

CHERTSEY
CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL
JANUARY 2020



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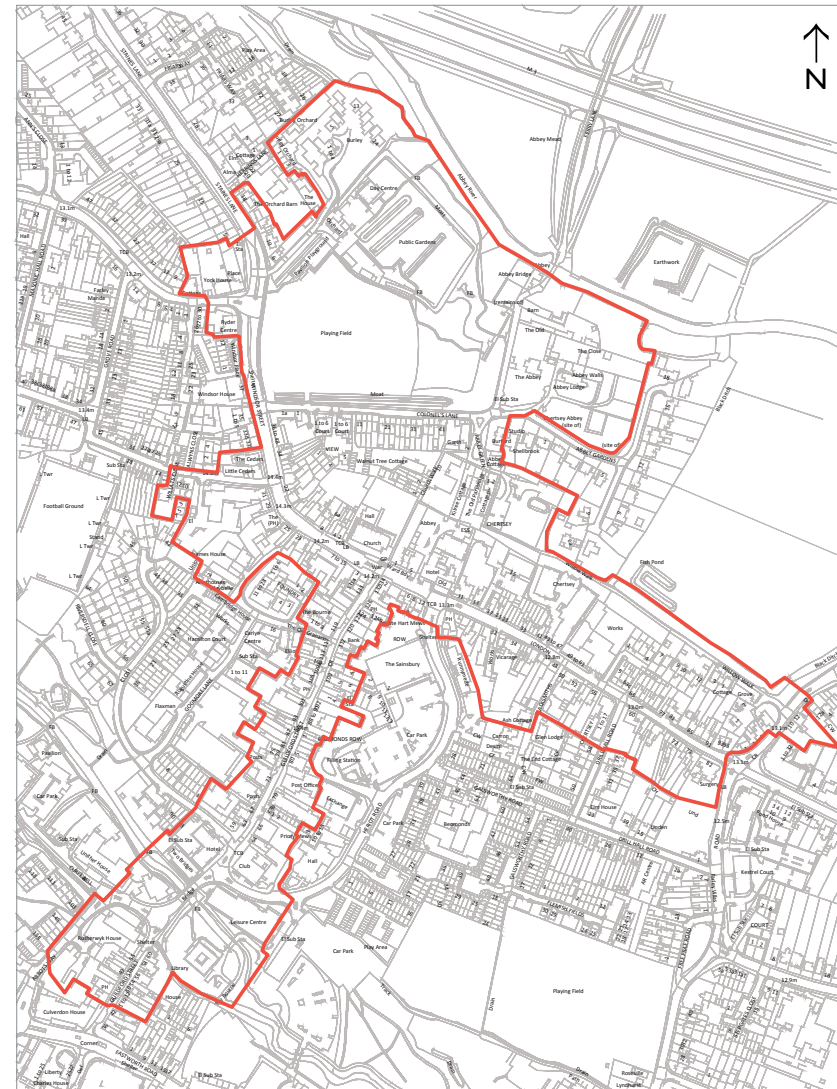
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I.0 | INTRODUCTION

I.1 CHERTSEY CONSERVATION AREA

- I.1.1 The Chertsey Conservation Area was designated in October 1969; it is one of seven conservation areas under the jurisdiction of Runnymede Borough Council. The Conservation Area has been extended twice, first in 1987 and again in 1994.
- I.1.2 The Conservation Area is centred on the junction of its three principal roads, Guildford Street, London Street and Windsor Street. At the junction is St Peter's Church, the tower and chancel of which contain thirteenth and fourteenth century fabric. Guildford Street is the main commercial street in the Conservation Area extending north-east to a T-junction the western arm of which is Windsor Street, which leads to the Abbey remains. The eastern arm is London Street, which leads towards the River Thames and Chertsey Bridge. Further from the junction with Guildford Street both London and Windsor Streets have a more residential character.
- I.1.3 The northern part of the Conservation Area consists of enclaves of residential buildings, some of which have been converted to commercial office uses, in Colonels Lane, Abbey Green, Ferry Lane and Burley Orchard. The northern part of the Conservation Area is also characterised by generous open spaces including the playing fields and public gardens on the remains of the former Chertsey Abbey, which are a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- I.1.4 As well as the River Thames to the east of the Conservation Area, a tributary, the River Bourne crosses the southern part of the Conservation Area, and an eleventh century artificial stream, the Abbey River, cut to supply the Abbey mill forms the northern boundary of the Conservation Area.



Plan 1: Current Chertsey Conservation Area boundary. This plan is not to scale.

1.2 WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA

- 1.2.1 A conservation area is defined as an “*area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which is it desirable to preserve or enhance*”⁰¹
- 1.2.2 Designation of a conservation area recognises the unique quality of that area as a whole. This quality comes not only from individual buildings and monuments but also other features, including (but not limited to) topography, materials, thoroughfares, street furniture, open spaces and landscaping. These all contribute to the character and appearance of an area, resulting in a distinctive local identity and sense of place.
- 1.2.3 The extent to which a building, or group of buildings/structures, positively shape the character of a conservation area is derived from their elevations, principally those which are street-facing but also side and rear elevations, the integrity of their historic fabric, overall scale and massing, detailing and materials.

1.3 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

- 1.3.1 Understanding the character and special interest of conservation areas is essential for managing change within them. It is therefore a requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that all local planning authorities “*formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement*” of conservation areas within their jurisdiction, and that these proposals are periodically

reviewed.⁰² The proposals are normally presented in the form of a Conservation Area Appraisal, which defines and records the special interest of a conservation area, as well as setting out a plan of action for its on-going protection and enhancement.

