



Northumberland Square Conservation Area Management Strategy

Supplementary Planning Document
July 2024



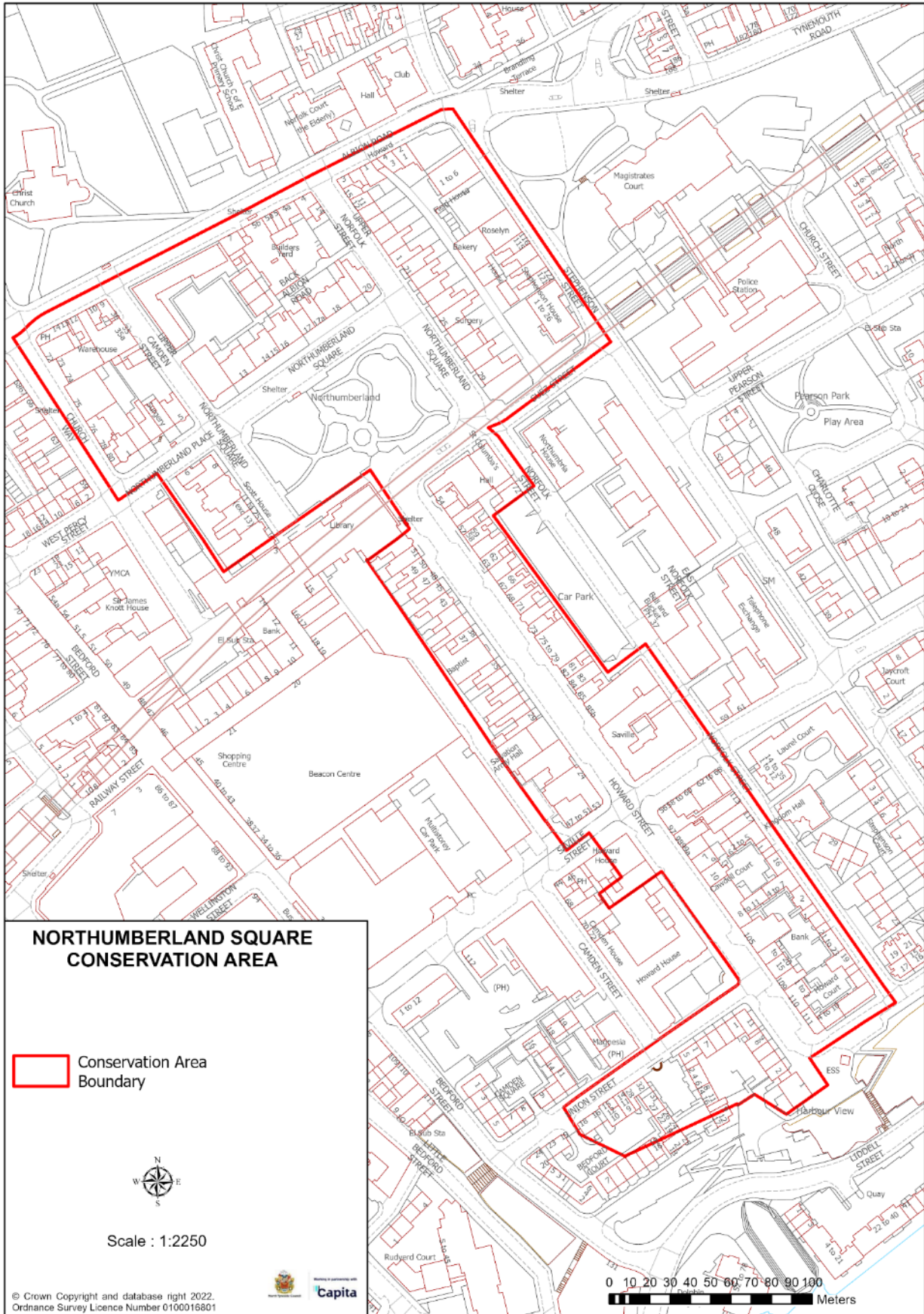
North
Tyneside
Council

Quality Management

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Date	July 2024
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**Conservation Area
Context**



1. Conservation Area Context

Northumberland Square is a conservation area with major historic and architectural value. It largely developed in late Georgian times and was at the forefront of town planning and architectural fashion.

It has, and continues to, play an important residential, commercial, recreational, cultural and civic role within North Shields. Some development in the area's more recent past has not been to the high standards the place deserves. As we look forward to a sustainable, vibrant future for the area, it is important that any more development and change respect the area's special character and appearance and that there is a positive strategy for management.

1.1 Conservation Areas

Conservation areas are "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance"¹. They are designated by the local planning authority on this basis.

Conservation areas are about character and appearance. This can derive from many factors including individual buildings, groups of buildings, streets and spaces, architectural detailing, materials, views, colours, landscaping, street furniture and so on. Character can also draw on more abstract notions such as sounds, environmental conditions and historical changes. These things combine to create a locally distinctive sense of place worthy of protection.

Conservation areas do not prevent development from taking place. Rather, they are designed to manage change and the way new development and other investment can best reflect the character of its

¹ Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s69(1)(a)

surroundings. Being in a conservation area can increase the standards required for aspects such as alterations or new buildings, but this is often outweighed by the pleasure of living or running a business in a conservation area, and the tendency of well-maintained neighbourhood character to sustain property values.

In terms of the Council's own investment in specific projects, these remain the responsibility of Cabinet and Council as appropriate, where applicable having due regard to relevant planning policies.

The first conservation areas were created in 1967 and now over 10,000 have been designated across England and Wales, varying greatly in character. North Tyneside has 17, as shown below. Of particular relevance are the Camp Terrace conservation area, which immediately adjoins the Northumberland Square conservation area to the north, and the Fish Quay conservation area, which is almost contiguous to the south.

CAs in North Tyneside

- The Green, Wallsend
- Benton
- Sacred Heart Church, Wideopen
- Longbenton Village
- Cullercoats
- St Peter's
- New Quay
- Northumberland Square
- Backworth Village
- Preston Park
- Killingworth Village
- Camp Terrace
- St. Mary's Island
- Monkseaton
- Earsdon Village
- Tynemouth Village
- Fish Quay

1.2 Why Manage Conservation Areas?

Change is inevitable in conservation areas. The challenge is to manage change in ways which maintain and, if possible, strengthen the area's special qualities. Character is rarely static and is prone to incremental, as well as dramatic, change. Some areas are in a state of decline and

suffer from lack of investment. In others, the qualities that make the area appealing also encourage over-investment and pressure for development in them.

Positive management is essential if such pressure for change, which tends to alter the very character that made the areas attractive in the first place, is to be controlled. Proactively managing Northumberland Square conservation area will therefore be an essential way of preserving and enhancing its character and appearance for everyone.

1.3 This Management Strategy

This Management Strategy has been prepared by Capita and North Tyneside Council to support the delivery of the High Streets Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) scheme for the Northumberland Square conservation area. The four-year HAZ scheme, funded by Historic England², has supported physical improvements to the historic and built environment, which has facilitated more varied and vibrant uses for the area, including cultural, leisure and tourism uses. A key focus in the implementation of the HAZ scheme was community participation and an increased understanding of and involvement in the heritage and culture of the area.

This Management Strategy will form a basis for day-to-day decision-making and guidance for the management of the area in the future.

A Character Appraisal produced by the Council was adopted in 2006 and was subsequently revised in January 2014 and November 2020. The Character Appraisal defines the special character and appearance of the conservation area and identifies elements that can have a negative impact and could be improved. It lays the foundation for the proposals

² Please see <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/regenerating-historic-high-streets/>

contained in this Strategy and is a valuable resource, particularly in supporting planning decisions.

This Strategy was adopted by North Tyneside Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), as defined in the relevant planning regulations³. An SPD is one that provides further detail and guidance on how to apply existing planning policies, specific to a particular topic or geographical area, and has weight in planning processes.

This Strategy should be reviewed from time to time, depending on the level of change that has affected, or is likely to affect, the significance of the conservation area.

1.4 Legislation

The Council has a statutory duty in exercising its planning powers to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. It also has a duty, from time to time, to draw up and publish proposals for preservation and enhancement, and to consult local people on them⁴.

The Council has extra powers in conservation areas over demolition, minor developments, and tree protection.

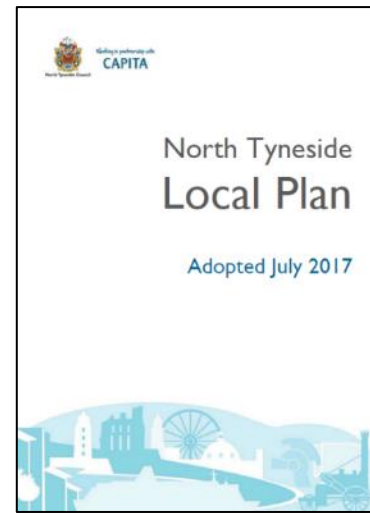
³ The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

⁴ Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s72 and s71

1.5 National Policy and Guidance

Government policy is in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁵. The NPPF sets out that conservation areas are heritage assets. It explains that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

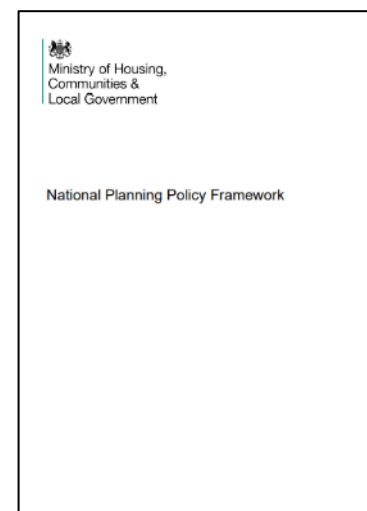
Guidance on the implementation of the NPPF is published in the Planning Practice Guidance, with the relevant chapter in this case being “Historic environment”⁶. Historic England’s guidance on conservation area management sets out key good practice⁷.



