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St Paul's Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Plan

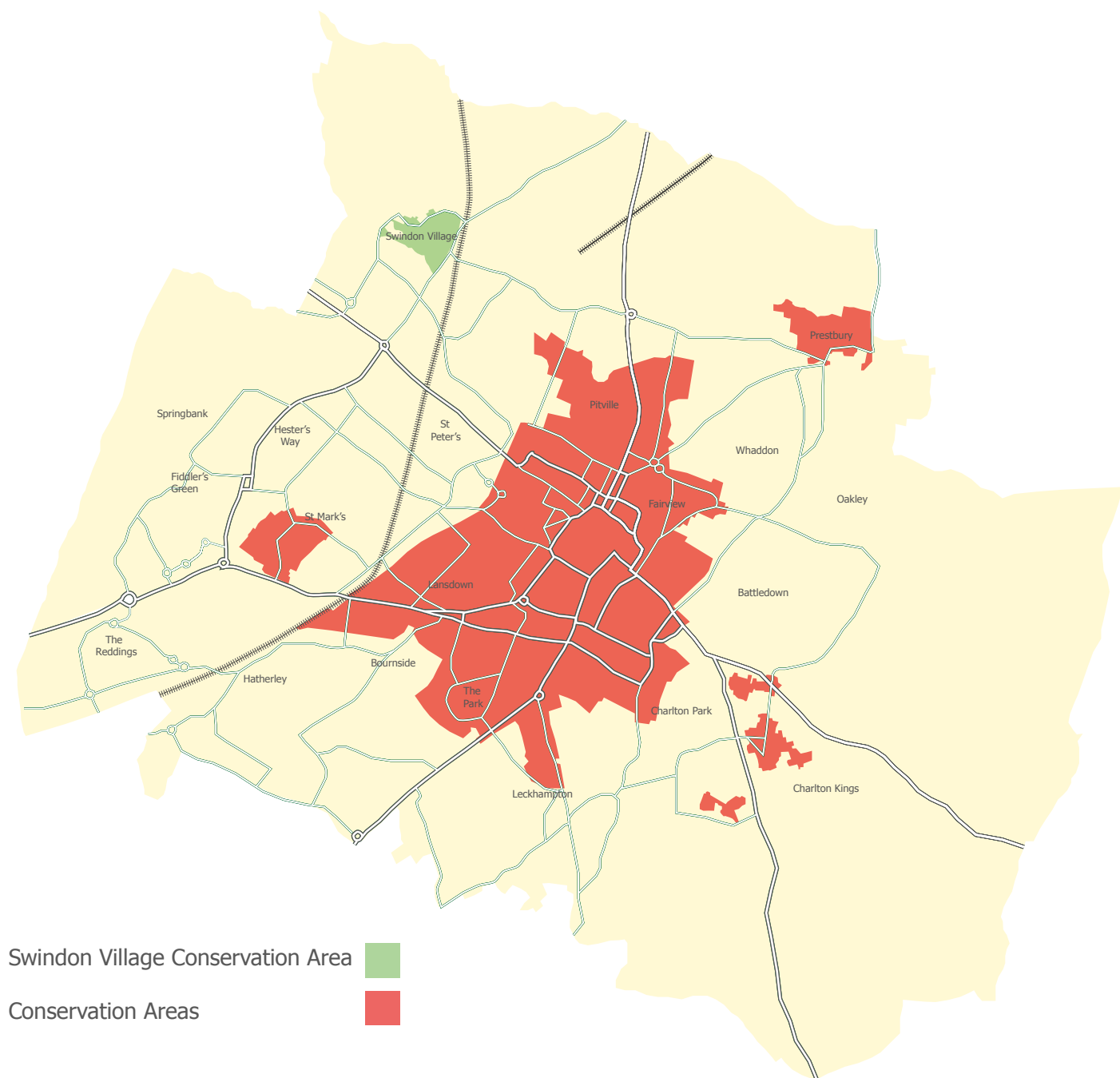
Cheltenham Borough Council
Planning Policy Team
Local Plan Draft Document
May 2017



The St Paul's Conservation Area Appraisal is a draft document and will not come into force until the consultation stage is completed and they have been adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council. Any suggested boundary change will not take place until that time.

For any comments please contact localplan@cheltenham.gov.uk

For more information on the existing Conservation Area Appraisals please [click here.](#)



