

An aerial photograph of a residential area in Colchester, showing streets, houses, and green spaces. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

COLCHESTER CONSERVATION AREA no. 4

Belle Vue Road , northern end of North Station Road and Digby House + adjacent Riverside Addendum



Colchester

North Station Road & environs

[Morten Road, Orchard Road, St Pauls Road (S),
John Harper Street & former Colne Bank
open-air swimming pool] Belle Vue Road

Conservation Area Appraisal

CONSULTATION DRAFT

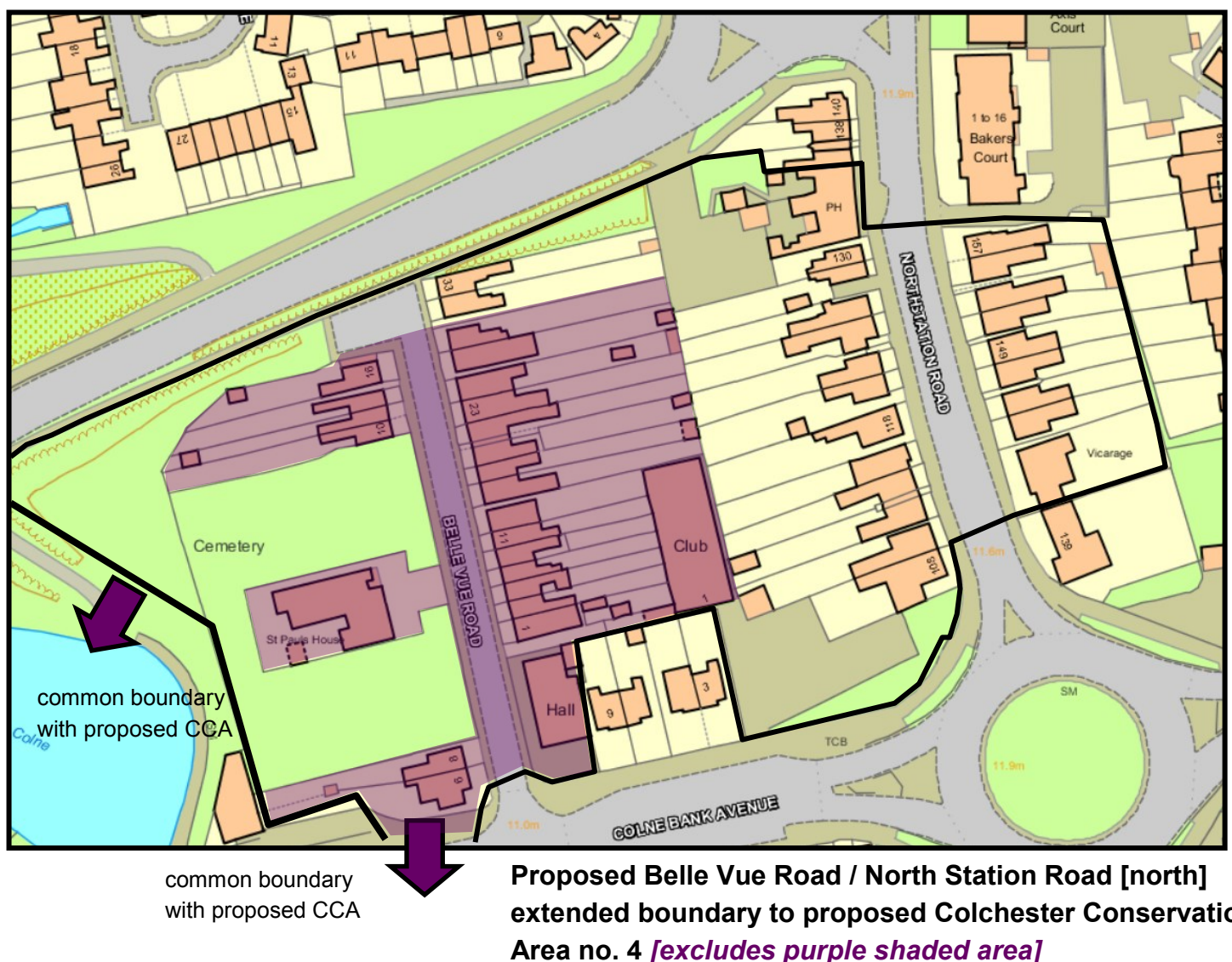
March 2018

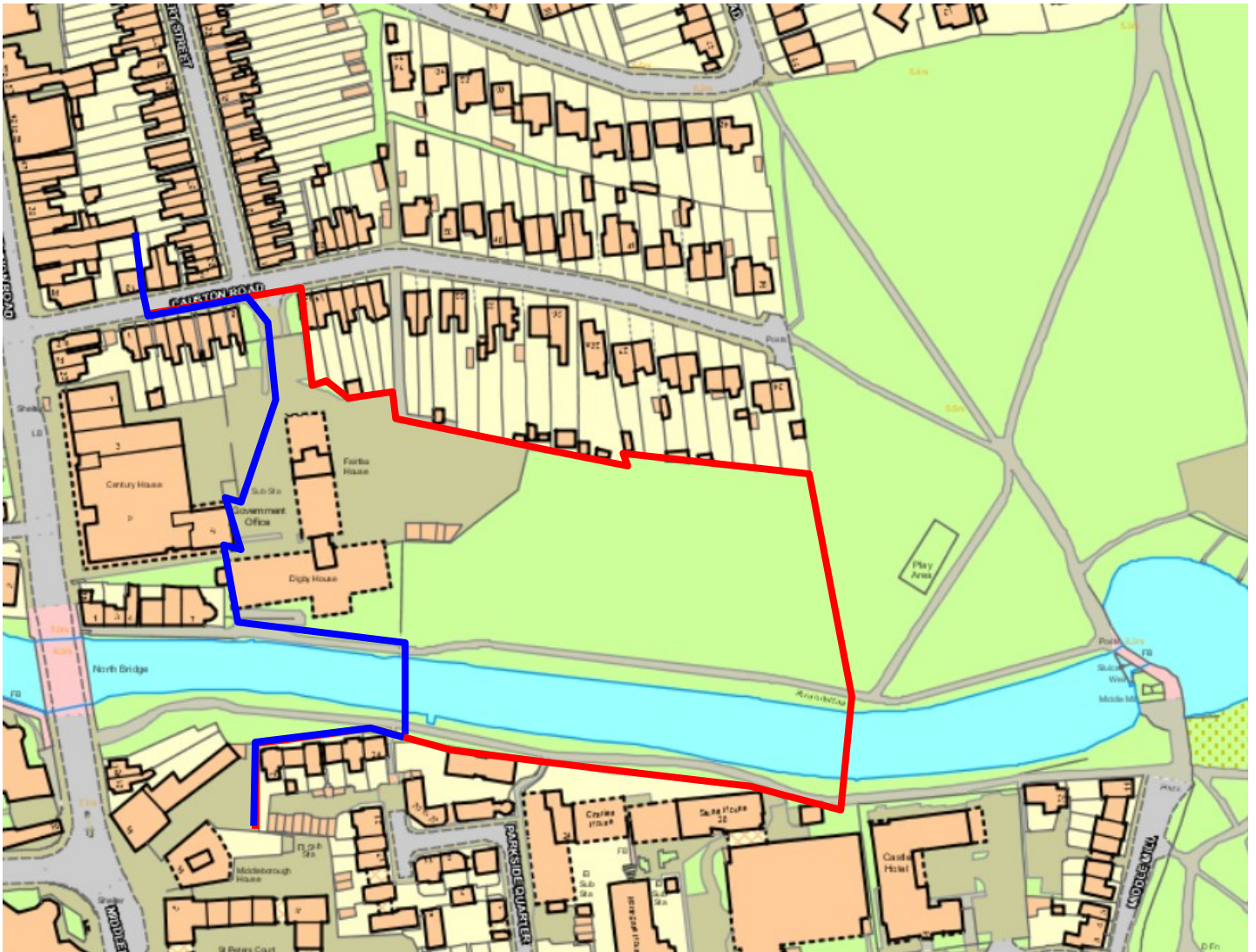
Introduction

On Monday 19th March 2018 Colchester Borough Council's Local Plan Committee agreed the Draft Colchester Conservation Area no. 4 Conservation Area '*Character Appraisal and Management Proposals*' document for Public Consultation.