- 1.3.2 Conservation areas may be affected by direct physical change, or by changes in their setting or in the uses of buildings or areas within them. A clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a place will enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of that area, against which applications can be considered.
- 1.3.3 Over time, conservation areas evolve and the characteristics which underpin their special interest may decrease in their integrity because of gradual alteration. It is therefore important to review and take stock of the character of a conservation area at intervals to ensure designation is still suitable and that the proper management of change is in place.
- 1.3.4 Often, conservation area boundaries have historically been drawn too tightly or include peripheral areas which do not contribute to an understanding of its character. Consequently, it is important to review the boundary and include/exclude buildings and spaces which do/do not meet conservation area designation criteria. The boundary of the Chertsey Conservation Area was reviewed concurrently with the production of this Appraisal. A separate Designation Report has been produced which contains the conclusions of the boundary review, the results of which have been incorporated into this Appraisal.

01 Section 69 (1), *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*

02 Section 71 (1), *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*

I.0 | INTRODUCTION

I.3.5 Although this document is intended to be comprehensive, the omission of any building, structure, feature or space does not imply that the element is not significant or does not positively contribute to the character and special interest of the Chertsey Conservation Area. The protocols and guidance provided in Section 8.0 (Management Plan) are applicable in every instance.

I.3.6 The assessments which provide the baseline information for this Conservation Area Appraisal have been carried out utilising publicly available resources and through on-site analysis from the public thoroughfares within the Chertsey Conservation Area.

I.4 PLANNING POLICY, GUIDANCE AND ADVICE

I.4.1 Conservation areas are governed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) sets out the overarching requirement for local planning authorities to identify and protect areas of special interest (paragraph 126). Runnymede Borough Council's emerging Runnymede 2030 Local Plan sets out the Council's policies for guiding development within the Borough, including that within conservation areas.⁰³

I.4.2 In addition to the policies contained within the Local Plan, the Council will produce a Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which includes guidance on new development and alterations which will be applicable to historic buildings and within conservation areas. This guidance should be referenced when planning changes within the Chertsey Conservation Area.

I.4.3 General guidance relating to conservation areas is also available from Historic England, the public body who manage the care and protection of the historic environment. In addition to the legislative requirements set out in this document, the Conservation Area Appraisal has been prepared in line with best practice guidance published by Historic England, including:

- Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (February 2016)
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (April 2008)
- Valuing Places: Good Practice in Conservation Areas (January 2009)
- The Setting of Heritage Assets Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) (December 2017)
- Heritage at Risk: Conservation Areas (June 2009)

⁰³ The Submission Local Plan was developed in line with the now superseded National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), and therefore this document is part of the evidence base for this Conservation Area Appraisal.

I.0 | INTRODUCTION

- I.4.4 When changes are being considered to buildings in the Chertsey Conservation Area, or perhaps where new development is proposed, it is often helpful to use the Council's Pre-application advice service (<https://www.runnymede.gov.uk/article/13837/Pre-application-advice>) to gain early guidance on proposals and highlight any constraints or opportunities.

I.5 CONSULTATION

- I.5.1 It is a statutory requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for conservation area guidance produced by or on behalf of Local Authorities to be subject to public consultation, including a public meeting, and for the local authority to have regard to any views expressed by consultees.⁰⁴
- I.5.2 A draft of the Chertsey Conservation Area Appraisal underwent public and stakeholder consultation from 21st January to 3rd March 2019 and a further consultation from 5th December 2019 to 20th January 2020.
- I.5.3 Prior to the drafting of the Appraisal, an inception meeting was held with invited members of local amenity and residents' groups to highlight the Conservation Area Appraisal review being undertaken by Runnymede to achieve an early understanding of the issues and opportunities associated with the borough's conservation areas and Chertsey specifically.

04 Section 71 (1), *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*

2.0 | SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

2.1 Chertsey first rose to prominence in the seventh century with the establishment of Chertsey Abbey, although archaeological finds demonstrate the area was occupied from pre-historic times. From the earliest beginnings of the settlement until the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Abbey dominated the town. Even today built remains of the Abbey survive including two barns and earthworks characterise both public and private open spaces. The physical impact the monks had on their surrounding landscape, reclaiming marshland from the River Thames and cutting the Abbey River to feed fishponds and power watermills, remains clearly visible within the Conservation Area and is a very important part of its special interest.

2.2 The Abbey was one of the richest and most magnificent monasteries in England. Its remains are therefore highly significant and are designated as a scheduled ancient monument. The development of the town is intimately connected with the monastery and the surviving remains contribute greatly to the special interest of the Conservation Area.

2.3 It is highly likely that extensive buried archaeology remains within the Conservation Area, in the area where the Abbey complex was located. Future investigation could reveal greater knowledge about the Abbey and its workings, potentially increasing its special interest and that of the Conservation Area. Closely associated with the Abbey, was the medieval Beomonds Manor, which lay adjacent to the Abbey precinct until its demolition in the nineteenth century. There are earthworks associated with the manor house, investigation of which may reveal greater knowledge of this important medieval building, also potentially increasing the special interest of the Conservation Area.

2.4 The town of Chertsey grew to the south of the Abbey as a bustling market town having first been granted its charter in the twelfth century by Henry I. The weekly market is therefore a key part of the historic value of the Conservation Area as well as being an important local amenity.

2.5 Prior to the arrival of the railways, Chertsey was a busy coaching town and the George Inn at the southern end of Guildford Street is one of the oldest public houses in Surrey.⁰¹ There are numerous other historic eighteenth and nineteenth century pubs in the town including the Kings Head, the Swan and the Crown Inn, which all remain in their original use.



Guildford Street is the principal retail street in the Conservation Area with surviving medieval plot pattern of narrow frontages

⁰¹ The George Inn has recently been substantially dismantled due to its poor structural condition but rebuilding in a sensitive manner is proposed.

