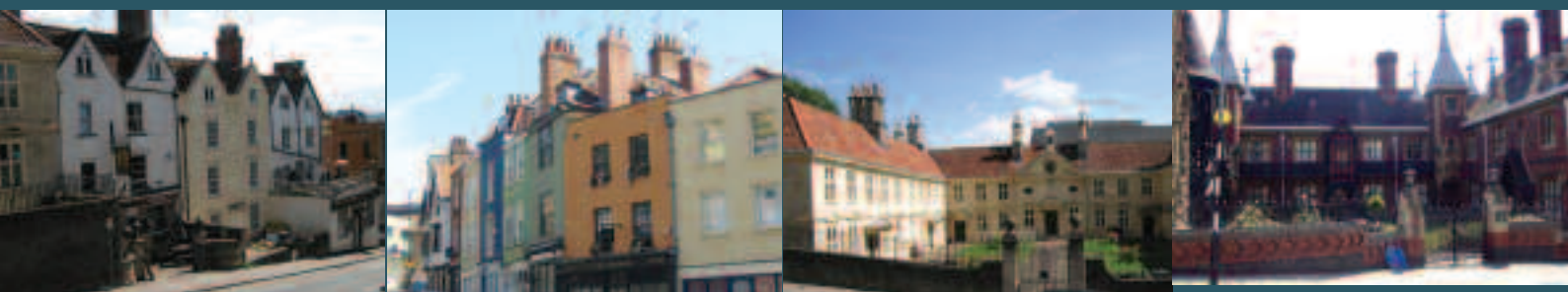


Conservation Area 9



St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps

Character Appraisal

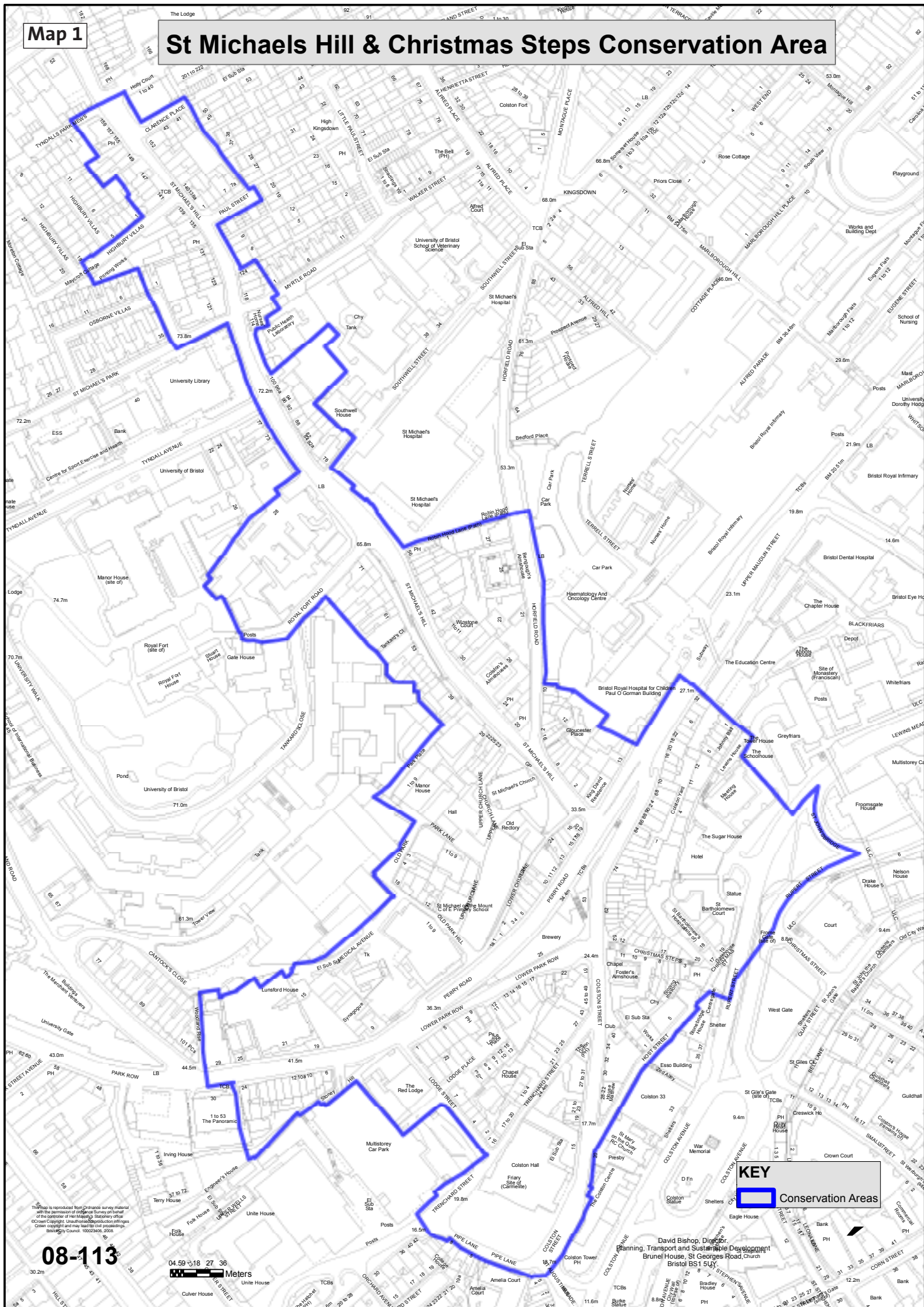



October 2008

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St Michaels Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area



KEY
 Conservation Areas

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If you would like this information in a different format, for example Braille, audio tape, large print or computer disc, or community languages, please contact the Strategic & Citywide Policy Team on: 0117 903 6722

This document was prepared by the Urban Design and Conservation Team, Planning Services Division, Bristol City Council. Special thanks goes to the Montpelier Conservation Group for their input and numerous photographs.





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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 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' (Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act, 1990).
- 1.2 Since the designation of the first conservation areas in 1970, Bristol City Council has undertaken a comprehensive programme of conservation area designation, extension and policy development. There are now 33 conservation areas in Bristol, covering approximately 30% of the city.
- 1.3 Bristol City Council has a statutory duty to undertake a review of the character and boundaries of each conservation area. This process was first undertaken with the Policy Advice Note 2: Conservation Area Enhancement Statements (November 1993).
- 1.4 More recent national guidance, set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) and English Heritage's Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals (2006), requires detailed appraisals of each conservation area in the form of formally approved and published documents.
- 1.5 The City Council is now underway with a comprehensive programme of producing a Character Appraisal for each conservation area. The enhanced appraisal process involves the review of boundaries, details of historical development, identification of townscape details, and unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the conservation area. It also identifies elements that threaten to undermine an area's special interest.

2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 All conservation areas are the subject of policies in the Bristol Local Plan (adopted December 1997) and the proposed Alterations to the Bristol Local Plan (deposited February 2003). Once adopted, policies in the emerging Core Strategy, and any future Development Plan Documents, will replace those in the Local Plan.
- 2.2 The Core Strategy is a key document in the emerging Bristol Development Framework. Once adopted the Core Strategy will become the key overarching policy document within the Bristol Development Framework. The next stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy will be the Submission Document, which will set out a Spatial Vision for the City, Strategic Objectives, a Spatial Strategy, Core Policies and a Monitoring and Implementation Framework. It will include a Core Policy on Conservation Areas and the Historic Environment.
- 2.3 Each Conservation Area Character Appraisal will be subject to extensive public consultation and once adopted will be a tool for development control officers, developers, residents and others to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. Each adopted Character Appraisal will replace the relevant Conservation Area Enhancement Statement for that area.
- 2.4 St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps was designated as a Conservation Area on 20/11/1974 and extended on 16/02/1977. As part of this appraisal, the boundaries have been extended to include nos. 6, 8, 10 Horfield Road; nos. 7a, 7 Paul Street; nos. 40, 41, 42 Clarence Place. The St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Character Appraisal was adopted by the Executive for Access and the Environment on XXXX.



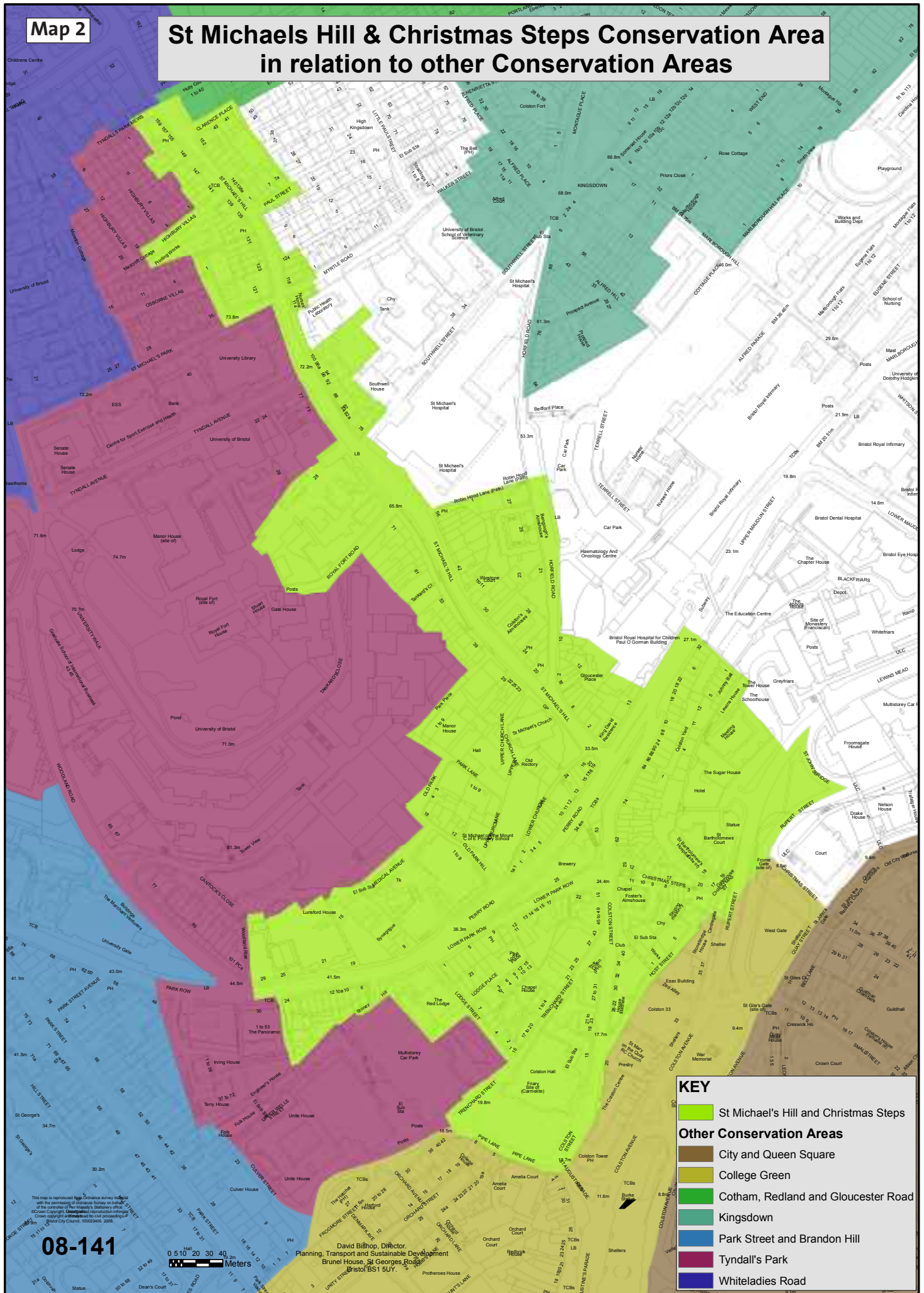


3. LOCATION & SETTING

- 3.1 The St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area is located immediately northwest of the centre of medieval Bristol. The Conservation Area lies on a northwest/southeast axis, cutting through the southeast facing escarpment that rises from the City Centre towards Cotham. The Conservation Area is characterised by its dramatic climb from 10m above sea level at the lowest point, reaching up to 75m towards the top of St Michael's Hill.
- 3.2 St Michael's Hill provides the central spine running from the north, which is separated by Park Row, Perry Road and Upper Maudlin Street from the lower portion of the Conservation Area. In the southern part, Colston Street is the main north/south route with Christmas Steps, Lower Park Row and Trenchard Street branching off it.
- 3.3 The perimeter boundaries of the Conservation Area are difficult to define, dictated in part by the proximity of other Conservation Areas which abut St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps to the north, west and south. The Tyndall's Park Conservation Area is located immediately west. The Kingsdown Conservation Area lies to the north east. The Park Street & Brandon Hill and College Green Conservation Areas are to the south and southwest. The Cotham, Redland & Gloucester Road Conservation Area reaches to the far northeast.

