

# **Stratford St John's** Conservation Area

**Character Appraisal and  
Management Proposals**  
March 2009



London Borough of Newham

## CONTENTS

### **PART 1: CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL**

Introduction.....	4
The Planning Context.....	4
Summary of Special Interest.....	8
Location and Context.....	9
Geology and Topography.....	10
Archaeology.....	10
Mapped Historical Development of Stratford.....	13
Historical Development.....	15
Spatial Analysis.....	19
Key Views.....	23
Character Analysis By Area.....	26
Public Realm.....	39
Land Uses.....	42
Building Materials.....	42
Listed Buildings.....	43
Key Unlisted Buildings.....	45
Conclusion.....	47

### **PART 2: CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Future Development.....	49
Planning Controls.....	50
Council Functions.....	50
Enhancement and Funding.....	51
Community Engagement.....	51
Public Realm.....	51
Boundary Review.....	52
Public Consultation and Monitoring.....	52

## MAPS

Figure 1 – Map of Stratford St John’s Conservation Area.....	5
Figure 2 – London Thames Gateway Development Corporation boundary within Newham.....	6
Figure 3 – Newham Context Map.....	9
Figure 4 – Archaeological Study Area.....	10
Figure 5 – John Rocque, 1746.....	13
Figure 6 – John Wyld, 1848.....	13
Figure 7 – Ordnance Survey 1867.....	14
Figure 8 – Ordnance Survey 1893.....	14
Figure 9 – Ordnance Survey 1914.....	14
Figure 10 – Location of Spatial Analysis Areas.....	19
Figure 11 – Townscape Analysis.....	23
Figure 12 – Location of Character Analysis Areas.....	26
Figure 13 – Key Buildings.....	45

## **PART 1: CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Since 1967 the Council has had a duty to designate as conservation areas, those parts of their area that are of 'special architectural or historic interest the character of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance'. This duty is found in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Stratford St Johns Conservation Area was designated by the Council in January 1984, following public consultation and support. The area covered is shown in Figure 1. It is one of nine conservation areas in Newham.

Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans are required for each conservation area in Newham. The Council is required by government to produce these documents. They accord with guidance published by English Heritage which sets out the matters that these documents should address.

They aim to encourage appreciation of the area's history and its present qualities; to identify opportunities for enhancement; to inform and guide those who want to make changes; and to support the Council in carrying out its planning and other functions.

This appraisal analyses the development and resulting townscape of Stratford St Johns Conservation Area, identifying its distinctive appearance and character, and opportunities for further preservation and enhancement. It considers the factors that contribute to its special character – the buildings and spaces between them, and the activities that take place within them.

The Management Plan identifies the actions the Council will take over the next five years to further the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area.

### **THE PLANNING CONTEXT**

In carrying out its planning functions in the conservation area, the Council is required to give proper weight to the preservation and enhancement of the area.

The London Thames Gateway Development Corporation (LTGDC) is the planning authority for part of the Conservation Area (CA) with regard to listed building consents. Furthermore it is the planning authority for significant planning applications on key sites adjacent to the CA, between Broadway and Great Eastern Road and north of High Street (see figure 2).

The local planning authorities must ensure their actions take into account wider planning policies and advice. The statutory planning context and policies that apply are as follows:

## National Policy

*Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 "Planning and the Historic Environment"* sets out current national policy on conservation and heritage protection. It provides useful advice to planning authorities and on the standards expected of development within conservation areas.

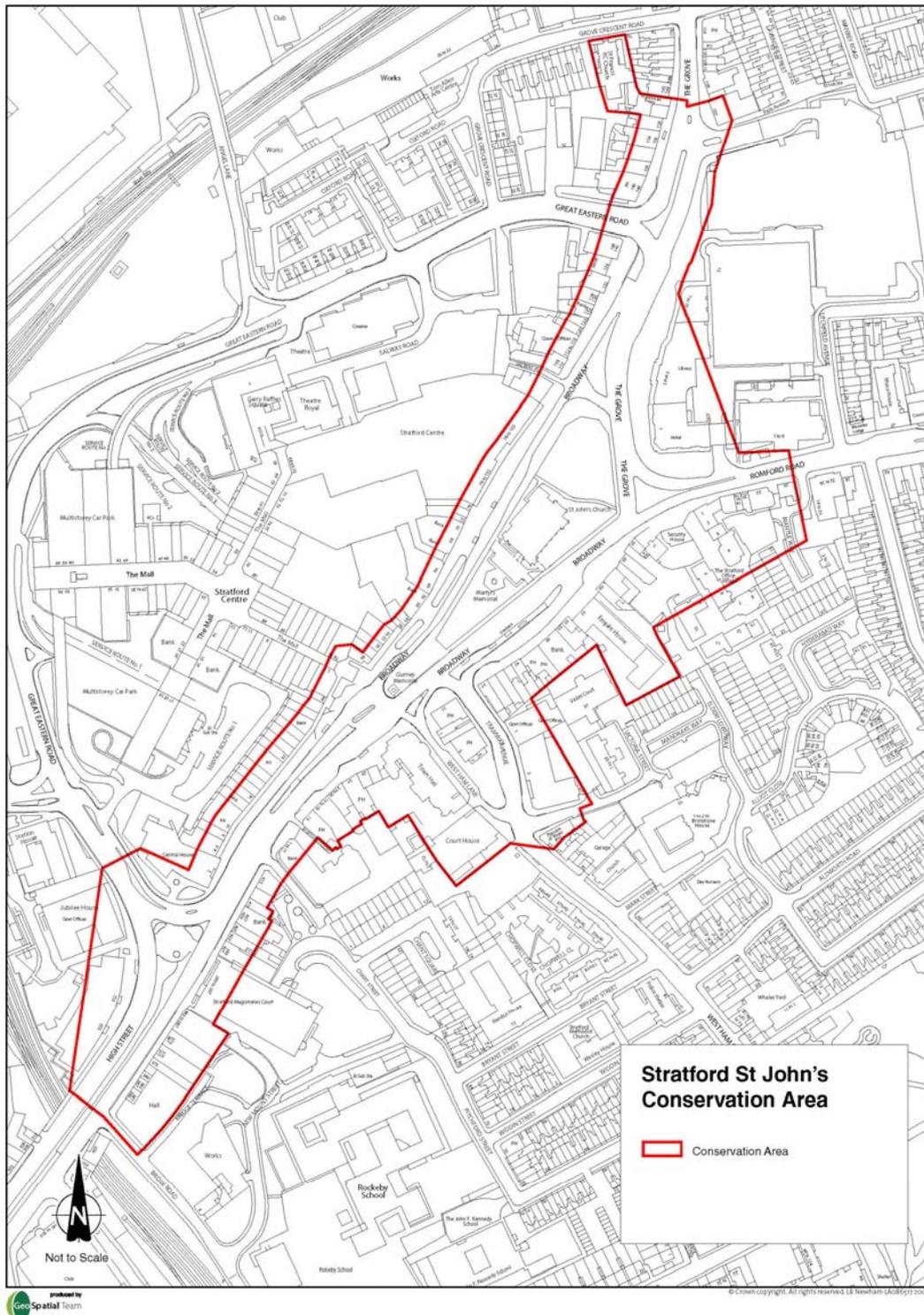


Figure 1

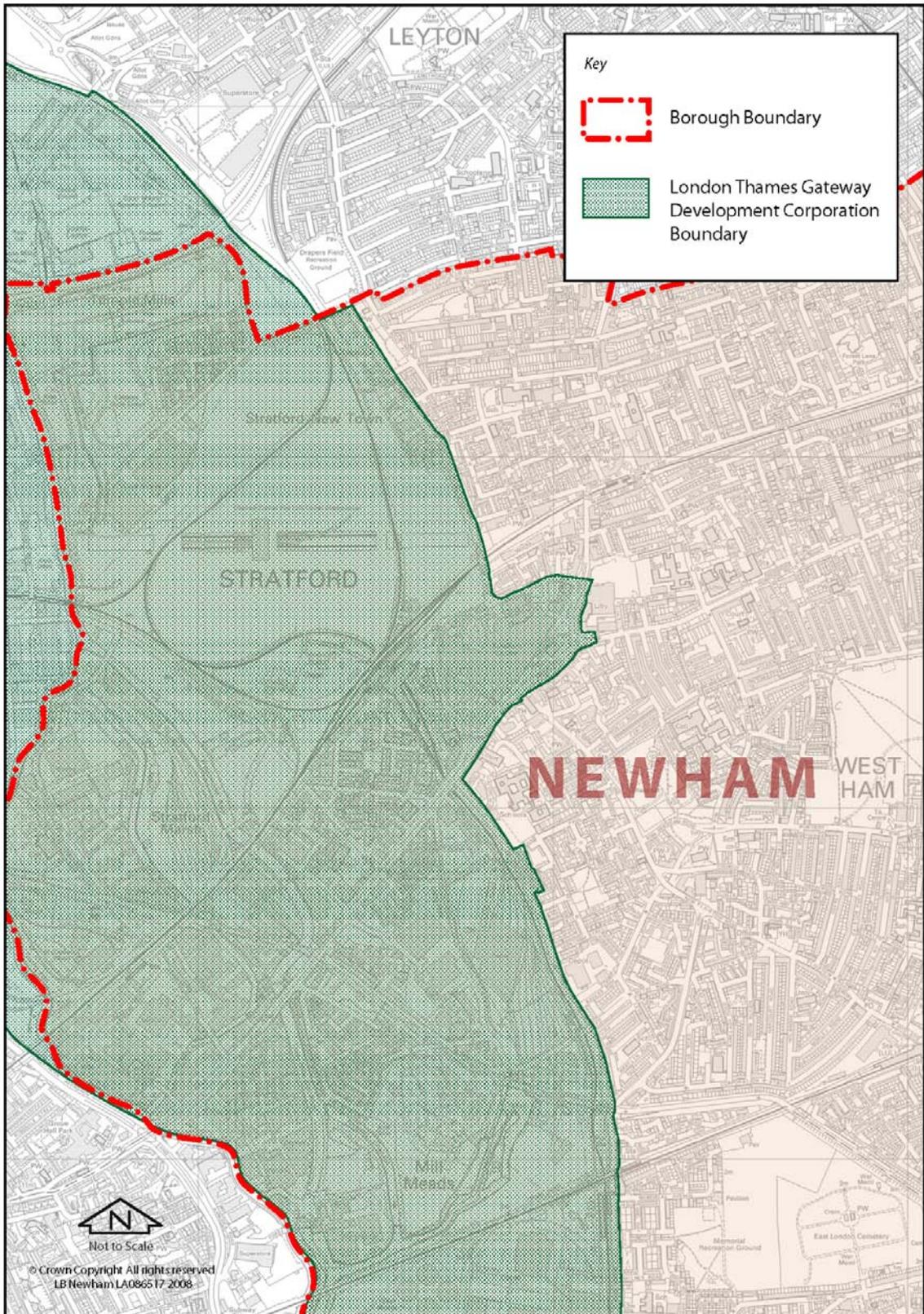


Figure 2. London Thames Gateway Development Corporation boundary within Newham

*Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 “Archaeology”* sets out the government’s policy on archaeological remains on land and how they should be preserved or recorded both in an urban setting and in the countryside.