2.0 | SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

2.6 These commercial uses of market trading and coaching are supplemented by the historic retail and banking uses on Guildford Street and around the town square (the junction with Windsor and London Streets) creating a thriving town centre character. The historic layout of narrow-fronted, deep plots, characteristic of the medieval period survives, although some amalgamation has taken place within modern buildings. The narrow alleys and lanes leading off Guildford, London and Windsor Streets are also an important part of the historic layout and demonstrative of the medieval burgrave plot pattern.



Modest residential buildings on London Street

2.7 There are also important civic buildings around this important junction, such as the Old Town Hall and St Peter's Church, which creates a civic focus to the Conservation Area, contributing to its special interest.

2.8 The commercial character of Guildford Street contrasts with the more residential London and Windsor Streets, which in themselves also contrast with more substantial and important houses in Windsor Street and lower status houses in London Street. This variance shows the full range of society who would have lived and worked in Chertsey historically.

2.9 Further from the town centre around the remains of the Abbey are further residential enclaves, the most picturesque being Abbey Green, although some of the buildings have been sensitively converted to office use. The scale of the buildings, irregular layout and green spaces mean that this part of the Conservation Area contributes to its aesthetic and historic value. There are also a number of substantial detached residences set within landscaped grounds including the Abbey, which remains a private residence, and Burley Orchard, built by William Herring a prominent local iron founder, and now converted into sheltered housing.

2.10 St Peter's Church, at the heart of the Conservation Area and Grade II* listed, contains thirteenth century fabric and is therefore the oldest building in the Conservation Area. Its tower is a landmark, being a feature in views along London Street and Windsor Street as well as other parts of the Conservation Area. The building contributes greatly to the special interest of the town both through its use and landmark quality.

2.0 | SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- 2.11 In addition to the town square, other significant areas of public realm are the space around Chertsey Library and the riverside of the River Bourne and Abbey Fields which are open playing fields and more formal gardens. The Abbey Fields lie on the remains of the Abbey and are an important amenity for the town community as well as containing highly important archaeological remains such as the now dry moat and fishponds.
- 2.12 There is a relatively restricted palette of materials, mainly brick, in a variety of colours, and render. Building heights are also relatively consistent, restricted to between one and four storeys, even for more recent buildings. This brings a homogeneity to the Conservation Area while the varying roofscape and architectural detailing of buildings add visual interest to the townscape, particularly along Guildford Street. There is a wide variety of classical style buildings and details within the Conservation Area including corbelled historic shopfronts, decorative cornices and pediments. There are also other decorative features including Dutch gables, patterned terracotta tiles and diaperwork.
- 2.13 Overall, the special interest of the Chertsey Conservation Area is derived from the town's historic development in relation to the Abbey and subsequent evolution into a thriving market and coaching town, which continues to the present day. Beyond the civic and commercial heart of the Conservation Area around the town square and Guildford Street, are both important high-status residential buildings, more modest cottages and townhouses and spacious and pleasant public open spaces.



Abbey Green is a tranquil enclave of historic houses and former Abbey barn, some of which have been sensitively converted into office use

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.1 ANCIENT ASSOCIATIONS

PRE-MEDIEVAL PERIOD

- 3.1.1 Although the first written record relating to Chertsey dates back to the seventh century, archaeological evidence, including flint axes and tools made from bone or antler, shows that the area was occupied from the Neolithic Period (c.4,500-c.3,000 BC). An Iron Age shield, unusual for its bronze materiality, was found in 1985 in a gravel pit at Abbey Meads to the north of the town and there was an Iron Age hill fort on St Ann's Hill, to the west of the town, although earthworks have largely been destroyed by subsequent agriculture and planting. There is some evidence for Roman activity within Chertsey. Roman tiles have been discovered during Abbey excavations opening the possibility that the foundation of the Abbey on this site is related to an important Roman settlement.⁰¹

MEDIEVAL PERIOD

- 3.1.2 Chertsey Abbey was established in 666 AD by Erkenwald, Bishop of London and Frithwald, Viceroy of Surrey, under Wulphur, King of Mercia.⁰² Erkenwald became the Abbey's first abbot. The site was formerly a marshy island, enclosed by the Thames and its tributaries. The monks embanked the water and reclaimed marshland for the Abbey site. The name derives from the Saxon meaning 'The Isle of Cerotis'; it is unknown why it takes this name although there is speculation that Cerotis may have been the original owner of the land used for the Abbey site.⁰³ The original Abbey buildings were

constructed in wood, which made them an easy target for the Viking invaders in 871 who sacked the Abbey and killed the Abbot and 90 monks. In the early tenth century, it was attacked again, by the Danes and later in this century the abbey was re-colonised and a new church was built. The Domesday Book of 1086 assessed Chertsey as 5 hides. A hide is a unit of land against which taxes were calculated and was roughly 120 acres. The Domesday Book also identifies the Abbots of Chertsey Abbey as owners of the settlement and they remained so until the dissolution of the monasteries.⁰⁴

- 3.1.3 The medieval manor house Chertsey Beomond (demolished in 1828) lay to the south of the abbey precinct; the manor of Chertsey Beomond was included in the land endowed to Chertsey Abbey by Frithwald in the seventh century. The line of the Abbey precinct skirts around the manor house plot suggesting the high status of the manor house when the Abbey precinct was determined.⁰⁵
- 3.1.4 From 1110, and following damage from the Norman Conquest, a major rebuilding programme was launched under Abbot Hugh to construct the post-Conquest abbey, the remains of which exist today.⁰⁶ The abbey was still under construction in 1176. A fire struck the abbey in 1235; the damage probably caused the major remodelling of the abbey church.⁰⁷ The Abbey became one of the richest and most magnificent monasteries in the country. At its prime, in the thirteenth century,