Map 2 shows the location of St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps in context of surrounding Conservation Areas

St Michaels Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area in relation to other Conservation Areas



KEY

- St Michael's Hill and Christmas Steps
- Other Conservation Areas**
 - City and Queen Square
 - College Green
 - Cotham, Redland and Gloucester Road
 - Kingsdown
 - Park Street and Brandon Hill
 - Tyndall's Park
 - Whiteladies Road



4. SUMMARY OF CHARACTER & SPECIAL INTEREST

- 4.1 The St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area is one of Bristol's most charming and historic districts. Characterised by its picturesque streetscape, intimate alleys, panoramic views, and quality and range of built fabric. The Conservation Area was one of the first to be designated in Bristol, reflecting its local as well as national significance.
- 4.2 The character of the area is broadly divided into the north and south sections, crossed by Perry Road/Upper Maudlin Street. The character of the lower portion reflects the maritime influence over this part of the City. The warehouses of Host Street, public houses and shops of Christmas Steps are vital indicators of Bristol's significance as a major port for trade and commerce. Townscape details, cast iron curb stones, Pennant paving slabs and steep steps are also important features of this part of the Conservation Area.
- 4.3 Climbing up towards St Michael's Hill, built form changes in scale and character. Moving away from the modest, vernacular styles seen around Lower Park Row and Christmas Steps, to larger, grander merchants' houses of the 18th century and earlier.
- 4.4 Commercial activity has played an important part in shaping the Conservation Area and a high number of independent, artistic and artisan trades still operate. Since WWII, shopper's desire-lines from other commercial centres have been broken, isolating the area's shops and traders, causing closures and decline. The area is under serious threat from slipping further into a declining state, which threatens to undermine its character and special interest.

Main Issues affecting the Conservation Area

Development & Alterations

- Post-War planning and road schemes have severed the connection between the Conservation Area and other parts of the City, impacting on footfall and loss of trade
- Loss of active shopfronts as local business uses are changed to office or residential, notably on Christmas Steps and the east side of Colston Street and south east side of St Michael's Hill and Horfield Road
- Unsympathetic alterations & loss of traditional architectural details
- Poor quality shopfronts and signage, notably in upper St Michael's Hill

Public Realm

- Volume of traffic and congestion, notably along Upper Maudlin Street/Perry Road/Park Row and Colston Street
- Loss or poor maintenance of traditional street surfaces or hotchpotch of modern replacement materials
- Poor maintenance of traditional street furniture

Beyond the Conservation Area

- Threat to key views and panoramas from new developments



5. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT & ARCHAEOLOGY

Medieval Period

- 5.1 The old town of Bristol was originally contained within a fortified enclosure between the Rivers Avon and Frome. Between 1200 and 1500 the area became rapidly urbanised and expanded across the Frome, which ran through the middle of the area, separating the town on the south side from the land to the north.
- 5.2 At the beginning of the 13th the area north of the Frome was largely characterised by monastic establishments and institutional buildings. St Mary Magdalene's Nunnery existed to the north of Upper Maudlin Street. The known bounds of a Carmelite friary appear to have encompassed the north side of St Augustine's Place, Colston Street, down to the Frome to the west, and Host Street and the now lost Steep Street. St Bartholomew's Hospital was founded c. 1232 on a site at the western end of the former Frome Bridge.
- 5.3 In 1483, John Foster founded an almshouse at the north-west end of Christmas Steps. These were rebuilt in the late 19th century, leaving only the Chapel of Three Kings of Cologne from the original building. Later in the medieval period, housing developed between the monastic sites, including tenements in Host Street ('Horssestret').
- 5.4 The Frome Bridge linked Queen Street (later Christmas Steps), so called during the 17th century, on the north with 'Knyfsmythstrete' (later Christmas Street) on the south; named because the Cutlers and Armourers traded from this street. The name Christmas could derive from the name Knyzt-mass Street, possibly a combination of Knight and Mass as holy day processions took place here.
- 5.5 At the beginning of the 13th century, St Michael's Church (St Michael on the Mount Without) had been founded and there was probably a small nucleus of settlement around it. Apart from small scattered settlements at the north end of St Michael's Hill, the land north of St Michael's Church was essentially rural.
- 5.6 St Michael's Hill was first mentioned in a charter of 1373. It formed the route to Westbury-on-Trym and Henbury; to Gloucester; and also the road to the Aust Ferry, which crossed into Wales. Church Lane (Lower Church Lane) and Griffin Lane (Lower Park Row) were important routes linking Christmas Steps and St Michael's Hill with Stony Hill and the way to Clifton.
- 5.7 The line of the old county boundary was drawn in a lozenge shape up to the top of St Michael's Hill. A gallows existed at the highest point of the hill (roughly at the Cotham Road/Cotham Hill junction) and St Michael's Hill would have been an important route to this site.
- 5.8 The area north of St Michael's Hill saw new development in the 15th century as ribbon development north of St Michael's Church was gradually creeping up St Michael's Hill.
- 5.9 The earliest standing building in the Christmas Steps portion of the Conservation Area is the fragmentary 13th century aisled hall of St Bartholomew's Hospital and part of a 15th century house to the west, no. 17 Christmas Steps, later enlarged with a jettied front. In comparison, the earliest standing buildings in the St Michael's Hill portion, other than the earliest parts of St Michael's Church, is the row of 16th century jettied houses next to the Church along St Michael's Hill.



16th & 17th Centuries

5.10 In the 16th century intense urbanization continued to characterise the lower portion of the Conservation Area, immediately north of the old Quayside around Lewins Mead, Host Street and Christmas Steps. Large industries such as soap manufacture and sugar refining were established, interspersed with high-density timber-framed tenements, shops and public houses.



Figure 1: Jacob Miller's Plan of Bristol, 1673 – shows the historic link between the south end of Queen Street (Christmas Steps) over the River Frome to the Old City. Development becomes less intensive north of St Michael's Church. Scattered plots exist along the Road to Aust Ferry (St Michael's Hill). These are the "summer houses" of Bristol's wealthiest inhabitants



- 5.11 By the 17th century, St Michael's Hill was also being developed though the area was characterised by small houses set in substantial garden plots compared with the intensive development further south. Nos. 23 – 29 St Michael's Hill date from 1637.
- 5.12 At the beginning of the Civil War in 1642 a defensive line was built running from a fort on Brandon Hill to one on Windmill Hill; that became the Royal Fort after Prince Rupert seized the city in 1643.
- 5.13 In the decades after the Civil War, the number of houses between Church Lane (Park Row) and St Michael's Hill increased. These "summer houses" or "garden houses" were the second residences of Bristol's wealthiest citizens. A number of substantial houses, including The Manor House, Park Lane and Oldbury House, at the top of St Michael's Hill, were also built at this time.
- 5.14 In the late 17th century, William Colston chose the eastern side of St Michael's Hill as the site for his new almshouses. The group of houses immediately south of the almshouses facilitated this development. Despite increasing development in the 17th century the Hill retained its essentially rural character.
- 5.15 By contrast, the St Michael's hillside continued to develop as a landscape of garden and gentry houses, having become a neighborhood of moderately wealthy citizens, sea captains and widows. More intensive development took place at the top of St Michael's Hill; Southwell Street having been laid out by 1742, containing an assemblage of middle-class housing.

18th Century

- 5.14 The notable difference between the modest, intensively developed Lewins Mead/Christmas Steps area and the 'arcadian' character of St Michael's Hill continued into the 18th century.

The lowest part of the Conservation Area, around Lewins Mead was still characterised by 17th century timber-framed houses. Poor-quality housing, intensive occupation and unsanitary conditions, exacerbated by the River, were a serious problem in this area. Sugar refining continued, and the Sugar House built in 1728 still survives.





Figure 2: John Roque's Map, 1746 – shows the increasing intensive development in the southern portion of the Conservation Area. The Colston's Almshouses have been laid out on the east side of St Michael's Hill and an increasing number of properties line the lower part of the Hill. The northern portion remains essentially rural, subdivided by small field plots and gardens. Johnny Ball Lane is clearly visible, running behind Lewins Mead to Maudlin Lane (Upper Maudlin Street)

5.16 Later in the 18th century, the area between the top of Christmas Steps and Stony Hill (Park Row) developed when the land belonging to the Red Lodge was developed for housing. Lodge Street, which originally had houses on both sides, and nos. 1 – 6 Lower Park Row were designed by Thomas Paty in c. 1784



Figure 3: Lodge Street originally had a terrace lining both sides of the street. Watercolour by TLS Rowbotham, 1826, shows views from the top of Lodge Street down towards St Mary Redcliffe Church in the distance

Victorian & Edwardian



Figure 4: Plumley & Ashmead's Plan, 1828 shows how intensively developed the lower portion of the Conservation Area was by the early 19th century. Ribbon development up St Michael's Hill has taken hold though this is far less intensive, being high-quality housing for the upper middle classes.

- 5.17 The disparity between the upper and lower portions of the current Conservation Area was acute in the 19th century, when the district north of the River was one of the poorest parts of the city. To remedy the situation, it was agreed to culvert the Frome in 1842 and the space created was used to construct Rupert Street.
- 5.18 Although the River Frome had been culverted, and the dockside warehouses that immediately overlooked the old Quay (now Colston Avenue) replaced, a secondary rank of original maritime warehouses still exist in Host Street, once a through-route from Lewins Mead but now a cul-de-sac.
- 5.19 Massive changes re-configured the area between 1870 and 1875 in preparation for the opening of Britain's first horse-drawn tram network for the Bristol Tram Company. Vast tram sheds were constructed in the heart of the Conservation Area, comprising a long, curved stables for sixty horses, a garage to house the double-decker ash-wood trams, a hitching-up shed, a repair workshop and a sloping tramline ramp into Colston Street.
- 5.20 Colston Street was created, driven through from the City Centre, to provide horses with a straight, even gradient up to the tram sheds. This resulted in the loss of many vernacular buildings and made Steep Street redundant, which was built over by Prince William House and the Bristol County Sports Club. Colston Hall was built on the site of the Great House in 1867-68 and became the largest music venue in the city.



5.21 Perry Road was also created at this time, to provide a tramway route from the tram sheds up to Park Row, Whiteladies Road and Blackboy Hill. Perry Road swept away slums that now occupied the escarpment and the Brandon Hill red sandstone was blasted and excavated to allow a shallow gradient for the road. The adjacent land parcels were auctioned to private developers who built the fine terrace of shops that now exist along the north side of Perry Road.

5.22 The area of Park Row saw the construction of a number of civic buildings with a strong educational theme from the mid 19th century, which include the Drama and associated admin buildings. The Jewish Synagogue was consecrated in September 1871, becoming Bristol's first purpose-built synagogue and one of only two in Bristol today.



Figures 5 & 6 : Ordnance Survey, First Edition, 1880 – the northern part of the Conservation Area has seen increasing development at the top of St Michael's Hill. The southern portion has been drastically re-configured with the introduction of Perry Road and Colston Street



Post-War to Present Day

- 5.23 In 2002 the tram sheds were re-developed to create the Zero Degrees Microbrewery. Although the original architectural integrity of the tram sheds has been largely lost, this new development has brought new vibrancy to the area.
- 5.24 The University of Bristol and the Bristol Royal Infirmary have introduced large-scale institutional developments abutting the east and west sides of St Michael's Hill. Modern introductions tended to be out of character in terms of rhythm, materials, scale and massing compared with the rest of the Conservation Area. Similarly, large-scale office buildings have also appeared on south Colston Street since the 1970s.
- 5.25 St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps was designated as a Conservation Area in November 1974.

Map 3 shows the Approximate Building Ages in the Conservation Area.

The city council will seek to maintain and strengthen the traditional form of individual streets and ensure that new development is in keeping with its surroundings both in character and appearance.

