

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

- 1.1.1 This is an updating and review of the Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal originally adopted in June 2006. Conservation Areas are defined as 'Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. They are designated under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 1.1.2 The historic core of Cambridge is part of the large Central Conservation Area No1 which is one of a number of conservation areas in Cambridge (see fig.1). In 1995, the City Council decided that it was unworkable to produce any meaningful proposals to cover such a wide and diverse area and set about dividing this conservation area into sectors. The core area is one of these sectors and its boundary is shown on fig.2.
- 1.1.3 The historic core of Cambridge as well as being of huge architectural and historic interest is also a very complex area. It was therefore decided that a different structure to the other Appraisals produced for the city's Conservation Areas was appropriate. This review retains the "street by street" format of the 2006 version.
- 1.1.4 The earlier document took several years to produce. It was intended not to be considered a snapshot in time but to be capable of being modified and updated over time to enable it to inform decisions made in the core area for many years.
- 1.1.5 The 2006 version has been reviewed and some additions have been made to the mapping, for example positive buildings and structures have now been identified. The document was put out to public consultation and approved by the Executive Councillor on the 27th June 2017 at the City Council Environment Scrutiny Committee.

1.2 The aims of the appraisal

- 1.2.1 From experience of its use, the most useful aspect of the appraisal has been that the format lends itself to street sections being "pulled-out" for reference as background to help inform development proposals. It is primarily this element of the format that it retained and a careful updating of each section and its mapping has taken place. The aims have been:
- To assess the essential townscape characteristics of the central core of Cambridge.
 - To briefly consider what pressures affect the core area, how they impact upon the essential characteristics and how they might best be managed.
 - To understand the different areas of the city core and how they are interrelated.
 - To add detail to the Cambridge Local Plan and to provide a framework for specific projects, conservation plans and development briefs.
 - To aid Development Control decisions.