01 Surrey County Archaeological Unit, Extensive Urban Survey of Surrey: Chertsey, p. 4
02 Edward Walford, A topographical history of Surrey, p. 361.
03 <http://chertseymuseum.org/chertsey>

04 Walford, p. 359.
05 Surrey Archaeological Unit, Extensive Urban Survey of Surrey, p. 7
06 <https://historicensland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1008524>
07 <https://historicensland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1008524>

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

the Abbey owned land covering 50,000 acres.⁰⁸ A general plan of the Abbey site, thought to date to the mid-fifteenth century, shows the monastic church, a hospitium (guest house), two mills, a bridge and a few buildings beyond the Thames.⁰⁹

3.1.5 Henry I gave the town its market charter, which was reconfirmed by Henry III in 1249 and Edward I in 1282. St Peter's Church dates back to the early thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, although the west tower and chancel comprises the only remaining original fabric. The chancel roof dates to the fifteenth century. The church was rebuilt in the early nineteenth century. Steventon's Bridge over the Bourne at the southern end of Chertsey was established by the thirteenth century; it was rebuilt in the fourteenth century. The construction of the bridge may have been linked to the presence of a medieval suburb, Styvington, on the south side of the Bourne.

3.1.6 In 1537, during the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Abbot and fourteen monks handed over the abbey to Henry VIII. The church was demolished soon after. There is little record of the destruction of the monastic establishment at Chertsey, although the antiquarian and philosopher, John Aubrey, writing in 1673, mourns the loss of most of the buildings and comments on the building of Abbey House out of the abbey ruins (which was later demolished).¹⁰ The general layout of the Abbey can still be traced through the once elaborate system of moats and fishponds and parts of the original precinct walls,

all probably dating to the late thirteenth / early fourteenth century. Following the Dissolution, the abbey remained under Crown ownership until 1553, when it passed from Edward VI to Sir William Fitzwilliam.



General plan of the abbey site, Exchequer Ledger, possibly dating to the mid-fifteenth century (copy of original, Chertsey Museum)

08 Chertsey Museum text panel.
09 Walford, p. 369.
10 Walford, p. 370.

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1.7 Elizabeth I granted permission for a new market and a fair in 1599.¹¹ A market house, raised above an arched colonnade, was built and a market town formed around the Abbey remains; the arable landscape lent well to market gardening and the town was easily accessible from London. The market house (later demolished) was located in front of St Peter's Church, where the street is particularly wide.



Swan Hotel, undated (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/36)

¹¹ <http://chertseymuseum.org/chertsey>

- 3.1.8 The town, located between London and Windsor, became a busy coaching town. Many of the pubs and inns that remain today were built during this period. The George in Guildford Street is thought to be the earliest inn in Surrey, dating back to the thirteenth century; its various past names include the Prince's Arms and The Boot. The building is Grade II listed and has recently been substantially dismantled due to its poor structural condition but rebuilding in a sensitive manner is proposed. One of the other earliest pubs still existing is the Swan. This pub, trading from 1595 as the 'White Swan', was the main coaching inn and post office in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries providing a stop and change of horses for the royal carriages to and from Windsor Castle.¹²



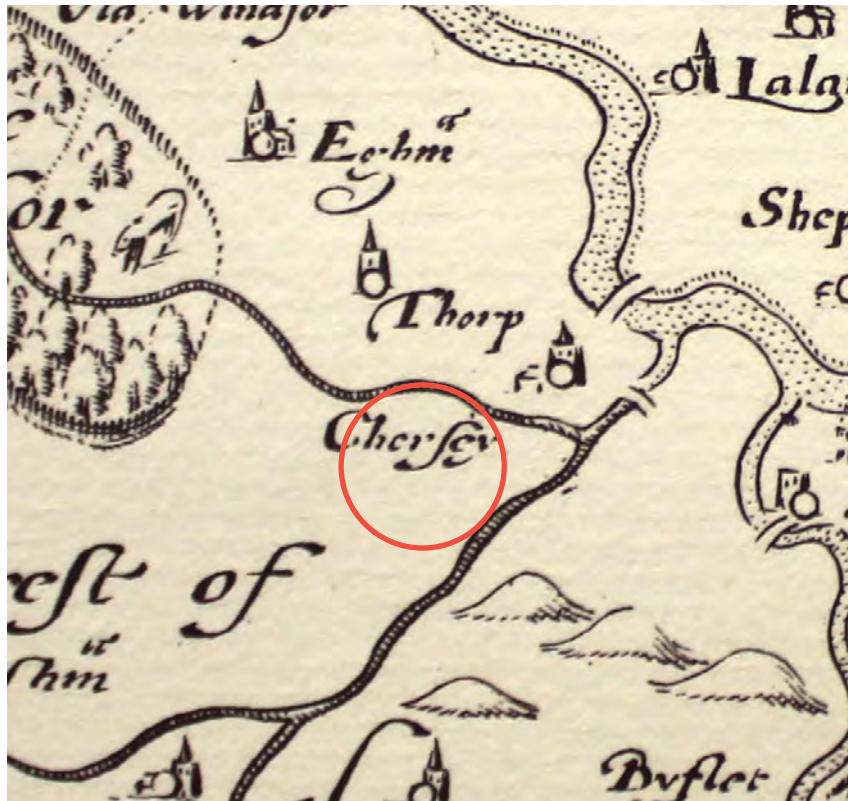
Crown Hotel, late nineteenth/ early twentieth century (Chertsey Museum: B.266)

¹² <http://chertseymuseum.org/chertsey>

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.2 LATE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

3.2.1 Chertsey appears on late sixteenth century maps of Surrey; the maps provide scant detail but show the town's position near the river, to the east of the park at Windsor and to the south of Egham and Thorpe.