In doing so the Committee required that the proposed conservation area boundary suggested in that document be extended to include those parts of Belle Vue Road and North Station Road [between Colne Bank Avenue and Colne Bank Avenue] that are considered to have special character.

This addendum document represents that analysis and should be read in conjunction with the larger initial document as it is intended the public be consulted on the enlarged conservation area boundary represented by the amalgamation of the two documents.





Proposed Digby House and riverside open space extension to proposed Colchester Conservation Area no. 4

The proposed conservation area boundary has been extended as part of the public consultation stage to include the site of Digby House on the basis that Century Houser which adjoins immediately to the west has been included and is given the status of an 'Opportunity site'. Digby House also represents a potential opportunity site any any proposed redevelopment or conversion of this building is likely to have an impact on the character of the proposed new conservation area.

The proposed boundary has also been extended following inclusion of Digby House to include the area of riverside open space immediately to the east in order to present a common boundary between the proposed conservation area and the designated Grade II Park and Garden (Lower Castle Park).

Townscape Analysis:

North Station Road [north end]

The inclusion of that part of North Station Road north of the Albert roundabout is logical in that it was only the construction of Colne Bank Avenue in the 1930's that severed this historic route in and out of the Town Centre from and to the north and Colchester North station. It is part of the same story of the expansion of Colchester.

Numbers 143—157 [odd] North Station Road [east side] form a delightful uniform group of red brick and slate roof semis with prominent chimney stacks at either end. It is the uniformity of floor plan and external appearance that makes this group such an important part of the street scene hereabouts.

Each semi-detached pair has its main recessed entrance centrally positioned in a side by side arrangement. The entrance alcoves have a decorative masonry arch with voussoir and a rectangular two storey brick bay with gabled roof at each end. Typically the front boundary to each property is demarcated by a low brick wall on the back edge of the pavement over which spills hedging and shrubs.



Nos. 143 –157 [odd]

The west side of North Station Road hereabouts is earlier and has a different character to that opposite.



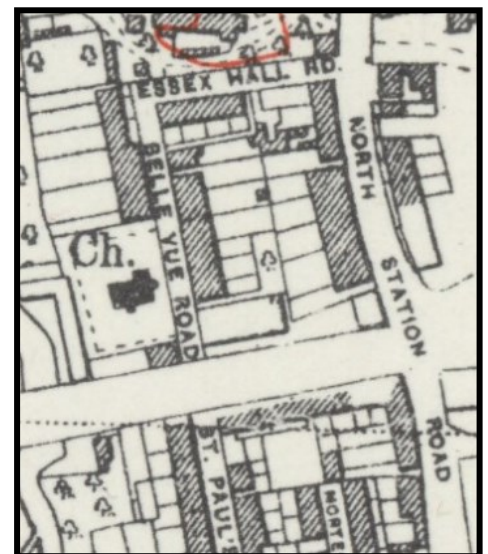
Nos. 112 –128 [even]

Its charm and quality stem from the design eclecticism that exists. Buildings vary in style, materials, height and profile but read together to form a delightfully elegant built frieze.

This array of three and two storey semi-detached and detached properties span the late Victorian to Edwardian period.



OS six inch 1888



OS six inch Circa 1946

OS six inch 1924

Examples of buildings of townscape merit



No. 145



No. 118



St John's Cottage [no 116] [date plaque 1864].



No. 114



The Norfolk public house

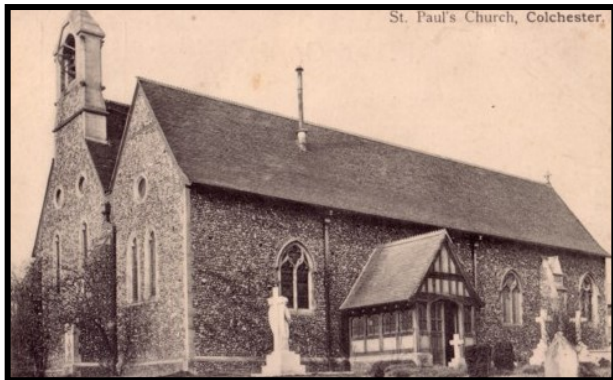


Landscaped area at the southern end of the west side of North Station Road [northern end]

Formerly the site of public conveniences

Belle Vue Road

The architectural centre-piece of the Belle Vue Road area was lost with the demolition of St Paul's church in the 1990's. This church was replaced by a single storey modern building to create a care home. Fortunately the grave-yard remains as a green oasis of calm and it does enhance the character of the road. The graveyard wraps around the recent care home and its trees and gravestones add drama to the street scene and provide a habitat for wildlife. The replacement building St Paul's House whilst functional and efficient does not make a positive contribution especially when compared to the scale and impact of the church it replaced.