1.6 Local Policy and Guidance

The development plan for North Tyneside is the Local Plan 2017⁸. The policies within the Local Plan that are most relevant to this Management Strategy are:

- S2.1 Economic Growth Strategy
- DM6.1 Design of Development
- DM6.2 Extending Existing Buildings
- DM6.3 Advertisements and Signage
- S6.4 Improving Image
- S6.5 Heritage Assets
- DM6.6 Protection, Preservation and Enhancement of Heritage Assets
- AS8.11 The North Shields Sub Area



⁵ National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2023

⁶ Planning Practice Guidance, Historic environment, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019

⁷ Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, Historic England, February 2019

⁸ Local Plan, North Tyneside Council, July 2017

- AS8.13 The Beacon Centre and Wider Regeneration of North Shields Town Centre
- AS8.14 North Shields Town Centre Public Realm

The following SPDs are relevant:

- Design Quality SPD⁹
- Register of Buildings and Parks of Local Architectural and Historic Interest SPD¹⁰

Other planning documents produced in the future may also be relevant. Also, non-planning documents from across the Council should be considered relevant to any future management in Northumberland Square, for example, documents relating to environmental sustainability such as North Tyneside Council's Carbon Net Zero 2030 Action Plan¹¹.

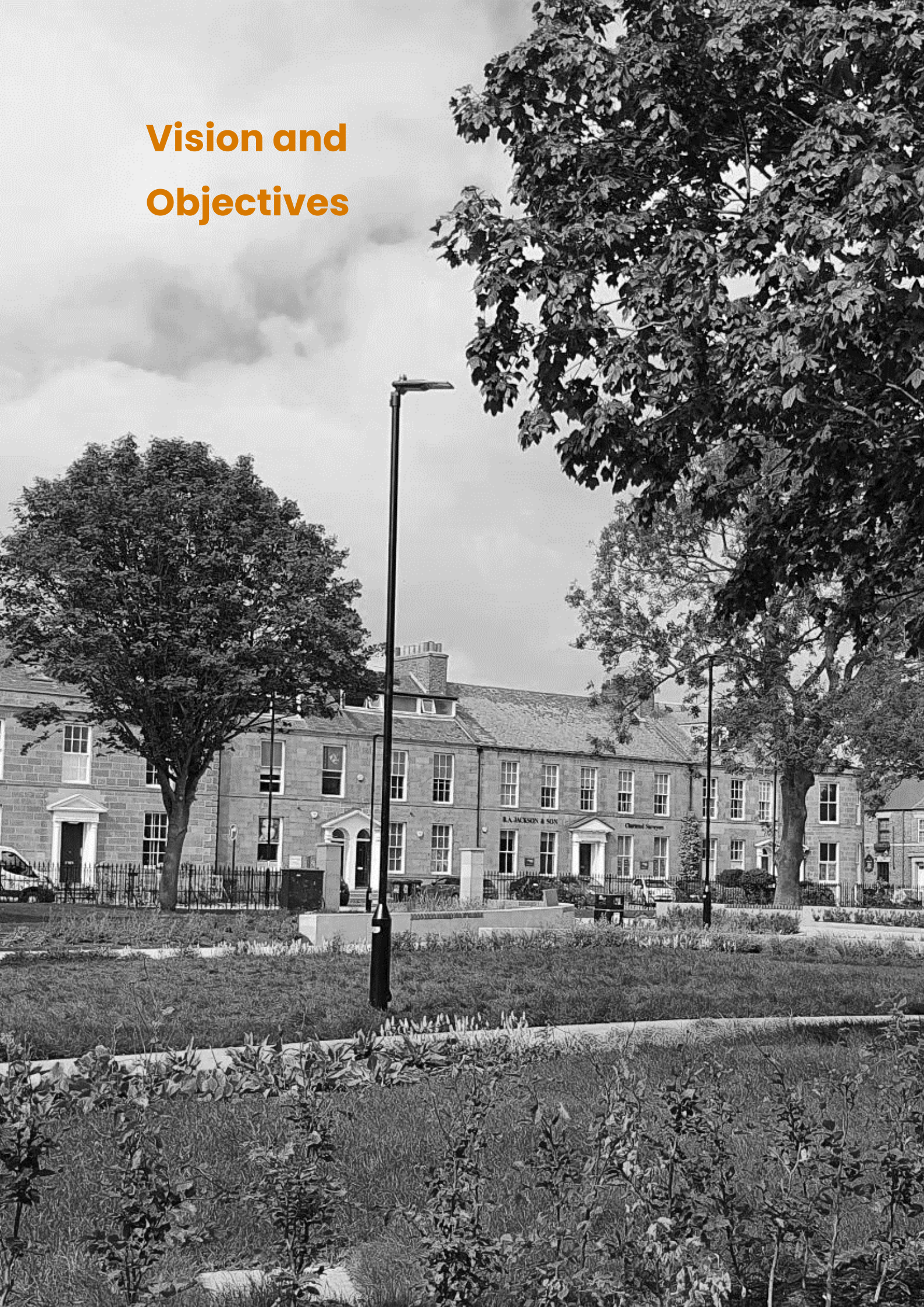


⁹ Design Quality Supplementary Planning Document, North Tyneside Council, May 2018

¹⁰ Register of Buildings and Parks of Local Architectural and Historic Interest Supplementary Planning Document, North Tyneside Council, February 2018

¹¹ Carbon Net Zero 2030 Action Plan, North Tyneside Council, 2022

Vision and Objectives



2. Vision and Objectives

2.1 Vision

Through coordinated and sustained management, and the involvement of the local community, Northumberland Square conservation area will be a vibrant, sustainable and well-connected place where people want to live, work, relax, socialise and invest in. Its special character and appearance, derived from its high-quality architecture, public realm, open spaces and distinct history, will continue to be preserved and, where appropriate, enhanced.

It is important that the local population's quality of life within Northumberland Square's special surroundings is sustained into the future, which is at the heart of this document. In turn, their continued efforts in conserving this special place and maintaining a strong partnership with the Council will ensure that we all have a place we can be proud of and for generations to come.

Northumberland Square conservation area is widely recognised as a special place, for its history, architecture and character. There is, however, always scope for improvement. Not all development over the last 70 years or so has been beneficial or to a standard of design and materials expected in such a place. The conservation area is inevitably showing signs of wear and tear and is a little tired in places.

Improvements are needed to conserve what we have and enhance it even further. The area has much scope for enhancement, both in terms of physical fabric and use. Change is a sign of continuing life, but it needs to be handled with care and sensitivity to ensure alterations from new development and other investment are of the highest quality.

2.2 Objectives

To achieve the vision, the objectives of this Management Strategy are:

- a. to revitalise Northumberland Square conservation area through proactive and coordinated conservation, planning, regeneration and management action.
- b. to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, with particular focus upon those elements currently identified as having an adverse impact.
- c. increase understanding and enjoyment of the conservation area's heritage for today and for future generations.
- d. to secure public funds.
- e. to encourage private investment in maintenance, repair, restoration and high-quality new work; and
- f. to work in partnership with local people, groups, businesses and other interested organisations, and seek to integrate their requirements.

2.3 Local Involvement

The Council will foster local community involvement in the conservation area, including, where possible:

- carrying out consultation,
- developing local capacity,
- encouraging projects led by the community, and
- heritage skills training.

The Council has a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)¹² for planning matters that sets out its commitment to informing the local community of what is going on in their area and encouraging participation in the planning process. A variety of planning processes will affect the conservation area. The main ones are the preparation of planning policy, guidance or evidence documents (such as this

¹² Statement of Community Involvement, North Tyneside Council, June 2020

Management Strategy) or development management decisions (planning applications). The SCI explains how the community are able to get involved in these processes so that they are able to guide decisions affecting the places important to them.

2.4 Corporate Approach

As an SPD, this Management Strategy is primarily a tool to be used in planning decision-making processes. However, as the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas is of corporate-wide concern, it should be taken into consideration by all functions of the local authority. It is also important that the different parts of this Strategy are not dealt with separately; to achieve the best outcome, it needs to be dealt with as a whole, with Council departments working together to positively manage the conservation area and to sustain its importance for the local population present and future.