Christopher Saxton, Surrey, Sussex, Kent and Middlesex – a map taken from a County Atlas (1579). (Surrey History Centre: 250 years of map making in the county of Surrey, 1575-1823, 1974). The red circle shows the approximate location of the Conservation Area.

3.2.2 An early seventeenth century map, by John Speed includes a church symbol, possibly representing St Peter's Church and Chertsey Bridge crossing the Thames.



John Speed, Surrey with insets depicting Palaces of Richmond and Nonsuch (1610). (Surrey History Centre: 250 years of map making in the county of Surrey, 1575-1823, 1974). The red circle shows the approximate location of the Conservation Area.

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

- 3.2.3 The poet Abraham Cowley lived in Guildford Street during the seventeenth century; he died at Cowley House in 1667.



Cowley House, Guildford Street, undated (Manning and Bray)

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.3 EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

3.3.1 Eighteenth century maps provide much greater detail than those dating to the previous century. John Senex shows that the main streets, Windsor Street, London Street and Guildford Street had been laid out, each lined with housing. Senex's map records, through symbols and annotations, St Peter's Church, Abbey House and Abbey Mill along a tributary from the Thames, as well as Chertsey Bridge. Rocque's map from the same century, shows a similar extent of development but also details rear gardens and the patchwork of fields characterising the surrounding landscape.

3.3.2 During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, possibly also during the medieval period, Chertsey had a southern suburb on the south side of the Bourne river, beyond Steventon's Bridge, called Styvington. This suburb was separated from the island of Chertsey by the floodplain of the Bourne.¹³

3.3.3 Chertsey remained an important coaching town throughout the eighteenth century. From the late eighteenth century, Chertsey attracted members of the fashionable London gentry, who established countryside retreats outside of London. The Whig politician, Charles James Fox was one of the first and resided at St Ann's House on St Ann's Hill, to the west of the town.

3.3.4 In the eighteenth, nineteenth and even early twentieth centuries, Chertsey was renowned for its clock-making industry. The main clock-makers were Henry Wale Cartwright and three generations of James Douglas'.



John Senex, Map of Surrey (1729). (Surrey History Centre: 250 years of map making in the county of Surrey, 1575-1823, 1974). The red circle shows the approximate location of the Conservation Area.



John Rocque, Map of Surrey (1768). (Surrey History Centre: 250 years of map making in the county of Surrey, 1575-1823, 1974). The red circle shows the approximate location of the Conservation Area.

¹³ Surrey County Archaeological Unit, Extensive Urban Survey of Surrey: Chertsey, p. 9.

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.4 NINETEENTH CENTURY

- 3.4.1 During the nineteenth century Chertsey's economy was largely agricultural; small local industries included brickmaking south of the town, market gardening, brewing and iron founding.¹⁴
- 3.4.2 The church was rebuilt in 1806 and the Old Market House, which was located by the church and apparently largely concealed its view, was taken down in 1810. Another Market House was constructed in London Street.¹⁵



Chertsey Church, undated (early nineteenth century) (Surrey History Centre: 4248/4/3/3 + 4)

¹⁴ Surrey County Archaeological Unit, Extensive Urban Survey of Surrey: Chertsey, p. 11.

¹⁵ Rev. Owen Manning and William Bray, *The history and antiquities of the county of Surrey: Volume III*, p. 206.

- 3.4.3 Nineteenth century maps show the two distinct areas of settlement: the main town of Chertsey and the suburb of Styvington to the south, on the southern side of the Bourne river. It was only after the mid-nineteenth century that the town was significantly expanded beyond its medieval extent. Maps from this period provide further detail on buildings, roads and land ownership in Chertsey. The 1814 Enclosure Map marks the Swan Inn on the south of Windsor Street and the Crown Inn on the north of London Street and shows the narrow, individual plots lining these two and Guildford Street. It also includes Weston House, the Manor House, Cowley House and Beaumont Cottage which all occupied larger plots of land. Main landowners at this stage included the Crown. Greenwood's map, dating to 1823, also references Cowley House, Beaumont Cottage (later known as Beomond Cottage), as well as the site of the former Abbey and Mill as indicated on earlier maps.

- 3.4.4 The Tithe Map of Chertsey Parish, dating to 1844, shows the layout of roads and certain plots of land, however there are many blank spaces showing that much of the land was untitheable, probably as a result of church ownership. Major landowners included Henry Roake, The Hon. George Cavendish, Thomas Lowndes, William Holme Sumner and Robert Kirkpatrick Escott.

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



Enclosure Map, 1814 (Chertsey Museum). The red outline shows the Conservation Area boundary.



Christopher and John Greenwood, Map of Surrey (1823). (Surrey History Centre: 250 years of map making in the county of Surrey, 1575-1823, 1974). The red outline shows the Conservation Area boundary.



Tithe Map, Chertsey Parish, 1844 (Surrey History Centre: 864/11/25). The red outline shows the Conservation Area boundary.