*The Heritage White Paper of March 2007* sets out its proposals to reform heritage protection. Its core principles are as follows:

- Developing a unified approach to the historic environment;
- Maximising opportunities for community inclusion and involvement in its future; and
- Placing the historic environment at the heart of the planning system, playing a key role in supporting sustainable communities.

### Regional Policy

The principal regional policy is contained within the Mayor of London’s London Plan (Spatial Development Strategy). The Mayor undertakes to work with others to protect the historic environment (Policy 4B.10) and expects the Council to ensure conservation of historic assets is based on their special character (Policy 4B.11).

### Local Planning Policy

Current planning policy is set out in Newham’s Unitary Development Plan (Adopted June 2001, Saved from 27 September 2007 in accordance with direction from the Secretary of State). This is in the process of being replaced by a Local Development Framework. However the saved UDP policies supporting conservation continue to apply. The UDP states:

*“The Council considers conservation has an important contribution to make towards the future of Newham by protecting buildings which enhance the attractiveness of the borough as a place to live, visit and invest, thus supporting the regeneration process.”*

*“Conservation Areas provide a focus for civic pride and, by preserving part of the borough’s history, contribute to a sense of continuity and stability in the context of substantial physical and social change.”*

These beliefs underlie the Council’s approach to the conservation of Stratford St Johns. The following policies are particularly relevant to development in and around conservation areas in Newham.

*Policy EQ30: In considering development proposals in a conservation area, the planning authority will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of that area. Applicants will be required to provide sufficient information about their proposed development and its immediate setting to enable an assessment to be made of the potential effect of the proposal. In appropriate cases this may include the submission of design impact statements as part of the application.*

Policy EQ31: *There is a presumption in favour of the preservation of buildings which contribute positively to the character or appearance of a conservation area. Applications for conservation area consent for the demolition of buildings in a conservation area will be granted only when demolition and subsequent redevelopment of the site would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.*

Policy EQ33: *The removal of healthy trees in a conservation area will be resisted. Acceptable works will normally be restricted to judicious crown lifting and /or thinning. When removal is considered acceptable, replacements will normally be required. New development should be designed to ensure mature trees are retained and their growing conditions adequately protected.*

The UDP also includes policies (EQ 35-40) to safeguard listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments, and their settings. Policy EQ36 seeks to maintain the architectural and historic integrity of locally listed buildings.

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) covering the town centre and the Conservation Area is currently being prepared by the Council to inform planned redevelopment.

## SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The special interest of the Conservation Area is in the survival of its irregular, pre-industrial plan form, which forms a wishbone shape around the centrepiece of St John's Church and the trees in its churchyard. The Church is very much the focal point of the conservation area, terminating views into, and within it. Stratford Broadway is a wide thoroughfare which gives prominence to the buildings on each side as well as the landmarks in the middle. The south side of the Broadway as far as the High Street forms a sequence that is rich in architectural incident and contrast with Victorian commercial and civic buildings sitting side by side with earlier domestically scaled survivals. Stratford's townscape is bolstered by the prominence and quality of its nineteenth century landmarks, most notably St John's Church, the Old Town Hall, the old Magistrates Court and no.63 Broadway. The impact of Stratford's historic development is often still visible where new there are almost continuous building frontages mostly built up against the pavement on much older plots. In recent years the centre of Stratford has experienced much change and rebuilding, particularly on the north west side of the Broadway and there is an almost continuous flow of traffic, but the town centre has retained its distinctive identity and vitality.



*Figure 3*

Stratford St Johns Conservation Area lies at the very heart of Stratford in north-west Newham. It is located eight kilometres north east of the City of London on land that rises gently from the River Lea to the west and the Thames to the south. Stratford has many positive features as a place in which to live work and invest. These are as follows:

- It is an area of very substantial inward investment and regeneration. Stratford City, a comprehensive, mixed use development is currently underway to the north east of the existing town centre. Stratford will also be the focus for the development of the Olympic Games site as London becomes the host city in 2012.
- Stratford's regeneration potential is greatly assisted by excellent transport connections and its strategic location within London and the Thames Gateway. Stratford has a regional bus and rail station served by a total of six rail and underground lines. It will also benefit from a direct connection with mainland Europe thanks to a soon to be completed International Railway Station on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Extension. Accessibility will be further enhanced by improvements to the DLR with better services from Stratford to Canning Town. Stratford will also be a station on the recently agreed Crossrail link.
- It has a vibrant centre with a good range of facilities and services which are set for further improvement, as well as a multicultural profile and an increasingly more affluent population.

## GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The land of Newham rises very gradually from the Thames in the south and the Lea in the east to a height of about 15 metres in the north of the Borough. Stratford is located on the higher, drier land east of the Lea Valley. The underlying drift geology of the gravel terrace to the east of Stratford and the alluvium of the Lea Valley to the west dictated the forms of human occupation in the prehistoric periods and later.

The flat landscape means there is very little variation in townscape resulting from topographical changes. However, long views are easily afforded.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

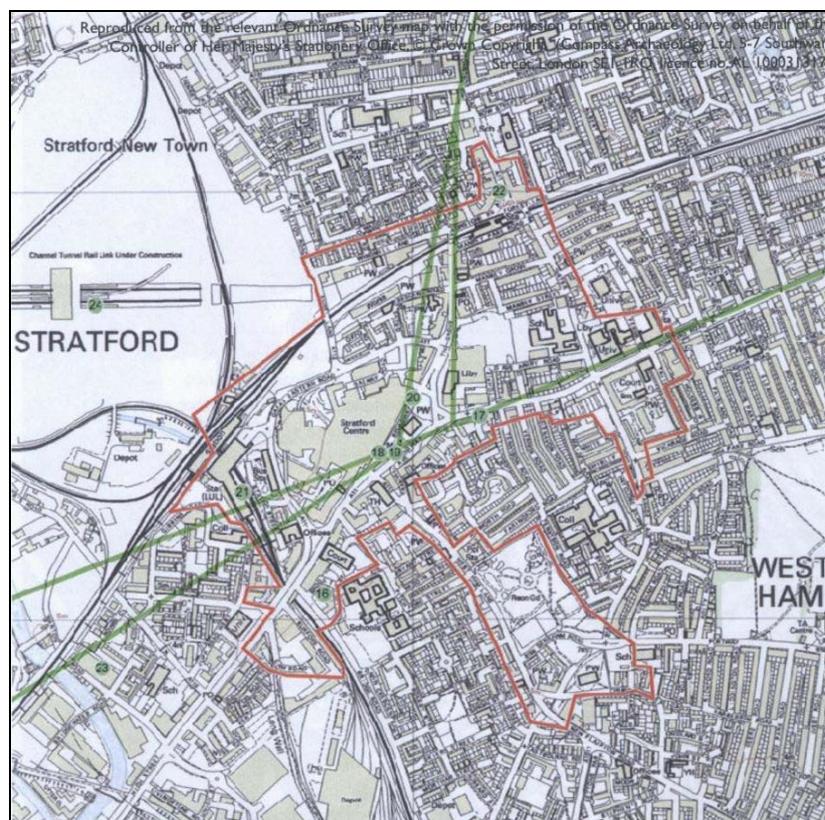


Figure 4. Map of the Archaeological Study Area. Possible routes of Roman roads are indicated by the green lines. The green dots indicate Roman sites.

To inform the Conservation Area Appraisal and archaeological desk-based assessment has been carried out. The study area for the assessment, shown in Figure 4, was wider than the Conservation Area and includes the wider settlement cores of Stratford Town and West Ham village. It draws upon information in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record and a selective range of maps, printed sources and manuscripts. The following provides a summary of the assessment's findings.

Artefacts have been discovered in the vicinity dating from the Palaeolithic period onwards with evidence of settlements along the edge of the gravel terrace from the Bronze and Iron Ages.

The Romans built a road across the Lea Valley on a course which is now uncertain, but probably ran to the north of the line of Stratford High Street. Traces of Roman settlement have been found to the north and south of the road and more recently a cremation cemetery near one of the projected alignments.

The Saxons continued to use the Roman route across the Lea valley and also began to reclaim its marshlands by digging water channels. In the early 12<sup>th</sup> century Queen Matilda established a new route across the valley on a causeway and stone bridges, on the line of the High Street. Stratford Langthorne Abbey was the dominant landowner in the area during the medieval period. The initial node of settlement was at West Ham; Stratford developed after the new crossing had been built. Between the two settlements was a late medieval house called Senables. Late medieval Stratford was notable for its tide mills and cattle grazing.

In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century Stratford expanded into new hamlets at Maryland Point and Stratford Green. By this time it was known for its textile trades.

Stratford grew as a residential town in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and much more rapidly as an industrial town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Most of the industrial area lay to the west of Stratford St Johns and to the North West the railway works were active from 1847 to 1963. Most of the study area remained residential with small industries, inns and commercial premises into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. St Johns Church was built at its centre in 1834.

The potential archaeological resource remaining buried in the study area is summarised below. It is beyond the scope of the assessment to consider the degree to which this resource may have been truncated by modern developments in particular localities. This will be one of the functions of individual desk based assessments required for sites in advance of any proposed redevelopment.

Scattered finds of the earlier prehistoric periods may be found throughout the study area. However, any contribution to knowledge for these periods would be of regional significance.

Stratford is a likely location for Bronze Age settlement on the edge of the gravel terrace opposite a westward meander of the River Lea. Indeed traces of settlement have already been found at Stratford Market Depot to the south west and Warton Road to the west. Evidence for such settlement has so far proved elusive or ephemeral in the lower Thames area, and the identification of any remains are likely to be of regional significance. These settlement areas are likely to have had successors in the Iron Age.

Parts of the Roman Road from London to Colchester and Great Dunmow certainly underlie the study area. Sections of the buried road surface have been found in the past but the courses of the roads are still uncertain. As portions of the roads are probably on the same alignment as modern streets, there is likely to be severe damage from service trenches. It is also probable that there was a Roman roadside settlement at the road junction on the site of Stratford served

by the recently discovered cemetery at Warton Road. Other Roman artefacts are likely to be found scattered throughout the study area. Discoveries related to the roads may be regarded as of regional significance, as would any evidence for the continued use of the roads and settlements into the Saxon period.

Stratford has a Saxon name, but the date location and extent of the settlement there are unknown. The location of initial Saxon and early medieval settlement is more likely to be found at West Ham than Stratford itself. Evidence for Saxon occupation at either place would be of local or regional significance. Evidence of the maintenance of the Channelsea watercourse at the west end of the study area may well be found from these same periods.