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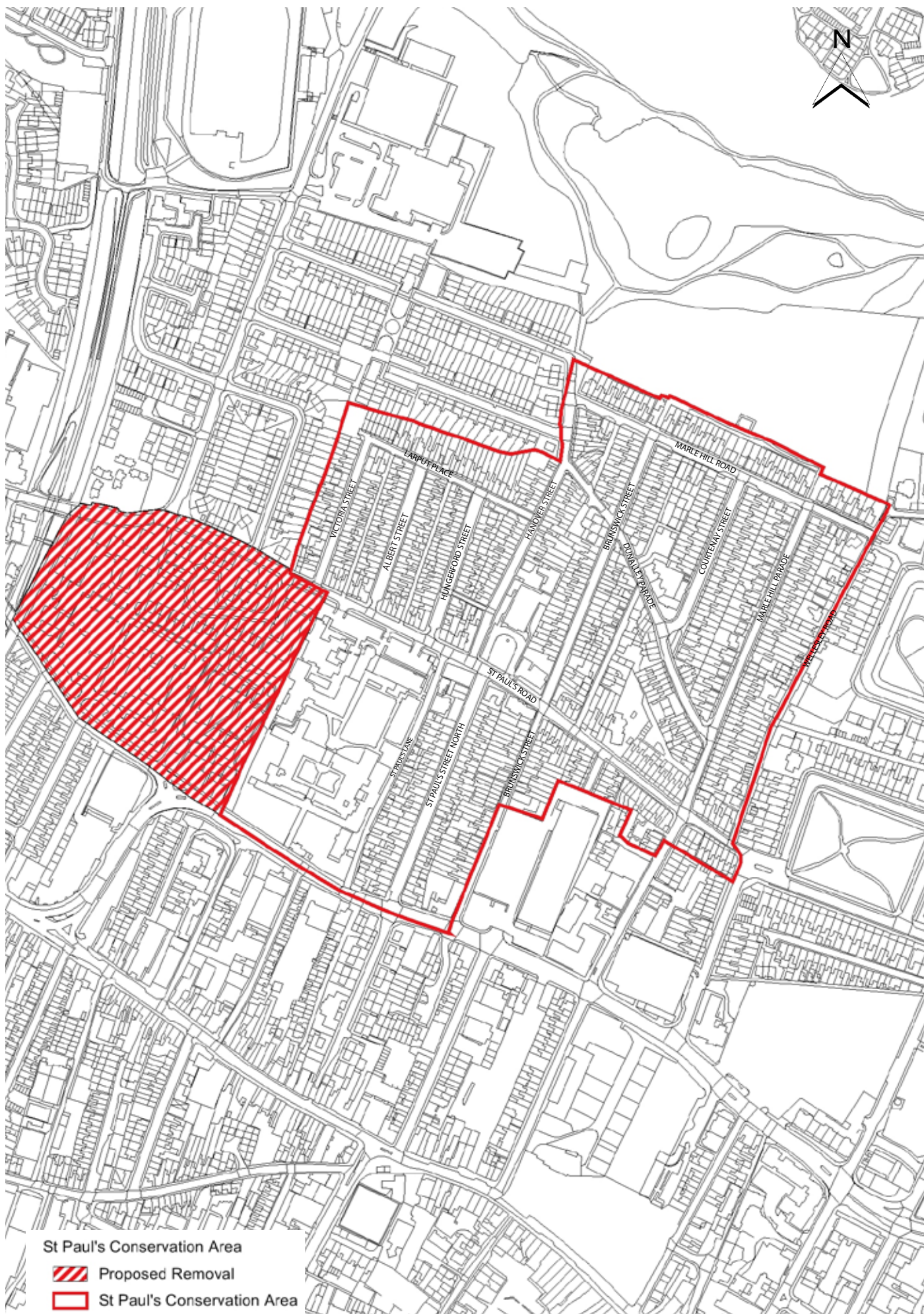
Map 1. The location of the St Pauls Conservation Area and other conservation areas in Cheltenham

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 What is a Conservation Area?

1.1.1 A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The power to designate is given to councils through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (Sections 69-78). Under section 69 local planning authorities must also review their conservation area from time to time. This document supersedes the previous appraisal and management plan which was previously reviewed and adopted in 2008.

1.2 What is a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?

1.2.1 A Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is a document which supplements Cheltenham Borough Council's Local Plan.

1.2.2 The Appraisal aims to describe the special historic and architectural character of an area. A conservation area's character is defined by a combination of elements such as:

- Architecture
- Uses
- Materials
- Detailing
- Relationship between buildings and their setting
- Appearance and placement of buildings within their plots
- Key views and vistas
- Relationship between the street and the buildings
- Trees and green spaces
- Historic structures/artefacts

1.2.3 A Management Plan addresses the issues raised in the Appraisal and provides area specific guidelines, in addition to potential enhancement schemes are also explored.

1.3 Implications of Conservation Area Designation

1.3.1 Planning proposals for new development within a conservation area will be subject to the relevant policies of the Council's adopted Local Plan and national policy guidance outlined within the National Planning Policy

Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). Part 12 of the NPPF relates specifically to the historic environment.

1.3.2 National and local planning policies seek to achieve a high standard of architectural design in development. It should complement and respect neighbouring development and the character of the locality, prevent harm to the historic fabric, layout and setting of listed buildings and seek to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

1.4 Community Involvement

(To be completed at a later date once consultation/meetings have taken place)

1.5 Designation Background

1.5.1 St Paul's Conservation Area was formed as a result of the 2016-2018 Conservation Area Review. The area was previously part of Cheltenham's Central Conservation Area. This was designated on 28 May 1973 by Gloucestershire County Council and its boundary extended by Cheltenham Borough Council on 14 August 1987. This was previously divided into 19 separate character areas, however the ongoing review has recommended creating separate conservation areas in order to better understand the individual characteristics of the areas.