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

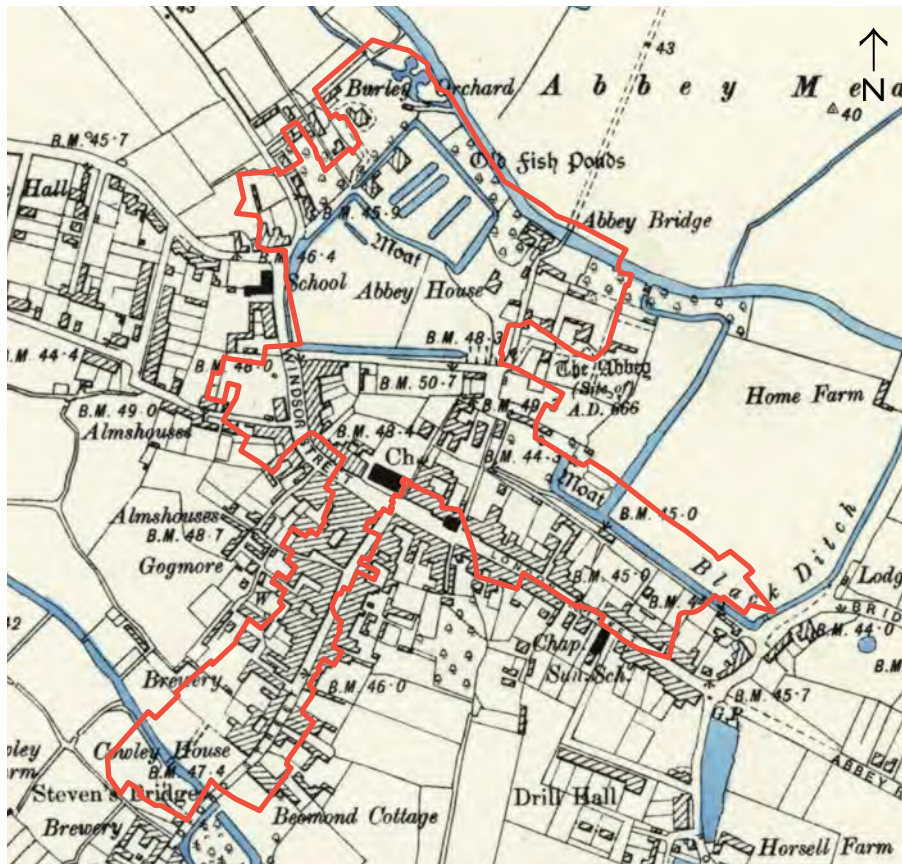
- 3.4.5 The railway arrived in 1848, when a line was opened running from Weybridge, through Addlestone to Chertsey. The station and railway line are to the south of the town centre. This infrastructure caused an increase in the local population and significant development, particularly at the south end of the town.
- 3.4.6 The first OS map of 1864-65 provides the first fully accurate and detailed record of Chertsey which includes place names and road names. Since the early nineteenth century maps, further housing had been constructed beyond the town core, along the south of Guildford Road, east of London Street and north of Windsor Street. The map shows the town centre's important civic and religious buildings including almshouses, St Peter's Church, the Town Hall, the Baptist Chapel and the parochial schools (both Sunday and Infant). Burley Orchard was constructed shortly after, in 1874-75, to the north of Abbey Fields. The house was built by and for William Anthony Herring, an important local figure who was a successful iron founder and benefactor to Chertsey. The Herring Iron Foundry, which supplied ornamental ironwork and heating apparatus, was originally set up in Guildford Street, before moving to a site in Gogmore Lane in 1827. The foundry flourished until well into the late nineteenth century and is memorialised by the present names of Foundry Mews and Foundry Court built on the foundry site in Gogmore Lane.¹⁶



OS map, 1864-1865 (National Library of Scotland). The red outline shows the Conservation Area boundary.

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

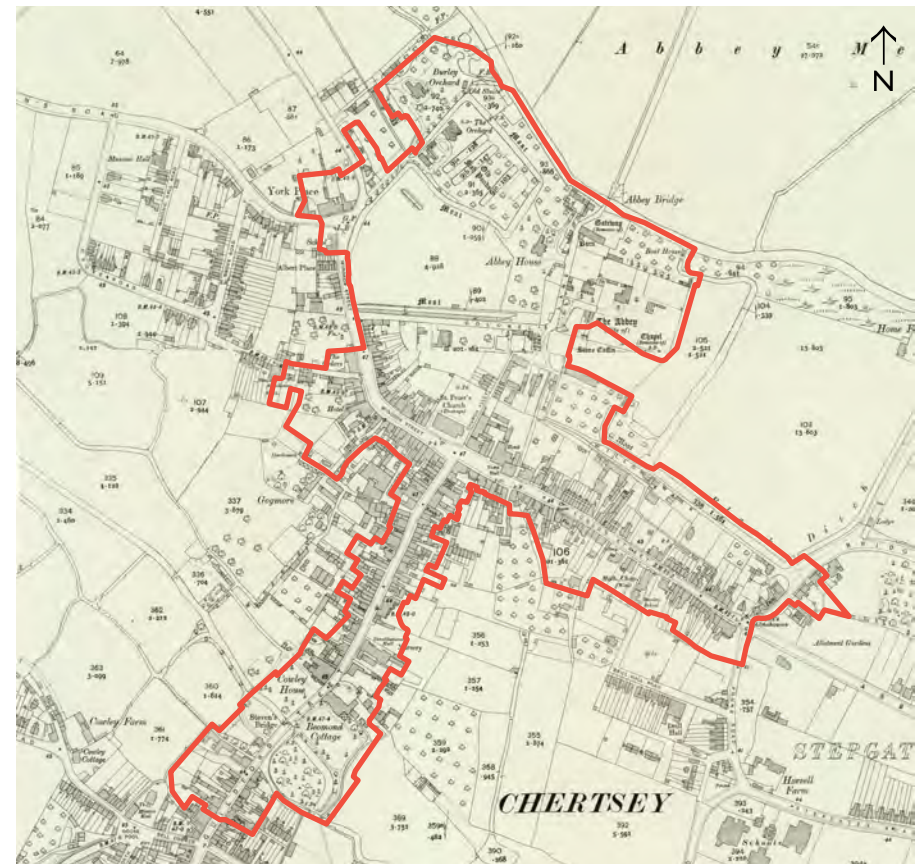
3.4.7 In the 1880s and the 1890s, more housing was built at the fringes of the town, for example in the Chertsey Grove development, to the north-west of the town centre and within the former Abbey site. Semi-detached houses were also built along Drill Hall Road, to the south-east of the main town. The Constitutional Club was built on the east side of Guildford Street.



