard, 43207/9/19/25
- 2 Cheltenham Road, looking south towards the Arches, c.1910s. Vaughan Collection postcard 43207/9/19/11
- 3 R. & J. Dick, Ltd, power transmission engineers, had shops in several British cities. They occupied 195 Gloucester Road from 1942-46. Hartley Collection photograph 2159
- 4 William Morgan’s drapery shop at number 13 and Emily Facey’s shoe store at 15 Gloucester Road can both be traced back to at least 1894. Hartley Collection photograph H213
- 5 The New Inn, 97 Gloucester Road in the 1940s. The Inn was established in the 1870s. Hartley Collection photograph H13
- 6 Petch’s Wines and Spirits was situated at 71 Gloucester Road from 1919-58. Hartley Collection photograph 169



Character areas

4



Gloucester Road Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Adopted April 2017
City Design Group

Looking south to junction with
Overton Road and Claremont Road

4 Character areas

Character Areas overview

The general character of the Gloucester Road Conservation Area has been defined in Section 2. The legacy of the area’s historic development has shaped and defined the character and appearance of the Conservation Area we see and experience today.

The Conservation Area has been divided into two separate ‘Character Areas’, defined by ...

- 1 The Arches to the Prom:** the gently sloping southern end of Gloucester Road characterised by the bustling commercial street and generous public realm along the Promenade book ended by the Arches and set against the quieter residential quality of North Road.
- 2 Bristol North Baths environs:** the continuation of Gloucester Road curving beyond Meridian Terrace, defined by fine grain gable fronted terraces and book ended to the north by larger scale buildings including the Bristol North Baths.