St Paul's church Belle Vue Road [now demolished]



St Paul's House—on the site of St Paul's church [graveyard of St Paul's around it]

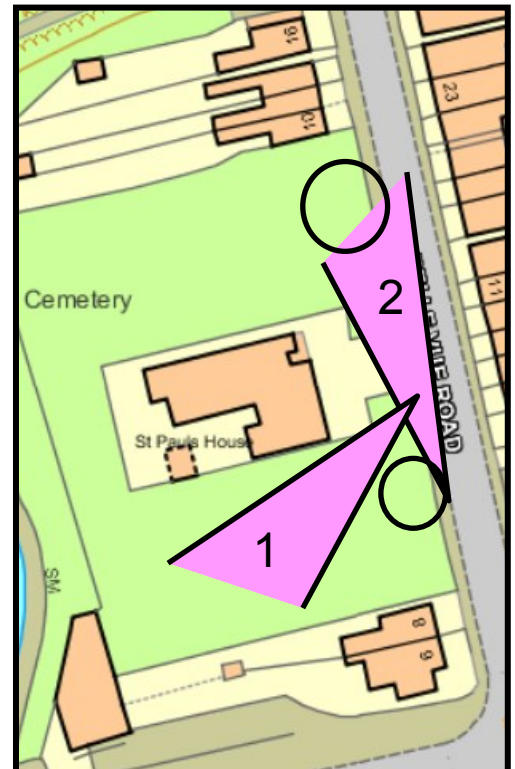


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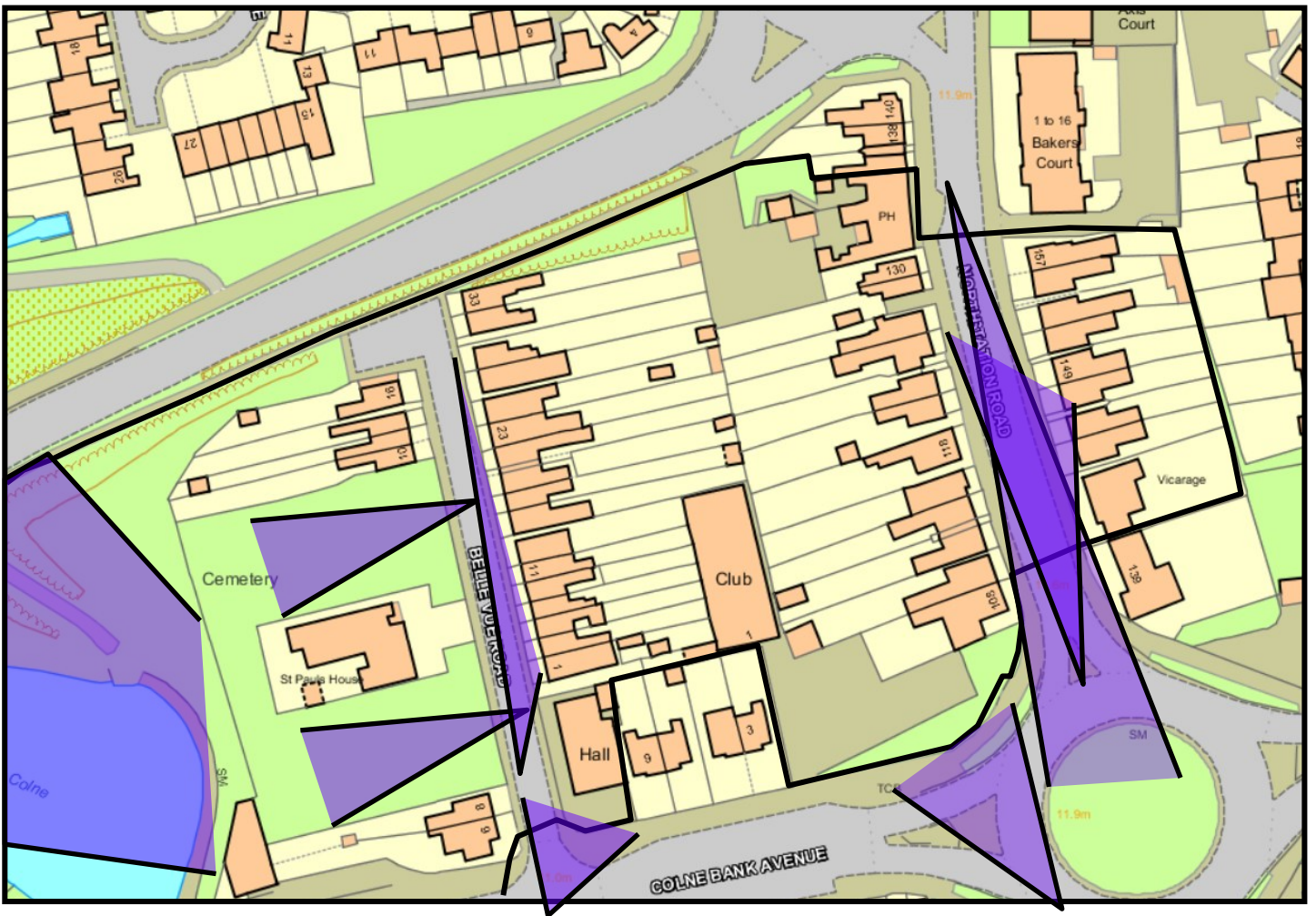