OS map, 1894 (National Library of Scotland). The red outline shows the Conservation Area boundary.

3.5 TWENTIETH CENTURY

3.5.1 There was very little change in Chertsey between the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century; the town itself was largely unaffected, but large, detached houses were built set back from Abbey Road.



OS map, 1912 (National Library of Scotland). The red outline shows the Conservation Area boundary.

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



OS map, 1934 (National Library of Scotland). The red outline shows the Conservation Area boundary.

3.5.2 The following postcards and photographs capture the three main streets in Chertsey in the early twentieth century; the images show modest Georgian and Victorian buildings with traditional Victorian and Edwardian shopfronts features. Unless stated otherwise, the images are undated; however, the presence of the horse-drawn carts, dirt roads and historic shopfronts suggest they pre-date the first decades of the twentieth century.



View of Guildford Street, undated [possibly late nineteenth century] (Chertsey Museum: CHYMS.0065/28)

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



View of Guildford Street, late nineteenth century (Chertsey Museum: CHYMS. 0065/36)



View of Guildford Street, 1889 (Chertsey Museum: CHYMS.0158)



View of Guildford Street (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/18)



View of Guildford Street (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/19)

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



View of Windsor Street (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/17)



View of Guildford Street (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/24)



View of Windsor Street with London Street in the distance (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/16)



View of London Street showing the Crown Hotel and the Town Hall (Chertsey Museum: CHYMS.0065/24)

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



View of Windsor Street looking west, c.1900 (Chertsey Museum: CHYMS.0065/31)



View of Guildford Street (Chertsey Museum: CHYMS.0842)



View of Windsor Street looking west (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/5)



View of Windsor Street looking west (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/13)

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



View of London Street (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/11)



View of London Street (Surrey History Centre: PC/34/18)



Old Town Hall, 1907 (Chertsey Museum: CHYMS.2002.044)

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.5.3 There was significant development in Chertsey during the twentieth century. Large engineering works were constructed including electroplating works and light engineering works, as well as warehouses and institutions such as the telephone exchange and post office. These large-scale buildings were set back from London Street and Guildford Street. More housing was built to cater for the growing commuter population: semi-detached houses filled in the land between Staines Lane and St Ann's Road to the north-west of the town centre and large detached houses further infilled the former Abbey site. The size of the town increased significantly. New roads were introduced to serve the growing town, the most significant being Heriot Road, with a new development of terraced houses to its east.



Aerial photograph looking north showing extent of flooding in 1947 (Surrey History Centre: CC5471113)

3.0 | HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.5.4 The photographs from the mid-late twentieth century show that a few Victorian and Edwardian buildings and shopfronts along the High Street had been replaced with modern buildings and shopfronts, whilst others remained with historic fascia boards, stallrisers, shop signage and metal arms for canvas awnings.

3.6 RECENT HISTORY

3.6.1 The town of Chertsey was designated as a Conservation Area in October 1969. In the 1970s the M3 was built, immediately to the north of Chertsey, cutting through Abbey Mead. The Borough of Runnymede was formed in 1974 when the administrative areas of Chertsey Urban District Council and Egham Urban District Council were combined.



View of Windsor Street (Surrey History Centre: PH 34/117)



View of Guildford Street, 1970 (Surrey History Centre: PH 34/148)



View of Windsor Street (Surrey History Centre: PH 34/116)

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

4.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 4.1.1 Chertsey is located in the eastern part of the borough positioned between the M3 motorway to the north, the M25 to the west and the River Thames to the east. The town of Addlestone is located to the south.
- 4.1.2 The Conservation Area is centred on the junction of its three principal streets, Guildford Street, London Street and Windsor Street. St Peter's Church is positioned at this junction and to the north are the remains of the nationally significant Chertsey Abbey.
- 4.1.3 The boundary of the Conservation Area mainly tightly follows the rear elevations and plot boundaries of the buildings lining Guildford Street, London Street and Windsor Street. In the northern part of the Conservation Area, the boundary is formed by Willow Walk, the open space in Abbey Green and Abbey Gardens. It then follows the edge of the Abbey River to Herrings Lane before joining Staines Lane, which is an extension of Windsor Street.
- 4.1.4 The Conservation Area is low-lying at around 15m above sea level. The lowest points are within the vicinity of the River Bourne and Abbey River and the eastern end of London Street, nearest the River Thames. The St Peter's Church and the Abbey remains are on slightly higher ground. The bedrock geology of the area is Bagshot Formation, sandy sedimentary deposits, with superficial deposits of fluvial gravel and sand due to its proximity to the River Thames and its low-lying floodplain.



Plan 3: Location Plan of Chertsey within the surrounding area. Base plan © Google Earth 2018. This plan is not to scale.

4.2 ARCHAEOLOGY

4.2.1 The ancient origins of Chertsey as a settlement and location of an important Benedictine monastery, Chertsey Abbey, mean that there are extensive known archaeological remains within the Conservation Area and high potential for further archaeological remains to be identified.

4.2.2 The remains of Chertsey Abbey are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, details of which are within the National Heritage List for England entry for the site found here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1008524>. The Abbey was founded in the seventh century; however, the remains date to its rebuilding in the twelfth century. Despite demolition of the buildings following the dissolution and subsequent disturbance by more recent building works the Abbey remains survive comparatively well as a rare example of an early monastic foundation.