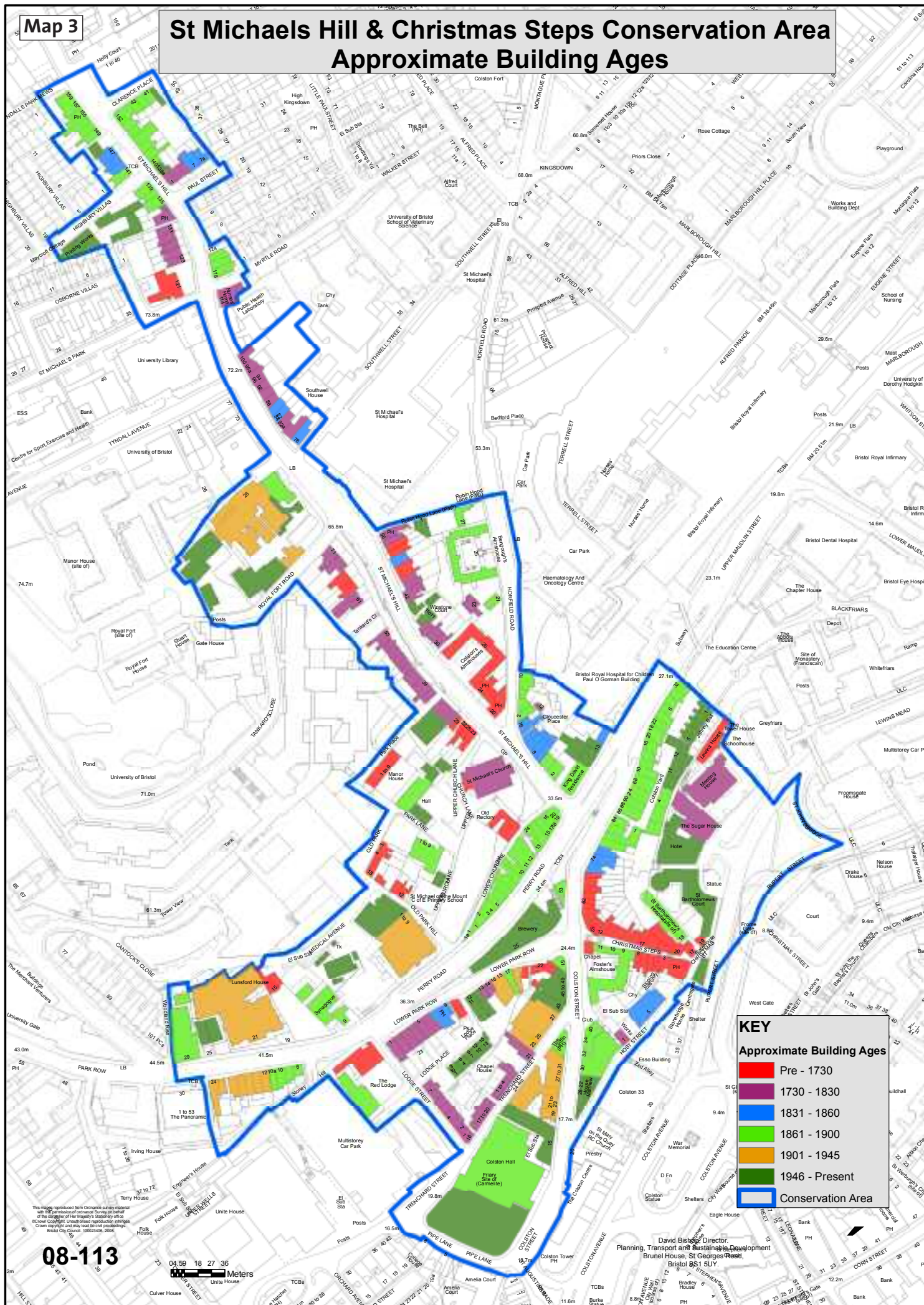
There will be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not. Policy B22 (I – II) should be consulted.



Map 3

St Michaels Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area

Approximate Building Ages





6. SPATIAL ANALYSIS

6.1 Routes & Spaces

6.1.1 The historic street layout and the relationship of built form to open space define the framework of an area. The traditional pattern of development, building lines and plot sizes should be respected and used to dictate the scale and level of enclosure or openness appropriate to the Conservation Area.

6.1.2 Upper Maudlin Street/Perry Road/Park Row is the principle east/west route through the Conservation Area. The c.2000 City Centre re-modeling that reduced the volume of traffic through The Centre, resulted in re-routing much of the traffic to Park Row/Perry Road and Upper Maudlin Street. This is now a heavily congested route that dissuades passing trade from visiting the Perry Road and Colston Street shops. (See Negative Features, Section 8.)

6.1.3 The west and eastern ends of this route are characterised by large institutional buildings occupying vast plots, while the middle section, of Perry Road and the south side of Upper Maudlin Street, is characterised by narrow plots directly addressing the pavement.

6.1.4 St Michael's Hill and Horfield Road are the main north/northwest routes, which carry traffic to/from Cotham, Kingsdown and Redland. There is a strong building line along St Michael's Hill as properties, occupying narrow plots have a vertical emphasis, directly address the pavement or are set behind low boundary walls. The exception are the modern institutional buildings (many just beyond the Conservation Area boundary) that sit in substantial plots and do not relate well to the dominant rhythm of the street.

6.1.5 Rupert Street, a major traffic route to the southeast, links the St James Barton Roundabout and Lewins Mead with the City

Centre. Colston Street and Trenchard Street are both important link routes between the Centre and Perry Road, however, traffic and footfall is significantly calmer. Large buildings characterise this lower portion, owing to substantial redevelopments of the 19th and 20th centuries.

6.1.6 Lower Park Row was historically a major route through the Conservation Area, though this was reduced to a secondary route when Perry Road was driven through in the late 19th century. Lower Park Row, Christmas Steps and Upper Colston Street are characterised by tightly packed terraces of modestly scaled properties that occupy narrow but varying plot widths.

6.1.7 The network of narrow lanes and alleys that branch off the main routes contribute greatly to the charm and intriguing character of the Conservation Area. Some are important remnants of historic rights of way that today are practically forgotten. These include:

- Stoney Hill, passing in front of the Red Lodge
- Zed Alley, which once linked the Quayside with Griffin Lane
- Tankard's Close, between the demolished nos. 57 & 59 St Michael's Hill and was a former rope walk
- Johnny Ball Lane, running behind the Sugar House to Upper Maudlin Street
- Gloucester Place, between nos. 12 & 14 Horfield Road
- Griffin Court, the tiny route between nos. 20 & 21 Lower Park Row
- Old Park Hill

6.1.8 The preservation of these routes is vital in preserving the historic and special interest of the Conservation Area. Reinstatement of some of these routes would greatly enhance the area and increase pedestrian permeability though it.





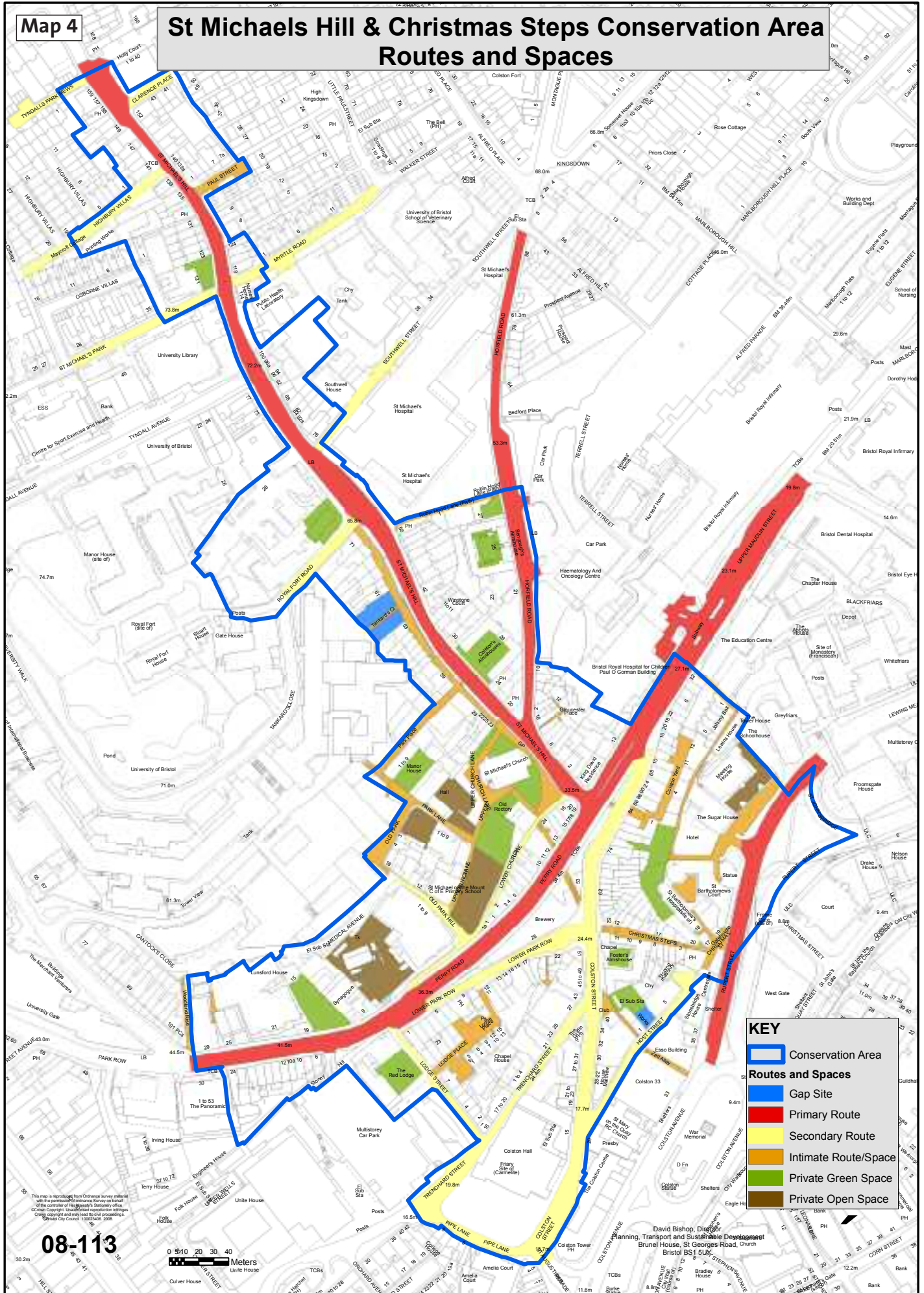
6.1.4 In a Conservation Area where there is no public open space, vital alleviation from an otherwise built up environment is provided by glimpses into private green spaces. For example, the formal landscaped courtyards of the area's three Almshouses. Despite the lack of open space, the panoramic views out of the Conservation Area and across the City also help break up the density of built fabric.

The Routes and Spaces in the St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area are shown on Map 4.

Dominant street pattern and the character of spaces should be respected. Where historic patterns remain, these should be protected and reflected in proposed schemes. Policies B15 (I – III) should be consulted.

Map 4

St Michaels Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area Routes and Spaces



6.2 VIEWS

- 6.2.1 The topography of the City is unique and views across it make an important contribution to Bristol's townscape and character. The spectacular city-wide views enjoyed from the St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area are fundamental to its special interest.
- 6.2.2 Panoramic views extend from Dundry and the Mendips in the southwest and as far as Kelston and Lansdown in the southeast. Long views are enjoyed to a number of Bristol's landmarks, including Cabot Tower, St Paul's Church and St Mary le Port.
- 6.2.3 The church of St Michael's on the Mount, which occupies a prominent raised corner position at the southwest end of St Michael's Hill, is the terminating landmark in a many views within the Conservation Area. Other more locally important views are to the houses of St Michael's Hill; the University Physics Tower; the distinctive roof forms of Colston Street and Foster's Almshouses; and the intriguing glimpses down numerous narrow lanes and alleys.
- 6.2.4 The long views and panoramas to the south tend to be enjoyed from the top of St Michael's Hill and houses and gardens tucked behind the west side of the street on the upper slope. Historic lanes and alleys in this area also channel long views south out across the City.
- 6.2.5 Although situated within the Tyndall's Park conservation Area, the institutional buildings, including Synthetic Chemistry, form a very strong backdrop to the buildings on Perry Road and St Michael's Hill.
- 6.2.6 The preservation views within and out of the Conservation Area is vital in protecting its character and special interest. For the purpose of Character Appraisals, four types of views have been identified:

Panoramas

Are wide-reaching views that extend across the city and beyond.

Long Views

Are long-distance views across the City, to key features or landmark buildings. Views into the Conservation Area fall within this category.

Local Views

These tend to be shorter and confined to a specific locality such as a Conservation Area. They include views to skylines, local landmarks, attractive groups of buildings, views into open spaces, streets and squares.

Glimpses

Allow intriguing glances to intimate routes or spaces, they make an important contribution to local character.



Figure 7: Panorama from corner of Old Park Lane/Old Park south across the City and beyond



Figure 8: Long view from between upper Christmas Steps looking southeast across the City Centre

Views in the Conservation Area are identified at Map 5.



Figure 9: Glimpsed view from bottom of Christmas Steps

6.3 LANDMARK BUILDINGS

- 6.3.1 Landmark Buildings are those that due to their height, location or detailed design stand out from their background. They contribute to the character and townscape of the area and provide key focal points in local views.
- 6.3.2 Given the topography, history and development of the Conservation Area, there are a number of buildings that act as local landmarks.
- 6.3.3 St Michael on the Mount is the most prominent feature in the Conservation Area, which sits on an elevated platform just above Perry Road. The distinctive medieval tower is visible in many local views. The Church is currently in a poor condition and features on the Bristol CC, English Heritage and Civic Society's Buildings at Risk Registers (see Negative Features, Section 8).