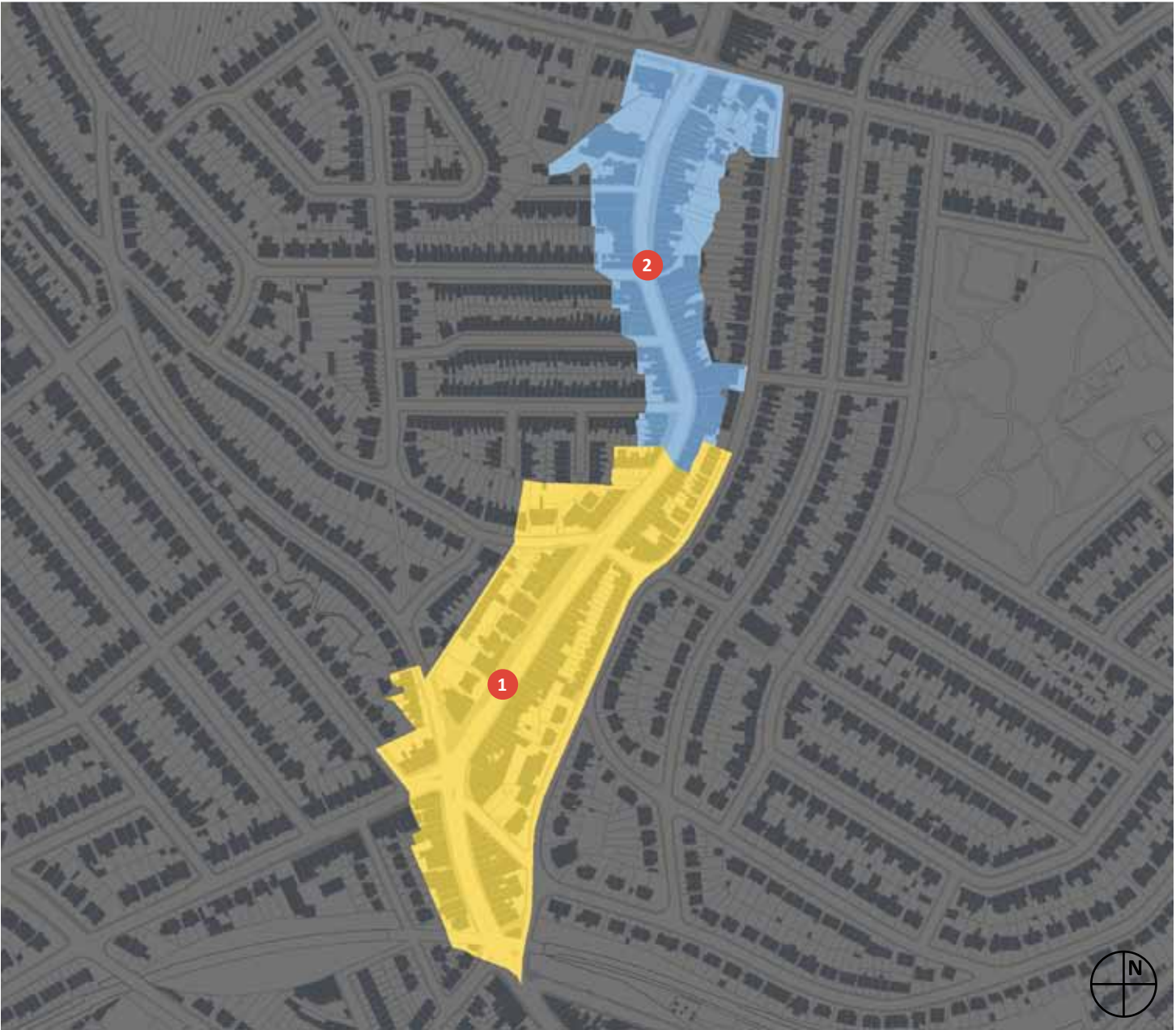
Criteria for character areas

The character areas have been defined using English Heritage guidance provided in ‘*Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice*’ (2010), although the boundaries have been adjusted to fit with existing conservation area or neighbourhood boundaries where practical.

Each character area has been defined according to its predominant physical characteristics: topography, urban structure, scale and massing, building ages and material palette. This is in accordance with Development Management policies on local character and distinctiveness.

The boundaries are an attempt to define where these physical characteristics notably change, although there will be design influences within neighbouring areas. Therefore adjoining character should be considered in any response to context.

The key challenges and opportunities for each character area are given at the end of each character description section. These challenges are not an exhaustive list and are presented as the significant issues and potential opportunities as identified through the Our Place project and public consultation.



1 The Arches to the Prom

Summary description

Taking in the gently sloping northern most stretch of Cheltenham Road, Gloucester Road up to Meridian Terrace and residential street North Road to the east, the area is largely defined by its commercial shopping function. Within this there are four distinct areas which make up the character of the area.

The Arches forms a distinctive landmark and prominent gateway to the Conservation Area from the south and provides a unique setting to the commercial units along Cheltenham Road.

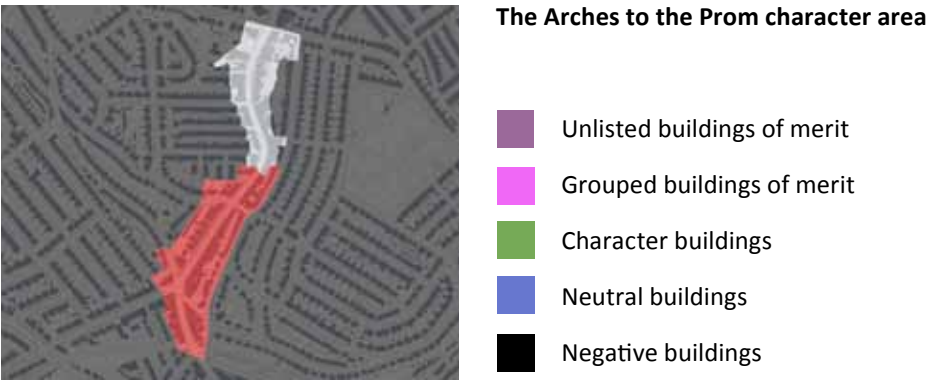
Historically a major transport node, formerly the Tramway Junction, Zetland Road Junction is an expansive and heavily trafficked road junction. Despite this the quality of Character and Buildings of Merit form a coherent group enclosing this area despite dating from a mix of periods.

The Promenade forms a generous area of public realm, with a wide pavement allowing opportunities for street tree planting and ‘spill out’ activity which has developed along the single storey commercial units built over the former front gardens of the Victorian villas behind.

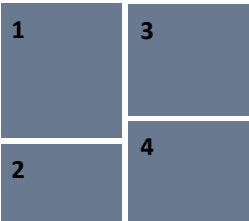
In contrast to the vibrant commercial character of Gloucester Road, North Road provides a quieter residential setting. A mix of brick gable fronted semi-detached dwellings, curving frontages onto the Overton Road junction and distinctive group of terraced cottages with unique brick detailing and covered shared thresholds contribute to the special character of the area.

Key views and landmarks

- Views to the Arches
- Views to David Thomas Memorial Church from Claremount Road and up Overton Road
- Views channelled south towards the Zetland Road Junction and landscaping along the railway embankment



The Arches to the Prom



- 1 Spill out activity along the Promenade
- 2 Former Morgans’ Department Store, replacing the tramway depot in the 1930s.
- 3 Surviving stone architectural detailing
- 4 Gothic style brick terrace North Road, most likely by local Architect Stuart Coleman.