1.6 Proposed Boundary Changes

1.6.1 Proposed boundary changes include the removal of the south-west corner of the Conservation Area, including Clarke Way, St Paul's Medical Centre and Poole Close. Buildings in the proposed removal area largely date the end of the twentieth century and is largely out of character of the area, in terms of massing, planform and materials. The proposed changes therefore help to strengthen the character of the St Paul's Conservation Area.

1.7 Statement of Special Character

1.7.1 St Paul's developed from the early 19th century onwards, as one of the first distinct areas for artisan workers located off the High Street. The area has distinct historic value, owing to the streets plan form, being laid out in a compact grid pattern from c.1820 to the early twentieth century. This helps provide the area with a unique identity from the neighbouring planned Pittville Estate.

1.7.2 Terraces developed along similar buildings lines, which adds to the uniformity of the area. Despite this, each street contains subtle degrees of variation which enhances the character of the area.

1.7.3 The area contains 14 listed buildings and structures, and collectively, these contribute to the areas historical and architectural value. One of the most visually distinctive is the Grade II* St Paul's Church, designed in a neo-classical style for 'artisan classes in the poorer quarter' of Cheltenham. Today the Church, along with the Church Centre continues to play an active role within the community.

1.7.4 The University of Gloucestershire, Francis Close Hall campus is a distinctive enclave. It contains a number of statutory listed buildings, but also a number of open green areas that significantly contribute to the character of the conservation area. Furthermore, it has a degree of associative value due to being named in honour of Rev Francis Close, who also had Dean Close named in his honour.

1.7.5 St Paul's Conservation Area also borders Pittville Park, a Grade II Registered Parks and Garden. This adds to the degree of significance of the area, with the close proximity to the historically open space being important.

1.7.6 Development of dense artisan houses took place in other areas of Cheltenham such as surrounding the Lower High Street and Fairview. However, the gradual evolution of St Paul's with subtle variations helps give the area its unique character.

Conservation Area Appraisal

This Appraisal defines the characteristics that make the conservation area special, including its wider context, historic development, townscape, streetscape and architectural character. It also describes the conservation area's



Map 3. Aerial photograph of the St Paul's Conservation Area and surrounding area

2.0 Context

2.1 Location and Setting

2.1.1 St Paul's Conservation Area is positioned to the north-west of Cheltenham's centre, with Pittville Estate to the east.

2.1.2 St Paul's is largely surrounded on all sides by urban development. To the north and east sits Pittville and High Street Conservation Areas. Agg Gardner Recreation Ground, which contains grass football pitches and a basketball court is located to the north. The recreation ground is included on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens as part of Pittville Park due to its special historic interest.

2.1.3 St Paul's Road and Swindon Road are both busy roads running throughout the Conservation Area with high levels of traffic running into and around the town centre. Swindon Road forms the southern boundary to the Conservation Area, serving as a distinct boundary between St Paul's and the High Street Conservation Area.

2.2 Historical Development

2.2.1 Cheltenham is first reference in an account the Council of Cloveshoe held in 803, however it is highly likely that Cheltenham was in existence as a farming village prior to the 8th century. It gained the status of a market town in 1226.

2.2.3 Between the 13th and 18th centuries the town consisted of one long street, the present High Street, with linear development in the form of narrow burgage plots and lanes leading out on either side to the adjoining fields and orchards.

2.2.3 Up until the 16th century Cheltenham was predominantly a small market town, however as the town broadened its economy through the malting and brewing the population began to increase, and by 1650 it was roughly 1,575.

2.2.4 The medicinal spa waters were first discovered in 1716 which helped to increase the towns popularity. However it was not until



Fig.2.1 St Paul's Church

1788 when George III and family arrive for a five week holiday did Cheltenham really begin to grow in popularity.

2.2.5 The area of St Paul's originals from the first half of the 19th century, when open field were enclosed and built on. The enclosure of fields was enabled through the passing of the Inclosure Act in 1801.

2.2.6 By 1820 a number of roads were laid out within the area of St Paul's, these included St Paul's Road, Brunswick Street (then named Rutland Street), Dunalley Street, and Dunalley Parade. However, the majority of the area remained as undeveloped fields at this time.

2.2.7 Further development has occurred within the Conservation Area by the time of Merrett's map in 1834. This included St Paul's Church, which was built in 1831 by John Forbes, after the site was donated by Joseph Pitt with the church built to serve the 'artisan congregation of the area'.

2.2.8 The majority of St Paul's involved the building of compact terraces, built for artisan workers. There were also a number of light industrial uses within St Paul's, and includes a Malthouse owned by J. Agg Gardner, who ran the Cheltenham Original Brewery, located on Malthouse Lane. These have all now been

replaced with residential units.