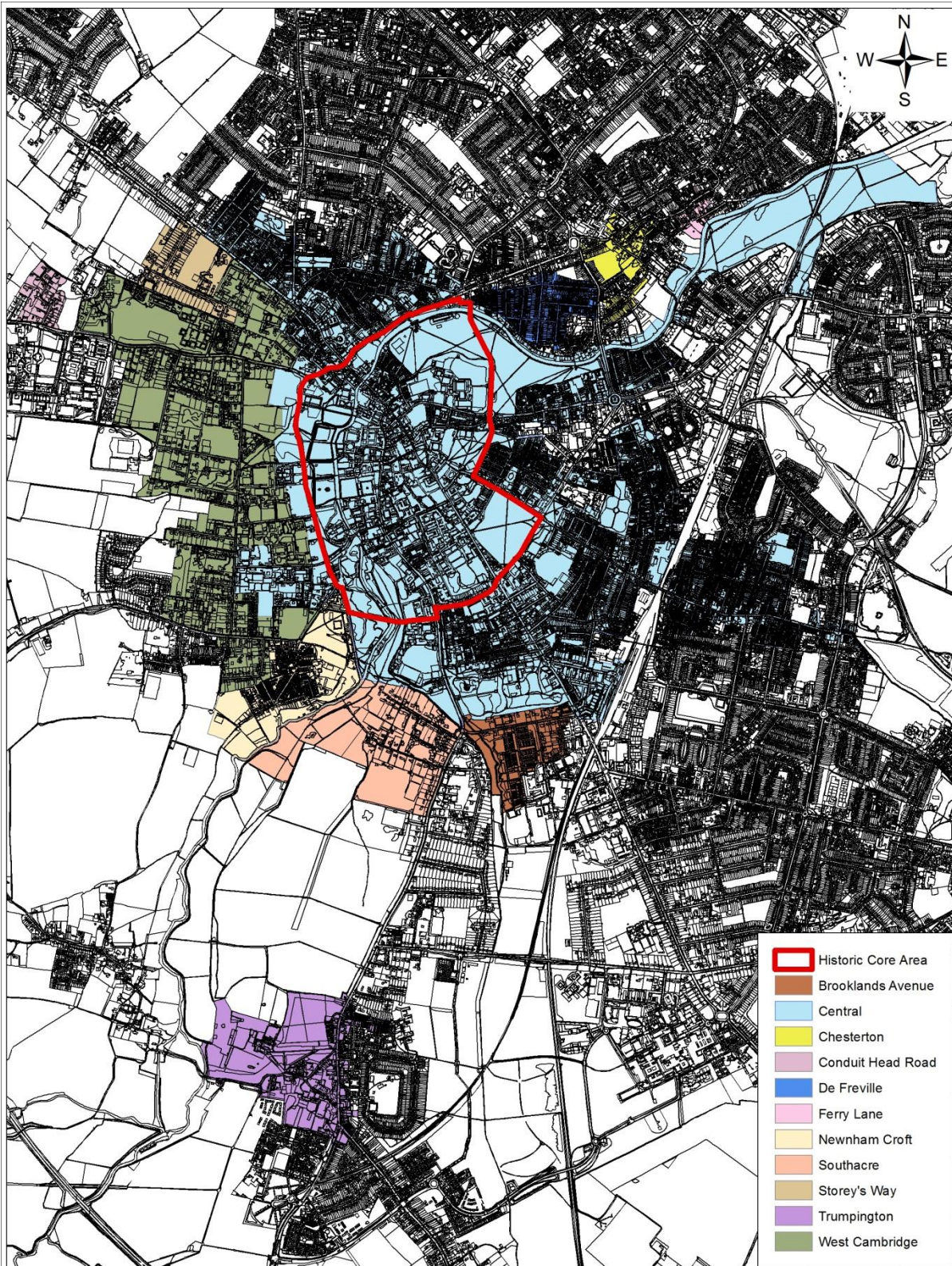


Fig: 1

Historic Core Area

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Date: 09 April 2015
 Produced by: GIS Team
 Section/Department: Information Systems, Environment Dept.
 Scale: 1:28,000 @ A4

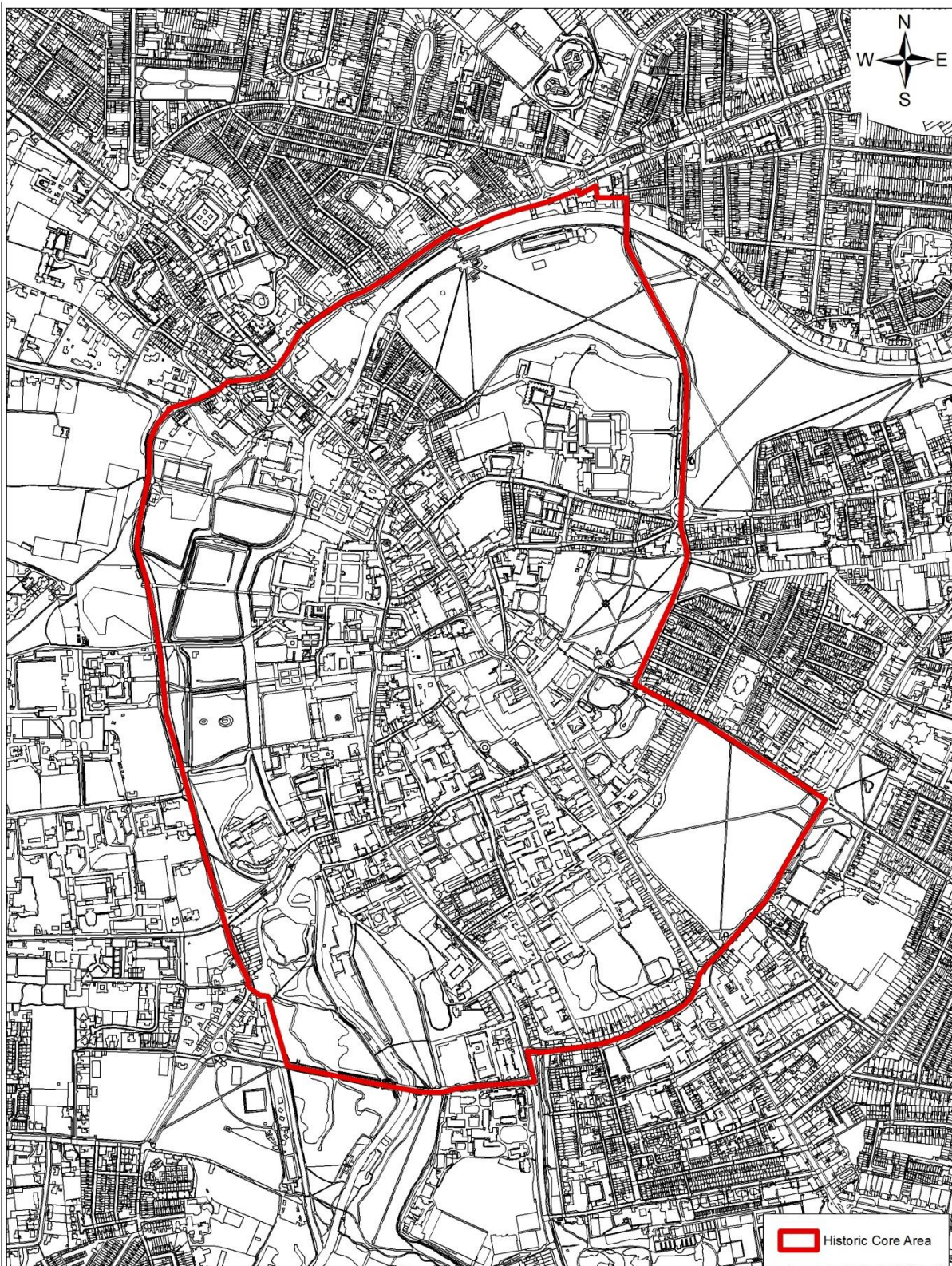


Fig: 2

Historic Core Area

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1.3 Designations

1.3.1 CONSERVATION AREAS

The entire historic core area is within a Conservation Area. This means that for the majority of buildings and structures, demolition would require formal consent from the City Council. It also means that owners must notify the Council of their intention to carry out works to most trees. For householders, the rights which they have to carry out works to their properties without Planning Permission (known as 'permitted development rights') are reduced. For shopkeepers, any illuminated signage requires Advertisement Consent. Stricter controls are imposed on the design of new buildings or alterations to existing ones, and the City Council has a duty to advertise applications for development on site and in the local newspaper.