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St Paul's graveyard



Positive contributions to streetscene



Views [within the survey area there is considered to be no obvious focal point]



View southwards down North Station Road [town centre in the distance]



View eastwards across former open air swimming pool [Belle Vue Road in distance]

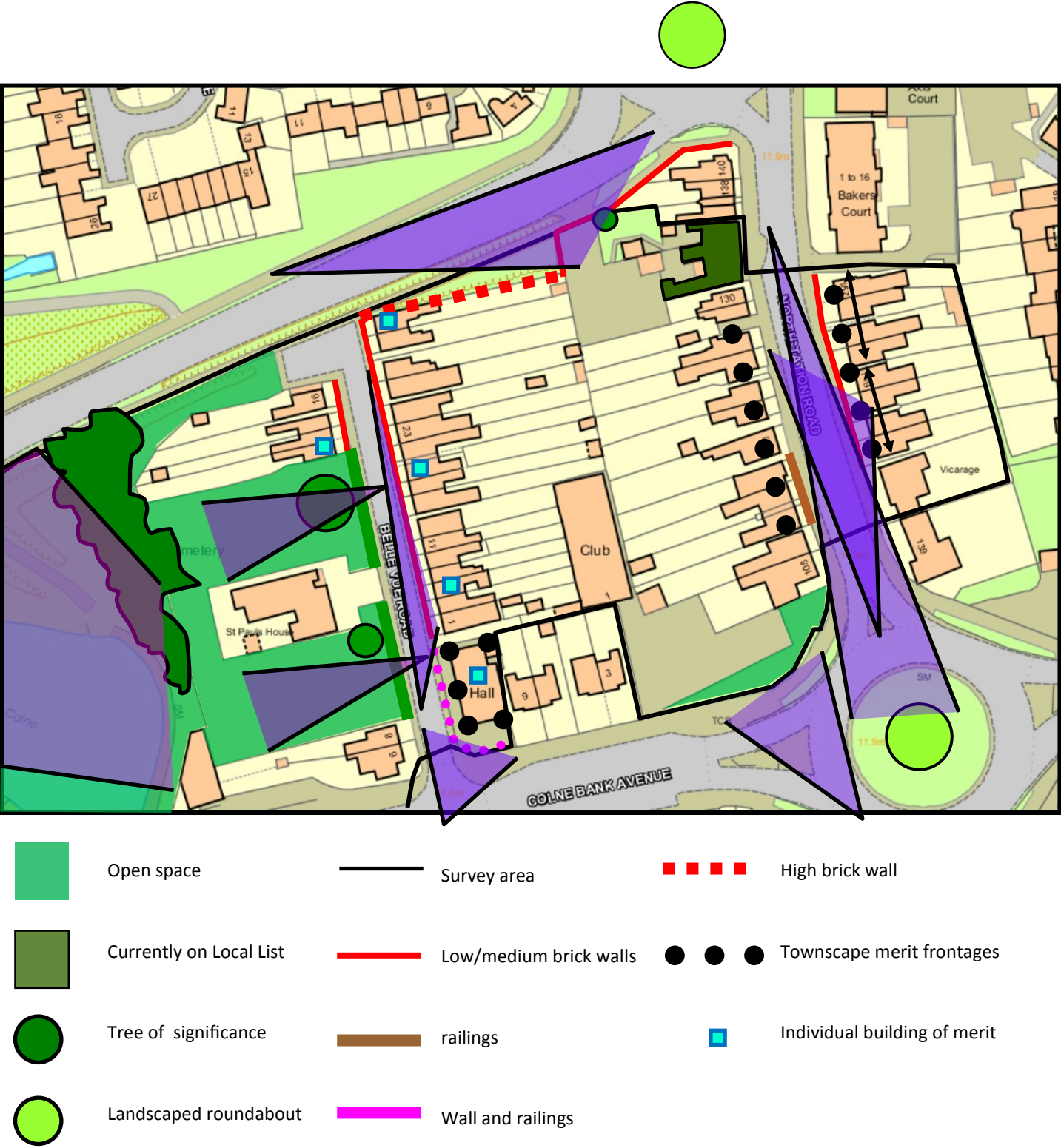


View northwards along Belle Vue Road