2.2.9 There were also a number of light industrial uses within St Paul's, and includes a Malthouse owned by J. Agg Gardner, who ran the Cheltenham Original Brewery, located on Malthouse Lane. These have all now been replaced with residential units.

2.2.10 To the east of the Conservation Area a workhouse was built on Swindon Road in 1841



Map 4. St Paul's OS Map 1884-1893 showing vacant plots on Marle Hill Road, Parade & Courtenay Street



Map 5. St Paul's OS Map 1902-03 demonstrating the completion of house

for the Cheltenham Union of Parishes, set up under the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834. It was built to accommodate 250 inmates and replaced the parish workhouse near St James's Square. Today this has been demolished, but a chapel built in 1886 was positioned to the south.

2.2.11 St Paul's Teacher Training College was constructed in 1849, located off Swindon Road. It was built largely by the efforts of

3.0 Townscape

Townscape is the arrangement and appearance of buildings, spaces and other physical features in the built and natural environments.

3.1 Layout and Planform of the Conservation Area

3.1.1 The planform of the Conservation Area encompasses the majority of the area of St Paul's, predominantly encompassing 19th century narrow residential streets which run on a north-south axis in a slight irregular grid pattern. Swindon Road and St Paul's Road are wider and run on an east-west axis, with artisan terraces running to the north and south.

3.1.2 The majority of which are located on the front of the pavement with no garden (Fig.3.1). Buildings located on Marle Hill Parade, Marle Hill Road and St Paul's Road are set back behind small frontages. Service and narrow back lanes running are an important element of the conservation area (Fig.3.3).

3.1.3 Buildings located Swindon Road tend to be more spaced out and of a looser urban grain, and includes Francis Close Hall, in which buildings are set within spacious grounds. Dunnalley Parade largely follows the original entrance to Marle Hill House, which was demolished in the 1960s to make way for



Map 7. Figure ground Plan of St Paul's Conservation Area

Albermare Gate.

3.2 Land Uses

3.2.1 St Paul's Conservation Area has largely been a residential area, with predominantly dense artisan terraced houses. Today, a high number of these properties are houses of multiple occupations (HMOs) and rented by students from the nearby University of Gloucestershire.

3.2.2 Land uses along Swindon Road and St Paul's Road are varied, with a mixture of education, community, commercial and residential uses. Mixed uses here help to create a dynamic and interesting street scenes which contributes to



Fig.3.1 Artisan terraces of St Paul's Street North



Fig.3.3 Back lanes, St Paul's



Map 8. Building uses St Paul's Conservation Area

the special interest of the area and retention of this is strongly encouraged.

3.3 Building Height and Massing

3.3.1 Artisan terrace houses are generally two storeys located throughout much of the area. Buildings along St Paul's Road are a mixture of two and three storeys with civic and community buildings of a larger massing (Fig.3.2). There is a modern block of flats adjacent to the old school house, which despite being four storeys is a similar height to the neighbouring former school house, and fits in well with the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.3.2 The University of Gloucestershire Francis Close Campus is larger in scale and massing than neighbouring buildings, with recent developments up to four storeys high.