Identifying, Understanding and Conserving Heritage in the Conservation Area



3. Identifying, Understanding and Conserving Heritage in the Conservation Area

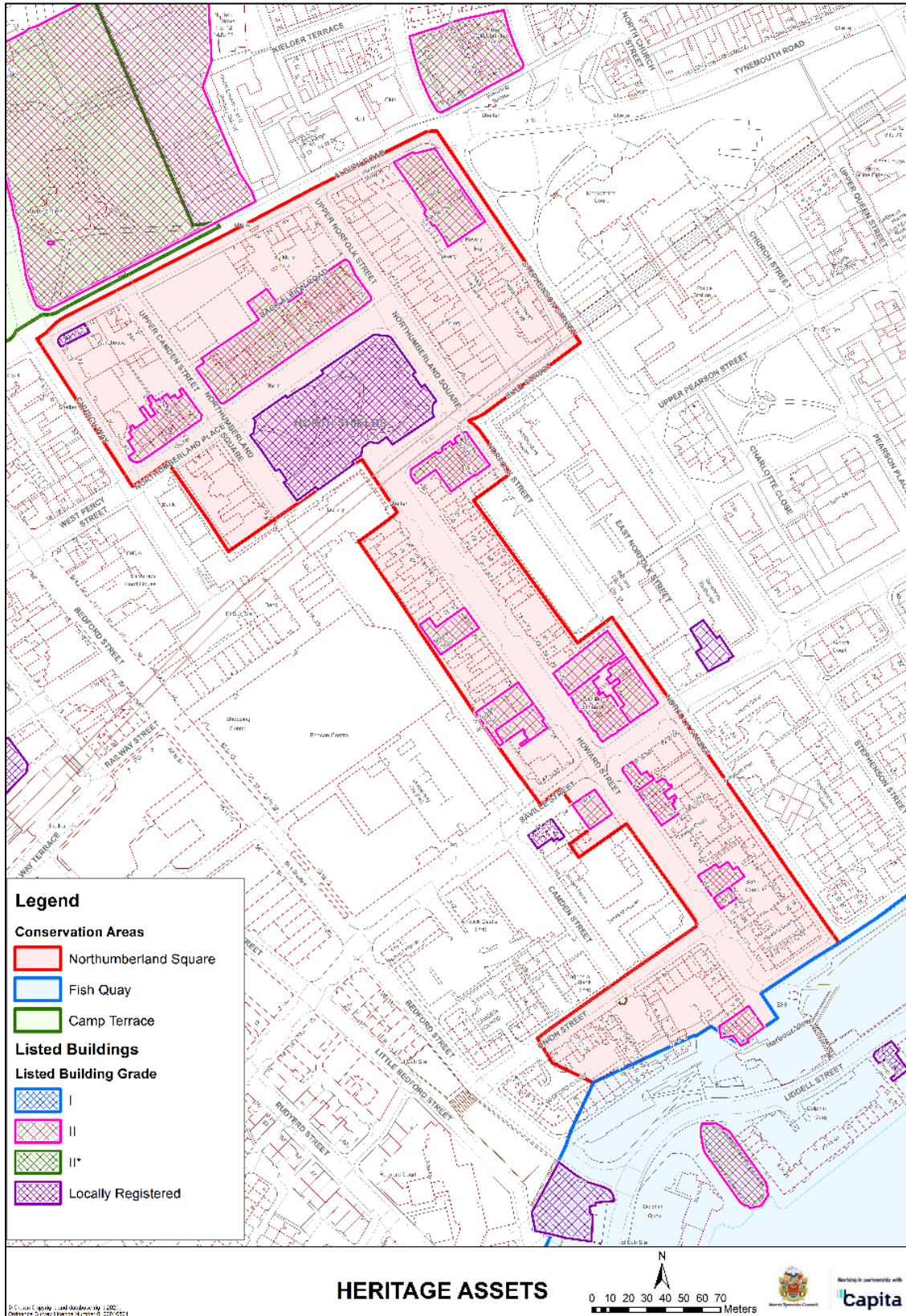
3.1 Introduction

First, we must know what heritage there is in the area. There are many designated and non-designated heritage assets in this area, as shown on the map opposite. This section focuses on those elements of managing the historic environment that local authorities lead on and where it is beneficial for a clear stance to be provided:

- the character appraisal,
- the boundary of the conservation area,
- non-designated heritage assets, such as buildings of local interest that are not listed, and archaeological remains underground that we may not know about,
- research and interpretation.

As well as physical heritage such as this, there will also be other types of heritage in the area that this Management Strategy cannot address but are touched on here. They include:

- artefacts and collections which might be held about the area, such as old photographs or documents,
- local history and stories about the area's people and places, including those written down and those that people have in their memories.



Heritage assets in and around the conservation area

3.2 Character Appraisal

3.2.1 Context

Government policy in the NPPF says councils should have up-to date evidence about the historic environment to assess the significance of heritage assets¹³.

Historic England advise that character appraisals define the special interest of the conservation area that merits its designation and describes and evaluates the contribution made by the different features of its character and appearance. They can be used to develop a robust framework for planning decisions and management actions in conservation areas. They support and guide new investment and are also useful to engage the local community. It is good practise for conservation area reviews to be carried out around every five years, depending on available resources and development pressure within an area¹⁴.

3.2.2 Position

Northumberland Square conservation area was designated in 1975. A Character Appraisal was adopted by the Council in 2006, with subsequent revisions in 2014 and 2020¹⁵. The most up-to-date version is used to help manage change in the area and was used to inform the contents of this Management Strategy.

¹³ National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2023, para. 198

¹⁴ Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, Historic England, February 2019

¹⁵ Northumberland Square Conservation Area Character Appraisal, North Tyneside Council, November 2020

3.2.3 Implementation

The Council will keep the conservation area's Character Appraisal up-to-date, taking into account changes that have occurred within the area or its setting, and the potential for future change. The review process will take account of relevant guidance and include public consultation.

The Council will formally adopt future Character Appraisals and use them to inform decisions that have an influence over the conservation area's special interest.

3.3 Conservation Area Boundary

3.3.1 Context

Legislation places a duty on the Council to regularly review the coverage of conservation areas in its boundaries¹⁶. Guidance suggests review should take place every five years or so, depending on available resources and development pressure within an area¹⁷.

3.3.2 Position

The conservation area was designated in 1975 and has not been subject to any boundary review since.

The conservation area is the core of the neighbourhood's special interest. The boundary must reflect that part of the neighbourhood that has special architectural or historic interest with a character and appearance which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

It is important to ensure that the conservation area's boundary, in accordance with best practice:

- is coherent and, wherever possible, follow features on the ground,
- is not drawn too tightly, so excluding integral parts on the periphery but, equally, should not include parts that do not have special interest to avoid devaluing the designation,
- ensures the setting is adequately protected, including landscape features such as open spaces and roads,
- ensures all relevant legislation is used, including in relation to trees,
- considers more recent architecture and history that might now be regarded as having special interest.

¹⁶ Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s69(2)

¹⁷ Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, Historic England, February 2019

On-site survey of the area suggests that there may be some areas in and around the conservation area that do not adhere to this best practice. Certainly, the area around Bedford Court, where the boundary cuts through the centre of the development and even through properties, requires amending.

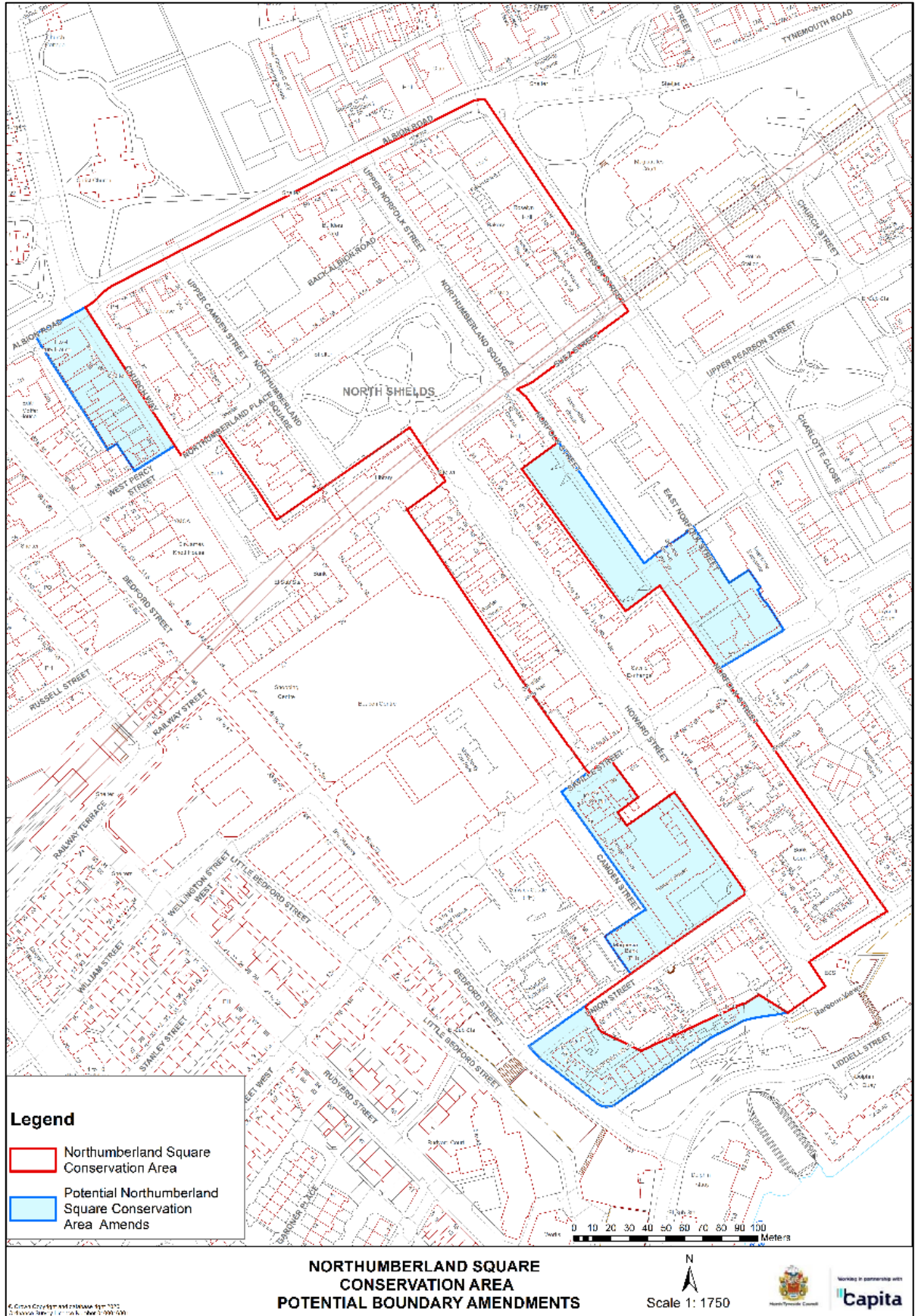
3.3.3 Implementation

The Council will seek to review the conservation area boundary every five years or so using relevant guidance, taking into account changes that have occurred within the area or its setting, and the potential for future change. Any proposed amendments to the boundary will be subject to public consultation and adoption at Cabinet.