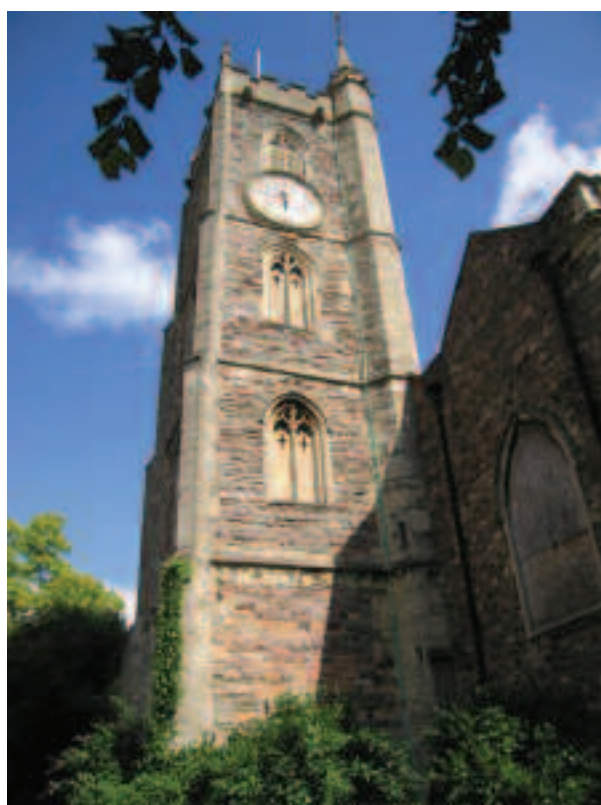


Figure 10: St Michael on the Mount

- 6.3.4 Foster's Almshouses, Colston Street is another significant landmark. The distinctive roof-form, punctuated by tall clustered chimneys, ornate diaper brick and tile-work and Gothic detail all contribute to the building's prominence.



Figure 11: Foster's Almshouses, Colston Street

- 6.3.5 Colston Hall, Colston Street is Bristol's major concert hall and an example of Bristol Byzantine design. The Hall is currently undergoing re-development and a metal-clad extension will occupy the St Augustine Parade/Colston Street corner, making the site even more prominent from the City Centre.
- 6.3.6 The following are considered landmark buildings in the St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area:
- St Michael on the Mount, St Michael's Hill
 - Foster's Almshouses, Colston St
 - Colston Hall, Colston Street
 - Colston's Almshouses, St Michael's Hill
 - Former Children's Hospital, St Michael's Hill
 - Bengough's Almshouses, Horfield Road
 - White Bear Public House, St Michael's Hill
 - King David Hotel, St Michael's Hill/Upper Maudlin Street



- Synagogue, Park Row
- The Red Lodge, Park Row
- Zero Degrees, Perry Road
- Hotel du Vin/Sugar House, Rupert Street

Landmark Buildings in the Conservation Area are identified at Map 5.

Development should be designed with regard to the local context. Proposals which would cause unacceptable harm to the character and/or appearance of an area, or to the visual impact of historic buildings, views or landmarks, will not be permitted. BLP Policies B2 (I – IV) should be consulted.



Map 5

St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Views, Vistas and Landmarks

Conservation Area

Landmark Buildings

Long Views/Vistas

- A St Michael's Hill N/NW to Former Western Congregational College, Cotham
- B St Michael's Hill N to Cotham Church
- C Lower Park Row E to St Paul's Church and beyond
- D St Michael's Hill S/E to Centre/Redcliffe
- E Perry Road S/E to All Saint's, Corn Street
- F Lower Church Lane to S/E Centre/Corn Street
- G Centre/St Augustine's Parade N/W to Colston House
- H Park Row S/W to Cabot House
- I Lodge Street S/E to Centre
- J Southwell Street S/W to Physics Tower
- K Trenchard Street SW
- L St Stephen Street NW to St Michael's Hill

Glimpsed Views

Local Views

Panoramas

08-113

04.59 18 27 36 Meters

David Bishop, Director,
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7. CHARACTER ANALYSIS

7.1 Overview

- 7.1.1 The St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area is defined by the quality and range of historic buildings within it, reflected in the number of listed buildings, many of which are Grade I or II*. The local topography has shaped the area and contributes to a noticeable difference in character and development that exists between the upper and lower portions.
- 7.1.2 Though the entire Conservation Area is relatively small, it offers a microcosm of many architectural periods and styles throughout it, from medieval to modern day. Each street is different, with variations in architectural style and formality altering the character between them. Despite the variations in its townscape, the Conservation Area as a whole remains unified with a recognisably charming and intimate character.
- 7.1.3 The area south of Perry Road is characterised by groups of tightly packed terraces, ranging from Victorian to 17th century timber-framed, most with active ground-floor uses. Despite the range between individual properties, overall harmony is achieved through a general consistency in scale and materials, and the preservation of traditional architectural details,



Figure 12: Christmas Steps. The area south of Perry Road is characterised by a mixture of modest vernacular buildings.

- 7.1.4 North of Perry Road, St Michael's Hill contains a range of fine Georgian townhouses that cling to the steep hillside as it rises towards Cotham. The substantially sized properties and quality of materials clearly reflects the social standing of the area's former residents, and the way in which the suburb grew as an out-of-City retreat offering a rural setting and panoramic views.



Figure 13: St Michael's Hill properties are of high quality, reflecting the social status of their original inhabitants

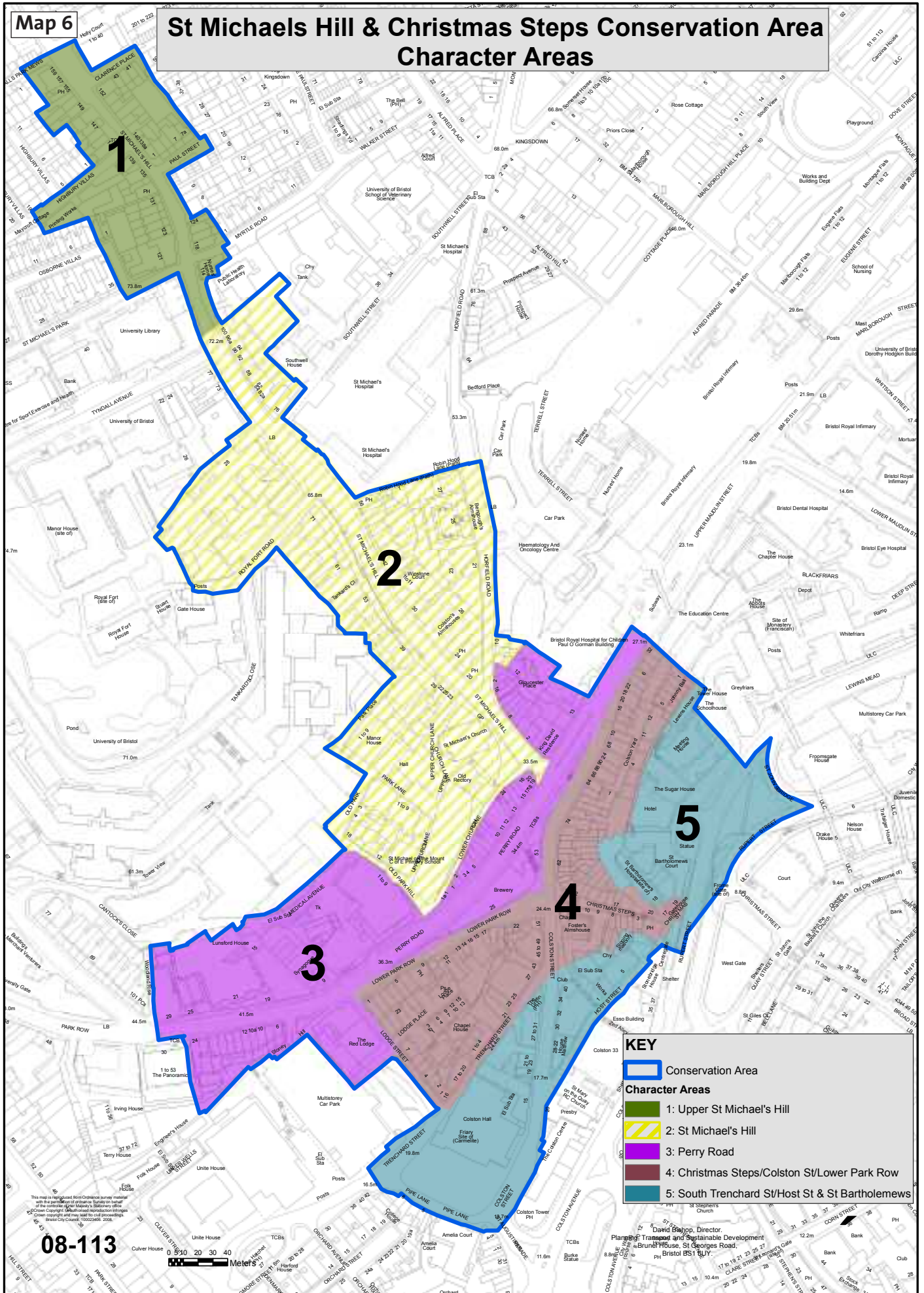


7.1.5 Overall, the character of the area is very much determined by its developmental history. The upper portion reflects the development of substantial manor houses, short terraces and "summer houses" either situated in large garden plots or climbing the hill. Christmas Steps, Colston Street and Lower Park Row reflect the more intensive development of modest artisan's and trader's houses and shops. Perry Road reflects massive 19th century road alterations and the subsequent shopping parade, Tram Sheds and large institutional developments this enabled along its length.

7.1.6 The Conservation Area can be divided into a number of areas of distinct character, each reflecting a particular aspect of its architectural development or topography.

Character Areas are identified on Map 6.

St Michaels Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area Character Areas



KEY

Conservation Area

Character Areas

- 1: Upper St Michael's Hill
- 2: St Michael's Hill
- 3: Perry Road
- 4: Christmas Steps/Colston St/Lower Park Row
- 5: South Trenchard St/Host St & St Bartholemews



CHARACTER AREA 1:

Upper St Michael's Hill

Area 1: Dominant Characteristics

Scale

- Up to three storeys, plus attic
- Narrow plot widths, up to three bays wide
- Strong building line, notably on east side of St Michael's Hill, as properties directly address the street
- Oldbury House, Nos. 123 – 131 (odd) St Michael's Hill set back behind short front garden and low boundary wall

Proportions & Architectural Treatment

- Vertical emphasis
- Window heights diminish up elevation
- Roof concealed behind continuous parapet
- Traditional timber shopfronts directly addressing street

Material Palette

- Main facades: Red brick, Bath stone, Stucco render (sometimes painted)
- Dressings: Limestone and red brick
- Boundary Treatments: Random rubble stone, Limestone, red brick, wrought iron railings
- Joinery: Timber sash windows, timber panelled doors, timber shopfronts
- Roof coverings: Clay double roman tiles, occasional natural slate; red brick chimney stacks with clay chimney pots

Main Issues Undermining Character

- Poor quality shopfronts/signage
- Insensitive roof extensions
- Small-scale accretions on main façade
- Mix of street surfaces

7.1.7 Area 1 forms the northernmost portion of the Conservation Area, centered on St Michael's Hill and the residential streets running east and west off it. Buildings directly address the street, many with active ground floor uses. With the exception of Oldbury House, the character in this upper portion reflects the slightly later development than the rest of St Michael's Hill.



Figure 14: Oldbury House, St Michael's Hill

7.1.8 There is a notable commercial character to the area, with a range of shops, public houses, cafes and services occupying the ground floors, with residential above. The White Bear Public House is a local landmark owing to the large white bear attached to its frontage.



Figure 15: North west side of St Michael's Hill

7.1.9 A number of fine traditional shopfronts exist in their entirety, for example at no. 1 Paul Street. Others retain their traditional surrounds including carved consoles, and entablature fascias. Where shopfronts have been restored in a sensitive manner, this has greatly enhanced the street scene.



Figure 16: No. 1 Paul Street

7.1.10 Two long views extend northwards towards Cotham and a local view to the Hospital Chimney to the southwest.

7.1.11 Unsympathetic shopfronts and signage insertions, in poor quality materials and design; a proliferation of satellite dishes,

redundant wires and alarm boxes exist between Paul Street and Clarence Place; and a mixture of street surface treatments are undermining the quality of the area.

CHARACTER AREA 2: ST MICHAEL'S HILL

Area 2: Dominant Characteristics

Scale

- Up to three storeys, plus attic
- Narrow plot widths, up to three bays wide
- Strong building line and rhythm to traditional properties

Proportions & Architectural Treatment

- Vertical emphasis
- Window heights diminish up elevation
- Variety of roof forms: mansards and gables and roofs concealed behind parapet

Material Palette

- Main facades: Lime stone Ashlar, Stucco (with Lime wash) and Tyrolean render (now with modern painted finishes) or cement roughcast on Georgian and pre-Georgian buildings.
- Dressings: Limestone and red brick
- Boundary Treatments: Random rubble stone, Limestone, red brick, wrought iron railings
- Joinery: Timber sash or casement windows, timber panelled doors
- Roof coverings: Clay double roman tiles; red brick chimney stacks with clay chimney pots

Main Issues Undermining Character

- New developments failing to respect the dominant scale/rhythm of the street
- Loss of townscape details including traditional boundary features, street surfaces and street furniture
- Gap in the historic terrace, between nos. 53 & 61 St Michael's Hill (demolished during the 1950s)

7.1.13 Area 2 forms the central spine through the Conservation Area, centred on St Michael's Hill. The Area has a high quality townscape, containing predominantly Georgian or earlier buildings, and the highest proportion of listed buildings in the Conservation Area.