The opportunity to attach some certain dates to the stages of marshland reclamation in the Lea valley would be of regional significance. Most of the historic road lines in Stratford and West Ham have been preserved in spite of modern developments. The 12<sup>th</sup> century bridge over the Channelsea River on the High Street at the west end of the study area retains some elements of its medieval structure. As this is one of the earliest stone bridges in the country it remains are of national significance.

Buried evidence of medieval and early modern settlement can be expected to be found in the central part of the study area and its southern tip. This will probably include slaughter houses for cattle and tanning pits. This evidence would be of local importance.

The late medieval house site of Senables may well survive on the east side of West Ham Lane beneath the recreation ground. Should any parts of the complex survive they would be comparable to sites such as the excavated moated manor house at Low Hall in Walthamstow and therefore be of regional significance.

Evidence of settlement from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards will probably be found at Maryland point and on the north side of Stratford Green, where contemporary gravel pits and ponds are also likely to be encountered. These remains may be regarded as of local significance.

Remains of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century housing and commercial premises may be found throughout the study area. Some industrial remains may also survive at the west end of the study area including 18<sup>th</sup> century calico works and 19<sup>th</sup> century dyeworks. These may be regarded as of local significance.

The report concludes that parts of the study area have the potential to contain buried archaeological deposits, stratigraphic features, finds or environmental materials.

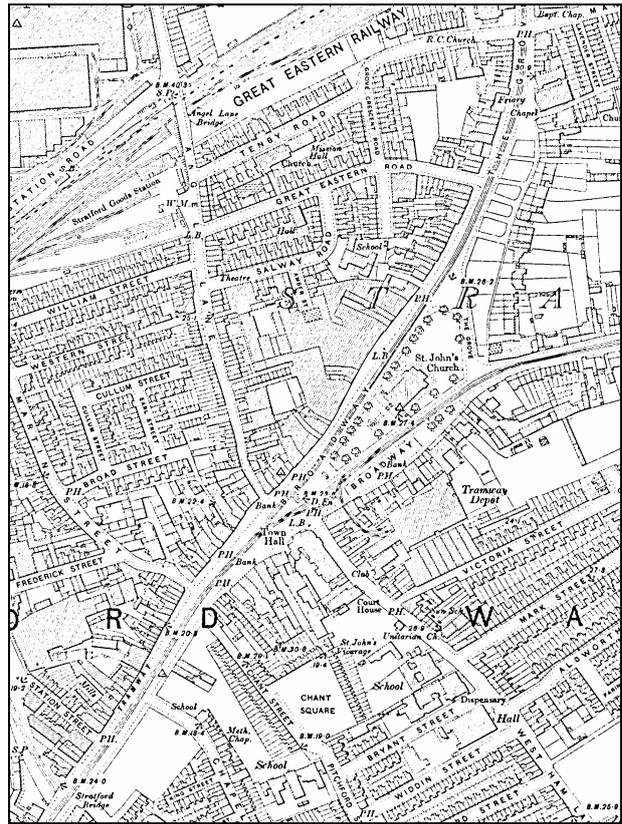
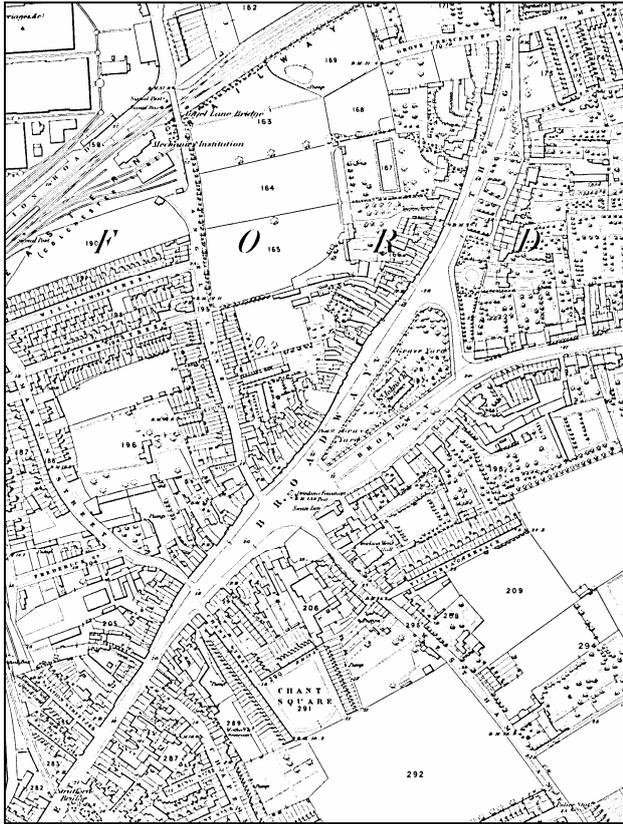
MAPPED HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF STRATFORD



Figure 5. John Rocque, 1746



Figure 6. John Wyld, 1848



Figures 7 and 8. Ordnance Survey 1867 (left) and 1893 (right)

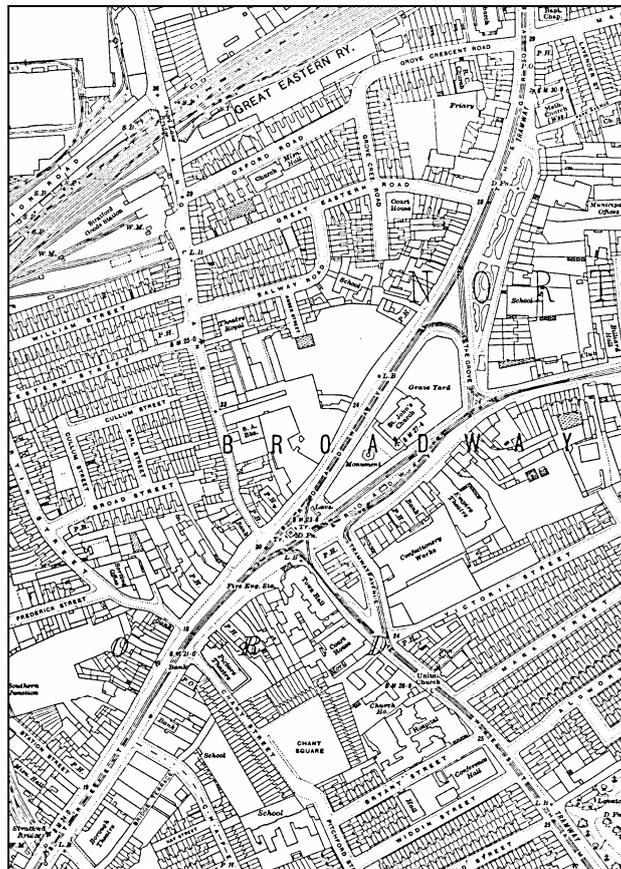


Figure 9. Ordnance Survey 1914

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Stratford's history is most tangible in its 19<sup>th</sup> century institutions such as St Johns Church and the Old Town Hall. However, its origins are much deeper as a market town and trading post with origins reaching back before the Roman period.

Stratford's name is first recorded in the eleventh century and reflects its position as a convenient fording place on a Roman road over the River Lea. The Roman Road from London to Colchester crossed the Lea at this point, starting the areas two thousand year association with trade and transport.

In the decades after the Norman conquest, the Domesday Book records that there were eight mills in the Manor of [West] Ham and a population of 130 families (c.550 people), making it a sizeable village for the time. A small settlement grew up around All Saints Church in the Parish of West Ham. 1135, shortly after the building of the Bow Bridge, the Cistercian monks founded Langthorne Abbey which soon prospered from its position on the edge of London. The Victorian Abbey Mills pumping station, which opened in 1868 across the Lea, takes its name from the medieval foundation. The monastery was dissolved in 1538 and was followed by a time of religious upheaval; in 1555 eighteen Protestants are believed to have been burnt at Bow and at Stratford Green.

By 1670 Stratford Ward had 179 houses and was the largest of the three wards in the parish of West Ham. Stratford became something of a rural retreat for prosperous city merchants, particularly around Maryland, which is thought to take its name from a house built by an English merchant recently returned from the American colony. Stratford was also a strategic gateway to London and John Rocque's map of 1745 shows an almost continuous line of development from the Lea to Stratford Broadway. The presence of a turnpike gate at the Stratford end of Bow Bridge may have encouraged inns and hostelries to flourish, forming a resting point outside the city. The Angel, the Cart and Horses and the King of Prussia (below) in were all recorded in 1765.

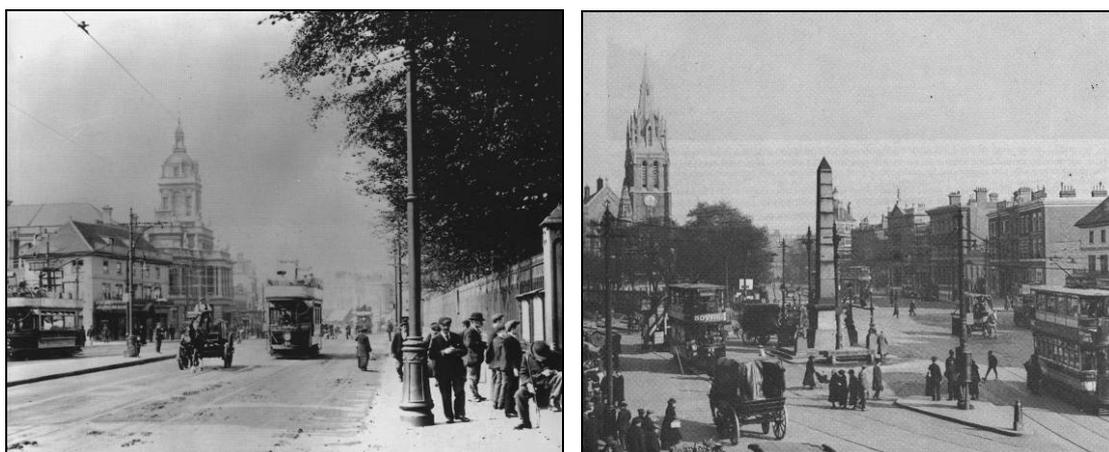


The Lea valley itself was by this time the repository of many industries and manufactories, some of them noxious and noisy. Milling, fulling, gunpowder manufacture and textiles, including silk weaving and calico dying were all to be found at Stratford. Most notable perhaps was the Bow Porcelain factory on the High Street, which moved from Bow in 1744 to Stratford High Street, west of Marshgate Lane.