3.4 Key Views

3.4.1 For the purpose of this character appraisal three types of views have been identified:

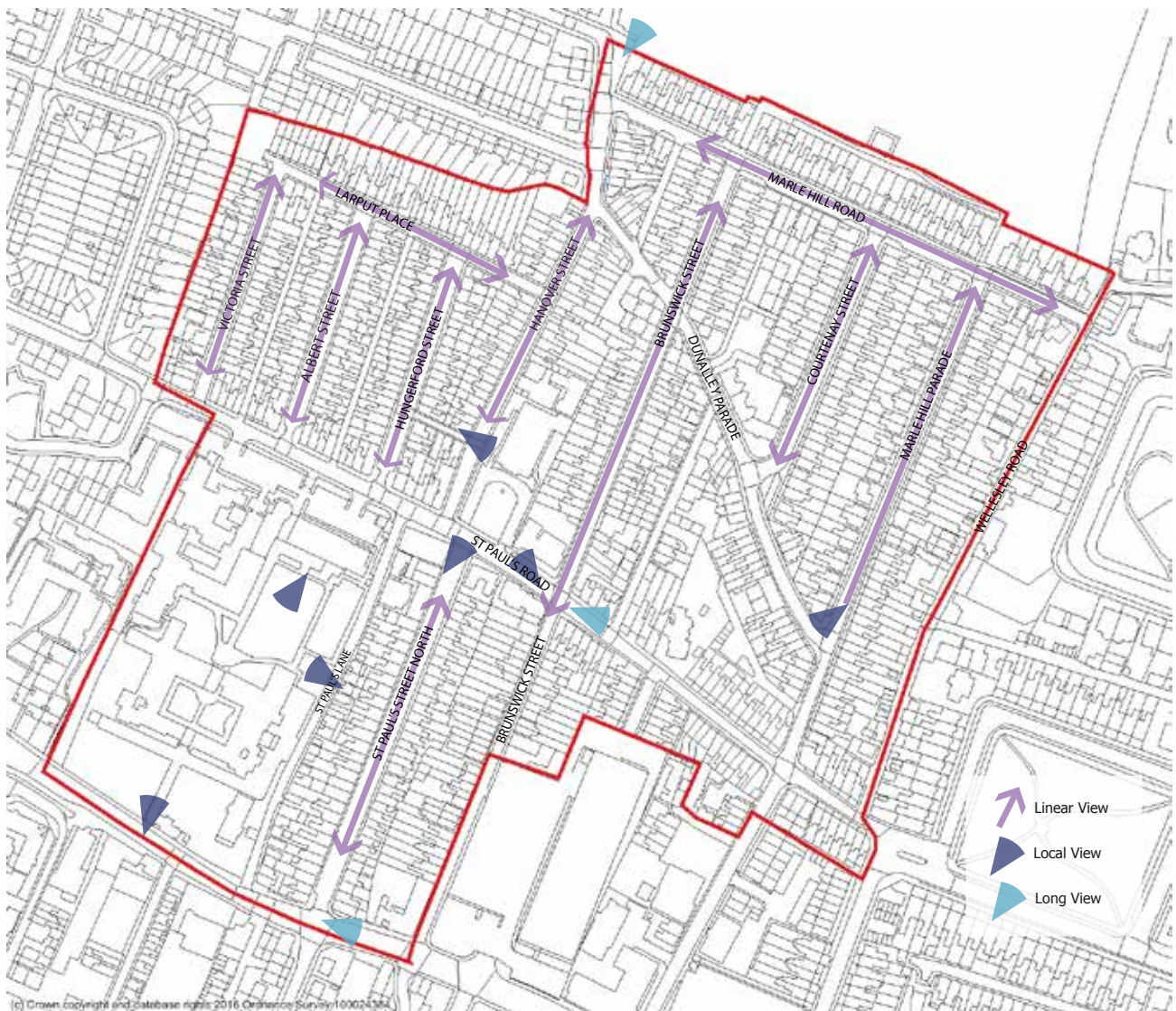
- Linear Views- Long, straight views within the conservation area.
- Local Views- These tend to be shorter and confined to a specific locality within the conservation area. They include views of landmarks, attractive groups of buildings, views into open spaces and square.
- Long Views- Long-distance views across the town, to key features or landmark buildings.

Key view's within the conservation area form an important element of the character and appearance of St Paul's.

Linear views form an important element within the conservation area, with a number of landmark buildings forming key terminating views at the end of roads. This includes views of St Paul's Church along St Paul's Street North and views along Hungerford Street of Francis Close Hall Chapel. Linear views throughout the artisan terraces form a key characteristic of the conservation area, these are largely uncluttered with little greenery or trees but have high levels of on-street parking.

Long views into Pittville Park from the end of Brunswick Street and Marle Hill Parade form an important element, helping to provide a sense of greenery and space. Views of the Cotswold Escarpment seen from Swindon Road and St Paul's Road also play an important role within the streetscene. Long views of St Gregory's Church and Christ Church spires between buildings and over rooftops are also notable.





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Map 9. Key views map of St Paul's Conservation Area

4.0 Streetscape

Streetscape is the outward facing visual appearance and character of a street or locality.

4.1 Public Realm and Open Space

4.1.1 There is a general lack of open spaces within the Conservation Areas; however those that do exist make an important contribution to the character of the area. These spaces include the space in front of St Paul's Church and the open grass and quad in Francis Close Hall Campus. Furthermore, there is a notable open space at the end of Courteney Street where it meets Dunalley Parade.

4.1.2 North and south of St Paul's Road there are narrow artisan terraces, with the majority located at the front of the pavement with high levels of on-street parking. The notable exceptions are houses located on Marle Hill Parade, Marle Hill Road and Courtenay Street which are slightly set back with small self-contained frontages.

4.1.3 Roads are asphalt and overall are in a good condition, but a number are in a poor condition, including Malthouse Lane, Hungerford and Victoria Street. The entrance of Victoria Street contains historic setts which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. St Paul's Road frequently suffers from high quantities of traffic, particularly during the rush hours in the morning and evenings.

4.1.4 The footpath paving is predominantly 400x400 concrete slabs which are in a good condition, where the pavement is wider brick paving has also been introduced.

4.1.5 Service lanes at the rear of properties to the west of the conservation area make an important contribution to the area, however these are often rundown and overrun with wheelie bins and large quantities of rubbish which detracts away from the Conservation Area.

4.1.6 Road markings can detract away from the character of the Conservation Area. These are often unsuitable for a conservation area, due to the width and colour of the lines. Double

yellow lines for example should be 50mm wide and painted in primrose yellow in order to minimise the impact in a conservation area.

4.2 Street Furniture

4.2.1 Street furniture within the Conservation Area is generally limited due to the residential nature of much of St Paul's.. Bollards are often present at significant junctions odd Swindon Road, however these are not overly visually intrusive. Bollards located throughout Marle Hill Road and Dunalley Road are painted a mix of colours which enhances the Conservation Area.