Figure 17: Pre-Georgian buildings on the southeast side of St Michael's Hill

7.1.14 The southern end reflects the old parish of St Michael's located around the rebuilt church of 1775. Buildings here still suggest the former village with its Manor House, Rectory, Colston's Almshouses and jettied Jacobean houses rising up the hill, the whole linked with narrow flagged alleys. Further north, the street is characterised by a range of fine Georgian townhouses, most of which area Grade II or II* listed.

7.1.15 St Michael on the Mount Primary School, built 1895, the Parish Hall and nos. 12-8 Old Park Hill and nos. 3 & 4 Old Park are unlisted buildings that contribute to the character of the area.

7.1.16 The West side of St Michael's Hill is raised on a rubble causeway and many other important townscape details run through the area. Boundary treatments are an extremely important feature and define a strong building line up the hill. Where buildings are demolished, their stone (Brandon Hill grit and Pennant) offers the possibility of re-use in buildings, boundary walls and paving.



Figure 18: Rubble causeway on the west side of St Michael's Hill



7.1.17 Five local landmarks exist within this Character Area: two almshouses, St Michael's Church and the former Children's Hospital. Long Views reach to the Physics Tower and to the City Centre/Redcliffe southeast down St Michael's Hill. One of the best City-wide panoramas is gained from the top of this Character Area.



Figure 19: Colston's Almshouses (Grade I Listed), St Michael's Hill

7.1.18 Unsympathetic, over-scaled modern institutional insertions, from the 1960s and 70s, along St Michael's Hill has damaged the traditional layout and residential scale of the area. There is a gap in the historic terrace, between nos. 53 & 61 St Michael's Hill. A sensitive scheme to reinstate the lost townhouses, that respected the historic Tankard's Close, would most successfully preserve the character in this part of the Conservation Area.

CHARACTER AREA 3: PERRY ROAD

Area 3: Dominant Characteristics

Scale

- Up to four storeys, plus attic

- Narrow plot widths, up to two bays wide
- Strong building line, directly addresses pavement edge
- Institutional buildings set back from street in large plots

Proportions & Architectural Treatment

- Vertical emphasis
- Window heights diminish up elevation
- Variety of roof forms: mansards and gables and roofs concealed behind parapet

Material Palette

- Main facades: Red brick, Stucco, Lime-based render (sometimes painted or lime wash finish), Pennant stone on institutional buildings. Many rear elevations are Tyrolean rendered
- Dressings: Limestone and red brick
- Boundary Treatments: Random rubble stone, iron area railings
- Joinery: Timber sash windows, timber shopfronts and surrounds
- Roof coverings: Clay double roman tiles; red brick or ashlar chimney stacks with clay chimney pots

Main Issues Undermining Character

- Trenchard Street car-park undermining setting of Grade I listed Red Lodge
- Traffic and pedestrian movement problems
- Poor maintenance, loss or insensitive replacement of shopfronts & poor quality signage
- Insensitive modern street furniture and signage
- Mixture of modern street surfaces



7.1.19 This Character Area centres on Upper Maudlin Street/Perry Road and Park Row and the short stretch of properties leading to Horfield Road. Perry Road itself is a late Victorian tram route, which now interrupts the continuation of St Michael's Hill to Christmas Steps.

7.7.20 There is a predominantly commercial character as the majority of buildings have ground floor shop units, which contain a variety of independent businesses ranging from cafes, antique shops, galleries to hair dressers.



Figure 20: Shopping parade along north side of Perry Road

7.7.21 There is an extremely strong building line along Perry Road and St Michael's Hill/Horfield Road, as properties directly address the pavement edge and respond to the gentle curve of Perry Road and St Michael's Hill.

7.7.22 The north-western end contains a complex of late Victorian/Edwardian institutional type buildings, some of the largest within the Conservation Area. On the south side of Park Row is a parade of attractive Edwardian properties and shopfronts.

7.7.23 The Red Lodge is one of two Grade I listed buildings in the Conservation Area. The setting of the building is undermined by the elevation of Trenchard Street Car-Park that surrounds the Lodge on two sides.

7.7.24 The majority of buildings are unlisted though many add value to the Conservation Area as a whole. Landmark buildings are The Red Lodge, The Synagogue, Zero Degrees Microbrewery (former Tram Sheds), and the former King David Hotel.



Figure 21: Former King David Hotel, corner of Upper Maudlin Street and St Michael's Hill

7.7.25 The volume of heavy traffic undermines the character of the area, conflicting with pedestrian movement and impacting on local trade. Some shopfronts are being poorly maintained or replaced; the Café Wall Illusion tiles (originally tiled as a butcher's shop, now an empty café) at no. 19-20 Perry Road, which inspired experiments in visual distortion by Professor Richard Gregory in the 1970s, are in a poor condition.



Figure 22: Café wall illusion tiles at no. 19-20 Perry Road

CHARACTER AREA 4: CHRISTMAS STEPS/COLSTON STREET/LOWER PARK ROW

Area 4: Dominant Characteristics

Scale

- Human scale, up to three storeys, plus attic
- Narrow plot widths, up to two bays wide
- Strong building line and rhythm

Proportions & Architectural Treatment

- Vertical emphasis
- Window heights diminish up elevation
- Variety of roof forms: mansards, pitched or hipped roofs, many concealed behind continuous parapet

Material Palette

- Main facades: Red brick, Lime-based render (with lime wash finish)
- Dressings: Limestone, pre-moulded and red brick

- Boundary Treatments: Wrought iron area railings at nos. 1-5 Lower Park Row
- Joinery: Timber sash windows, timber shopfronts & surrounds, timber panelled doors
- Roof coverings: Clay double roman tiles; red brick chimney stacks with clay chimney pots

Main Issues Undermining Character

- Closure of many independent businesses on Christmas Steps contributing to an atmosphere of decline
- Loss of retail units to residential/corporate uses
- Poor maintenance or insensitive restoration of period buildings
- Insensitive modern street furniture and signage
- Mixture of modern street surfaces

7.7.26 Character Area 4 sits on the escarpment to the River Frome that runs from the south of Upper Maudlin Street to Colston Street and includes Lower Park Row, Trenchard Street and Christmas Steps.

7.7.27 The development of the area was dictated to in part by the local topography, which retains much of its original layout as a medieval suburb. The area has an intimate and charming character, owing to the jumble of historic buildings and number of narrow lanes and alleyways, many now forgotten, that permeate the area.

7.7.28 Christmas Steps is one of the most important historic streets in Bristol, notable for its steep stepped form that dates from the Jacobean period. Buildings that round Colston Street and along Lower Park Row are some of the earliest in the Conservation Area, all timber-framed with a modest scale and vernacular character.





Figure 23: Early vernacular buildings that round Colson Street from Christmas Steps

7.7.29 The area contains a rich variety of townscape details including shopfronts, lampstandards, street surfaces, which add interest and diversity to the street scene (see Townscape Details section). Poor maintenance and mixed replacement is undermining the quality of the area.

7.7.30 Fosters Almshouses Grade II* and the adjacent chapel is the only local landmark. A number of glimpsed views are gained down narrow streets. An important long view runs east down Lower Park Row towards St Paul's.



Figure 24: View eastwards down Lower Park Row

7.7.31 Colston Yard is the only mews development in the Conservation Area, which retains a light-industrial character. The retention of independent workshops, artisans and light-industry is extremely important in protecting the unique and diverse character of the area.



Figure 25: Colston Yard

7.7.32 Some modern and restorations infills have failed to respect the dominant materials and proportions to detrimental effect. Despite being one of the City's primary retail areas, Christmas Steps and Colston Street are struggling to attract trade. Many retail units are being lost to residential or corporate uses, which further deprives the area of an active ground floor and vital footfall.

CHARACTER AREA 5: SOUTH TRENCHARD STREET/HOST STREET & ST BARTHOLOMEW'S

Area 3: Dominant Characteristics

Scale

- Up to eight storeys fronting Rupert Street
- Large, wide plots
- Strong building line down Colston Street

Proportions & Architectural Treatment

- Mix of building styles and treatments
- Host streets retains a light-industrial, warehouse character
- Generally flat roofs

Material Palette

- Main facades: Red brick, Limestone Ashlar, Stucco or Lime render (with lime wash finish), Pennant stone
- Dressings: Limestone and red brick
- Boundary Treatments: Random rubble stone, Limestone, wrought iron railings
- Roof coverings: Clay double roman tiles; natural slate

Main Issues Undermining Character

- Host Street has become a forgotten cul-de-sac dominated by negative elevations of Colston Avenue buildings on the south side
- Severed pedestrian links between Old City and bottom of Christmas Steps

7.7.33 Character Area 5 lies in the valley floor between Lewins Mead and Colston Avenue that originally followed the River Frome. The area is most mixed in terms of its development, architecture and character.

7.7.33 Fronting Rupert Street is a collection of historic buildings including the Meeting House and the Sugar House, the sole surviving sugar refinery (now Hotel du Vin).



Figure 26: The Meeting House, Lewin's Mead

7.7.34 St Bartholomew's Court is a massive late 20th century office development that obscures the opening to the south of Christmas Steps. Tucked behind the offices is the site of the 13th century St Bartholomew's Hospital which is now a complex of small office units.



Figure 27: Remnants of the former St Bartholomew's Hospital

7.7.35 Host Street still reflects something of the maritime history that once shaped the area, owing to the small-scale warehouse type buildings, cast iron curb edges and Zed Alley that historically ran from the water up past

Steep Street to Trenchard Lane (now Trenchard Street). The only reminders of the name of Griffin Lane are in the Griffin Public House and Griffin Court, off Lower Park Row.



Figure 28: Zed Alley leading from Colston Street to Host Street

7.7.36 Colston Street was driven through the area in the late 19th century, sweeping away all of the vernacular buildings that existed. Colston Hall is a landmark building, occupying a vast plot between Colston Street and Trenchard Street.

7.7.37 Trenchard Street car-park looms over Trenchard Street and undermines the setting of the Conservation Area. Similarly, Colston Avenue buildings turn their back on Host Street and overshadow this historic route creating the sense of a forgotten back alley.



Figure 29: Host Street

7.7.38 The dual carriage way that runs along Rupert Street has severed the historic link between Christmas Steps and the Old City. The problem is exacerbated by the lack of pedestrian crossings at crucial points.

7.2 ARCHITECTURE

Overview

7.2.1 The St Michael's Hill and Christmas Steps Conservation Area is particularly rich in its diversity and variety of buildings, containing a harmonious jumble of building styles and details with virtually no two buildings being the same. The character of the area is derived in large part from the quality of the buildings, many of which are listed and retain traditional features.

7.2.2 With the exception of local landmarks and institutional buildings, an overall harmony derives from the human-scale and overall consistency in materials: stucco render, Bath and rubble stone, red brick, Clay double roman tiles. The consistent use of traditional materials gives a cohesion to the Conservation Area

7.2.3 The Character Areas described above reflect the architectural styles of the conservation area, which are consistent in character and period. Most buildings display typical architectural proportions, with diminishing storey heights.

Pre-Georgian Buildings

7.2.4 The earliest buildings in the Conservation Area are the vernacular timber-framed examples clustered around Christmas Steps/Lower Park Row; and the grander merchants' houses scattered near St Michael's Church. There are also a number of substantial early buildings, notably the Red Lodge, the Old Rectory, the Manor House, Oldbury House and Colston's Almshouses.

7.2.5 The earliest, modestly-scaled buildings on the lower slopes are all likely to be timber-framed although in some cases the frame may have been concealed behind later re-fronting (many of the Christmas Steps properties were re-fronted in the late

Georgian/Victorian period). These buildings are characterised by their human scale and diversity in individual details. Frontages are either flat or gabled, occasionally jettied. Variety in roof forms adds to the individual character of each building.

- 7.2.6 The earliest houses north of St Michael's Church reflect the higher status of this part of the Conservation Area. Properties are larger-scale, though 23 – 27 St Michael's Hill are timber framed, there is a higher quality in building materials and execution. Colston's Almshouse and the Manor House show a Classical symmetry that became more popular in the 18th century.



Figure 30: The Manor House, Park Lane

Georgian Buildings

- 7.2.7 The Conservation Area contains a large number of fine Georgian townhouses, particularly in the northern portion along St Michael's Hill. Most Georgian townhouses are set behind low boundary walls crowned with wrought iron area railings, or behind short front gardens.
- 7.2.8 Georgian buildings are characterised by their Classical proportions and details and quality materials, either stucco render or ashlar Bath Stone. A number have rusticated ground floors with plain ashlar stone above. Window heights generally diminish up an

elevation and a parapet cornice conceals the roof.

- 7.2.9 Decorative ironwork is a particular feature of Georgian buildings, seen in wrought iron area railings or occasionally in Regency balconies or entrances, for example at no. 1 Lower Park Row.