Despite these first signs of urbanism, Stratford's growth was modest until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and still had the common at Stratford Green to the east of the settlement. The railway era and the expansion of the London docks were the catalyst for change, driven by a plentiful supply of cheap land and an untapped workforce. The arrival of the Eastern Counties Railway (later the Great Eastern) reached Stratford in 1839 and was extended to Brentwood and Colchester. In 1847 the company made Stratford its main works for loco and carriage making and repairs, a role it maintained for more than a century. Freight and marshalling yards were added to the Temple Mill works, as well as houses for the growing community of railway workers. These houses were first named Hudson Town, after Easterns 'Railway King' George Hudson, before coming Stratford New Town. At its peak the Stratford railway works covered 78 acres and employed more than 6000 workers.

The North Woolwich Land Company built speculative housing in the area from 1843 and the construction of the Royal Docks between 1855 and 1880 gave a huge impetus to the area. Between 1840 and 1914 over 40,000 houses were built in West Ham, mainly for letting to working class tenants. These were mostly two storey terraces or pairs of dwellings.

As Stratford grew, a number of civic and community institutions were established in the area. The first and most prominent of these was St Johns Church, built in 1834 on the old green at Stratford Broadway, at the Apex of Romford Road and the Grove. At first the church was a Chapel of Ease within the Parish of West Ham but it soon received independent parish status.



*Stratford Broadway in 1905 (left) and 1925 (right).*

Stratford Town Hall opened in 1869 and was enlarged in 1885 to incorporate a courthouse. A year later West Ham became a municipal borough and Stratford Town Hall was adopted as its headquarters. The final flourish of building was

marked by two theatres, the Borough Theatre in the High Street (below) – with 3,000 seats, the largest in Essex – and the Theatre Royal.



By the end of the nineteenth century, many traders had relocated from the High Street to Angel Lane and especially to Stratford Broadway, which had become an important shopping centre with three department stores: Roberts, Boardman's and the Co-operative Stores. Meanwhile the High Street was given over to industrial uses. A tram terminus was situated in the Broadway and Stratford was a lively bustling community.



*The North West side of the Broadway in 1925 (above), and present day (below).*



With little land left for building, Stratford's growth slowed in the first decades of the twentieth century and the area declined after the second world war, when enemy action and longer term structural changes had a profound effect on its fortunes. The railway works, which had long suffered from flooding, closed in 1963 and the dock were transformed by contained freight and a shift to the Thames estuary.

In the town centre a new Co-op was built next to St John's Church and in the 1970's the biggest development for a century took place with a new shopping centre, office towers and a multi-storey car park, intended to give a new heart to the town. Boardman's store was demolished and replaced shortly before the designation of the conservation area in 1984. Since that time the pace of change within the Conservation Area has been relatively slow, with the main changes taking place on the fringes; a new library, a large supermarket and the establishment of Gerry Raffles Square as the town's cultural focus. Most recently, the railway station has been comprehensively rebuilt and remodelled. Extensive development is now taking place along Stratford High Street.

The forthcoming Stratford City development and the Olympics in 2012 are heralding new pressures for development in Stratford, and the sensitive consideration of role of the historic fabric of Stratford is crucial at this defining point in the future of the town.

# SPATIAL ANALYSIS

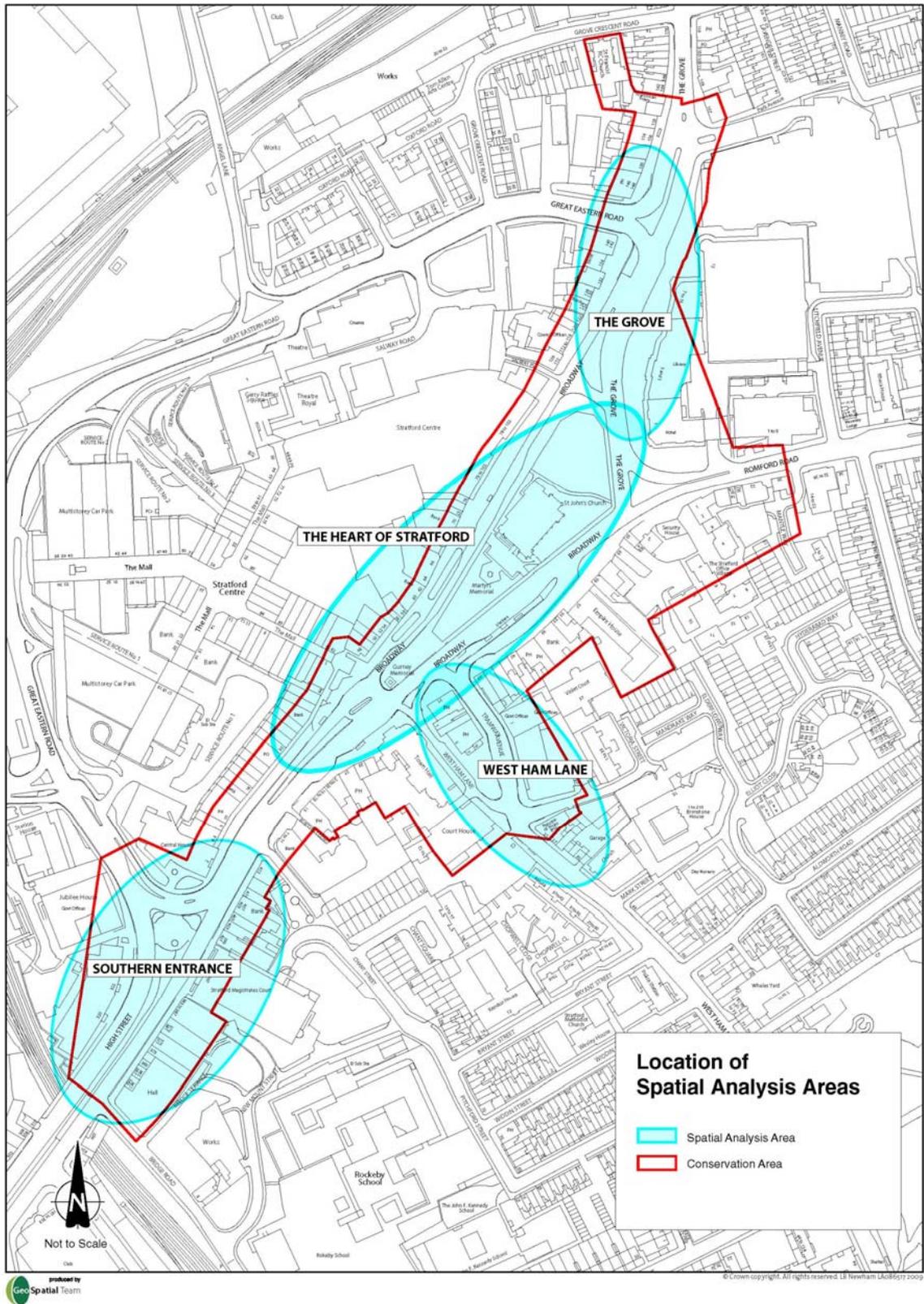


Figure 10

## The Heart of Stratford

The heart of Stratford is marked by St John's Church which sits in the centre of a large space at the apex of the wishbone pattern formed by the convergence of the Broadway, the Grove and Romford Road. St John's Churchyard is an attractive green oasis in the centre of this large space. Numerous mature trees help to soften the urban forms and provide shade and a pleasant setting. Continuous frontages of three to four storeys to the south east and north west enclose and define the central space and contribute to the sense of arrival. On the south east side of the Broadway in particular the buildings that address this space are of architectural and historic merit, and the surviving fine grain of this frontage and the slight variation in the rooflines helps to establish a strong sense of place at the centre of the Conservation Area. Forming the western edge of this space is the former Co-op building which has a wide deep plan that contrasts with historic grain elsewhere in the Conservation Area. It also lacks the roofline interest of the east side and to some extent the buildings immediately to the north, which although of a similar period as the Co-op building, retain the narrow plots of the historic grain. Further to the south on the west side of the Broadway the building heights on the main frontage, at two storeys, are insufficient to provide adequate enclosure to such a wide space and the sense of place diminishes. The junctions and roads within this space are busy with traffic, which has become overly dominant. This severs the central space and prohibits the full integration of the centre as a place one can fully enjoy. Nevertheless there is sufficient character in the buildings and the potential to resolve this.

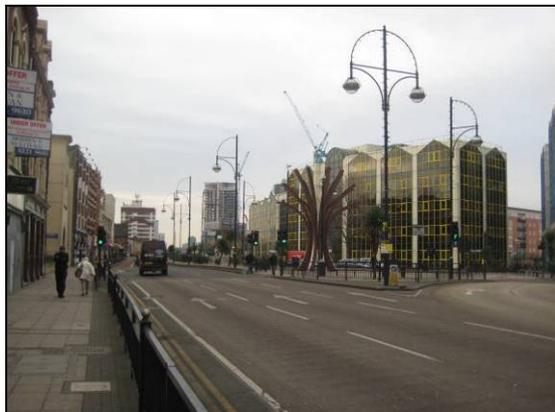
## The Southern Entrance



The Railway bridge over the Stratford to North Woolwich line defines the southern boundary of the conservation area. As the road gently rises over the railway line views north open up into the Conservation area. The impact of the scale and style of any new development on this view should be very carefully considered. At the junction of the Broadway/High Street and Great Eastern Road the street widens and is enclosed on three sides. To the south east is a terrace of high quality, highly individual buildings of three to four storeys. To the west are a group of late 20<sup>th</sup> century office buildings that are rather bland and monotonous that make no reference to the grain or character of the High Street. The quality of this 'arrival' space into the conservation area is undermined by these buildings as well as the lack of height (and resultant lack

of enclosure) of the block to the north which forms the southernmost tip of the Stratford Island site. There is the opportunity for greater height on this site but the effect of any such development on key views into and within the Conservation Area require careful consideration. The impact of traffic in this area is particularly dominant with six lanes on the High Street and further undermines the quality of this space. Within the centre of the space is sculpture that hints at Stratford's connections with the railway. This is a minor landmark but sits on an island severed by 3 lanes of traffic on all sides. The pedestrian experience in this area is poor, particularly on the south east side of the High Street, with narrow footways defined by almost continuous guard railings. There is potential to improve the pedestrian experience in this area by:

- Widening the footways;
- Reducing traffic speeds;
- Removing unnecessary guard railings;
- Increasing the number of crossing points;
- Rationalising paving; and
- Introducing planting.



### West Ham Lane



At the junction of the Broadway and West Ham Lane and Tramway Avenue a space is formed within which sits the former Swan PH and the Queens Head PH. This space is enclosed to the south by the Town Hall and the former Magistrates Court. To the north is a late 20<sup>th</sup> century office building of 4 storeys that has a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The quality of this space is undermined by the dominance of traffic to a

lesser degree (West Ham Lane only allows buses one way) and has the potential to significantly improve. Active uses within the former Magistrates Court and the building to the west of this space would help to achieve this.