Positive characteristics

- Distinctive frontages, particularly gable fronted shops
- Rich townscape resulting from architectural variety held together by the strong terrace form with strong plot rhythm.
- Traditional/ High quality shop fronts
- Architectural detailing above shop fronts
- Positive sense of enclosure through strong and distinctive building line as buildings directly address the pavement edge.
- Strong rhythm created by consistent runs of terraces along narrow plots, particularly on the east side
- Quality of former Victorian Villas along the Promenade
- Significant street trees at the junction with Elton Road and north end of the Promenade.
- Key buildings of merit and listed buildings add to the special interest of the area.
- Legibility between commercially focussed Gloucester Road and residential quality of North Road.

Predominant material palette

- Red brick
- Painted brick
- Render
- Timber shopfronts and windows
- Timber fascias/ barge boards
- Stone window surrounds, headers and cills.
- Ashlar limestone

Predominant scale and massing

- 2-3 storey gable fronted terraces
- 3-4 storey Victorian villas with single storey shop front extensions
- Strong building line, directly addressing pavement edge.

Enhancement opportunities

- There are a number of quality traditional shopfronts in the area. Poor quality shopfronts and signage has had a detrimental impact on the overall quality of the streetscene. Development should take the opportunity to reinstate high quality shopfronts taking into consideration the positive characteristics of the remaining traditionally restored units.
- Promote the use of canopies to retail units, with the benefit of providing both weather protection and shading as well as enhancing the traditional commercial character of the street.
- Promote the sensitive restoration or reinstatement of traditional features, such as the prominent timber fascias to the gable fronted terraces.
- Further enhance the quality of Buildings of Merit and Character buildings through reinstating appropriate style and material windows.
- Gloucester Road forms part of the A38, a key arterial route into the City. Any works should follow the Traffic and Highway Works in Conservation Areas Protocol to enhance the character and appearance of the area and support the traditional high street function.
- Promote a more coherent approach to design and quality of ‘spill out’ areas along the Promenade to enhance the visual quality of the area and manage conflicts with pedestrian movement.
- Encourage the Neighbourhood Partnership to work with retailers to manage the storage of waste bins and location of advertising boards.



2 Bristol North Baths environs

Summary description

Characterised by flatter topography and more obvious curves to the street, resulting from the sharper meanders of the river valley, this area forms the 2016 boundary extension.

Retaining a strong commercial character, fine grain gable fronted terraces characterise the east side of Gloucester Road. The street is less generously proportioned, with relatively narrow pavements and only limited areas of wider pavement allowing ‘spill-out’ activity.

Bolton Road provides the only connection through the eastern block, marking the southern most point to which the brook was culverted in the late 1800s. The corner of North Road and Sommerville Road is occupied by the curving form of the purpose built former Horfield police station.

The north west is marked by larger scale buildings including the Bristol North Baths, Bristol Flyer and former Methodist Chapel, while the south west is characterised by shorter runs of terraces, which are less uniform in the plot width, rhythm and architecture, and are broken up by street links to the west.

Key Views and Landmarks

- Views north to the Bristol North Baths Chimney
- Views to the Bristol North Baths
- Views to the tower of Former Methodist Chapel
- Views along Sommerville Road to Former Horfield Police Station
- Views across roof line to the Spire of David Thomas Memorial Church.

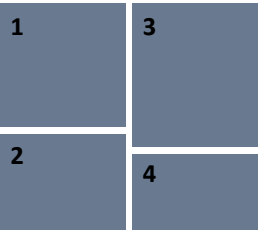


Bristol North Baths environs character area

- Listed Building (Grade II)
- Unlisted buildings of merit
- Grouped buildings of merit
- Character buildings
- Neutral buildings
- Negative buildings



Bristol North Baths environs



- 1 Former Horfield Policy Station (Building of Merit)
- 2 The Bristol North Baths (Grade II)
- 3 View south from Shadwell Road with David Thomas Memorial Church a key feature in the skyline.
- 4 Meridian Terrace at right angles to Gloucester Road follows the gable style despite breaking from the building line.

Positive characteristics

- Distinctive frontages, particularly gable fronted shops and Meridian Terrace
- Traditional/ High quality shopfronts and canopies
- Architectural detailing above shop fronts
- Positive sense of enclosure through strong and distinctive building line as buildings directly address the pavement edge along with predominantly terrace form
- Strong rhythm created by consistent runs of terraces along narrow plots, particularly on the east side
- General quality of corner buildings along west side punctuating deflected views
- Key buildings of merit and listed buildings add to the special interest of the area.