Figure 31: Nos. 1-4 Lower Park Row

Victorian/Edwardian Buildings

- 7.2.10 Victorian and Edwardian architecture tends to reflect the shift in development and building patterns in the area. Victorian terraces with commercial ground floors and consistent upper storey treatment exist along the north side of Perry Road and south Upper Maudlin Street.
- 7.2.11 The Victorians also introduced a number of large-scale institutional and civic buildings into the Conservation Area, made possible by the massive road engineering that took place along Perry Road and Colston Street. Colston Hall, the re-built Foster's Almshouses, the Synagogue, St Michael on the Mount Primary School and the King David Hotel are all bold Victorian/Edwardian introductions.



Figure 32: Synagogue, Park Row

7.2.12 As the Frome was culverted in the late 19th century, this spurred the re-development of the area around south Colston Street and Host Street, which are now characterised by large warehouse/industrial type buildings.

20th & 21st Century buildings

7.2.13 More modern introductions tend to be located around Colston Street and Rupert Street and occasional infill on Lower Park Row and St Michael's Hill. A large extension to Colston Hall is currently under construction.

Original architectural features, materials and detail are vital to the quality of individual buildings and the character of the Conservation Area. Policy B16 encourages the consideration of traditional architectural elements that contribute to the overall design in a group of historic buildings.

7.3 ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

7.3.1 St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps has a rich variety of architectural detail, reflecting the varied architectural styles of the Conservation Area. The preservation of so many traditional architectural details in St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps contributes to the special interest of the area. The variety of windows, doors and roofs enliven the area and give variety and interest to the street scene. Most commonly Classical details are used in porches, windows, door surrounds, cornices and parapets, which provide vital alleviation to the stucco or brick facades.

7.3.2 It is important that architectural detail is protected and preserved, as it is often the factor that gives the plainer buildings their character. Particularly in terraces it is the overall consistency of design and detail that gives the character, and loss of detail on one house in a terrace can be damaging to the whole group

7.3.3 Variety in scale and detailing in some buildings reflects the more piecemeal type of development that occurred in streets such as Christmas Steps and Lower Park Row.

Roof Profiles

7.3.4 Roof profiles are fundamental to the architectural character of a building or group, and contribute greatly to the character of an area. Alterations at roof level can consequently have a significant impact on an individual building and the wider context.

7.3.5 Chimney stacks and pots form striking and important features when seen against the skyline and they are usually significant to the architectural design of a building. Replacement or removal of chimney pots and stacks on listed buildings requires consent, and is discouraged on any buildings in the Conservation Area.

7.3.6 Windows and Doors are crucial in establishing the character of a building's elevation. Original doors and windows, including their detailing, materials and method of opening make a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.

7.3.7 Typically, Georgian windows in St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps are single glazed, double hung, timber sashes, recessed within the window reveal and painted white. Sashes are usually six-over-six, though there are variations to this pattern. Victorian windows are heavier, one-over-one timber sashes with moulded window horns (seen particularly at the north end of St Michael's Hill).



Figure 33: Unusual 'Gothic' window, the Old Rectory, Lower Park Lane

7.3.8 Doors and surrounds are the most elaborately detailed element of the facades. In St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps there are a variety of original 6-panel doors with traditional door furniture. These have a variety of limestone Classical surrounds and some have elaborate shell-hoods, for example no. 67 St Michael's Hill.



Figure 34: No. 96 St Michael's Hill: Typical Georgian window and door details: six-over-six timber sash window; six panel door with decorative fanlight and Lime stone door surround

7.3.9 Fanlights, a means of providing internal hallways with additional light, are generally semicircular and appear in various ornate styles.



7.3.10 Regular maintenance and painting or traditional doors and windows is essential to ensure that problems of decay are not allowed to flourish. Other architectural details of special interest must be retained, and specialist advice sought on repair. (See Useful Information section.)

7.3.11 Where wholesale replacement is needed, the detail of doors and windows must match the originals in terms of glazing patterns and method of opening. Poor quality replacement doors and windows have a detrimental impact on the integrity of individual buildings, and the character of the conservation area as a whole (see Negative Features).

7.4 MATERIALS

7.4.1 The Conservation Area sits on a bed of Carboniferous Quartzitic Sandstone locally known as Brandon Hill Grit and Triassic mudstones of the Keuper series (Mercian mudstone). The local stone is most widely used in boundary walls and occasionally in building e.g at the Red Lodge. (Brandon Hill Grit, however, was not intended to be a visible construction material as this would originally have been covered in a traditional plaster finish.)

7.4.2 Other predominant building materials in an area are imported, albeit from local sources. Pennant stone came from quarries in east Bristol, near Stapleton. Limestone may have come from Clifton, where it was quarried near the Downs. The very finest Oolitic limestone, used in the most prestigious buildings, usually came from Bath.

7.4.3 Building materials not only give texture and interest to individual buildings, they also characterise an area. The strong material palette seen in St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps unites the area and also gives an indication of building ages and patterns of development. Where recent infills and new developments have failed to respect the dominant palette, this undermines the character of the area as a whole.

Any proposal should take into account the character of its context. Applications for alterations to a Listed Building or its curtilage that fail to preserve the building, its features or setting will not be permitted. Policies B17, B18, B19, B20



7.5 TOWNSCAPE DETAILS

7.5.1 Other features and details in the townscape also contribute to a sense of local distinctiveness. These can range from distinctive boundary treatments and street furniture, to trees and hard landscaping. Individually and collectively they contribute to the overall quality of Bristol's streetscape.

7.5.2 The St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps is rich in local townscape details that cumulatively give interest and quality to the street scene and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. Where they remain, these details must be preserved or replaced with their modern equivalents as their degradation and disappearance gradually undermines the quality of the area (see Negative Features below).

Historic Street Surfaces

7.5.3 Traditional surface treatments such as setts and paving can be important elements in the townscape of an area. Paving, if well maintained and in high quality materials, contributes greatly to the character of an area, providing the backdrop to surrounding buildings. Their maintenance and retention is essential.



*Figure 35:
Traditional Pennant
stone paving along
St Michael's Hill*

7.5.6 Schemes to restore the traditional street surface would greatly enhance the character of the area and promote its historic context. Continued maintenance of street surface, particularly setts, is vital as these easily become dislodged and can present difficulties to pedestrians and non-ambulant users.

7.5.7 A cohesive plan for the future of street surfaces, that reduces the hotchpotch treatments, whilst considering maintenance, would greatly enhance the local environment. Where the opportunity arises, a scheme to restore the traditional street surfaces would greatly enhance the routes where it has been lost.

Railings and Boundary Treatments

7.5.8 Railings and boundary walls contribute significantly to the character of the St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps. They add interest and variety of scale in the street scene and provide a sense of enclosure. Where they remain, traditional boundary walls, gates, gate piers and railings must be preserved, sympathetically restored or reinstated as and when the opportunity arises.



*Figure 36: Original
wrought iron
railings, St
Michael's Hill*

Street Furniture

7.5.9 St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps has a fascinating collection of historic street furniture, some of which is listed. Street furniture, including letter boxes, lamp standards, and other details, enlivens the street scene but also reflects the history of the area. Cast iron lamp posts, lanterns and iron support brackets made in Bristol foundries should be preserved in situ, where appropriate.



Figure 37: Traditional lampstandards along Christmas Steps



Figure 38: Lantern and street sign to the little-known Gloucester Place, off St Michael's Hill

7.5.10 The appropriate maintenance, protection and reinstatement of traditional street furniture important to preserving the character and appearance of Conservation Areas, as is the need to prevent modern street clutter detracting from its setting.

Shopfronts and Public Houses

7.5.10 Traditional or quality shopfronts are of great importance in contributing to the character and appearance of both individual buildings and the conservation area as a whole, and can be of historic and architectural interest in their own right.

7.5.11 The St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area has a fine collection of original and traditional shopfronts of various ages. The most interesting collection area in the lower portion, south of St Michael's Hill; though a cluster also exist at the northern extremity of the Conservation Area as well as those along Perry Road.



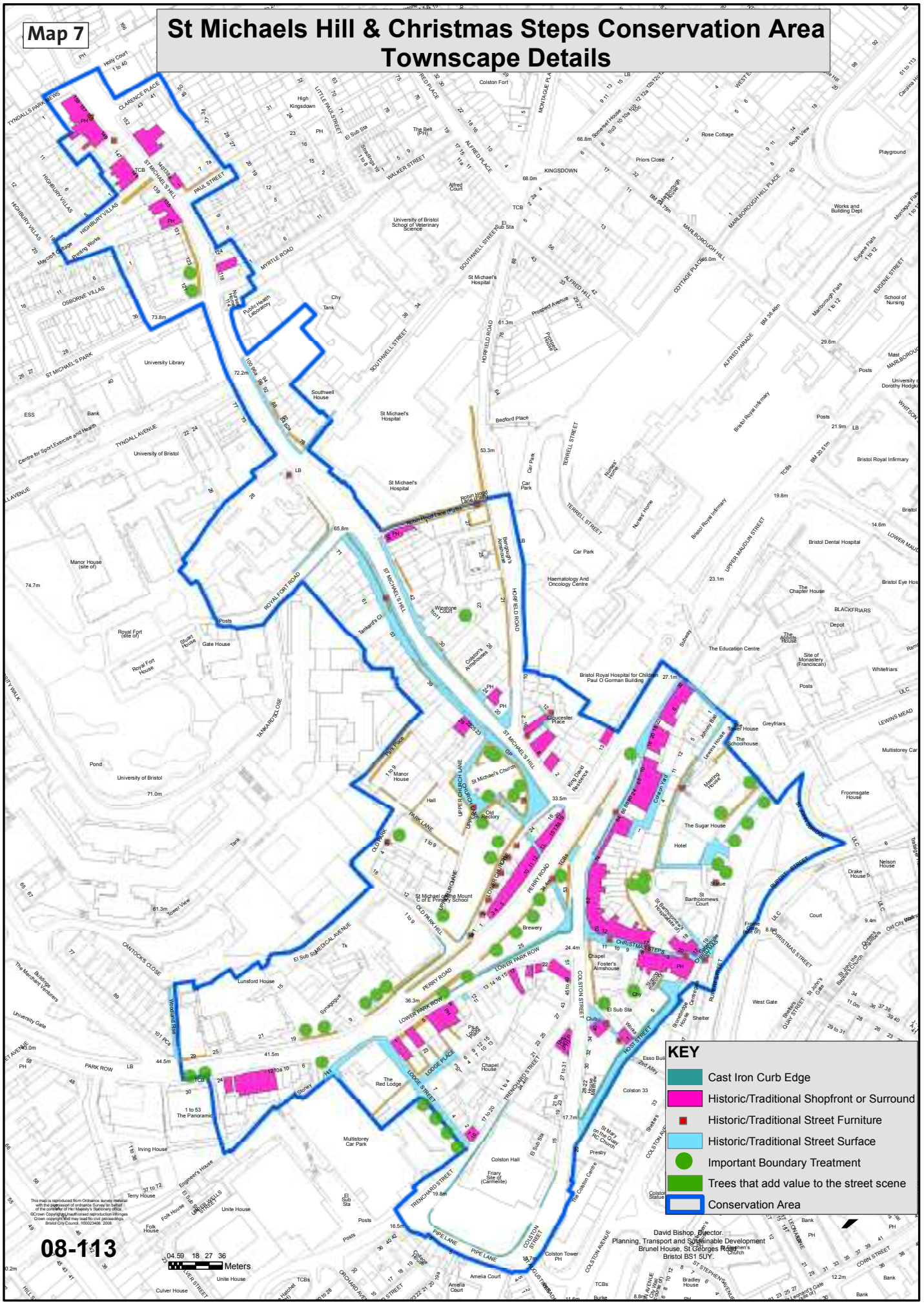
Local Townscape Details are shown on Map 7.

The loss of private planting, the removal of boundary walls and railings, the introduction of car parking into traditional front garden areas, and the loss or replacement of traditional signage, street lighting, paving and street furniture can all adversely affect the character of the historic environment and will generally not be acceptable. Policy B15 (I – III) should be consulted.



7.5.12 The Conservation Area contains an interesting collection of public houses, ranging from the Three Sugar Loaves at the bottom of Christmas Steps, the Scotchman and His Pack, St Michael's Hill, The Robin Hood, St Michael's Hill The Ship, Lower Park Row, and the Griffin, Colston Street. The names of public houses in some instances reflects the historic trades or old street names in their locality.

St Michaels Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area Townscape Details



KEY

- Cast Iron Curb Edge
- Historic/Traditional Shopfront or Surround
- Historic/Traditional Street Furniture
- Historic/Traditional Street Surface
- Important Boundary Treatment
- Trees that add value to the street scene
- Conservation Area

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Bristol BS1 5UY.