Aerial view of survey area

ADDENDUM: 1.37A POSITIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 6



Map showing positive townscape elements

positive contributions to streetscene



No. 5 [east side]



No. 13 [east side]



No. 10 [west side]



No 33 'Byculla Cottages' [date plaque 1872]



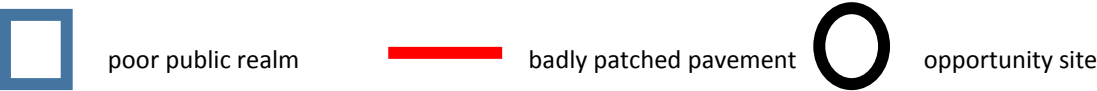
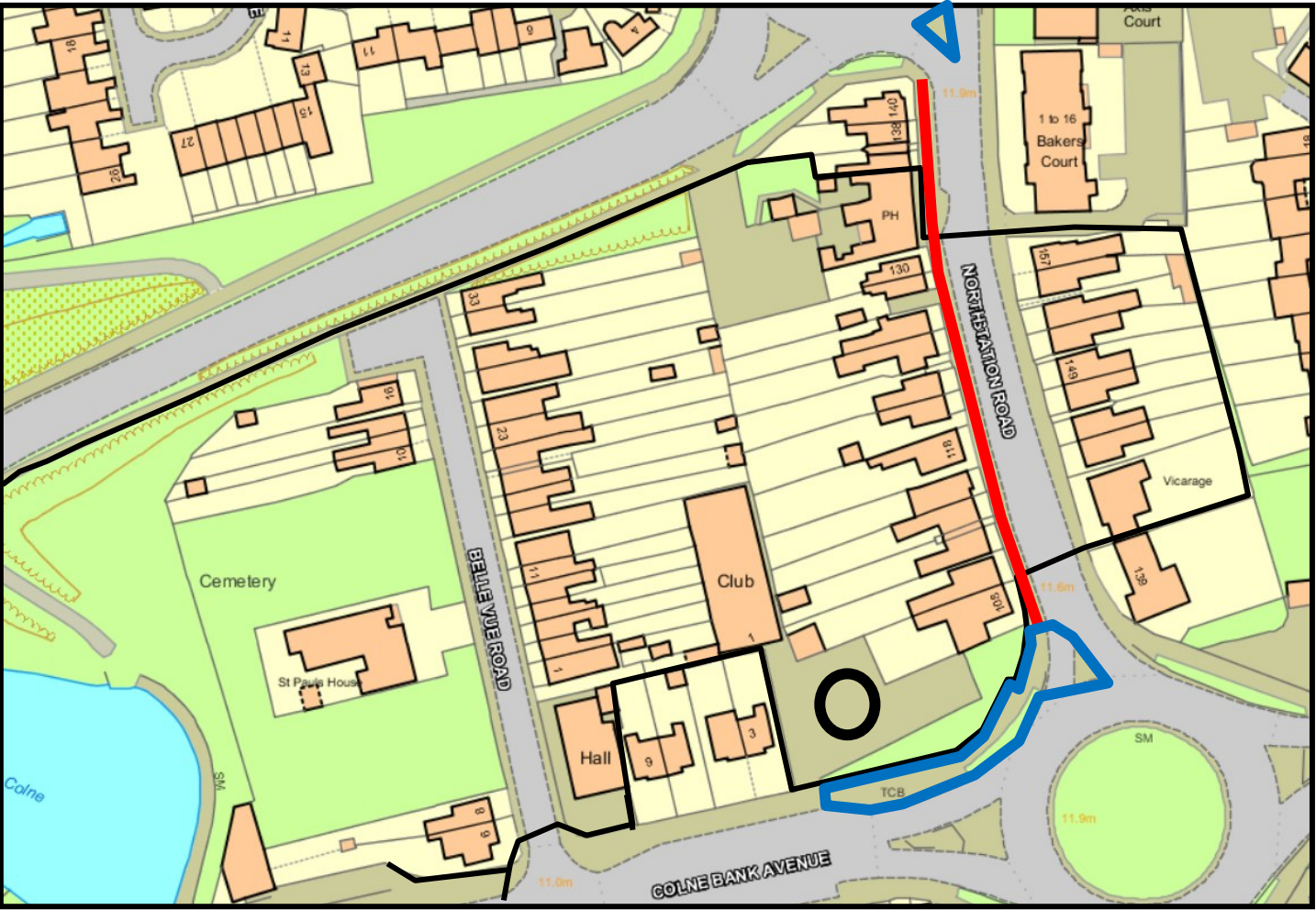
former **St Paul's church hall** [east side]