Predominant material palette

- Red brick with limestone details
- Painted brick
- Render
- Timber shopfront and sash windows
- Timber fascias/ barge boards
- Clay pantile roof coverings

Predominant scale and massing

- 2 storey terraces with some larger scale 2-3storey buildings to the north.
- Buildings generally directly address the pavement edge, with some spill out seating areas where wider pavements allow.

Enhancement opportunities

- There are a number of quality traditional shopfronts in the area. Poor quality shopfronts and signage has had a detrimental impact on the overall quality of the streetscene. Development should take the opportunity to reinstate high quality shopfronts taking into consideration the positive characteristics of the remaining traditionally restored units.
- Promote the use of canopies to retail units, with the benefit of providing both weather protection and shading as well as enhancing the traditional commercial character of the street.
- Promote the sensitive restoration or reinstatement of traditional features, such as the prominent timber fascias to the gable fronted terraces.
- Gloucester Road forms part of the A38, a key arterial route into the City. Any works should follow the Traffic and Highway Works in Conservation Areas Protocol to enhance the character and appearance of the area.
- Limited crossing points restrict the ability of pedestrians to explore both sides of the street. Additional controlled crossing points would enhance the activity and vibrancy along both sides and support the traditional high street function.
- Promote a more coherent approach to design and quality of ‘spill out’ areas from cafes and restaurants etc to enhance the visual quality of the area and manage conflicts with pedestrian movement.



Challenges and opportunities

5



Looking south along The Promenade

Challenges and opportunities

The Gloucester Road Conservation Area has many aspects that contribute to its special interest, which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Negative features offer the opportunity for enhancement through either beneficial change, removal or re-development. The negative features that tend to threaten the character and special interest of Gloucester Road vary, and are often dependent on predominant land-use or historic factors that have affected a specific Character Area.

- In the broadest sense, the character and special interest of Gloucester Road can be preserved or enhanced through encouraging:
- That new buildings complement their neighbours in scale, style and use of materials
 - The retention or reinstatement of architectural, boundary, paving and shopfront details that add character to the area
 - The improvement of signage and shopfront design
 - Appropriate public realm, street furniture, signage and landscape improvements

Fundamentally, raising the awareness of the type of features that contribute to the local character and distinctiveness will help promote the area and enhance it as it moves into the future.

The challenges and opportunities for each Character Area outlined in the following tables may be used as a tool to focus strategic priorities or external funding sources aimed at resolving them.

The Bisopston Society, who played a key role in the development of this document, would, where possible, like to be closely involved in implementing these suggestions by encouraging and coordinating efforts by local community groups in bringing about such improvements.

Challenges and opportunities

Character Area affected	Challenges	Opportunity
The Arches to the Prom and The Arches to the Prom	Conflicts between pedestrians/ cyclists and cars along this heavily trafficked route.	<p>Encourage the implementation of best practice as outlined in The Protocol for Highway Works in Conservation Areas (December 2011) as and when highway works emerge in future or as part of future maintenance.</p> <p>Encourage the implementation of a public realm strategy that would overcome the current traffic movement and would help support better place values/ gateways of the area as a whole that creates a more pedestrian friendly environment that also supports local business.</p>
	Street cleansing, large bin storage and waste collection.	<p>Work with retailers to develop a waste management strategy to managed the storage and collection of large commercial waste bins.</p> <p>Encourage better waste management, especially of large bins, through future development management.</p>
	Poor quality shop fronts, signage and spill out areas.	<p>Encourage the retention of traditional shopfronts or the insertion of new shopfronts that are of high quality and follow traditional proportions sympathetic to the character of the area in line with Policy Advice Note 8, through future development management negotiations.</p> <p>Seek removal/ reinstatement through planning enforcement action where a breach of planning control has occurred.</p> <p>Develop of a community design guide for spill out areas to ensure a consistent high quality approach.</p>
	Loss of distinctive plot rhythm through amalgamation of adjacent units.	<p>Encourage the retention / reinstatement of distinguishable plot rhythm through appropriate shopfront design in line with Policy Advice Note 8 through future development management negotiations.</p> <p>Seek removal/ reinstatement through planning enforcement action where a breach of planning control has occurred.</p>
	Threat to unlisted heritage assets such as the former Horfield Police Station, former Methodist Church, and North Road terrace.	<p>To ensure that any redevelopment proposals take the opportunity to sensitively restore and re-use the heritage assets appropriate to the local context in terms of scale, massing, materials and detail through the planning process.</p>
	Utilitarian street furniture, particularly lighting.	<p>To improve the public realm through provision of new or replacement street furniture more sensitive to the local character; and to encourage the rationalisation of street signs, and the removal of redundant ones, where appropriate.</p>