1.3.2 LISTED BUILDINGS

The historic core contains well over 1000 buildings Listed by the Government because of their special architectural or historic interest. These are identified on the maps in the Street by Street section. Any works which affect the special architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building (inside or out) require consent from the City Council. In general, when a building is Listed, any pre-1948 building attached to it, or any object fixed to it, or a structure that formed part of the land and was in the curtilage of the principal listed building at the date of listing (or possibly 1 January 1969 for buildings listed before that date) and is ancillary to the principal building, is considered to be part of the listing. As from 26th June 2013 some new list entries or list entries amended after that date may expressly exclude such curtilage buildings from protection. You should contact the City Council's Conservation team for advice.

1.3.3 POSITIVE BUILDINGS and BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Buildings that do make a positive contribution are now identified on the street by street maps. Buildings of Local Interest are also shown on the maps and have been identified by the City Council as of interest within the Cambridge context. Further such identification of positive buildings and Buildings of Local Interest may occur from time to time as significance is revealed. The demolition of such buildings, or their disfiguring alteration, is unlikely to be supported. Aspects of the Building Regulations may be relaxed when converting such buildings to new uses or undertaking other alterations. Positive buildings make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area, and therefore merit consideration in accordance with clause 72 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. Some buildings have also been identified as Buildings of Local Interest in their own right and may be considered as undesignated heritage assets in accordance with paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

1.3.4 HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

Within the core, the college grounds of Christ's, Clare, Emmanuel, King's, Queens', St John's, Trinity Hall and Trinity Colleges are all registered by Historic England as being of 'special interest'. The City Council considers the impact of developments on the character of such gardens and consults Historic England or the Gardens Trust as appropriate, before making decisions on such applications.

1.4 Consultation and adoption

- 1.4.1 The review of the appraisal was made available on the City Council website and various groups, organisations and institutions were consulted prior to its adoption in 2017.

1.5 How to use this document

- 1.5.1 Part 2 of this document attempts to summarise the issues which affect the way we perceive the city. It begins with a broad-brush view, looking at the landscape within which the city sits and then at the city's history and how this has shaped the settlement that we now see. It then begins to focus on the way people use the core area both in terms of the spaces and the buildings, before looking in detail at the streets, the spaces, the building forms and the minor details that make the core area so special. Finally, it defines some very broad characteristics of the core area.
- 1.5.2 Part 3 looks in detail at every street and space within the core area. This section, in an illustrative way, details the characteristics of each street and space. It gives a brief historical analysis, provides an audit of the buildings, and picks up the townscape elements. This information should help provide a context for developers and Council officers which will allow them to judge the suitability of proposals for new development. It can also be used as a reference for potential enhancement schemes on which the City and County Councils may work together. Each street is given a 'significance value'. This is intended to provide a guide to the sensitivity of the street to change of any description.
- 1.5.3 Part 4 comments on issues and impacts in the historic core and provides guidance. It sets out good practice and management, and statements of the City Council's intent/practice.

1.6 Change since the 2006 Appraisal

- 1.6.1 Since the publication of the 2006 Appraisal document, the central core has seen *significant change* at both large and small scale. This includes: the completion of the Grand Arcade shopping centre; the redevelopment of Bradwell's Court including the re-opening of Christ's Lane; the relocation of some University of Cambridge departments (from eg the New Museums Site) to the West Cambridge site; the expansion of the Judge Business School at Old Addenbrooke's; and the conversion of a number of city centre buildings (for example former banks) to college accommodation. There have also been changes to the retail character and the introduction of many new A3 uses.
- 1.6.2 *Strategic issues and threats* may arise from the impacts of development outside the historic core but still within the wider city for example, pressures from the greater Cambridge area, retail trends, housing pressure or university or college needs. The Historic Core Appraisal is not intended to propose policy in respect of these. Rather

it is intended that a Conservation Area Management Plan will be the opportunity to consider such issues and to propose measures to address them.

- 1.6.3 The emerging Cambridge Local Plan 2014 policy 9 included the intention to produce a city centre public realm strategy as referred to in Section 4 of this Appraisal, to set out how development can contribute to improving the capacity and quality of the public realm. Subsequently, it has become clear that this may take the form of a “Spaces and Movement Strategy” and would be prepared in the context of the “City Deal” projects of the Greater Cambridge Partnership. References in the Appraisal to a city centre public realm strategy are therefore subject to its emerging form and objectives.