Original Crittall metal window frames remain intact throughout and the main façade with a venetian style trip-tych of windows is very striking. The high side boundary wall and wall and railings to the Colne bank frontage really add character to the street hereabouts.





Interesting Architectural Details: Belle Vue Road



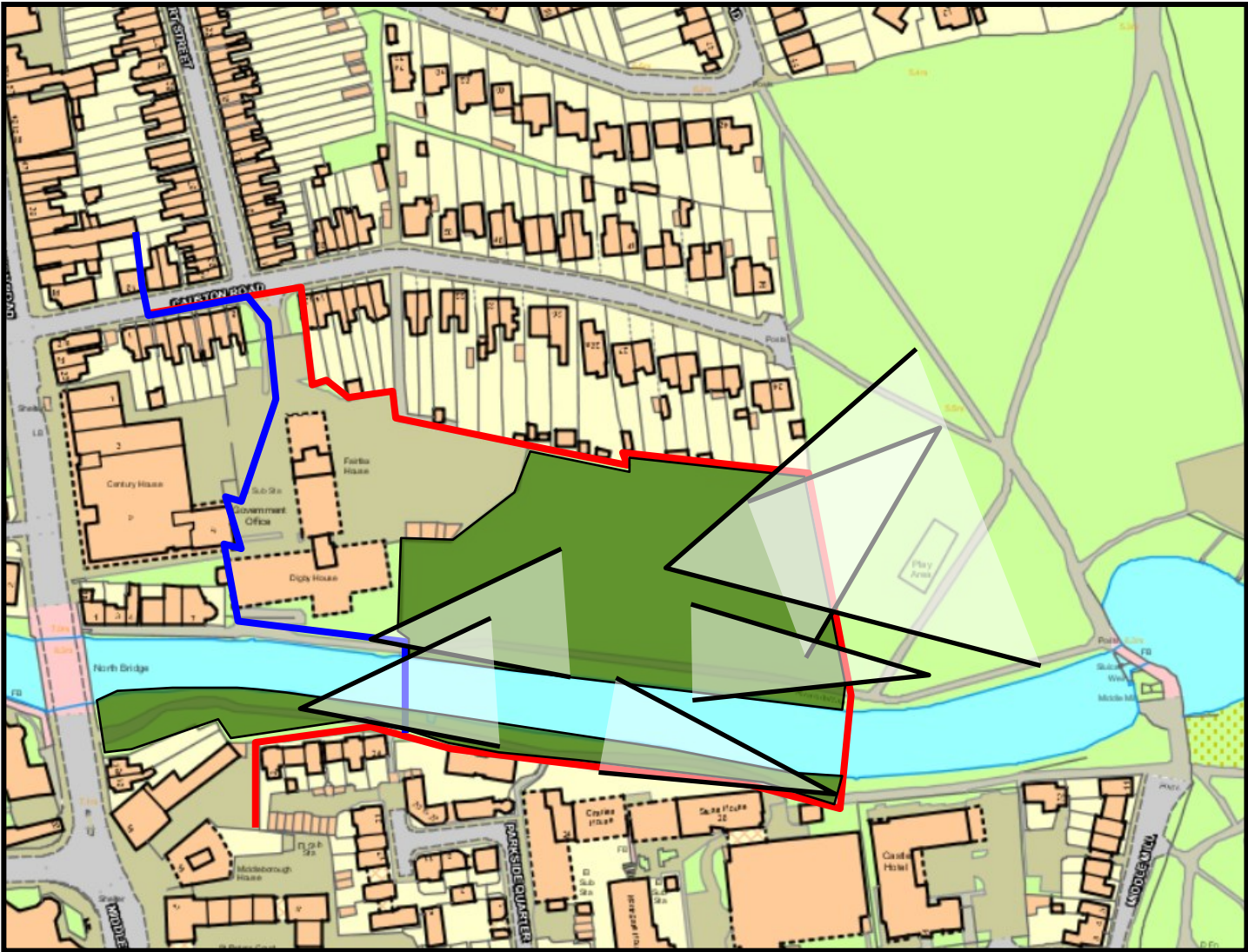
Belle Vue Social Club: Opportunity site



examples of negative elements within the streetscene



ADDENDUM: 1.37C POSITIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 7



ADDENDUM: 1.37D NEGATIVE TOWNSCAPE CONTRIBUTIONS: Area 7

Conclusions

Having extended the survey area as requested by the Council's Planning Committee it is considered that not all of the area analysed is worthy of formal conservation area status.

Most of the northern end of North Station Road (between the Albert Roundabout and Essex Hall roundabout) is considered to have special character for the reasons explored and is worthy of conservation area status.

The loss of St Paul's church in Belle Vue Road has left a significant void within the area surveyed as there is no longer a visually dominant central focal point. The replacement care home building whilst functionally efficient does not enhance the character of the area - especially when one considers how important the church building was to the townscape hereabouts.

The retained churchyard does however enhance the character of the immediate vicinity for reasons described and it is considered appropriate to include it within Colchester Conservation Area no. 4. along with the nicely detailed Byculla Cottages.

The houses in Belle Vue Road are simple but not unattractive examples of late Victorian artisan housing which if largely unaltered would be worthy of inclusion within the proposed conservation area. Unfortunately most have been modified, particularly in respect of replacement double glazing resulting in the loss of original timber sashes. Most roofs are now tiled in concrete tiles rather than the original slate and modern doors proliferate.

In considering conservation area status for an area the Council must have regard to the advice in paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] which states:

"When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest. "

There are however notable exceptions; namely no's 5, 10 & 13 which are considered worthy of inclusion on the Local List for their individual architectural and local history value and original features. They are not however considered worthy of statutory listing. The former St Pauls church hall is also considered worthy of inclusion on the Local List for its social and historic value. The fact that it retains most of its original external character with its metal Crittall windows does add its appeal.

ADDENDUM: 1.37C Actions

A6.1

Encourage local highway authority to improve appearance of pavements and quality of public realm on the west side of North Station Road [northern end] and around the Alvbert Roundabout corner.

A6.2

Encourage the local highway authority to undertake remedial works to ensure that the areas around newly planted trees are properly managed and that the areas are weeded and planted to enhance the quality of the public realm. The tree pit areas shall not be tar-macked over and trees should be replaced if broken or are dying or dead.

A6.3

Excessive street furniture clutter should be rationalised.

MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

Recommended Management Proposals are the same as appear in the initial Draft Colchester Conservation Area no.4 Conservation Character Appraisal and Management Proposals document.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Draft Colchester Conservation Area no 4 Conservation Area Appraisal and management proposals document