Challenges and opportunities

Character Area affected	Challenges	Opportunity
The Arches to the Prom	Conflicts between pedestrians/ cyclists and cars at Zetland Road and Cotham Brow Junctions	To promote design improvements to these road junctions that increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists, enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and that supports the local businesses.
	Poor quality public realm at the north end of the promenade.	To encourage the commission of a public realm strategy which seeks to deliver higher quality materials, explores opportunities for green infrastructure improvements and detailing to improve the appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of undesignated heritage assets, to be delivered through development management process where possible or through future maintenance.
	Proliferation of bins cluttering the street and front gardens along North Road	To work with residents to identify appropriate storage areas outside of collection period.
	Loss of and insensitive replacement of boundary walls along North Road	Encourage the retention or reinstatement of front boundary treatments to ensure the preservation of the character of the street through future Development Management negotiations.
The Arches to the Prom	Lack of convenient and safe pedestrian crossing points, inhibiting ability to explore both sides of the street.	Identify potential locations for additional crossing points to be implemented as part of a wide public realm strategy.
	Inconsistent material treatment and poor quality public realm on the east side from Sommerville Road junction where the pavement widens.	To encourage the commission of a public realm strategy which seeks to deliver higher quality materials and detailing to improve the appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of undesignated heritage assets, to be delivered through development management process where possible or through future maintenance.
	Obstruction of pavement and cycle route due to loading, particularly on the west side.	Work with retailers to identify appropriate locations and time slot restrictions for servicing that minimises the impact on pavements and cycleways.
	Dead frontage and poor quality public realm to the rear of the CoOp along North Road	To encourage the commission of a public realm strategy which seeks to deliver higher quality materials and detailing to improve the appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of undesignated heritage assets, to be delivered through development management process where possible or through future maintenance.

Statement of Community Involvement

6



6 Statement of Community Involvement

Our Place

Proactive community participation is a critical aspect of embedding heritage within place-making processes. To help communities take an active role in securing the protection and understanding of their local area, City Design Group has designed the Our Place toolkit that enables communities to identify and record their neighbourhood's local character and distinctiveness.

In May 2014, members of the Bishopston Society and other volunteers carried out an Our Place character mapping activity along the Gloucester Road and adjoining streets.

The group worked with Peter Insole from Bristol City Council's City Design Group and Richard Guise from Context 4D urban design specialists.

For the purposes of the mapping activities the area was divided into six smaller areas.

Using mapping worksheets the community participants defined the character of Gloucester Road, including building types, views, landmarks and boundaries. This workshop exercise, and subsequent involvement from key stakeholders in the Conservation Area, has underpinned the understanding and analysis of local character defined within this Character Appraisal.

For further information about the Our Place project visit designbristol.ning.com/profiles/blogs/our-place-community-context-mapping-toolkit

Publicity and public consultation

There is no formal procedure for adopting a Conservation Area Character Appraisal, though national guidance encourages 'rigour and openness' in the process.

Bristol City Council places a lot of value on the specialist knowledge of local groups and greatly supports a collaborative approach in producing character appraisals. The level of community involvement ensures the status of this Character Appraisal as a *material consideration* in development management decisions, in defining the character of the conservation area, and at appeal.

A draft of the character appraisal for the Gloucester Road including the proposed boundary alterations and the Unlisted Buildings of Merit representing the outcome of council officers work and representations from the local community was produced in December 2016.

A briefing report on the document was presented to the Executive Member for Place on 9th January 2017.

The draft document was published on the Bristol City Council website at the end of January 2017 and invitations to comment were circulated to:

- The Bishopston Society
- Conservation Advisory Panel
- Local councillors
- The local magazine, Bishopston Matters

The consultation was held open until the end of February during which time the council received comments in support of the document from the Bishopston Society, the Neighbourhood Partnership, the Neighbourhood Street Scene Group and local residents.

Comments received from consultees have further contributed to the document.

Further information

<http://www.bishopstonsociety.org.uk/>
<https://bishopstonhistorysociety.wordpress.com/>
<http://thegloucesterroadstory.org/>
<http://www.walkwithus.co.uk/index.html>