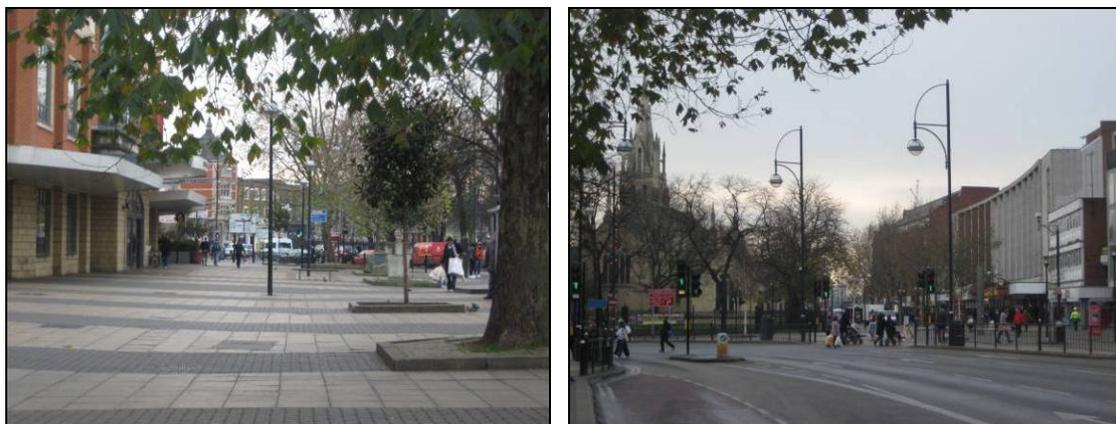
### The Grove

The Grove was once lined with a number of substantial private residences and had formal gardens laid out on the eastern side with mature trees.



The eastern side of the Grove has been almost continually redeveloped since the Second World War. The scale of the supermarket, library and hotel, provide little enclosure to this relatively wide space. The car park at Morrison's supermarket is a large and visually unsatisfactory break in the townscape.

Recent improvements at the southernmost point of the Grove have provided more space for pedestrians, although the design of the public realm is somewhat confused and messy. A marginal increase in the heights of buildings to either side of this space could help reinforce a sense of enclosure without affecting the dominance of the church. Traffic calming measures and further activity generating uses adjacent to this space could improve its attractiveness as a place to linger. The introduction of further tree planting would enhance the quality of the space and would be represent a return to the former leafy character of the Grove.



## KEY VIEWS

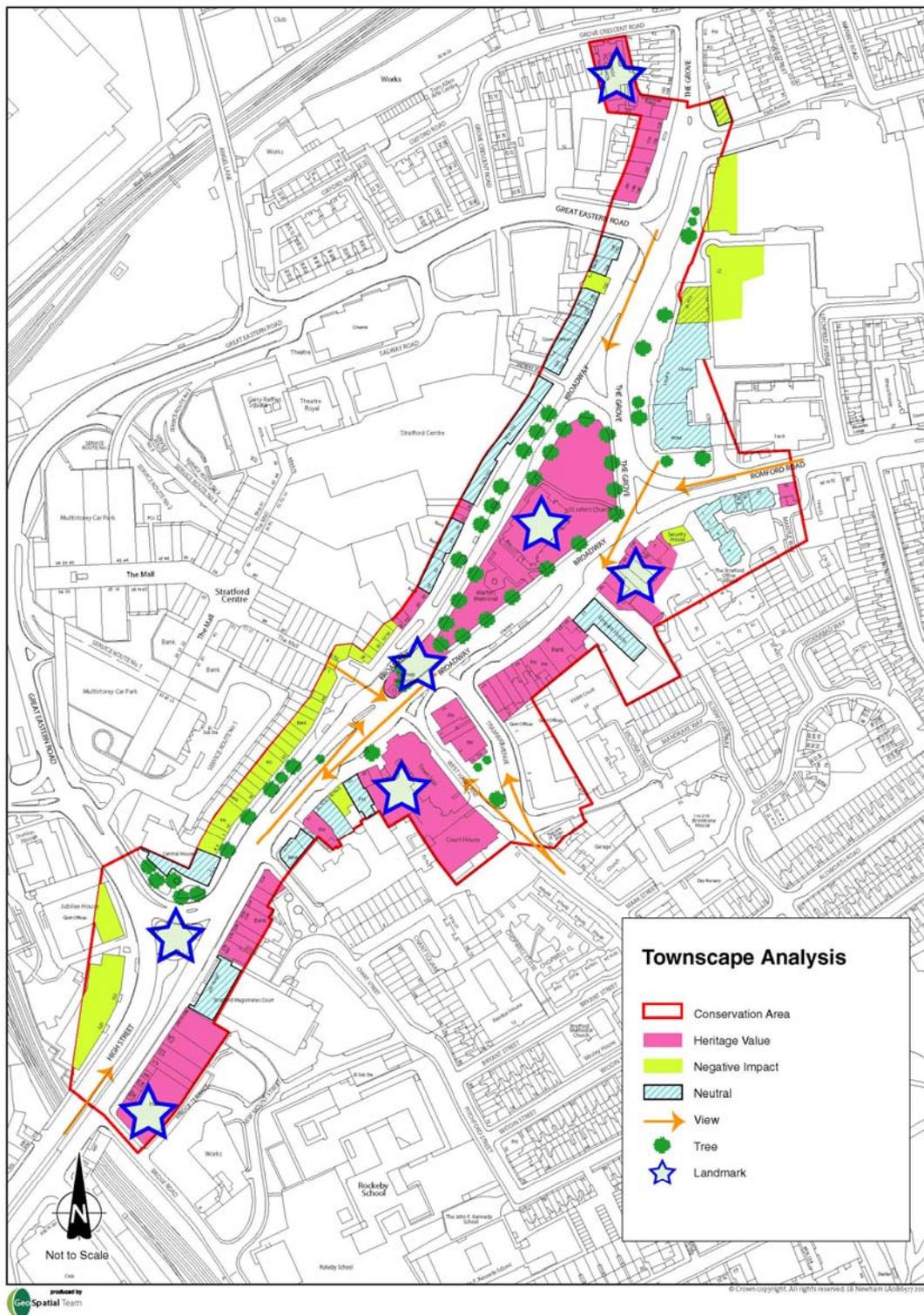


Figure 11

The principal historic landmarks in the Conservation Area are St Johns Church and spire, the tower and cupola of the Old Town Hall, the Gurney memorial and the building at 63 Broadway. As a result of the almost continuously built up frontages, views into and within the Conservation Area are afforded primarily along the transport corridors. Key views are indicated on Figure 11. St Johns

church dominates the view north east from within the Conservation Area along the Broadway, as well as into the Conservation Area from the east along Romford Road, and in the approach from the north along the Grove. These views, which are terminated by the Church at its centre, epitomize the character of the Conservation Area and should be preserved. New development that undermines the church and spire as the focal points of these key views will be resisted. The view into the Conservation Area along West Ham Lane is framed by the old Magistrates Court and Old Town Hall, and the former Swan PH. As one enters the Conservation Area from the Stratford Centre the view is dominated by the Old Town Hall. In long views all of the historic buildings are dwarfed by office blocks associated with the 1970's Stratford Centre shopping development.



*The view north east along Stratford Broadway is dominated by the tower and spire of St John's Church. The Gurney memorial is in the foreground. The tall domed cupola of the Old Town Hall is visible in the right of the picture.*



*The view west along Romford Road, with the church at the centre. The distinctive roofline and timber turret of 63 the Broadway can be seen in the left of the picture.*



*Looking south from the Grove towards St John's Church.*



*Stratford Town Hall from the exit of the Stratford Centre.*

## CHARACTER ANALYSIS BY AREA

This section describes the merit, issues and potential for enhancement of each area in the centre. Locations are noted on the map below (figure 12.)

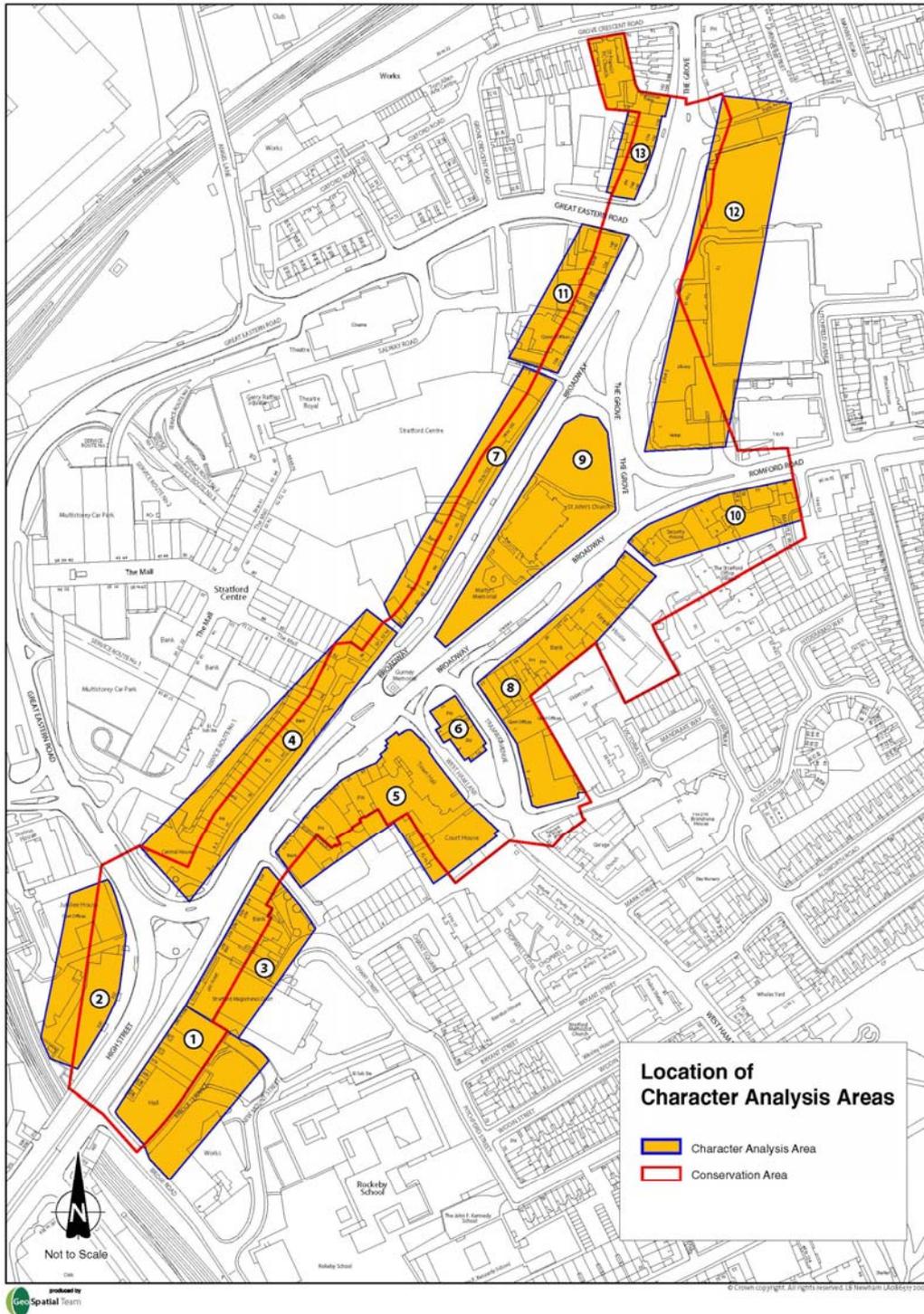


Figure 12

## Area 1



On the south east side of the High Street is a consistently rewarding group of buildings of great diversity and visual interest. These buildings are of three and four storeys on irregular plots, with the consistent vertical emphasis helping to lend a sense of unity to the group which is terminated at the southern end by the strong 1930's façade of the Rex, characteristic of interwar cinema design. The curved frontage provides strong corner termination. The group exhibit a diverse range of materials which contribute to their visual richness. These include red brick, stone, render, terracotta and painted ornamentation. These buildings are a reminder of Stratford's commercial heyday in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.