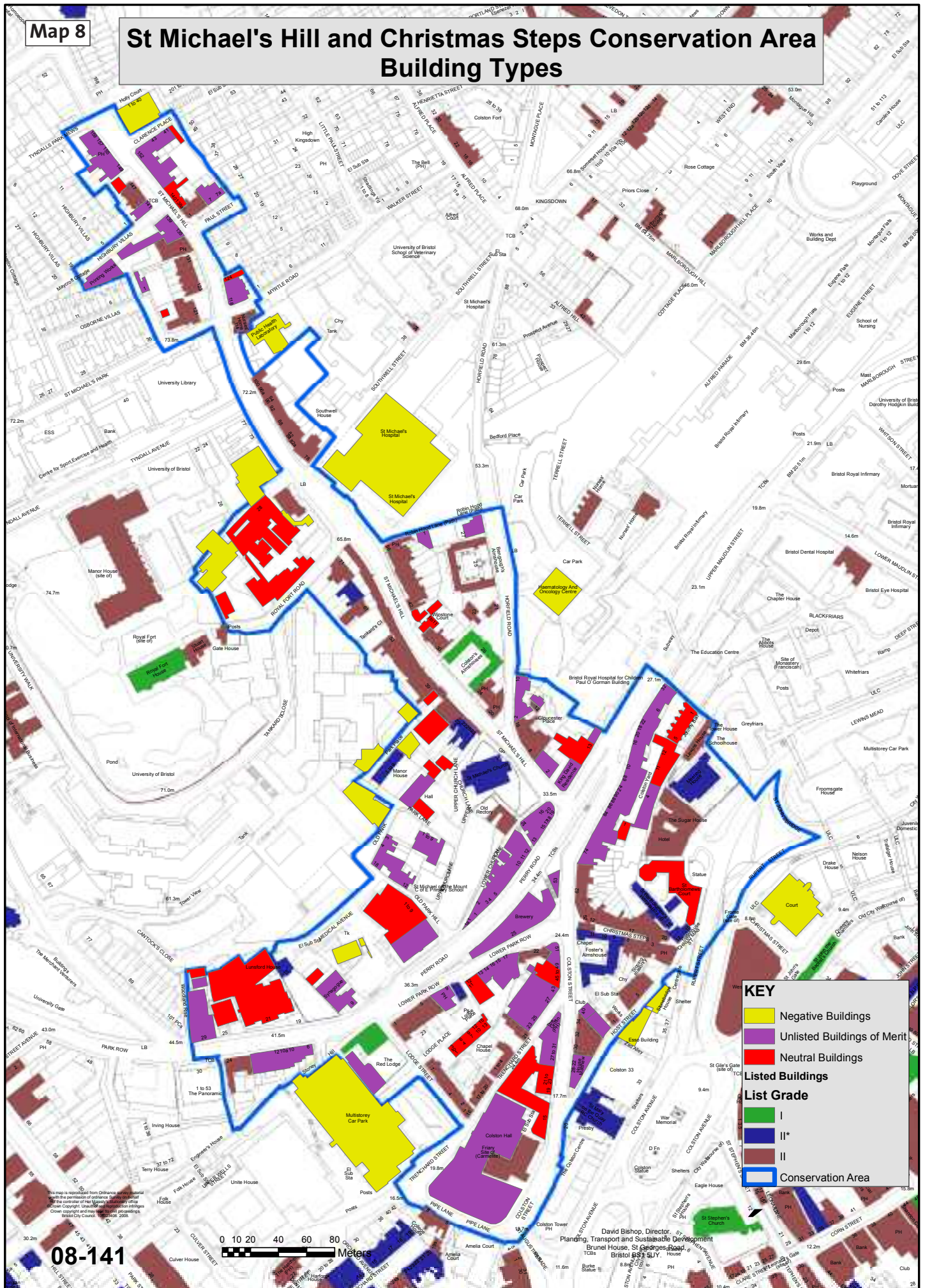


7.6 UNLISTED BUILDINGS OF MERIT

- 7.6.1 St Michael's Hill & Christmas steps contains an extremely high concentration of listed buildings, reflective of the quality of the environment. Listed properties tend to comprise the pre-Georgian, Georgian and early Victorian terraces.
- 7.6.2 Unlisted buildings can also make an important contribution to the character and quality of an area. This may be due to their value within the townscape, their architectural qualities or local historic and cultural associations.
- 7.6.3 'Unlisted Buildings of Merit' are considered to make a positive contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area and their demolition or unsympathetic alteration will normally be resisted.

Building Types (Listed Buildings, Unlisted Buildings of Merit, Negative and Neutral Buildings) are identified on Map 8.

St Michael's Hill and Christmas Steps Conservation Area Building Types



KEY

- Negative Buildings
- Unlisted Buildings of Merit
- Neutral Buildings
- Listed Buildings
- List Grade
 - I
 - II*
 - II
- Conservation Area

7.7 LANDSCAPE

- 7.7.1 There is no public landscaped space in St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area. The only green and landscaped space that exists comes from the private gardens and forecourts the Church and Almshouses. Consequently, the Conservation Area as a whole suffers from a lack of greenery.
- 7.7.2 There is a fine Tudor knot garden behind the Red Lodge, as well as gardens with trees behind St Bartholomew's Hospital and behind Lunsford House, those these are entirely hidden from public view.
- 7.7.3 Apart from a few front gardens towards the top of St Michael's Hill on the western side, the only other greenery is provided by the lawns and gardens of the three sets of almshouses; the churchyard of St Michael's Church (currently neglected and overgrown); and the landscaped lower playground of St Michael's School. These areas of garden, albeit private, contribute greatly to the public realm in a borrowed sense and are very precious to the Conservation Area.
- 7.7.4 A limited number of trees have been planted along public highways throughout the Conservation Area (shown on the Townscape Details map 7). Further tree-planting would greatly enhance the street-scene and would provide vital greenery in an otherwise entirely built-up area.

8. NEGATIVE FEATURES

- 8.1 Negative features are those elements that detract from the special character of a conservation area and therefore present an opportunity for enhancement. This can include both small features and larger buildings and sites. It may be that simple maintenance works can remedy the situation, reinstate original design or lost architectural features.

Development & Alterations

- 8.2 Unsympathetic alterations & loss of traditional architectural details – where poor quality replacement doors and windows or roof level extensions have been inserted these have had a significant and detrimental impact on the architectural integrity of individual buildings. (The character of the former King David Hotel has been severely compromised by the insertion of uPVC windows.) Roof-level extensions are particularly detrimental, especially when they interrupt the consistency of a group.



Figure 41: No. 148 St Michael's Hill, insensitive roof extension



- 8.3 Unsympathetic infill and over-intensive developments – threaten to undermine the character and special interest of the area. Especially if they ignore predominant scale, materials, local architectural features and traditional building lines.
- 8.4 Shopfronts & Signage - Poor quality replacement shopfront, internally illuminated or over-size signage can have a dramatic effect on the quality of the street scene as well as being contrary to BCC design guidance. Grossly deepened fascia boards are a particular problem along Park Row, Perry Road and Upper Maudlin Street.



Figure 42: Over-sized fascia board, Park Row

- 8.5 Loss of shopfronts as local businesses are changed to residential/corporate uses – this issue is increasing as the area suffers from a general decline in footfall and trade. Shopfronts are a vital architectural feature in the conservation area and provide active ground floors.
- 8.6 Poor maintenance of buildings – the care and maintenance of individual properties affects the character of the area as a whole. Some shopfronts along Perry Road have seen their Limestone details, stallrisers, pilasters etc. painted, or clad. The important optical-illusion tiles at no. 19 Perry Road are deteriorating rapidly.



Figure 43: Shopfront at no. 19 – 20 Perry Road is in a poor state of repair

- 8.7 Buildings at Risk – St Michael's Church is currently redundant and has been vacant for over five years. Various discussions for appropriate re-use have failed and the building is rapidly deteriorating. The Church is currently on three 2008 At Risk Registers: English Heritage, Bristol City Council and The Civic Society.



Figure 44: St Michael on the Mount, currently vacant and in a deteriorating condition

- 8.8 Small-scale accretions - satellite dishes, telephone wires and poles, alarm boxes, air conditioning units and other minor additions have a significant cumulative impact on the character of streets and terraces. Careful siting and choice of materials and colours can significantly reduce the impact of these elements. Redundant wires should be removed.



Figure 45: Insensitively sited air conditioning unit, Lower Park Row

Public Realm

- 8.9 Traffic – major inner-city traffic is carried by Park Row/Perry Road/Upper Maudlin Street, made worse since the c. 2000 City Centre re-modelling. The volume of traffic causes environmental pollution, noise and deters ‘passing trade’ from stopping at the shops in the Conservation Area.
- 8.10 Pedestrian movement - hindered at various points, notably at the junction of St Michael’s Hill and Upper Maudlin Street. Vital pedestrian desire-lines between the area and other centres, for example the Old City have been severed. This is severely impacting on footfall through the area hindering successful trading and attracting residents.

- 8.11 Loss of small businesses -linked to the problems above, independent businesses, which characterize the area, are struggling and many have closed (there are 78 active retail shops, workshops, cafes and pubs; 17 empty shops; 11 shops used as residences; and 13 shops used as offices – i.e 35% of the shopfronts are currently inactive).

- 8.12 Loss of traditional street surfaces or mixture of modern materials – gradually erodes the quality of the public realm. Pennant setts are frequently removed or overlain with tarmac, creating a hotchpotch of materials. Poorly reinstated traditional surfaces or poor maintenance is equally negative and poses a threat to pedestrians.



Figure 46: Mix of street surfaces, Colston Street

- 8.13 Advertising hoardings – oversized and unsympathetically located hoardings detract significantly from individual buildings, the street scene, and the quality of the wider Conservation Area. Particularly detrimental are the hoardings at the top of Colston Street, along the west end of Perry Road and on the southern corner of Pipe Lane and Trenchard Street.



Figure 47: Advertising hoardings, Park Row



Figure 48: 'Tagging' along Lower Church Lane

- 8.14 Parking issues – being built on a medieval street plan of steep, narrow roads on an escarpment, the area has little on-street parking provisions. There is an inadequacy of parking for the Hospital, which overflows into the Conservation Area, particularly along St Michael's Hill. Residents' parking permits monopolise one-third of the one-street parking spaces in the area and consequently deprive potential shoppers of parking.
- 8.15 Graffiti and 'Tagging' - undermines the quality of the environment and contribute to a sense of decay and neglect in areas. The blank wall and relative quiet of Lower Church Lane, Johnny Ball Lane and Host Street make them attractive areas for 'tagging'.

Beyond the Conservation Area

- 8.16 Threat to key views and panoramas into and out of the Conservation Area from new developments, particularly in the City Centre.
- 8.17 Large-scale institutional developments – the University and Hospital occupy much of the land to the east and west of the Conservation. Pressures for institutional expansion has seen post-War developments of the 1960s and 70s that significantly undermine the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, particularly along St Michael's Hill.



Figure 49: St Michael's Maternity Hospital on east side of St Michael's Hill blights the setting of the Conservation Area



9. MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

- 9.1 It is expected that the effective management of the St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps can, for the most part, be met through an effective policy framework and the positive use of existing development control and enforcement powers. The analysis of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area within the new Character Appraisal therefore identifies those elements the Council will seek to protect, as well as negative features, which may present opportunities for change or enhancement.
- 9.2 The following table provides a list of proposals related specifically to those features identified as 'negative' in Section 8. The implementation of the proposed Potential Actions may depend on the existing and future financial and staff resources that Bristol City Council departments work within.

Negative Feature

Unsympathetic alterations and loss of traditional architectural details

Potential Action

- Where consent is required, resist unsympathetic alterations and loss of traditional architectural details through positive use of existing development control powers.
- Encourage appropriate reinstatement of traditional architectural details in future development control negotiations.
- Seek enforcement action against unauthorised removal of traditional architectural details where a breach of planning control has occurred.

Negative Feature

Unsympathetic infill and over intensive developments

Potential Action

- With applications for new development, encourage high-quality design and materials, sensitive to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, through positive use of existing development control powers.
- Seek enforcement action against any breach of planning permissions or conditions where there is a negative impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Ensure that predominant scale, materials, details and building lines are respected in line with BLP/LDF policies and findings within the Conservation Area Character Appraisal.
- Increase awareness of conservation issues and understanding of the character of the Conservation Area through promotion of Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

Negative Feature

Poor quality shopfronts & signage

Potential Action

- Where a breach of planning control has occurred, seek enforcement action against unauthorised removal/alteration of shopfronts or signage that has a negative impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Encourage appropriate reinstatement or sympathetic shopfront and signage design (following guidance in Policy Advice Note 8) in future development control negotiations.
- Investigate the possibility of updating existing shopfront/advertisement design guidance.

Negative Feature

Loss of shopfronts as businesses change to residential/corporate uses

Potential Action



- Where planning permission is granted for material change of use, seek the retention or reinstatement of traditional shopfront surrounds through development control negotiations.
- Seek enforcement action against unauthorised change of use or removal of a shopfront where a breach of planning control has occurred and there is a negative impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Investigate the possibility of updating existing shopfront design guidance (Policy Advice Note 8).
- Increase awareness of conservation issues and understanding of the character of the Conservation Area through promotion of Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

Negative Feature

Poor maintenance of buildings & Buildings at Risk

Potential Action

- Seek improvements to poorly maintained buildings or land by negotiation through the development control process.
- Use Section 215 Notices more effectively to improve quality of built environment by the Planning, Private Sector Housing or Environmental Health Teams.
- Investigate possibility of serving Section 54 Urgent Works Notices on listed buildings in poor repair, and consider use on unlisted buildings, where appropriate.