At the next review, the Council will consider the following suggested boundary changes:

- Rationalise to take in the whole of Bedford Court; this would also be a way to protect views of the Fish Quay and maintain the existing high standard of design.
- Extend to include Camden Street and the associated part of Saville Street, resulting in a more coherent reflection of the historic development pattern. It would also include some development of a high standard, including the modern Howard House and its public space, the Magnesia Bank and the locally registered Garrick's Head.
- Extend on Norfolk Street to take in and provide additional protection to the former fire station and high-quality Victorian buildings on the associated part of Saville Street, including the locally registered former post office at no.63.
- Extend to the west side of Church Way to allow for improved management of the whole street scene.

There may be other potential areas to consider. A boundary change could result in an extension or a reduction in the size of the conservation area.



3.4 Non-designated Heritage Assets

3.4.1 Context

Some assets of the area might be significant but not enough to be designated as listed buildings or scheduled monuments, etc. These are classed as “non-designated heritage assets” and can include buildings of good local character, sites of archaeological interest and features such as street furniture or historical open spaces. Such assets can make an important positive contribution over and above what they bring to the conservation area.

The NPPF advises that the effect proposals have on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should be taken into account in determining planning applications, where a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset¹⁸.

Historic England says local people and the Council should identify what in a neighbourhood are valued as distinctive elements of the local historic environment and are worthy of recognition and protection. Assets should be recorded in a Local List (known as the Local Register in North Tyneside). This gives clarity to developers and others working in the neighbourhood, including the Council¹⁹.

3.4.2 Position

Policies S6.5 and DM6.6 of North Tyneside’s Local Plan set out the intention to preserve, promote and enhance all of the Borough’s heritage assets, including those that are non-designated²⁰. Further guidance in the application of these policies is provided in the Register Buildings and

¹⁸ National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2023, para. 209

¹⁹ Historic England Advice Note 7 Local Heritage Listing, Historic England, May 2016

²⁰ Local Plan, North Tyneside Council, July 2017

Parks of Local Architectural and Historic Interest (Local Register) SPD²¹.

The following are currently included on the Local Register:

Within the conservation area

- The Pub and Kitchen, 13-14 Albion Road
- Northumberland Square gardens, Northumberland Square

Adjacent to the conservation area

- Garricks Head, 44-52 Saville Street
- Old Post Office, 63 Saville Street

The Tyne and Wear Historic Environment Record (HER) holds records of historical and archaeological sites. This is maintained by the County Archaeologist. Currently included in the HER are:

- North Shields, Metcalf's Ropery (no. 4568)
- North Shields, Scotch Church (no. 4570)
- North Shields, Methodist Chapel (no. 4571)
- North Shields, Secession Church (no. 4572)
- North Shields, Ranter's Chapel (no. 4576)
- North Shields, Baptist Chapel (no. 4578)
- North Shields, Town Hall (no.4584)
- North Shields, Chirton Colliery (Shields Colliery) (no. 6929)

Given its location and the earliest known settlements, the conservation area is not expected to have significant unknown underground archaeological resources; the adjacent bankside and riverfront are likely to have more potential. In 2004, the Council and partners published an archaeological assessment and strategy for North Shields that sets out the archaeologically important parts and what should be done to understand and protect the archaeological resource in the area²².

²¹ Register of Buildings and Parks of Local Architectural and Historic Interest Supplementary Planning Document, North Tyneside Council, February 2018

²² North Shields, An Archaeological Assessment & Strategy, North Tyneside Council / City of Newcastle / Northumberland County Council / English Heritage, 2004

3.4.3 Implementation

From time to time, the Council will work with local people to identify non-designated heritage assets in the conservation area and its setting. They will be recorded in the Local Register and/or the Tyne & Wear Historic Environment Record.

The significance of the assets will be taken into account when determining proposals that affect them, including those that do not need permission but where other influence is possible (for example, through public funding).

3.5 Research and Interpretation

3.5.1 Context

Research is important to improving our knowledge of the history and evolution of the conservation area. Interpretation helps us to understand what is important about the conservation area and allows us to enjoy it. The Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment promotes research to help to understand, progress and appreciate the region's historic environment²³ (the project is in the process of being updated²⁴). The North Shields archaeological assessment sets a research framework for the wider area²⁵.

3.5.2 Position

The history of the conservation area is of high interest and is set out in more detail in the adopted character appraisal and the archaeological assessment.

First signs of the Georgian new town atop the banks of the River Tyne first appeared in the mid to late 18th Century and, by the publication of John Rook's 1827 map, around half of the area was developed. John Wright acquired land in 1796 and was able to plan an ambitious townscape that included a grand processional way starting at the dramatic banktop edge (Howard Street) and terminating in the elegant Georgian Northumberland square.

The north side of Northumberland Square was built before 1810, with the other sides following in subsequent decades, although with gaps in the south west and eastern parts in response to the relatively shallow railway tunnel beneath.

²³ Shared Visions: North-East Regional Research Framework, D Petts & C Gerrard, English Heritage/ Durham University, 2006

²⁴ Please see <http://www.nerrf.net/>

²⁵ North Shields, An Archaeological Assessment & Strategy, North Tyneside Council / City of Newcastle / Northumberland County Council / English Heritage, 2004

Whilst the overall area was governed by a number of landowners and no formal masterplan existed, the area still developed in accordance with shared ideals of layout, scale and appearance. Whilst it cannot compete with Newcastle's Grainger Town for grandeur, drama and imagination, its beginnings do pre-date Richard Grainger's work by over 50 years and is surprisingly successful on the ground considering it was never in a single ownership and was the product of several different minds and budgets, operating over several years.

Several books are devoted to the conservation area and its surrounds: many are primarily photographic with some good local history information. These include:

- North Shields, Eric Hollerton
- Around North Shields The Second Selection, Eric Hollerton
- North Shields The Bombing of a Town, Ron Curran
- North Shields Through Time, Diane Leggett and Joyce Martin
- Shiels to Shields: The Life Story of a North Tyneside Town, Danny Lawrence

Within the conservation area is a blue plaque on the Stag Line Building, outlining its history as a subscription library for Tynemouth Literary and Philosophical Society, built 1806-7, then as Stag Line Ltd.'s maritime chambers between 1895-1980. The area is also subject to the Northumbria World War One Commemoration Project that saw small blue plaques erected on properties where lives had been lost in the conflict²⁶.

The role of town centres has, and continues to, evolve. The HAZ scheme recognises this and seeks to support arts and cultural uses within North Shields.

²⁶ Please see <http://northumbriaworldwarone.co.uk/>

3.5.3 Implementation

The Council will:

- Further develop the cultural offer with more capacity for a programme of events that reflect local identity and rich heritage through mediums such as digital experience, significant public art installations and performing arts.
- Work with other parts of the authority and the cultural sector in North Shields to enhance the use of Northumberland Square and Howard Street for events, creating a cultural quarter.
- Prepare and encourage others to prepare interpretation of the area's special local interest, investigating opportunities for relevant on-site printed and digital media.
- Encourage local history groups and others to carry out and publish research into the area's architecture and history, taking into account where relevant the Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment.
- Pursue with local people opportunities for research and interpretation projects.

3.5.4 Possible Research and Interpretation Projects

Collections of Photographs

Whilst there are already such collections, there are always older and not-so-old photographs being found, and "old and new" pictures are always needed to allow us to appreciate how the Northumberland Square conservation area and its surrounds have changed and continues to change. A new approach could include additional community projects to present family photographs in exhibitions as well as in book form.

History of the House/Shop Investigations

This might include researching for a compendium of house histories in the conservation area, or to the history of commercial and business premises in the area.

Local Heritage Community Projects

This should include local information-gathering from oral, social and local history sources and perhaps have a family focus such that visitors and residents alike can relate to the heritage of the area. Popular projects for some of the key sites could include the Stag Line Building, the Old Town Hall/Borough Treasure's, the area's churches and 13-16 Northumberland Square.

Building Conservation Community Projects

This could include Building at Risk surveys, street furniture condition surveys and other audits relating to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Heritage skills events and workshops could be a useful way to advise on best practice on repairs/new work. Local people could play a role in preparing conservation advice leaflets (such as on Property Maintenance).

Book and/or Website Development

There are already a number of books covering several aspects of North Shields, but there is room for more of these, especially those reflecting recent changes and comparing them to older ones. A website could be a more effective way to have this kind of information made publicly available.

As part of the HAZ scheme, several fantastic online resources have been created and compiled that cover the area's past, present and future²⁷.

²⁷Please see <https://voda.org.uk/north-shields-heritage-action-zone-haz/>

On-Site Interpretation and Smart-Phone App Guides

The Council already produces an excellent range of walking tour and trail leaflets for the Borough. However, this could be extended to identify short walking tours specific to this particular area. It could also include development of a smart-phone app. There could be versions reflecting on wildlife, buildings and history, for children as well as for adults.

Commemorative Plaques

A project to identify where further plaques could be sited, based on past residents or important buildings, would be worthwhile. Care must be taken to ensure plaques would be carefully cited having regard to the area's heritage assets.

Street/Space Use

The Victorian Market is held in Northumberland Square annually in the lead-up to Christmas and is successful in attracting people to the area. The Food Festival held each May is starting to attract as many visitors. Both events should continue to be nurtured along with other appropriate events that could make use of the special environment of the conservation area. Opportunities to link these events to the exploration of the area and use of its facilities (for example, local walking routes, understanding of local history, use of the Local Studies Centre in the North Shields Customer First Centre, visiting a local café) should be explored.

Cultural Uses and Events

The Exchange Theatre on Howard Street provides opportunities for culture/shows/performances to be brought into the conservation area. The North Shields Customer First Centre offers a range of services and opportunities for events. Beyond the conservation area is the Old Lowlights Heritage Centre at the Fish Quay, which is a key venue to engage with the public on the wider area's heritage and offer space for cultural events.

Heritage Open Days

Heritage Open Days is an annual event, typically taking place each September, where free access is available to buildings and sites of heritage significance that are not usually open or charge a fee, or where additional events are held. In previous years St. Columba's Church and the North Shields Customer First Centre have participated; there is scope for further site involvement and increased public attendance with support and publicity.