## Area 2

Opposite is a group of late 20<sup>th</sup> century offices of four, five and six storeys which are used as offices. They are of flat fronted curtain wall construction with vertical bay rising to false gables. These buildings are of limited architectural interest and make a negative contribution to the conservation area. Although the building line and scale is generally appropriate and the strident yellow and blue palette makes the buildings stand out, they lack attention to the human scale and there are no local references or any evident attempt to respect the character of Stratford High Street. The redevelopment or refurbishment of this site could significantly enhance the Conservation Area.



## Area 3



This group of buildings with irregular forms and employing a wide variety of materials emphasise the variety in plot sizes and the incremental growth and rebuilding of the High Street. They have a high group value and complexity that surpasses the interest of the individual buildings and add to the visual richness of the Conservation Area. The Magistrates Court breaks the building line by being set back from the street and is much wider than its neighbours.



#### Area 4

The prevailing scale of the Stratford Centre is two storey, terminated at the southern tip by Central House (Jacksons Furnishings) and punctuated by the multi storey offices of 44 Broadway. The dark grey brick buildings of the Stratford Centre have an irregular rhythm to break down scale and the low roof line, colonnade and first floor windows lend the Stratford Centre its strong horizontal emphasis. It is too low for the width and character of the Broadway.



This area has been entirely redeveloped in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when a number of fine Victorian buildings were swept away to make way for the new shopping centre. However, there is some evidence of the former buildings in the gently irregular form of the street. Central House is characteristic of the post war period. It is a white masonry building with infill spandrel pale green in imitation of Burlington slate and thin double height pilasters. 44 Broadway is a local

landmark by virtue of its height and bulk. There is an opportunity for redevelopment or refurbishment to provide a stronger frontage with the scale and frequency of buildings more akin to those on the facing southern side.

### Area 5



The Italianate Old Town Hall dominates this group and is of a scale and character of its own. It has many West Ham historical connections, is architecturally distinguished and its domed cupola is a local landmark. The statues and parapet features are of particular importance to the special interest of the building. The Town Hall's neighbours are predominantly three storey rising to four at Ye Olde Black Bull. The Natwest Bank is four storeys plus a mansard roof. There are a wide variety of styles and materials within the group. Narrow plot sizes ensure that there is a visual richness. The Locally Listed Ye Olde Black Bull is a characteristic late Victorian Pub and has recently been refurbished. The Black Bull sculpture on this building contributes to local distinctiveness as does the raised stone plaque on the former fire station. To the rear of the Old Town Hall on West Ham Lane is the Grade II listed Old Magistrates Court. This 3 storey building of limestone and London stock brick is Italianate in style and is one of a group of valuable civic buildings but has been neglected and is currently on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk Register. New uses within, and refurbishment of the Old Magistrates Court would greatly benefit the building and this part of the Conservation Area. A recent fire has resulted in an unsightly gap in the street scene at the centre of this group. An opportunity exists for a new building on this site that respects the scale, grain and proportions of the rest of this group.



## Area 6



This is an island site that lies between West Ham Lane and Tramway Avenue. The recently restored former Swan public house (rebuilt in 1925) fronts onto the Broadway. It has a strong neo-Georgian façade and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Its tall chimney stacks add variety and interest to the skyline. Immediately to the rear of the former Swan is the recently restored 3 storey amusement arcade with Italianate detail including wrought ironwork, blind boxes, pilasters, bracketed cornice and hood mould. The adjacent Café Mondo is a plain 3 storey, 19<sup>th</sup> century building, and the lively ground floor use makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. To the rear of these buildings is the attractive Queens Head pub which at two storeys, is of a contrasting scale.



## Area 7





This block forms an informal and irregular sequence of commercial buildings including probable former houses at 72-76 Broadway. Heights range between two and five storeys. 56-62 Broadway (built c1900 for Thomas and Williams, drapers) is a distinctive building of redbrick with limestone dressings and timber windows. It is a local landmark and along with 72-76 Broadway it is a significant survivor and a reminder of the old town centre. A red brick building with a recessed attic storey occupies the site of the former Boardman's Department Store. Its wide front has been divided into bays in a reasonably successful attempt to relate to the finer grain of the older buildings. It has a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. No 78-102 Broadway is a 1950's building, the former Co-op department store. It has a wide deep plan that contrasts with the historic grain. Despite its bulk it makes a conscious attempt to provide a vertical rhythm through the sequence of canted double height fins above the ground floor. It is an interesting building and the style and materials (brick/render/terrazzo panelling) are of its period but it lacks the roofline interest, and richness and detail of older parts of the Conservation Area. There is the potential to improve the shopfronts and signage.

### Area 8

This is a valuable group of buildings that form an attractive setting to St John's Church. Predominantly 3 storeys of varying scale and grandeur, with the exception of the two storey King Edward VII public house. The incidental drop in scale here contributes to the visual richness as does the slight variation in building line and attractive individual detailing. Chimneys survive well and can be seen against the skyline from several positions. There is the opportunity to improve the modern shopfronts and remove excessive signage that exist on some of the buildings within this group. No.63 Broadway is a four storey Victorian tower with an eclectic composition that terminates the group to the north. This building has landmark qualities due to its scale in relation to adjacent buildings and its lively silhouette. At the centre of the group is Empire House, a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century frame construction with glass and spandrels above the ground floor that has a neutral to negative impact on the Conservation Area. Listed buildings within this group include no.49 Broadway, a High Victorian former bank and the King Edward VII pub. Formerly known as the King of Prussia, up until the outbreak of the First World War, this was built in the early eighteenth century and is one of the earliest and most significant surviving buildings in Stratford. To the south of the King Edward VII pub is an attractive terrace of former townhouses with a moulded stucco cornice. This

terrace retains most of its original architectural features although, with the exception of no.37 Broadway, shopfronts have replaced the original features of these houses at ground floor level. To the rear of this terrace, fronting onto Tramway Avenue, are two plain buildings of three and four storeys. They have symmetrical facades with classical references such as pilasters and pediments. They have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area. The name of this street and its form are a reminder of its origins as the tramway terminus at the turn of the twentieth century.



## Area 9

The centre of the Conservation Area is occupied by the grade II listed St John's Church. Its materials, tall tower and spire, trees and churchyard enclosed by distinctive iron railings are the defining feature of the Conservation Area. Its form and setting are a welcome and notable contrast to the urban setting. The character and views of the church make an important impact on the perceived image of Stratford. It has become somewhat cut off and difficult to reach from the surrounding space to the south east due to the growing dominance of vehicular traffic. New public realm works should seek to reunite these spaces. The Martyrs Memorial sits to the south of the church within the churchyard.



## Area 10

The buildings on the south side of Romford Road form a mainly fine grained sequence, with a range of styles and materials that contribute to a varied townscape. The Old Dispensary is a local landmark and one of the earliest buildings remaining in Newham. This two storey plus attic weatherboarded building with a clay tile roof is a reminder of the Essex vernacular and makes an important contribution to the local distinctiveness of the Conservation Area. The chimneys and dormers provide additional roof line interest. 14-22 Romford Road form a group of modern buildings that have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area due to their scale, form and materials, and the fine grain of the building plots. The narrow dormers of no.14 add variety and interest at roof level. The building line begins to taper back at the Stratford Village office development. St John's House (no.2 Romford Road) is a grade II listed building that dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is built of yellow stock brick with stucco dressings and has a Doric porch to the central bay. This building is set back with a generous forecourt, and a reminder of the former residential character of

this part of the conservation area. Excessive signage and advertising detract from the special character of this building and the Conservation Area. 65 Broadway adjacent also has unattractive signage. Both these properties are currently the subject of enforcement action. Adjacent to St John's House to the north west is Security House, a mid 20<sup>th</sup> building. It has an awkward relationship with the street and the buildings to either side as a result of its angled building line.



## Area 11

This group of buildings on the west side of the Grove are a collection of entirely 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings. Individually the buildings are of no heritage value but they serve as a reminder of their much older plots due to the fine grain here. The building materials are very mixed different types and shades of brick and render, precast aggregate finish panels and timber. They have modern plastic fascias and a mix of fenestration. The newest building, the Q Building on the corner of Salway Place has the strongest individual character and bends on plan to follow the line of the old street. These buildings front onto the wide space of the Grove and there is the potential for a marginal increase in the heights that could help reinforce a sense of enclosure here without affecting the dominance of the church. There is also potential to enhance the quality of building frontages and shopfronts.



## Area 12



On the opposite (east) side of the Grove is a late 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial development consisting of a supermarket and car park, a library, hotel and restaurant. These are flat roofed buildings with a deep plan, of two storeys, rising to four at the hotel on the corner of Romford Road. Between the library and the supermarket the building line steps back to create a more generous public area but the lack of active frontages and the northerly aspect result in an unwelcoming and underused space. These buildings are of little architectural distinction and are at odds with the historic fine grained development of most of the Conservation Area. The open car park severs the northern part of the Grove from the rest of the town centre and provides no enclosure or active frontage to the street. The low commercial buildings are of insufficient height to provide adequate enclosure to the wide space of the Grove, perhaps with the exception of the Hotel at the southern end of the group. There may be an opportunity to develop the car park to re-establish the building line and create an active street frontage. There are a number of mature and semi mature trees that line the Grove and are of high amenity value. To the north of the entrance to the supermarket car park, the domestic grain is preserved in the narrow plots but the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century building is of little intrinsic value to the Conservation Area.