Negative Feature

Small-scale accretions*

Potential Action

- Encourage removal or redundant wires, alarm boxes and other accretions, where appropriate, in future development control negotiations.

- Seek enforcement action against unauthorised siting of satellite dishes, air conditioning units, etc. where a breach of planning control has occurred and the item has a negative impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Increase awareness of conservation issues and understanding of the character of the Conservation Area through promotion of Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

Negative Feature

Traffic & Pedestrian Movement

Potential Action

- Encourage schemes to improve historic link from Christmas Steps Rupert Street to the Old City and other links in negotiations for Section 106 contributions

Negative Feature

Loss of small businesses

Potential Action

- Encourage increased footfall to and through the Conservation Area through improved signage and links with the City Centre and other commercial centres

Negative Feature

Loss of traditional street surfaces

Potential Action

- Co-ordinate with Highways Department to encourage retention/reinstatement of setts, stone kerbing, Pennant paving etc; subject to those materials being 'fit for purpose'.
- Encourage like-for-like replacement, provided material is 'fit for purpose', where damage to street surface occurs.
- Where wholesale replacement is required, co-ordinate with Highways to ensure consistency and quality of alternative material.





- Increase awareness of conservation issues and understanding of the character of the Conservation Area through promotion of Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

Negative Feature

Advertising hoardings

Potential Action

- Seek enforcement action against unauthorised advertising hoardings that have a negative impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, either within the Conservation Area or that affect its setting.
- Where an advertising hoarding with deemed consent detracts from the character and/or appearance of the Conservation Area, investigate removal through negotiation or taking by Discontinuance Action.
- Investigate possibility of undertaking a City-wide strategy for assessing advertising hoardings that have a negative impact on the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

Negative Feature

Parking Issues

Potential Action

- Co-ordinate with Highways Department to investigate possibility of introducing measures to improve more wide-spread provisions for on-street parking.

Negative Feature

Graffiti and 'Tagging'

Potential Action

- Co-ordinate with Street Scene Enforcement Team, local police, and Clean and Green Team to ensure action is taken against graffiti/tagging that is in breach of BCC's Graffiti Policy.
- Increase awareness of conservation issues and understanding of the character of the

Conservation Area through promotion of Conservation Area Character Appraisals in order to minimise damage to historic fabric caused by graffiti.

Negative Feature

Threat to key views into and out of Conservation Area

Potential Action

- Where applications for new development arise, ensure development is sensitive to the character and appearance of Conservation Areas through positive use of existing development control powers.
- Seek enforcement action against unauthorised development or signage that has a detrimental impact on the character of the Conservation Area, where a breach of planning control has occurred.
- Increase awareness of conservation issues and understanding of the character of the Conservation Area through promotion of Conservation Area Character Appraisals.

Negative Feature

Large-scale institutional developments

Potential Action

- Work with University and Hospital to ensure sensitivity and quality of future re-development schemes
- Work within bounds of pre-agreed Master Plans for these institutions



10. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

10.1 Prior to document drafting an initial public meeting was held on 01 July 2008. This meeting advised:

- What a character appraisal is and why BCC undertakes them
- The general format for character appraisals and the national guidance followed
- The types of features that make a conservation area special
- The types of features that detract from a conservation area
- The importance of reviewing boundaries, and identifying unlisted buildings of merit
- The projected timescale for the document production
- Details on how and when to make representations and contact officers

10.2 This meeting was advertised in the Bristol Evening Post (16 June 2008) and on the Bristol City Council and via the Christmas Steps Arts Quarter (Residents & Traders) monthly meeting.

10.3 The first-stage public consultation ran until 01 August 2008.

10.4 Once the draft document had been compiled, a second public meeting was held on 03 September 2008. This meeting advised:

- What a character appraisal is and why BCC undertakes them
- The general format for character appraisals and the national guidance followed
- The main findings within the document: Streets & Spaces, Views, Landmark Building, Unlisted Buildings of Merit, and Building Ages etc.
- The proposed boundary changes

- How to get involved and make representations on the findings
- Details on how and when to make representations

Copies of the draft document were available to take away from the meeting.

10.5 The second meeting was advertised in a Bristol Evening Post notice (13 August 2008), a BCC Press Release (26 August 2008), the BCC and in a circular to all properties within the Christmas Steps Arts Quarter (Residents & Traders) area. A letter/e-mail (05 August 2008) was written to all who expressed an interest during the first-stage consultation notifying of the meeting. The draft character appraisal was available to download from the BCC website along with details of the public consultation and ways to make representations.

10.5 This second public consultation period closed on 01 October 2008.

10.6 A separate letter 03 September was sent to all properties in the proposed boundary extension areas welcoming feedback. The deadline to make representations was 01 October 2008.

10.7 Walk-about and three separate meeting were also held with a steering group made up of members of the Christmas Steps Arts Quarter (Residents & Traders) Association and the Kingsdown Conservation Group (26 June, 14 July, 21 July 2008). An additional meeting was held with Dorothy Brown of Bristol on 7 July 2008.

10.8 In addition, BCC's Landscape Design, Strategic & Citywide Policy, Central West Area Planning Team, Conservation Advisory Panel, Central Area Planning Committee, English Heritage and other statutory bodies were consulted.

10.9 The St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Character Appraisal is available to down-load from the BCC website at: www.bristol.gov.uk/conservation or to purchase from the Planning Service Desk





11. LOCAL GUIDANCE, PUBLICATIONS & SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on the St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps Conservation Area can be sought from:

- Leech, R H The St Michael's Hill Precinct of the University of Bristol Bristol Record Society, 2000
- BCC Bristol Urban Archaeological Assessment Second Draft, June 2005
- The Christmas Steps Arts Quarter (Residents & Traders) Association
www.christmasstepsartsquarter.com

www.christmasstepsartsquarter.co.uk

For further information on Conservation Area Character Appraisals or Conservation issues in general, contact:

Urban Design & Conservation

Planning Services Division
Bristol City Council
Brunel House
St George's Road
Bristol
BS1 5UY

Tel: 0117 922 3097

Fax: 0117 922 3101

E-mail: conservation@bristol.gov.uk

Adopted and consultation draft Character Appraisals and details of the programme for reviewing Conservation Areas can be viewed on-line at www.bristol.gov.uk/conservation

For advice on alterations to buildings or new development within the St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps, contact:

North & West Area Planning Team

Planning Services Division
Bristol City Council
Brunel House
St George's Road
Bristol
BS1 5UY

Tel: 0117 922 3097

Fax: 0117 922 3417

The St Michael's Hill & Christmas Steps will form part of the emerging Local Development Framework and should be considered within the context of existing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), and Planning Advice Notes (PANs) including:

- 1 City Centre Strategy and Action Plan
- 2 SPD 7 'Archaeology and Development'
- 3 PAN 6 – Off-street Residential Parking in Conservation Areas
- 4 PAN 7 – Conservation Policies
- 5 PAN 8 – Shopfront Design Guides
- 6 PAN 15 – Responding to Local Character – A Design Guide

Bristol's Environmental Access Standards, 2006 should also be used by those who are planning, designing and implementing schemes in the built environment.

Bristol City Council's planning policies are set out in the adopted Bristol Local Plan (BLP) 1997 and 2003 Proposed Alterations to the Local Plan. These documents can be viewed on-line at www.bristol.gov.uk/planning



Further information on listed buildings, Conservation Areas, and guidance on character appraisals can be obtained from:

English Heritage (Head Office)

1 Waterhouse Square
138 – 142 Holborn
London EC1N 2ST

General Enquiries: 020 7973 3000
www.english-heritage.org.uk

The Victorian Society

1 Priory Gardens
Bedford Park
London W4 1TT

Tel: 020 8994 1019
www.victorian-society.org.uk

English Heritage (South West)

29 Queen Square
Bristol
BS1 4ND

Tel: 0117 950 0700

For technical guidance relating to historic buildings erected before 1714 and statutory consultee, contact:

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)

37 Spital Square
London
E1 6DY

Tel: 020 7377 1644
www.spab.org.uk

Local Branch

SPAB – Bristol & Bath Group

Local secretary: contact SPAB London

The Georgian Group

6 Fitzroy Square
London W1T 5DX
Tel: 0871 750 2936

www.georgiangroup.org.uk





12. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accretions

A gradual build-up of small additions and layers

Bath Stone

Even grained, poorly fossiliferous, light brown/cream coloured, oolitic limestone. Quarried in the Bath area

Bay

A vertical division of the exterior of a building marked by fenestration, an order, buttresses, roof compartments etc.

Bay Window

An angular or curved projecting window

Butterfly Roof

A roof formed by two gables that dip in the middle, resembling butterfly's wings. The roofs were particularly popular in Britain during the 19th century, as they have no top ridges and were usually concealed on the front façade by a parapet. The roof gave the illusion of a flat roof

Canted

Term describing part, or segment, of a façade, which is at an angle to another part of the same façade

Cast Iron

An iron-based alloy containing more than 2% carbon. The molten iron is poured into a sand or cast mould rather than hammered into shape. This allows for regular and uniform patterns and high degrees of detail. The finished product is chunkier, though more brittle, than wrought iron.

Chimney Stack

Masonry or brickwork containing several flues, projecting above the roof and terminating in chimney pots

Civil War

The English Civil War consisted of a series of armed conflicts and political machinations between Parliamentarians and Royalists 1642 - 1651.

Classical

A revival or return to the principles of Greek or Roman architecture and an attempt to return to the rule of artistic law and order. Begun in Britain c. 1616 and continued up to the 1930s

Console

An ornamental bracket with a curved profile and usually of greater height than projection

Corbel

A projecting block, usually of stone, supporting a beam or other horizontal member

Cornice

In Classical architecture, the top projecting section of an entablature. Also any projecting ornamental moulding along the top of a building, wall, arch etc., finishing or crowning it

Dormer Window

A window placed vertically in a sloping roof and with a roof of its own. Name comes from French to sleep

Double Roman Tile

A large rectangle roof tile with an upstand on one side, a roll in the centre and another roll on the other side, which fits over the upstand of the adjacent tile.

Dressings

Stone worked into a finished face, whether smooth or moulded, and used around an angle, window, or any feature

Entablature

The upper part of an order, consisting of architrave, frieze, and cornice

Escarpment

A steep slope or long cliff that results from erosion or faulting and separates two relatively level areas of differing elevations.

Fanlight

A window, often semi-circular, over a door in Georgian and Regency buildings, with radiating glazing bars suggesting a fan. Or any window over a door to let light into the room or corridor beyond



Fascia

A horizontal piece (such as a board) covering the joint between the top of a wall and the projecting eaves; also called fascia board. Also the wide board of a shopfront, usually carrying its name.

Fenestration

The arrangement of windows in a building's façade

Gable

The upper portion of a wall at the end of a pitched roof; can have straight sides or be shaped or crowned with a pediment (known as a Dutch Gable)

Georgian

The period in British history between 1714-1830 and the accession of George I and death of George IV. Also includes the Regency Period, defined by the Regency of George IV as Prince of Wales during the madness of his father George III

Gothic

A style of European architecture, particularly associated with cathedrals and churches, that began in 12th century France. The style focused on letting light into buildings and so emphasizes verticality, glass, and pointed arches. A series of Gothic revivals began in mid 18th century.

Hipped Roof

A roof with sloped instead of vertical ends

Jetty

In timber-framed building the projection of an upper storey beyond the story below

Lightwell

A shaft built into the ground to let light into a building's interior at basement level

Mansard Roof

Name taken from the French architect Francois Mansart. Normally comprises a steep pitched roof with a shallower secondary pitch above and partially hidden behind a parapet wall. The design allows extra accommodation at roof level

Pantile

A roof tile of a curved S-shape section.

Parapet

A low wall, placed to protect from a sudden drop – often on roofs – and a distinctive feature of Classical architecture

Pediment

A Classical architectural element consisting of a triangular section or gable found above the entablature, resting on columns or a framing structure

Pennant Stone

Hard, fine-grained, blue/grey coloured sandstone. Quarried in South Wales and the Bristol area and commonly used, throughout the country, as a stone roofing or street surface material

Pitched Roof

A roof consisting of two halves that form a peak in the middle where they meet

Portland Stone

A light coloured limestone from the Jurassic period, quarried on the Isle of Portland in Dorset

Sash Window

A window formed with sliding glazed frames running vertically

Setts

Rectangular paving stones with curved top, different to cobblestones which are created by being worn smooth by water over time; setts however are man made.

Stallriser

A key element in a traditional shopfront, usually wood, which protects the lower part of the shopfront and encloses the shop window and entrance

Victorian

Period often defined as the years of Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1902), though the Reform Act of 1832 is often taken as the start of this new cultural era

Wrought Iron

Made by iron being heated and plied by a blacksmith using a hammer and anvil. Pre-dates cast iron and enjoyed a renaissance during the revival periods of the late 19th century. Wrought iron is not as brittle as cast and seldom breaks