4.2.2 The LED street lights are of a contemporary design and are suitably located, set back from the kerb adjacent to properties.

4.2.3 Street signs make a significant contribution to the character of the area, with a vast array of historic cast iron street signs attached to buildings, walls and railings. These are in a



Fig.4.3 Historic sets, Victoria Street



Fig.4.4 400x400 concrete



Fig.4.5 Brightly coloured bollards, St Paul's

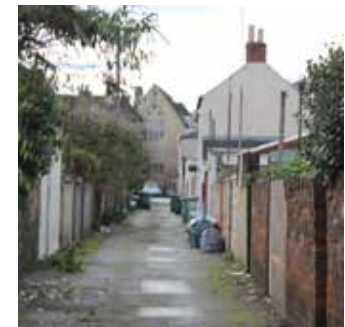


Fig.4.4 Back lanes, St Paul's

mixed condition, with some in need of painting. Dunnalley Road has a damaged historic sign in need of repair. Modern street signs tend to be free standing which can add to the clutter of the street scene. Where possible, these should be located on buildings, rails or walls, which would help to give the area a more uniform character.

4.2.4 Bollards are often present at significant junctions odd Swindon Road, however these are not overly visually intrusive. Bollards located throughout Marle Hill Road and Dunnalley Road are painted a mix of colours which helps to enhance and provide character to the area.

4.2.5 The Grade II listed post-box located on St Paul's Road positively contributes to the conservation area.

4.3 Boundary Wall Treatments

4.3.1 Boundary wall treatments where used have the potential to enhance the Conservation Area.

4.3.2 Properties located on Marle Hill Road, Marle Hill Parade, St Paul's Road and Courtenay Street are set back from the roads with low boundary walls. These are a mix of materials, including brick, fences, stone and metal railings, which creates a lack of consistency within the street scene. The reinstatement of brick walls is strongly encouraged.

4.3.3 The railings surrounding St Paul's Church help to enhance the area and positively contribute towards the street scene. Although of a more simplistic design the railings surrounding Francis Close Hall also positively contribute to the area.

4.3.4 On the southern and eastern side Francis Close Hall is also enclosed by an attractive Cotswold stone wall which helps to enhance the area. This has been unsympathetically pointed in cement which long terms likely to cause further stone deterioration. Within a number of the service lanes there are high red brick walls which positively contribute towards the area. However within there are also a number of fences in a poor condition which negatively impacts the conservation area.



Fig.4.7 Selection of historic street signs found throughout St Paul's



Fig.4.9 Railings, St Paul's Church



Fig.4.6 1866 Grade II listed post box

4.4 TREES

4.4.1 Generally there are few trees within St Paul's Conservation Area due to the narrowness of the residential streets and lack of open space.

4.4.2 Whilst there are few street trees the row of ash trees positioned on Dunalley Parade, outside Dunalley House and a small row of lime trees located on the south side of Marle Hill Road. A small row of trees have also been planted outside St Paul's Church and School which long with pavement improvements enhances the area. Sycamore and ash trees are evident within the grounds of St Paul's Church.

4.4.3 The greenery and trees surrounding Francis Close Hall provides an attractive setting for the University and includes mature horse chestnut, sycamore, lime and beech trees along the southern boundary. To the north of the site sit a row of lime trees which partially screen the car park from the road.

4.4.4 There are a small number of trees present within the back gardens of the terraced houses, although these are largely hidden from the road.



Fig.4.11 The Quad, Francis Close Hall



Fig.4.12 Railings, St Paul's Church



Fig.4.10 Trees making a positive contribution to the street scene

5.0 Architectural Character

5.1 General Architectural Character

5.1.1 Artisan terraces form the dominant built form within St Paul's Conservation Area, which helps to form its unique identity (Fig.5.1). The unifying and simple architectural details helps to create a strong sense of uniformity with a cohesion in rhythm, materials and mass within the street scene. Houses are generally rendered in stucco, many with small parapets and simple cornices, and would originally have had timber sash and case windows, although these have often been replaced with uPVC. Stone voussoirs are also found above the majority of the windows within the conservation area and help to provide a unifying feature (Fig.5.2). Properties are of a relatively uniform height with almost all being two storeys with many containing basements. Slate tiles are the dominant roof

material, although these are largely hidden due to the parapets. Doors are often recessed, with distinctive plain or reeded surrounds, with tiled entrances.

5.1.2 The general loss of architectural detailing, such as corncicing on properties does at times detract away from the uniformity of the area. Furthermore, original cast-iron gutters and hoppers have often been replaced with uPVC which detracts away from the conservation area.

5.1.3 Whilst artisan terraces offer a degree of uniformity there are subtle differences between the roads due to the gradual development of the area. Victoria Street, for example consists of a wide range of materials, including stucco, red brick and checkerboard bricks, where houses were often built as pairs within the terrace by individual builders.



5.1.4 Back lanes provide an interesting mix of buildings, often these have been infilled with modern development which is largely neutral to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.2 Building Contribution

5.2.1 This section explains the contribution buildings make to the special architectural or historic interest of the area as outlined in 10.