## Area 13



The locally listed Franciscan Friary dominates this group on the east side of the Grove, north of its junction with Great Eastern Road. It has local landmark qualities due to its scale relative to adjacent buildings and its distinctive roofline and details which includes a carved masonry monk on the front elevation. It is of group value with the early 19<sup>th</sup> century terrace of houses immediately to the north (just outside the Conservation Area) and St Francis Roman Catholic Church in Grove Crescent Rd. To the south of the Friary is a three storey terrace. Historically these are of special interest, as they were originally townhouses with long front gardens. Shops were later built over the front gardens creating 'bungalow' shops. The frontages have now been rendered over and much of the original detailing lost. The profusion of signage detracts from the appearance of the Conservation Area. The fine grain of the building plots has become hidden by shop fronts which span across two or more plots. The opportunity exists to enhance the building frontages and shop fronts here. St Francis Roman Catholic Church fronts onto Grove Crescent Rd and defines the northern boundary of the Conservation Area. This locally listed building is a late 19<sup>th</sup> century church with a classical features and a slender spire. The church makes a positive contribution to the character of the area and is a local landmark.

## PUBLIC REALM

The streets and spaces of the St Johns Conservation Area are a key part of its historic value. The wishbone structure of the routes is a defining feature.

The St Johns churchyard is an attractive green oasis in the heart of the Conservation Area with a large number of mature trees providing shade and a pleasant setting. None of the paths within the churchyard are rights of way, but the public are implicitly invited in by the open gates.

Traffic, roads and associated signage and services are a dominant feature of the public realm within the Conservation Area. Although some recent improvements have been carried out to improve the pedestrian environment, reducing the dominance of vehicular traffic and associated clutter will be a major objective in the future management of the Conservation Area.

Green spaces are primarily on the north western side of the Broadway making this side a more attractive pedestrian environment. Some street trees are also found on the east of the Grove (alluding to this site's once densely landscaped history), around the Old Town Hall and within the public space at the junction of Great Eastern Road and the Broadway.



*The western side of the Broadway is heavily treed. There are numerous mature street trees as well as mature trees within the Churchyard. Reduced traffic on this side makes a more attractive and less cluttered pedestrian environment. The lamp columns and church railings provide added detail.*



*Heavy traffic and pavement clutter such as signage, bollards and guard railings on the eastern side of the Broadway, create an unattractive pedestrian environment.*



*Pedestrian spaces to the south of the church are heavily used and traversed.*



*St John's Churchyard provides a calm green space within a busy high street. Flood lighting illuminates the church at night.*



*Recent improvements at the Grove have created more space for those on foot but this design, although using high quality materials has been over-ambitious resulting in a confusing appearance. Simpler, traditional materials would provide a better backdrop within the Conservation Area.*



*In the south of the Conservation Area at the junction with Great Eastern Road, this south facing area of open space is little used due to a number of physical barriers which limit its accessibility, and a lack of active uses around its edge. However, it benefits from a number of mature trees which provide valuable visual amenity, soften the outline of the adjacent buildings and offer relief from the traffic dominated environment. These trees should be kept.*

## LAND USES

The St John's Conservation Area has a wide range of uses but is predominantly a mix of retail, commercial and cultural activities. There is a combination of familiar national multiples and local stores. Public houses, cafes and restaurants have long been established in the area and provide limited activity outside daytime business hours.

The residential element that once characterised Stratford Broadway is beginning to return to the area, with flats in the upper floors of new and recently converted buildings. Shop and office tenants change regularly but the overall level of occupancy is high.

The area is full of movement throughout the day, with shoppers and office workers, as well as London commuters in the rush hours.

## BUILDING MATERIALS

There is a wide range of building materials to be found in Stratford, reflecting the different ages and styles of buildings as well as the town's absorption into the London metropolis.

There is little building stone in the immediate area and so early buildings in Stratford would have been timber framed. One example remains: The Old

Dispensary on Romford Road, which is a rare survival of the Essex vernacular with a painted, weatherboarded front. After 1700 brick would have been commonplace and from the mid eighteenth century pale, yellow London stock brick was the norm. On the grander buildings it would often be set against limestone dressings or stucco ornamentation. Imported limestones including Portland and Bath stone were used for prestige buildings such as St Johns Church and the Town Hall. Welsh slate, readily imported by rail and ship, supplanted plain clay tiles as the normal roofing material.

By 1900 there had been a shift towards classical eclecticism as well as the burgeoning Arts and Crafts movement. Red brick with terracotta or stone ornament was popular and used for the Borough Theatre.

By the second half of the twentieth century there was a profusion of styles and materials in the Broadway and the High Street, with curtain wall and steel frame construction offering new possibilities. Large areas of glazing, composite panels and orange and purple have all been deployed. Painted timber shopfronts have been replaced with standardised plastic coated or aluminium units.

In recent years there has been a return to yellow and red brick, often combined with artificial stone mouldings. Timber boarding, usually stained or left to weather is in fashion and is often combined with glass or aluminium.

## LISTED BUILDINGS

All the listed buildings in the St John's Conservation Area are Grade II. Prominent listed buildings in the Conservation Area include:

### Church of St John the Evangelist

Built 1832-34 to the designs of Edward Blore in the Early English Gothic style, whose work included the choir and screen Westminster Abbey as well as the former west front of Buckingham Palace. The Chancel was built in 1882 and most recently, church rooms have been added to the North aisle by Purcell Miller and Tritton (Chris Betts and John Burton architects). The church railings are listed separately.

### Railings to Church of St John the Evangelist

These are early nineteenth century cast iron Gothic railings with gables between the stakes and openwork buttressing behind. There are two pairs of gate piers to the north and south, with Gothic tracery and pyramidal cap-stones.

### The Martyrs' Memorial

Located in the churchyard and dated 1878, the Martyrs Memorial is a hexagonal monument of buff terracotta in the Gothic style. It was erected to commemorate Protestant Martyrs burnt nearby in 1556.

### The Gurney Memorial

A granite obelisk and drinking fountain designed by J Bell and erected in 1861 to the memory of Sir Samuel Gurney, a local Philanthropist who died in 1856.

### Stratford Town Hall Complex

Built in 1867-8 to the designs of Giles Angell, Borough Engineer, and enlarged in 1886. A vigorous Italianate composition with a domed tower that acts as a secular counterpoint to the spire of St John's Church. The Town Hall was partially rebuilt following a major fire.

### Three K6 Telephone Kiosks

Outside the Town Hall are three cast iron telephone kiosks designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and made by various contractors. They are square in plan form with domed roofs, unperforated crowns to the top panels and margin glazing to the windows and doors.

### West Ham Court House (former Police and Coroner's Court)

A yellow brick Italianate Court House with Portland stone dressings built in 1884 and designed by Lewis Angell (Borough Engineer 1867-99) and extended by John Morley in 1901.

### No 2 Romford Road (St John's House)

A late Georgian three storey villa in yellow brick with stucco dressings.

### No 30 Romford Road (The Old Dispensary)

A rare survival of a weatherboarded, timber-framed house of circa 1700. The building was used as a dispensary from 1861-79 by Dr William Elliott of the West Ham Union. It has recently been restored and is now used as Council offices and a visitor centre.

### 49 Broadway

An Italianate commercial building (formerly London and County Bank) built in 1867 to the designs of Frederic Chancellor, a leading Essex architect in his day.

### King Edward VII public house, 47 Broadway

One of the oldest buildings in the Conservation Area (early 18<sup>th</sup> century), now altered. It is a two storey building with a stucco façade and a slate a roof. The variation in height between this building and its neighbours contributes to the visual richness of this terrace. The pub was known as the King of Prussia up to the start of the First World War when it took its present name.

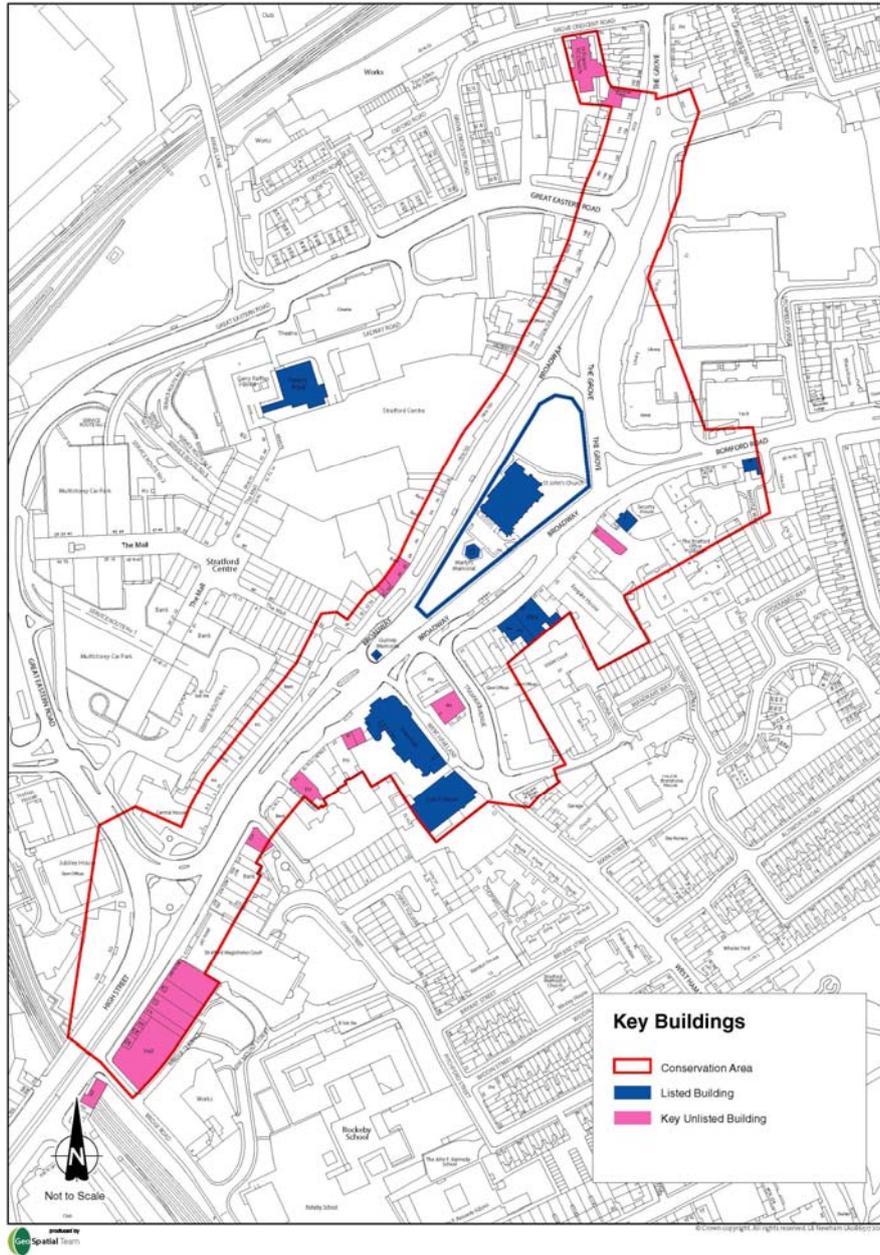


Figure 13

## KEY UNLISTED BUILDINGS

### Church of St Assisi, Grove Crescent Road

Built in 1868 by the architect EW Pugin, it was originally known as St Vincent de Paul. The building has a classical brick façade with stucco centre brought forward. This building is on the list of buildings of local interest.