Protecting and Enhancing the Conservation Area



4. Protecting and Enhancing the Conservation Area

4.1 Introduction

Identifying and protecting the heritage will not look after the conservation area or release all of its potential. There are always opportunities for enhancement, whether by property owners or others who are investing in the area. This section deals with:

- conservation-led regeneration,
- public realm, green spaces and trees,
- permitted development rights,
- buildings at risk,
- design,
- maintenance and repair, and
- monitoring and enforcement.

This chapter contains detailed guidance and strategy to help manage the area into the future.

4.2 Regeneration

4.2.1 Context

“Regenerate: bring new and more vigorous life to an area, especially in economic terms; revive.” (Oxford English Dictionary). Conservation-led change plays a vital role in social and economic regeneration across the country and can contribute to a sense of place, quality of life and sustainable neighbourhoods ²⁸.

The NPPF says that, when considering a positive strategy for the historic environment, councils should take into account the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation can bring. This should include addressing heritage assets that are most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats²⁹.

²⁸ Please see <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/heritage-and-growth/>

²⁹ National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2023, para. 196

We could take as a model of heritage-led regeneration the Grainger Town area of Newcastle, the late Georgian development whose spokes are Grey Street, Clayton Street and Grainger Street. By the 1990s much of it was shabby, crumbling and unattractive to anyone contemplating setting up a shop, restaurant or business or making it their home. The Government-financed Grainger Town Initiative gave it a new lease of life. It is now a place that draws people to shop, dine, work, live and invest in.

Whilst the economic and physical decline are not on the same scale, there are several comparisons between Grainger Town and Northumberland Square. They are similar in their age, in their current and previous uses, and in the opportunities they share in being a vibrant, sustainable area.

With judicious investment and sensitive management, the conservation area's pockets of neglect and aspects that are performing below their potential could become nodes of growth. Some could become flagship developments which, added to existing attractions, could create the critical mass to increase the conservation area's appeal.

4.2.2 Position

Some notable improvements to the fabric and life of the conservation area have been recent. As well as the current HAZ scheme (see section 1.3), there are several other current and recent examples of regeneration work within the area, including:

- North Shields Masterplan – an ambitious masterplan providing broad principles and indicative projects relating to housing, transport, retail and heritage. The conservation area is at the heart of the masterplan and delivery of the HAZ scheme is one of the first key projects that will set the tone for the Council to deliver

future projects as part of the borough-wide Ambition for North Tyneside regeneration³⁰.

- North of the Tyne North Shields Business Case – funding has been awarded for business case development work to inform economic opportunities in the area including surveys relating to Council-owned sites within and close to the conservation area, and transport and movement studies such as the implications of removing traffic from Howard Street.
- 13 to 16 Northumberland Square and site to rear – the Council’s development company, Aurora Properties, have refurbished the listed buildings, previously identified as at risk, and developed new properties in the site to the rear, which was identified as a site that was harmful to the significance of the conservation area.
- Improvement of the central gardens of Northumberland Square, including restoring their historic layout, is now complete.
- Wooden Dolly – the Wooden Dolly in the centre of Northumberland Square has recently been restored.
- Public realm improvement works are now complete on Howard Street to create a more attractive and high-quality environment.
- The Exchange Building – originally the Borough Treasurer’s offices, the Council made significant investment to bring the grade II listed building back into use and open to the public for cultural, creative and leisure activities.

Yet there is always more that can be done to use active conservation as an economic stimulus, making Northumberland Square’s good features even better, and making neglected ones excellent. The North Shields HAZ geographically does not cover the whole of Northumberland Square conservation area and the Council will make every effort to explore funding streams that allow for grant schemes that offer similar incentives as North Shields HAZ over the whole conservation area. This

³⁰ See <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/214/regeneration>

could include grants for the repair, reinstatement and conservation of good quality shop fronts and reinstating original curtilage, particularly where repurposing premises back to domestic use as the retail area of the town centre shrinks.

4.2.3 Implementation

The Council will:

- Put conservation at the heart of regeneration and involve local people in plans and proposals.
- Continue to explore further regeneration opportunities in partnership with others, including seeking funding, to promote the investment in buildings and spaces for the economic benefit of the conservation area and its setting.
- Support development proposals for uses in the conservation area that would add to its vitality and viability without undermining its overall attraction and would not adversely impact on the amenity, appearance, character and function area or surrounding environment.
- Promote the benefits of heritage-led regeneration to local people, owners, developers and decision-makers.
- Ensure the area's special requirements are taken into account in regeneration plans affecting it or its setting.

4.3 Public Realm, Green Spaces and Trees

4.3.1 Context

Conservation areas are designated because of streets and spaces as well as their buildings. Roads, paths, street furniture, trees, open spaces and other features combine to create the public realm.

The character of historic conservation areas like Northumberland Square gains much from street furniture, open spaces, established trees, hedges and greenery, both in the public domain and in people's gardens. The Local Plan contains several policies that work to manage these elements of the environment, including the specific policy AS8.14 North Shields Town Centre Public Realm³¹.

All trees within the conservation area are protected by law³² whereby anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree is required to give six weeks' notice to the Council who can then decide if the tree(s) should be further protected by tree preservation order (TPO)³³ in the interests of amenity. The Council will not usually support any proposal that would lead to the loss of trees that contribute to, or in the future might contribute to, the character of the conservation area. TPOs provide an additional protection for significant trees and groups of trees. The Council will use its enforcement powers to ensure trees are replaced where appropriate. The Council supports the establishment and maintenance of an appropriate level of tree cover within the conservation area to achieve the goals of sustainability as well as providing numerous ecological benefits.

Historic England are clear that the public realm is a key aspect of the character and appearance of conservation areas and encourage the

³¹ Local Plan, North Tyneside Council, July 2017

³² Town and Country Planning Act 1990, s211

³³ Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Part VIII

protection of trees and open spaces³⁴. Streets For All, published jointly with the Department for Transport and supported by the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation, urges full integration of highways and traffic issues³⁵. Great emphasis should be placed on connectivity, responding to local distinctiveness, maintenance, and the use of government guidance in Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2, which contain detailed guidance on public realm and green space issues³⁶.

4.3.2 Position

The main areas of public realm, and open and green spaces are discussed in detail within the Character Appraisal. Generally speaking, there is much to be positive about. It is an urban area, with not much greenery, but what does exist is significant, particularly Northumberland Square's central gardens that have recently been subject to works to improve their quality, useability and to restore their heritage significance.

Work has recently completed along Howard Street as part of the HAZ scheme to install a consistent, high quality public realm. This addresses an issue previously found throughout the conservation area, where an ad-hoc, uncoordinated approach has been taken to street and road surfaces. The HAZ street improvements have had a transformational impact on the area's public realm and sets the tone for enhancement of the wider conservation area.

³⁴ Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, Historic England, February 2019

³⁵ Streets for All, Historic England, April 2018

³⁶ Manual for Streets, Department for Transport, 2007; Manual for Streets 2, Department for Transport, 2010



(Left) mismatched and cluttered street surface and furniture (Norfolk St / Saville St.)

(Right) coordinated, high quality materials introduced (Howard St. / Saville St.)

With regards to private open spaces, many front and rear gardens have lost their boundaries and are covered over with hardstanding and parking. Where green, clearly defined gardens exist, they contribute greatly to the history and grain of area. There are some surviving examples of historic boundary treatments, which is positive. Recent renovation of the properties to the north of Northumberland Square has involved reintroduction of a sense of private, front garden space; an original feature lost from many properties. This has included restoration of iron railings, new paving and planted beds³⁷.



Surviving original railings and green garden

³⁷ Northumberland Square, North Shields: History, investigation and landscape assessment, Historic England, April 2024

4.3.3 Implementation

This SPD recommends that:

- History and character will be embraced in the public realm, creating and maintaining a locally distinctive scene.
- Good quality street furniture, facilities, and materials are used when installing any replacements.
- The advice in Manual for Streets, Manual for Streets 2, Streets for All and other published guidance is looked to.
- Highways and traffic legislation and guidance is applied sensitively; works are designed in a way that recognises the conservation area's special interest.
- Street furniture, road signage and road markings no longer needed are removed.
- Any public realm and highways works are planned, designed, implemented and maintained in collaboration with historic environment and design specialists, using this Management Strategy.
- Utility works and repairs should aim to use matching materials.
- The current policies and practice regarding protecting and managing trees and green space in the conservation area are continued.
- Any historic street furniture and signage that makes a positive contribution to character and appearance is not unnecessarily lost.
- Using planning powers, and through exploring funding opportunities, traditional boundary treatments and green garden spaces are protected and restored.

4.4 Permitted Development Rights

4.4.1 Context

The General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) automatically grants planning consent for a range of developments to properties³⁸. These are known as permitted development rights (PDRs). PDRs are slightly more restricted in a conservation area for some types of development.

However, this still does not prevent various developments being carried out which, over time, can combine to harm the area's special interest.

The GPDO allows the Council to remove harmful PDRs using an Article 4 Direction. This means consent would be needed for certain developments at properties covered by the Direction³⁹. Historic England encourages use of Directions to control harmful cumulative change but cautions against blanket use⁴⁰. Indeed, the NPPF says Directions should be limited to situations only where necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of an area⁴¹.

Removing PDRs cannot lead to automatic reversal of previous harmful alterations. So, removing PDRs on such properties might be considered too late as the harm is already done, making it very hard to justify including them in a Direction.

However, this does not prevent the Council and the community from encouraging the use of traditional designs when new works are carried out without the need for consent in order to help restore architectural character harmed in the past.

4.4.2 Position

³⁸ Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, Article 3

³⁹ Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, Article 4

⁴⁰ Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, Historic England, February 2019

⁴¹ National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, February 2019, para. 53

There are no Article 4 Directions in place within the conservation area at present. The majority of PDRs apply to dwelling houses, of which there are very few within this conservation area. Most properties, whilst originally built as dwelling houses, are now in office use, for which there are fewer PDRs relating to appearance. Equally, flats (even those converted from dwelling houses) have very few PDRs. Listed buildings do not benefit from PDRs.