A) Grade II* Buildings

5.2.2 Three buildings are Grade II* listed within St Paul' Conservation Area therefore indicating that it is particularly important and of 'more than special interest'.

B) Grade II Buildings

5.2.3 There are 8 Grade II buildings/structures, which are buildings are of 'special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them' and make a positive contribution to the area.

C) Locally Listed Buildings

5.2.4 Three buildings/structures are included on Cheltenham's Index of Buildings of Local Interest. These buildings, although not statutorily listed, have been identified as having a significant level of local value and considered to make a positive contribution to the special character of the conservation area. Demolition of these buildings is considered to constitute substantial harm and there is a presumption in favour of their retention.

D) Positive Unlisted Buildings

5.2.5 Buildings that positively contribute to the conservation area's overall character and appearance. Demolition of these buildings is considered to be undesirable to constitute substantial harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Special attention should be paid towards preserving important historical features present on these buildings.

C) Neutral Buildings

5.2.6 A number of buildings in the area do not positively contribute nor actively detract from the conservation area's special character. In principle, redevelopment of these sites would not be resisted, provided the proposed replacement buildings adhere to the objectives of relevant planning policy and are of high quality design consistent with the

conservation area's special character.

D) Negative Buildings

5.2.7 Some development detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area, due to the style, materials or massing. In principle, redevelopment of these sites will not be resisted, provided replacement proposals are of a high quality design that will make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

5.3 Key Architectural Features and Materials

5.3.1 Though there is variation in style, form, and layout of buildings throughout the conservation area, there are discernible groupings of buildings displaying similar key architectural features and common building materials. The dominant building typology for St Paul's being historic terraces.

5.3.2 The adjacent table lists the general key features and building materials found within many of the terraces.

Common Architectural Features

1. Voussoirs
3. Sash and case windows
4. String courses
5. Cornices
6. Decorative mouldings around windows and doors
8. Stucco rustication
9. Bay windows

Common Building Materials

10. Timber window frames/doors
11. Welsh slate tiles
12. Stucco over brick
13. Red brick
14. Checkerboard bricks

5.4 Architectural Analysis

5.4.1 The purpose of this section is to expand on the statement of special interest in Section 1.7 and to assess and analyse individual characteristics and prominent features found throughout individual streets that particularly contribute towards the areas special character.

Victoria Street & Hanover Street

5.4.2 Terraces, consisting of a wide range of materials, including stucco, red brick and checkerboard bricks,

Brunswick Street

5.4.3 A mixture of c.1820 and mid 20th century terraces, all stucco over brick with low pitched roofs and little ornamental detailing.

St Paul's Street North

5.4.4 19th century terraces, stucco over brick. The majority featuring rustication to the ground floor. Cornices and low parapet walls with low pitched slate roofs (Fig.5.1).

Albert Street

5.4.5 In Albert Street houses are uniform in appearance, with a set of checkerboard bricks in a Flemish bond, giving the street a distinctive character (Fig.5.2).

Marle Hill Road

5.4.6 Houses on Marle Hill Road date from the late 19th century and are notably larger, featuring string courses under first floor with bay windows to the ground floor. Towards the east there are a number of semi-detached villas. Off Marle Hill Road also sits Agg Gardners Lodge, out of three this is the only surviving lodge for Marle Hill, an early Regency House built circa 1810. The lodge has attractive detailing including a hipped roof and a large, stepped chimney stack.

Marle Hill Parade

5.4.7 The west side of Marle Hill Parade contains semi-detached villas, the majority being stuccoed with string cornice and external window architraves. Richmond Villa is distinctive brick villa within the road (Fig.5.4).

Dunnalley Parade

5.4.8 Dunnalley Parade, contains a distinctive and attractive row of checkerboard terraces that curve onto Marle Hill Parade (Fig.5.6). There have also been the addition of flats on the corner of Dunnalley Parade and Courtenay Street which

are largely neutral to the conservation area in terms of appearance and scale.

Larput Place

5.4.9 Predominantly 19th century terraces, including three Grade II terraced houses, which have attractive wrought iron porches, with ornate scrolled uprights and openwork friezes and tent roofs (Fig.5.7).

Hanover Street

5.4.10 Hanover Street contains the Hanover Inn, a former public house which despite now being in residential use still has the original sign on the side wall of the property.

Wellesley Road

5.4.11 On Wellesley Road there are a number of successful recent residential units, which are largely in keeping with the area, in materials, scale and appearance. These also provide an effective buffer between St Paul's and Pittville.

Malthouse Lane

5.4.12 Malthouse Lane has been subject to various stage of infilling, many of which are neutral to the character of the area.



Fig.5.1 Stucco over brick terraces, St Paul's Street North



Fig.5.2 Checkerboard brick and stone voissiors



Fig.5.3 Marle Hill Road, larger inscale with cornice, parapet walls



Fig.5.4 Dunnalley Parade with distinctive checkerboard bricks

St Paul's Lane

5.4.13 This is located to the east of Francis Close Hall contains a wide mix of buildings, but are predominantly late 20th and 21st century small brick houses, reminiscent of small back lane cottages such as Mews Cottage (Fig.5.8). Many of these are either neutral or positive to the contribution to the character of the conservation area.