### Old Fire Station, Broadway

Mainly of historical interest, having served the Stratford Area from the 1860's to its closure in 1964. It was built as part of the Town Hall development and has subsequently been rebuilt.

### Ye Olde Black Bull, Broadway

A lively late Victorian public house of brick and stone with a painted stucco bull set in a niche. This building is on the list of buildings of local interest.

### 415 High Street

An attractive 3 storey plus attic, late Victorian building of Gault bricks with stucco decoration and elaborately decorated dormers and prominent chimney stack.

### 63 Broadway

A four storey Victorian tower building in red brick with Portland stone dressings. It has Doric columns to the ground floor and horizontal stone rustication and dentil cornice to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. Its steeply pitched clay tile roof with dormer and a tiny timber turret lend the building its landmark qualities. This building is on the list of buildings of local interest.

### 361-383 High Street

These buildings form a significant group. There is a variation in the plot widths and there is no uniform roof line. The unifying features within the group tend to be the materials –especially red brick and the strong vertical emphasis throughout. This building is on the list of buildings of local interest.

### The Rex (Former Borough Theatre)

The group terminates with the Rex at the southernmost boundary of the Conservation Area. Designed by Frank Matcham and built 1895-6, this building was reconstructed in 1933-4 by George Coles and Arthur Roberts as a cinema and was given an Art Deco façade in part. The building was brought back into use in 1998 as a music and entertainment venue. This building is on the list of buildings of local interest.

### 56-62 Broadway

This is a distinctive building of redbrick with limestone dressings and timber windows (built c1900 for Thomas and Williams, drapers). It is a local landmark and along with 72-76 Broadway it is a significant survivor and a reminder of the old town centre.

### Queens Head public house

An attractive two storey red brick public house with prominent dentil cornice and six over six timber sash windows at 1<sup>st</sup> floor with small pane leaded light windows at ground floor.

## Stratford Market Station

This is a single storey red brick building plus attic. It has moulded red brick dressings, a hipped, tiled roof with finials and a pair gabled brick dormers with moulded brick detailing framing a smaller central dormer. The entrance bay has a pair of circular headed entrances with three tall windows to either side with moulded brick detail. This building lies outside the boundary of the Conservation Area but makes a positive contribution to its setting. It is locally listed.

## CONCLUSION

Conservation of heritage and townscape can play an important part in giving Stratford its own attractive, individual identity. Buildings of character should be preserved and enhanced. New redevelopment of neutral or unsightly plots is welcomed to allow for inward investment. All new development should compliment the heritage context so that together they work to provide with an attractive distinctive identity.

By its nature a healthy high street area is subject to constant change as traders come and go. Pressures on the historic environment tend to be as follows:

- New development that is unsympathetic to surrounding historic buildings in terms of grain and scale;
- Dominance of traffic and highways paraphernalia adding to urban clutter and visual chaos;
- Erosion of local distinctiveness through corporate branding of national and international traders;
- Removal of interior structure of buildings, including internal walls and staircases, resulting in low level use of upper floors and poor maintenance; and
- Loss of architectural detail to properties, including doors, windows, brickwork and mouldings.

The Conservation Area Management Plan seeks to address these and other issues.

## **PART 2: CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Stratford is undergoing radical change. The 2012 Olympics and legacy works, dramatic transport improvements, the substantial development at Stratford City and in the Lower Lee Valley will have a profound effect on the profile of the centre.

The St. Johns conservation area which covers the historic heart of Stratford will have an important role to play in the current expansion of, and investment in the wider area. The Council's aims will be to ensure that investment benefits this area, preserving and enhancing its distinctive and defining historic character. Whilst each part of the wider town centre will have its own role and character, the Council will be seeking to ensure coordination, in economic, social and urban design terms between these differing parts. Alongside the welcome new development there is an opportunity to use the historic environment to champion the distinctiveness and pedigree of the area. The Conservation Area has a fine grained character akin to the outer London village it once was, and can seek to establish an enduring, and positive role for itself in the future.

The Council also recognises the value placed, by local people, on conservation of their history, the architectural interest of the centre's buildings, its landmarks, human scale townscape and its role in community memory and continuity. Each place has its own story and it is that story which makes a place special. The historic core tells much of the evolution that led to the pre-eminence of Stratford. The Council will therefore seek to ensure that these features of merit and historic record are safeguarded.

During the 1970's there was a bold and ambitious redevelopment of the northern part of the historic centre. The traditional street pattern, a hive of activity was replaced by a large block offering a modern shopping experience attractive to the car borne shopper. Through traffic was diverted severing the block from public transport and adjacent communities. Its urban and architectural design paid no regard to the historic core. This destroyed the integrated street scene which provided the enclosure and character of the original centre with St Johns Church as its focus.

Today the Council will be seeking to address the negative impacts that resulted from that plan, avoiding and correcting past mistakes. It will be aiming to achieve new development that sets high standards of urban design. That design will pay due regard to the setting of the conservation area, impacts on views in and out and on its skyline. Sensitive contemporary contextual design will also provide the opportunity to reinstate the coherence of the conservation area, creating a well-integrated place with a special identity.

Stratford town centre developed at the confluence of two very busy main roads. The width of these roads and pavements, heavy traffic, signage, noise, pollution and danger dominates and detracts from the appeal and coherence of this central space.

In recent years, work has been undertaken to improve public realm and some properties, but a wider design strategy to improve Stratford Town Centre will be developed. This will enhance the experience and use of important spaces within the historic core and linkages to residential areas beyond and new development currently taking place. This will benefit users and improve the image of Stratford to those passing through.

In summary, the Council is committed to managing and influencing change within the conservation area in the coming five years to promote the centre's regeneration in conjunction with conservation and enhancement of its special qualities.

## FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The London Thames Gateway Development Corporation (LTGDC) is the planning authority for part of the Conservation Area (CA) with regard to listed building consents. Furthermore it is the planning authority for significant planning applications on key sites adjacent to the Conservation Area, between Broadway and Great Eastern Road and north of High Street. There is a clear expectation that the scale and design of any redevelopment proposals within its area have due regard to the need to safeguard and enhance the setting of the Conservation Area.

The Local Planning Authorities will exercise their powers under the Planning Acts to require that new development meets high quality design standards that also preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The Council will:

- Issue site specific design advice to guide development proposals so they positively contribute to conservation objectives;
- Require new development to pay regard to context, compliment or enhance established urban grain and townscape, whilst representing the time in which it is built and the culture it accommodates;
- Issue design guidance on specific areas of development including shop-fronts and facades;
- Be pro-active in working with developers to achieve the re-development and/or refurbishment of sites and buildings.

## PLANNING CONTROLS

The Council will:

- Continue to enforce against unauthorised development, alterations, changes of use and other breaches of the Planning Acts where expedient and in the interests of the conservation of the area;
- Serve s215 notices under the Planning Acts to improve sites that adversely affect the amenity of the area, where expedient;
- Every four years undertake a photographic audit of buildings, land and the public realm noting especially features of historic interest (post boxes for example). This will be used to monitor and review progress and also aid effective enforcement;
- Investigate the necessity and desirability of serving an article 4(1) Direction to bring certain “permitted development rights” under planning control. These would be those that adversely impact on conservation of the area and would follow detailed survey and justification;
- Consider designating an Area of Special Control to increase the extent of its planning control powers over advertisements;
- Will use its powers to serve urgent works and repairs notices, if applicable and expedient, to secure the proper maintenance of Listed Buildings;
- Review the Council’s list of buildings of local interest and consider the inclusion of buildings within the conservation area in that list.

## COUNCIL FUNCTIONS

In carrying out its functions the Council will:

- Strive for best practice; ensure consistent and co-ordinated project management and decision-making based on published policies and guidance;
- Provide specialist expertise in conservation and urban design to advise on proposals for the area.

## ENHANCEMENT AND FUNDING

The Council will:

- Seek funds to secure enhancement of the public realm and refurbishment of land and buildings in the interests of promoting conservation objectives. This will involve securing grants from government and other sources and financial contributions connected to the granting of planning permissions (called S.106 agreements).

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Council will:

- Pro-actively engage with the local community, its representatives, stakeholders, commercial interests and other relevant bodies to promote preservation and enhancement of the conservation area; the upgrading of the local environment; and regeneration. This will include providing town centre management services;
- Promote better use and maintenance of property. This will include pro-actively seeking redevelopment that will bring needed new uses to the centre; liaising with owners to bring vacant or underused property into suitable use; town centre management advice to retailers; attaching conditions to grant-aided schemes to require on-going proper maintenance of improved properties.

## PUBLIC REALM

The Council will:

- Ensure consistency and quality in the treatment of the public realm;
- Safeguard elements of the public realm that are of historic significance wherever possible (granite kerbs for example);
- Keep to a minimum, and where possible, reduce street clutter, including, posts, signs, railings, columns, apparatus, structures, advertisements, on the public highway, acting in the interests of conserving and enhancing the area;
- Well-maintain areas of the public realm including street furniture (seats, cycle stand, bins etc);
- Aim to improve access for all including reducing visual clutter and physical obstruction when undertaking works to the public realm;

- Undertake its duties in relation to traffic and transportation to support its regeneration and conservation objectives, in particular to explore opportunities for reducing the negative impact of vehicles on the appearance and character of the town centre and the quality of the environment for residents and pedestrians;
- Promote improved access for all to land and buildings;
- Provide or promote greening of the area through additional tree-planting, shrubs and flowers (containers etc) subject to resources. Any planting of this nature should be native and designed to maximise opportunities for biodiversity;
- Address issues such as crime and anti-social behaviour; community safety, taking action against fly-tipping, graffiti, dumping of rubbish.
- Make proper arrangements for the storage and disposal of refuse from premises; removal of abandoned cars; improving access and security along thoroughfares and to private property.

Action by the Council in any of these areas will be undertaken subject to the availability of necessary resources and funding and within the context of its wider obligations, policies and duties.

## BOUNDARY REVIEW

The town centre boundaries have been reviewed and are considered, at present, satisfactory for their purpose. Further review will take place as development of the centre progresses.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND MONITORING

The appraisal and management plan was subject to public consultation from 13<sup>th</sup> February to 13<sup>th</sup> March. Letters inviting comments from the local community and its representatives, relevant stakeholders and other bodies involved in the regeneration and conservation of the town centre, were sent out. The documents were made available on the Council's website and hard copies were placed in the local service centre/library. Comments received have been taken into consideration in the final drafting of these documents.

A review will be undertaken of these documents every five years.

Monday - Friday  
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