The reality therefore is that most of the inappropriate physical alterations within the conservation area relate not to permitted development but to development that was possibly granted planning permission in less conservation-minded times or were carried out unlawfully and may have become immune from enforcement action with the passing of time.

More relevant to this conservation area are PDRs that relate to changes of use⁴². These have become increasingly more flexible in recent years and have the potential to continue to. Such PDRs can have a marked effect upon the function and character of an area and may be of particular concern in light of the implementation of the HAZ programme.

⁴² The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020

4.4.3 Implementation

The Council will

- Continually assess the impact of permitted development rights (PDRs) on character and appearance and the potential for future harm based on the most current GPDO.
- Consider the use of Article 4 Directions to manage the impact of harmful PDRs and, if this is done, prepare further guidance on development likely to receive consent as a result of the Direction.
- Offer advice, guidance and encouragement to developers to reduce or remove the impact of harmful PDRs.

4.5 Design

4.5.1 Context

Both local and central government attach great importance to good design. The NPPF sets out that, whilst not preventing appropriate innovation, design should be sympathetic to local character and history, and be visually attractive as a result of good architecture⁴³. The National Design Guide⁴⁴ provides further guidance on applying this policy.

The North Tyneside Local Plan encourages high design standards and makes clear that addressing the historic environment is integral to good design⁴⁵. The Council's Design Quality SPD⁴⁶ is a key consideration when new developments are proposed; it sets out the principles of good design and best practice that need to be at the forefront of projects.

⁴³ National Planning Policy Framework, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021, para. 135

⁴⁴ National Design Guide, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, October 2019

⁴⁵ Local Plan, North Tyneside Council, July 2017

⁴⁶ Design Quality Supplementary Planning Document, North Tyneside Council, May 2018

In addition, there is other relevant national guidance on design from the Design Council, Historic England, the Georgian Group, the Victorian Society and others. *Buildings in Context: New developments in historic areas*⁴⁷ includes important principles that would serve the conservation area well.

4.5.2 Position

The conservation area has mix of designs, including many Georgian, many Victorian, and a smaller amount of more recent buildings. The vast majority of the buildings follow recognised architectural styles and are high quality, recognising their place in the area alongside neighbouring buildings. The conservation area's Character Appraisal highlights the importance of a careful and unified approach in the area. This is particularly true since the area has regeneration possibilities to build on existing success, and poor design can only work against this.



Inappropriate materials on Howard Street (left). Insensitive shop front and boxy dormer on Northumberland Place (right)

The Character Appraisal highlights several issues where past design decisions have not responded well to the character and appearance of the conservation area, including use of inappropriate materials, loss of original features and poor-quality commercial signage. There are some potential redevelopment opportunities within the conservation area where a good design is paramount. The quality of shopfronts varies

⁴⁷ *Building in Context: New developments in historic areas*, English Heritage / CABE, 2001

within the conservation area, with some historic retention but also some examples where little regard has been had to local character. With terraced properties being a defining feature of the area, unity is important; however, several alterations have taken place over the years that harm unity and the overall quality of the streetscape.



Stephenson House fails to positively respond to the conservation area's predominant built form

4.5.3 Implementation

The Council will:

- Promote good design in the area by firmly applying relevant policy, guidance and this Management Strategy, and having strong regard to best practice.
- Pay special attention to the way new design responds to the area's traditional character and appearance, taking into account the different character throughout the area.
- Preserve and enhance the area through collaboration with designers and developers, where possible seeking opportunities to remove unsympathetic alterations or additions. This includes tackling the harmful impact of cladding added upon 19th Century buildings to help restore area's original character and special interest.
- Pay special attention to addressing breaches using the legislation available.

Design Principles for the Conservation Area

General	All alterations, extensions or new developments in the conservation area should have the highest respect for its existing character. They should be in proportion to surrounding buildings and spaces in terms of size and scale and use high quality materials.
Style	The design of new development, whether it be a small extension or a whole new building, will generally be supported if it represents good quality traditional-style design or high-quality modern design. However, any new development, whether contemporary or traditional, will require considerable design expertise to relate well to adjoining buildings of earlier periods.
Windows and doors	<p>Windows and doors should match the character and period of the building in both fenestration and materials. The preservation, and where appropriate the restoration, of original windows and doors in all properties is of paramount importance. Where inappropriate modern windows and doors are being replaced, the new replacements must be in the vernacular of the age of the building.</p> <p>Fenestration is a key element in maintaining the character of the conservation area. Traditional windows should be retained and restored wherever they have been changed from this. uPVC is unacceptable in most properties of the age and style in this conservation area.</p>
Dormer windows and roof additions	Terraces define the conservation area, and a poorly designed dormer can significantly affect the streetscape. Whatever the age of the property or the property type, any new dormer should be related carefully to the character and materials of the

Design Principles for the Conservation Area

building. Regular verticality is crucial, and dormers should relate to the pattern of windows in the rest of the building. It may be the case that no dormer window is acceptable at all in particular buildings, for example where dormers are not traditional features. Existing large box dormers that dominate the roofscape must not set a precedent or be a design cue. Should the removal of these unattractive features not be possible, there is scope for improving those that currently exist such as incorporating colours and materials to blend with the existing roof and subdividing the windows vertically with mullions.

Existing or replacement roofs and chimneys

Roofs on properties here are traditional natural slate (usually Welsh with some examples of Lakeland) and should continue to be so. The use of natural materials is essential, and the recycling of materials is very much encouraged. Chimneys and gable ends should be in the vernacular and removal or capping of existing chimneys is not supported. Opportunities to sensitively rebuild lost chimneys are encouraged.

Rainwater goods (pipes, gutters)

If replacement is needed, or as part of any new build, these should reflect the traditional profile and metal of traditional guttering and pipes.

Renewable energy

The incorporation of the means of harnessing renewable energy should be encouraged, provided that due regard is given to the impact on the architectural character of the building and the appearance of the wider conservation area.

Shopfronts

Retail properties in the conservation area should have shop fronts that respect the historic nature of their

Design Principles for the Conservation Area

properties and the street scene. The retention and reinstatement of traditional shop front features and colours is supported.

Every encouragement should be given to retail businesses to replace or improve inappropriate shop windows, over-large fascia, or intrusive signs. For example, large plate glass windows should be replaced with sub-divided windows of smaller panes. Some principles of good traditional shopfront design are as follows:

- Shopfronts are a showcase and must speak well of the owner and trader.
- The shopfront is part of the street scene not just the host building.
- The shopfront should respect the proportions and scale of the host building.
- The shopfront should use materials reflective of the age of the host building.
- Bits of old shopfront are rare and valuable and should be retained. Hidden fabric should be conserved.
- Intrusive shopfronts should be seen as temporary features to be replaced.
- Brash, bright colours are considered inappropriate in this conservation area.
- Illuminated shopfronts are considered inappropriate in this conservation area.
- Where no historic shopfront survives, a new traditional design is usually best.
- Good design is not necessarily about style, but high quality is crucial.

Design Principles for the Conservation Area

Commercial signage Many commercial properties within the conservation area do not have a shop front but use signage on the building to advertise themselves. This is to be expected and supported. Signage must however be appropriately sited and designed, and not contribute to unattractive, cluttered elevations. Some principles of signage appropriate to the conservation area are as follows:

- One sign on the building is usually sufficient to advertise a business.
- The signage must be modestly sized.
- The signage must be placed in a suitable location on the building with regard had to architectural features.
- High quality materials must be used.
- Brash, bright colours are considered inappropriate in this conservation area.
- Illuminated signage is considered inappropriate in this conservation area.

Design Principles for the Conservation Area

Gardens

Many gardens have been lost to hardstanding. Although the installation of hardstanding can in some cases be permitted development, in those cases where it does require planning permission it should not be permitted. Where hardstanding has already been installed, we would encourage property owners to soften the effect by introducing some planting round the edges.

Protection and reinstatement of traditional boundary treatments and garden division is required. The reinstatement of these features, with a well-informed approach to traditional materials and designs, is encouraged and supported.

4.6 Building Maintenance and Repair

4.6.1 Context

Good conservation is founded on appropriate routine maintenance. This minimises the need for larger repairs and is the cheapest way of looking after an historic building. Regular, modest repairs keep buildings weathertight. Routine maintenance to avoid water getting in can prevent much more expensive work later on.

4.6.2 Position

Historic England maintains a Heritage at Risk Register⁴⁸, which it compiles annually with the input of Local Authority officers. The Register considers:

- grade I or II* listed buildings.
- grade II listed buildings in London.
- structural scheduled monuments with upstanding remains.
- listed places of worship.
- scheduled earthworks and buried archaeology.
- listed parks and gardens.
- listed battlefields.
- listed wreck sites.
- conservation areas.

Northumberland Square conservation area is not included on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register, and it does not contain any known examples of the other categories.

The Council have in the past undertaken a survey grade II listed buildings within the Borough to assess for risk. The assessment is based on Historic England's approach and considers physical condition and, where relevant, vacancy. This was last undertaken in 2008 and revealed that 12-20 Northumberland Square was considered at risk due to poor physical condition of nos.13-16. The restoration and reuse of the building is now complete, and this building is no longer at risk.

⁴⁸ Please see <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/buildings/>

When considering the other listed and non-listed buildings within the conservation area, some could benefit from some localised repair or maintenance, and there may be grounds for them being considered as vulnerable or at risk. Vacancy is not recognised as a widespread issue in the conservation area but there are some empty properties, with associated grounds and building maintenance issues that negatively impact upon character and appearance.