St Paul's Road

5.4.14 St Paul's Road contains a wide mix of uses and buildings types, but to the west predominantly contains artisan terraces. There are a small number commercial premises along St Paul's Road, with the majority featuring modern shop fronts, with 11 St Paul's Road being the exception containing an attractive historic shop front that contributes to the character of the area.

5.4.15 St Paul's Church (Fig.5.6), designed by John Forbes in a Greek Revival style plays an important role in the Conservation Area and significantly adds to the special interest (Fig.5.12). There are also two former school houses, both red brick which although larger in scale and size than neighbouring buildings play an important role within the area (Fig.5.11). Today, one is now St Paul's Church Centre (Fig.5.5) and the other is now is residential use.



FIG.5.7 Francis Close Hall

5.4.16 32 St Paul's Street is a former light industrial unit that has successfully been converted into flats that positively contributes to the conservation area.

Francis Close Hall

5.4.17 Francis Close Hall (Fig.5.7), formerly named St Paul's College dates from 1849, designed by SW Daukes in a Gothic revival style (Fig.5.13). It is constructed of stone with ashlar dressings, which offers an interesting visual contrast to the surrounding red brick and rendered terraced houses. Significant architectural detailing includes quoins, buttresses, million and transom windows. The open centre quad plays an important role within the setting of Francis Close Hall and helps to enhance the Conservation Area.

5.4.18 Within the campus there have also been a number of additions throughout the 20th century, the majority of which are neutral and respect their historic setting.

5.4.19 The CeAl building (Centre for Active Learning) positively contributes to the character of the conservation area (Fig.5.8).



Fig.5.5 St Paul's Church Centre



Fig.5.8 CeAl Building, UoG



Fig.5.6 St Paul's Church

6.0 Assessment of Condition

6.1 General Condition

6.1.1 The overall condition of St Paul's Conservation Area is generally good, with the majority of buildings maintained to a high standard. There are a number of factors which have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and are in need of careful consideration.

6.1.2 Historic buildings are often in a good condition, but a key issue throughout the area is the loss of architectural detailing, particularly on artisan terraces where uniformity is an important aspect of their significance. New buildings have been well designed to fit in and respect the appearance and character of the conservation area.

6.1.3 Traffic forms a fundamental problem throughout, causing issues with parking but also with significant levels of noise and movement with cars going along both Swindon and St Paul's Road.

6.1.4 Generally buildings are well maintained, and despite the loss of architectural detailing, due to the varied stages of development much of the significance continues.

6.2 Key Threats

6.2.1 While insensitive development can instantly harm the Conservation Area's special character, negative change can often occur incrementally through alterations that do not require planning permission, or that occupied prior to the areas designation. The quality of the public realm also has an impact on the area.

6.2.2 The conservation area is under pressure from a number of changes, which could result in threats to its special character and appearance. Existing and potential future threats are categorised as to whether they impact directly on buildings or the wider streetscape.

Threats to Buildings

- New development of a poor quality design/ materials or inappropriate siting, scale and massing
- Poor maintenance of buildings
- Loss of historic architectural detailing
- Replacement of historic timber windows with uPVC
- Poorly cited building services, including ventilation pipes, wires, alarm boxes and air conditioning units

Threats to Streetscape

- Poor quality/condition of street signs
- Poor quality road markings
- High levels of on street parking
- Significant quantities of traffic running along St Paul's Road
- Graffiti/Vandalism
- Litter within service lanes



6.3 Threats to Buildings Analysis

Poor Maintenance

Buildings are generally in a good condition, but there are notable examples within the lower high street that are in need of maintenance. Much of the work relates to cracked or stained render, which can harm the appearance of the conservation area. Other key elements include damaged or overflowing guttering, either broken or with filled with plants. Annual maintenance is therefore something which should be undertaken in order to prevent long term problems.

Loss of Historic Architectural Detailing & Poorly Cited Building Services

The loss of architectural detailing can detract away from the character of the conservation area. Of particular note this includes the loss or damage to string courses and cornices, these help to provide unifying features throughout St Paul's.

This is further compounded by the loss of many of the original historic windows with uPVC, and is a particular issue within terraced houses where changes at different times results in a loss of the collective value of the terraced properties. There has also been a loss of cast iron guttering, which has often replaced with uPVC.

6.4 Threats to Streetscape Analysis

Poor quality street signs

At present there are a huge variety of street signs designs that considerably add to the clutter and lack of coherent appearance throughout the Conservation Area. This includes historic street signs, historic style and generic highways signs that are of a utilitarian design.

Traffic

Traffic is a prominent issue within the conservation area with a number of main roads running through, such as Swindon and St Paul's Road. This is compounded by further issues with on-street parking



Conservation Area Management Plan