Encouragement is the best way to deal with matters of building condition, but in extreme cases the Council would consider using its statutory powers to rescue a building at risk from its condition or vacancy (see 4.7, “Monitoring and Enforcement”). Priority should be given to resolving the long-standing vacancy sites alongside tackling listed buildings at risk.

4.6.3 Implementation

The Council will:

- Encourage property owners to carry out maintenance and repairs to buildings and land in the conservation area, through for example, preparing and distributing guidance.
- Provide further information and guidance on the best approach.
- Encourage training and demonstrations for owners, building contractors and officers to encourage best practice.
- Review the local Heritage at Risk Register regularly and use it to target efforts to bring about maintenance and repair. Look to include locally registered buildings in the Heritage at Risk Register in the future.
- Consider preparing a full strategy to deal with heritage at risk should long term vacancy and/or lack of maintenance become widespread.

4.6.4 Guidance for Property Owners

Maintenance should be carried out little and often and buildings inspected regularly. All that is needed is enough to keep the building wind and water-tight and free from structural problems. Small problems such as blocked gutters or slipped slates can, if left, quickly lead to big problems that are very costly to sort out.

Well-intentioned but ill-advised or unnecessary repairs can unwittingly harm a property, too. For example, money can be wasted on repointing sound mortar, or replacing windows that only need minor repairs.

Misleading advice from unskilled builders, salespeople and the media can pressurise owners in to building works that can damage the appearance of an historic building and even reduce its value. Not all experienced professionals understand the needs of historic buildings and can do more harm than good if methods and materials are not suitable. For example, rather than keeping moisture out, cement-based mortars, renders and pebbledash usually cause long term harm by trapping damp in a building.

More advice on building maintenance can be found in the Institute of Historic Building Conservation/ Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings' *Stitch in Time*⁴⁹. Historic England also provide information on the maintenance of older buildings⁵⁰.

4.7 Monitoring and Enforcement

4.7.1 Context

Planning controls are the main way of ensuring that the special character and appearance of the conservation area is protected. Non-compliance with planning requirements must be dealt with quickly and fairly if public

⁴⁹ downloadable for free from:

<https://www.ihbc.org.uk/stitch/Stitch%20in%20Time.pdf>

⁵⁰ including this webpage on Looking After Your Home:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/your-home/looking-after-your-home/>

confidence in and support for planning and conservation are to be maintained.

Enforcement against unauthorised works must be started within four years of the date of substantial completion of the development. Historic England suggests using a comprehensive dated photographic record to aid enforcement in the historic environment⁵¹.

4.7.2 Position

Keeping an eye on the way the area changes is important to ensuring character and appearance are protected. This includes monitoring for the effect of permitted development rights (see 4.4 above) and compliance with consents.

The Council has a Planning Enforcement service that handles complaints received on suspected breaches of planning control.

The Enforcement service relies upon the local community and Council representatives to notify them of suspected breaches. When breaches are identified, the Council considers whether and how to take action in a timely and cost-effective way.

The following unauthorised works will be given a high priority:

- demolition or threat of demolition of a listed building, or alterations to or removal of features that contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building,
- the demolition or threat of demolition of a non-listed building that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area,
- the topping, lopping or cutting down trees, or the threat of this.

The following unauthorised works will be given a medium priority:

⁵¹ Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, Historic England, February 2019

- works that have a moderate impact on the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building,
- works that may cause harm to character and appearance,
- the display of advertisements that detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The Council will work with property owners to prevent or regularise the works. If negotiations fail, the Council will consider serving a relevant notice in accordance with good practice⁵²:

- Section 215 Notice: Can be served on any land or building to remedy the adverse effects to amenity from their condition or unsightly nature⁵³.
- Listed Building Enforcement Notice: Served when works are being carried out to a listed building without the benefit of consent. Allows the Council to specify what works should be carried out to remedy the situation and in what time period⁵⁴. The Council can also have an injunction put in place or issue a Stop Notice to prevent unauthorised works being carried out to a listed building⁵⁵.
- Urgent Works Notice: For vacant listed buildings or non-listed buildings contributing positively to the conservation area. Allows the Council to carry out urgent works needed for preservation and for recovery of costs from the owner⁵⁶.
- Repairs Notice: To secure more extensive works for the long-term preservation of a listed building (only). Should it fail in a specified time, the Council can consider compulsory purchase⁵⁷.
- Compulsory Purchase Order: If all else fails, the Council can acquire the building compulsorily to ensure its preservation⁵⁸.

⁵² As set out in Stopping the Rot A Guide to Enforcement Action to Save Historic Buildings, Historic England, April 2016

⁵³ Town and Country Planning Act 1990, s215

⁵⁴ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s38

⁵⁵ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s44

⁵⁶ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s54

⁵⁷ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s47

⁵⁸ Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s48

Successful enforcement may depend on acting quickly. Delegated powers are in place to ensure a swift response where necessary. Failure to respond to enforcement action can result in prosecution.

4.7.3 Implementation

The Council will:

- Respond to complaints related to planning requirements and highway advertisement requirements and consider any necessary follow-up action in a timely and cost-effective manner.
- Prepare and keep up to date a dated photographic record of the conservation area for use in monitoring.
- Seek to resolve planning breaches through negotiation but, where necessary, consider using statutory powers to deal with the effects of poor condition or vacancy.

Enhancement Opportunities

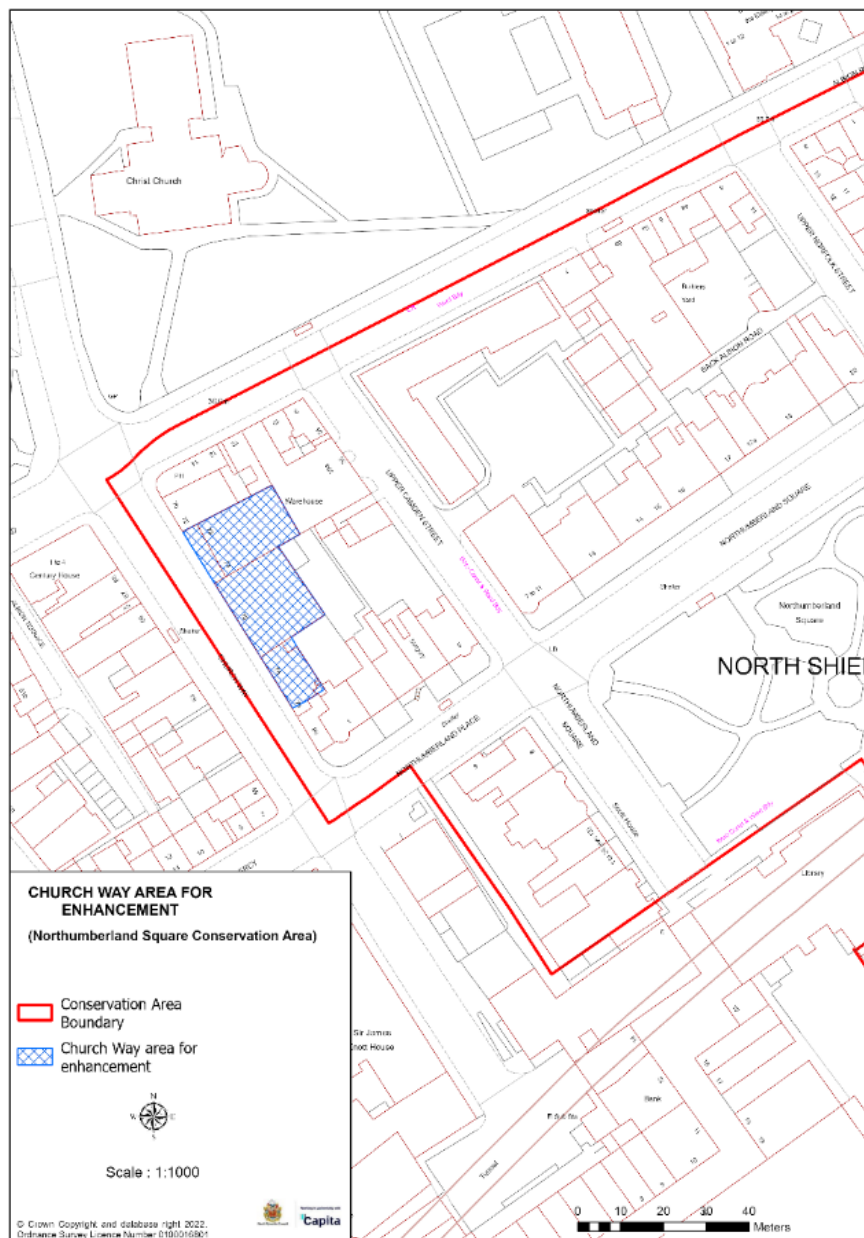


5. Enhancement Opportunities

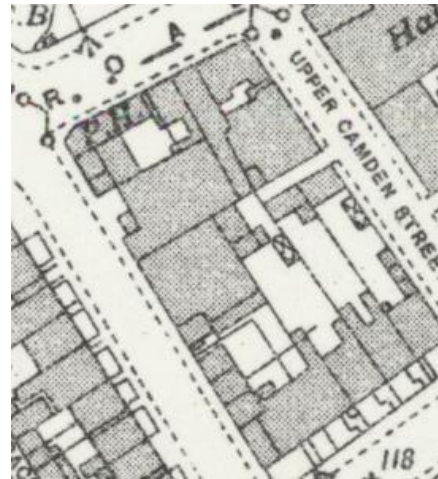
5.1 Introduction

Based upon the discussion in section 4, the information within the adopted Character Appraisal and the potential opportunities that exist in the conservation area, this section outlines the Council’s proposals for future enhancement.

5.1.1 Church Way



There are parts of Church Way where the development does not reflect the established character and appearance of the conservation area. Historic maps show that this part of the conservation area never featured a uniform terrace but appeared to contain service and functional buildings, including a smithy. Over time the amount of development and its appearance has changed (see historic maps below).



Left: OS Map surveyed 1894, showing the service and functional uses on Church Way.

Right: OS Map surveyed 1937/8, showing more infill of varying scales.

Used with permission of the National Library of Scotland

Whilst the current varied appearance does reflect this, the scale, style and finish of some properties do represent harm to significance. The scope of the potential for change here ranges from relatively small-scale cosmetic work (such as removal of bright paint and replacement of plastic fascia), to addition of pitched roofs, or redevelopment that would introduce buildings of a scale and appearance that would sit more comfortably within the conservation area.



East side of Church Way

It is noted that there are several operational businesses here. Any proposals for enhancement would be carried out in partnership with business and land owners.

5.1.2 Albion Road

Albion Road forms the northern boundary of the conservation area and is important in views towards the conservation area and as a gateway into it. The part of Albion Road within the boundary is made up of commercial premises and some residential use, often in the units above.

There are many good quality shopfronts and properties that are of interest due to their history or architecture. However, the appearance and condition of several of the properties are suffering due to a lack of maintenance or poor design choices.

Albion Road is a main traffic route in this part of North Shields, and the street can feel car dominated. The buildings are located up to the edge of the pavement and, with the lower environmental quality of the properties and public realm, the experience in this part of the conservation area is not as positive as elsewhere.



Recessed shopfront doorways with tiled and terrazzo entries on Albion Road

Significant environmental and social improvements could be achieved through the following potential enhancement opportunities:

- **Shop front improvements.** There are several good quality features in place which, with some relatively small modifications, could be greatly enhanced. Production and dissemination of guidance that outlined the importance of appropriate materials, architectural detailing, rhythm and proportion could be beneficial⁵⁹. The main part of Albion Road that could benefit from such an approach would be the stretch between nos.4 and 7.
- **Building improvements.** Some properties would benefit from repair to improve condition and works to reinstate traditional appearance. This would include removal of modern render/paint, replacement of plastic windows and doors, and repair/reinstatement of traditional roof coverings.
- **Facilitate sustainable uses on the upper floors.** Working with property owners to remove any vacancy and support new uses, including residential use, could assist in ongoing maintenance and vibrancy.
- **Paving improvements.** The current pavement treatment is made up of modern concrete square flags with mismatched infill repair.

⁵⁹ Gateshead Borough Council's Coatsworth Conservation Area Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document is an excellent example to take guidance from <https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/media/1771/Coatsworth-Road-Design-Guide/pdf/Coatsworth-Road-Design-Guide.pdf?m=636669063156000000>

Good quality, matching materials along the pavement would greatly enhance the appearance – as seen on Howard Street.

- Subject to highway feasibility, **pavement widening** could be explored that could reduce the feeling of road dominance, allow for greater appreciation of the buildings, and make the pedestrian experience more inviting. There could be scope to introduce street trees to soften the atmosphere.



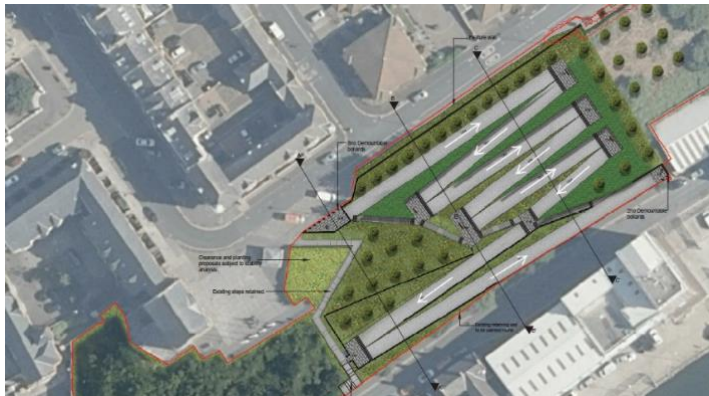
Example of pavement widening with street trees (Source: Barnet Residents Association)

5.1.3 Connectivity to the Riverside

As part of the Council's regeneration plans for North Shields, an embankment walkway is proposed between Tyne Street at the southern end of the conservation area, down the bank to Bell Street. It will feature routes that are step-free and steps with handrails, along with planting and artwork.

The walkway will support Howard Street's role as the main town centre pedestrian link to the riverside, aiming to increase the attraction and vibrancy of the Fish Quay, New Quay and the Northumberland Square conservation areas.

The walkway was granted planning permission in August 2022, and it is hoped the project will be complete in 2024.



Proposed walkway linking the town centre and the riverside

5.1.4 Re-ordering Tiled Façade of 54 to 67 Howard Street

Numbers 54 to 67, and number 50, at the northern end of Howard Street, forming the gateway to Northumberland Square, have heavily altered façades with the addition of ceramic tiles. The poor quality and prominence are highlighted by directly abutting the grade II listed St. Columba's Church. This collection of properties has a negative impact on the townscape, and indeed was highlighted in the public consultation responses with PlaceCheck as an opportunity for improvement. A scheme for authentic façade reinstatement associated with railing installation is to be actively encouraged.



Tiled properties at the northern end of Howard Street

5.1.5 Tackling Poor Appearance in Northumberland Place

Similar to those found on Howard Street, some of the properties found on Northumberland Place have been subject to intrusive interventions that

harm the special character and appearance of the conservation area. This includes the addition of boxy dormer windows, loss of original features, and inappropriate shop front design and signage. A scheme to remove the harm to the special interest of this grade II listed terrace should be actively encouraged.

5.1.6 Extending the Curtilage Project

As part of the HAZ scheme, traditional garden boundaries and gardens were reintroduced in some locations within the conservation area, with a notable positive impact upon character and appearance. This is discussed further under section 4. It is recognised that this curtilage project did not extend as widely as hoped and it should be a priority to deliver more of the same throughout the conservation area should resources allow.

An aerial, black and white photograph of a city park. The park features a prominent, winding path that curves through various green spaces, including lawns and areas with trees. The path is bordered by low walls or curbs. Surrounding the park are several multi-story buildings, some of which appear to be under renovation or construction, as evidenced by scaffolding. A road with cars and a few pedestrians is visible at the bottom of the frame. The overall scene depicts an urban environment with integrated green space.

**Outcomes of the
HAZ Scheme and
Future Regeneration**

6. Outcomes of the HAZ Scheme and Future Regeneration

6.1 Introduction

The four-year HAZ scheme has successfully delivered projects that have revitalised the Northumberland Square Conservation Area and has set the tone for future regeneration of the town centre. This section will cover the outcomes of the HAZ scheme and how this will steer future regeneration and ambition within North Shields.

6.2 Regeneration

Throughout 2020 to 2024, the HAZ scheme has been an integral component of the overall ambition for North Shields, running alongside the North Shields Masterplan. The HAZ scheme has revitalised the special character and appearance, successfully delivering projects to physically improve the conservation area and support cultural activities for the local community and visitors. In doing so, it has inspired a new trajectory for the regeneration of North Shields.

6.3 Northumberland Square

The restoration of Northumberland Square, which took place from 2021 to 2022, played an integral part in the HAZ scheme due to its historic significance and role within North Shields Town Centre. With the use of plans dating back to 1826, the works included the reconfiguring of the footpath and perimeter of trees to reflect the Square's historic layout, as well as using materials with historic precedence and appropriate to the conservation area. The restored layout and improved accessibility have allowed for the Square to be used for events that all can attend, such as the Victorian Christmas Market. The restoration and increased participation in cultural activities in the Square has supported the revitalisation of the local historic environment and allows for Northumberland Square to become a more inclusive, cohesive and vibrant place to live, work and visit for generations to come.



The restored Square reflecting the original layout and use of appropriate materials and planting

6.4 The Exchange



The Exchange building was identified as a pivotal component of the proposed Culture and Leisure Quarter in North Shields Town Centre. The HAZ scheme has successfully supported the restoration works of the building, including works to the roof, masonry, windows and has addressed internal damage caused by water ingress. Due to the success of the restoration, the Exchange building now operates as a venue for cultural and creative

events that will attract local talent, visitors and support future cultural development within North Shields.

6.5 Culture and Leisure Quarter

The North Shields Masterplan has identified a key focus at the junction between Howard Street and Saville Street to be a designated zone for culture, creativity and leisure⁶⁰. The HAZ scheme has played a vital role in achieving this vision through the restoration of the Exchange building and public realm improvements made along Howard Street. The Exchange building is now an established music, arts and leisure venue that has become an anchor to the future cultural regeneration through attracting further public and private investment, local talent and visitors to North Shields.

6.6 Wider Outcomes

As the HAZ scheme has delivered public realm improvements at Northumberland Square and Howard Street, the works have allowed for more cultural events and activities to take place, such as the Victorian Christmas Market, Together Events and guided heritage tours. The success of these events has increased community participation throughout the HAZ scheme and increased awareness of the local area's heritage to a wider audience. In addition, through the HAZ scheme, a North Shields Steering Group was established compiling of residents, local businesses, councillors, North Tyneside VODA, Historic England and Council officers. This group created a unique relationship and allowed for key decisions to be made, as well as giving local residents and business an opportunity to participate and help define how the scheme was shaped and driven.

⁶⁰ North Shields Master Plan, North Tyneside Council, 2020.

6.7 Post HAZ Scheme

Projects achieved through the HAZ scheme has set a benchmark for future investment in Northumberland Square conservation area and the wider North Shields Town Centre area for years to come.

The improvement works to the public realm, private properties and gardens, and restoration of the Exchange building has created a high-quality environment and has unlocked further public and private investment into local businesses. These buildings and spaces, and the events they support, will continue to capture wider audiences and increase awareness and appreciation of the local area's heritage and overall raise North Shields as a place to work, visit and live.

The HAZ scheme has played a pivotal part in the long-term narrative of North Shields by bringing back to life the local area's special character and appearance, alongside setting the tone for investment that can be sustained going into the future. The efforts and partnership between the local community and the council will continue to be strong to ensure that we all have a place that we can be proud of now and for generations to come.