4.2.3 The majority of the rest of the Conservation Area, along Guildford Street, London Street and Windsor Street, is designated as Chertsey Historic Core Area of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP). The designation reflects the likely potential for archaeological remains, which would add further understanding about the evolution of the town core which developed alongside, and in association with, the Abbey.



Plan 4: Chertsey Abbey Scheduled Ancient Monument and Chertsey Historic Core Area of High Archaeological Potential. This plan is not to scale.

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

4.3 STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

- 4.3.1 The three principal streets in the Conservation Area are Guildford Street, London Street and Windsor Street. The three join at a T-junction at the heart of the Conservation Area and provide a traditional focus for the town with St Peter's Church positioned at this prominent junction. The Church is set back and there are generous pavements around the junction. Both Windsor and London Streets are of generous width being more residential in character than Guildford Street, which is narrower in width.
- 4.3.2 Guildford Street, aligned north-east / south-west, and London Street, extending south-east, are occupied by buildings with varied frontage widths and long, narrow plots. On Guildford Street, the main commercial and shopping street, the frontages are generally two or three bays and buildings are hard against the pavement clearly defining the public realm. The buildings narrow frontages survive from the medieval origins of the town when the street frontage along this street would have been at a premium. There are several exceptions to this narrow plot pattern resulting from the amalgamation in modern times of multiple plots. Examples include Nos. 95-99 and Nos. 88-90 Guildford Street.
- 4.3.3 Along London Street, which is mainly residential in use, the variety is greater with very deep and narrow plots along the south side and at the eastern end and shallower plots along the north side. At the western end, closest to the commercial heart of the Conservation Area are some broader frontages associated with significant buildings such as the Old Town Hall and Crown Hotel. There are also some very large and irregularly shaped plots with large detached buildings for industrial and office uses such as Nos. 43-47 and Nos. 49-61; these are out of character of the finer historic grain of domestic buildings along the rest of the street. Towards the western end of the street, buildings are hard against the pavement but further east, away from the town centre, houses are frequently set back behind small front gardens.
- 4.3.4 Windsor Street extends north-west from Guildford Street before turning north beyond the junction with Alwyns Lane. The buildings along this street occupy larger and wider plots, with larger, grander buildings. There are many five or six bay buildings on this street, most of which were large private houses, but many are now in office use. Similarly to London Street, the buildings closest to the town centre are positioned hard against the pavement, but further north buildings are set back behind front gardens.

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

- 4.3.5 A characteristic of all three of these principal streets are the numerous, narrow, secondary lanes and alleys which extend off them at perpendicular angles and would have historically led to more industrial uses. These include Gogmore Lane and several unnamed alleys off Guildford Street, Alwyns Lane and Church Walk off Windsor Street and Blacksmith's Lane and Drill Hall Road off London Street. These narrow streets are now primarily residential in character and are made up of irregular plots.
- 4.3.6 The northern part of the Conservation Area is dominated by the substantial open spaces of the playing fields and public gardens. To the north of these open spaces is the meandering approach drive to Burley Orchard, a substantial detached house set in a large plot and now accompanied by sheltered housing. There are a number of other large plots with detached houses in this part of the Conservation Area as well as semi-detached houses fronting Staines Lane and Herrings Lane. Colonel's Lane forms the southern edge of the playing fields and has generally narrow plot widths with a broader frontage at the eastern end. Abbey Green is an irregularly-shaped enclave around which are clustered a variety of plot sizes and shapes. Buildings away from the town centre and principal streets generally have much more generous open space around them and a more suburban character.



Historic narrow frontages along Guildford Street



Modern buildings such as Nos. 75-79 Guildford Street have much broader frontages than the more historic buildings

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT



Historic narrow frontages along London Street



Broader building frontages on Windsor Street



Irregular arrangement of buildings around Abbey Green



Detached buildings in large plots to the north of the playing fields

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

4.4 PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACES

- 4.4.1 Public realm includes the treatment of spaces around buildings, such as surfacing, signage and street furniture. There are several areas of managed public realm in the Conservation Area as well as the public streets.
- 4.4.2 The principal public open space is Abbey Fields made up of playing fields and public gardens in the northern part of the Conservation Area and are located on the site of the former Chertsey Abbey. The playing fields are characterised by a large open lawn with tarmacked paths and a pavilion and trees around the periphery and a denser area of trees to the east which contains some visible built remains of the Abbey complex. The remains of the Abbey's dry moat also extend around the edges of the playing fields. The public gardens are also lawned, with planted beds and interspersed with trees. The gardens are dominated by three long earthwork depressions, remains of three of the six former Abbey fishponds. There are a variety of timber benches within both the playing fields and public gardens. Abbey Fields are of both significant amenity value, for being a large public open space in very close proximity to the town centre, and heritage value, for containing visible and buried remains of the nationally important Chertsey Abbey.



Former Abbey walls in the treed area to east of playing fields



The Abbey River and riverside footpath, forming the northern boundary of Abbey Fields and the Conservation Area

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT



Playing fields



Former Abbey fishponds in the public gardens



Remains of the Abbey complex moat, parallel with Colonel's Lane

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

4.4.3 Another important area of public open space is the 'town square' around the important junction of Guildford Street with London and Windsor Streets. This is an informal public space, defined by the broader pavements around the junction and St Peter's Church being set back from the general building line. The approximate area of the town square is defined on Plan 5 in section 4.5. This area has a civic and commercial character incorporating the Grade II listed town pump and war memorial and being the location of the weekly market on Saturday mornings (7-9am). It is also surrounded by key buildings including the Church, the Old Town Hall and Crown Hotel. The 'square' is the commercial and civic focus of the Conservation Area and makes this open space a particularly important part of the Conservation Area. However, it is in need of maintenance with much of the street furniture in a poor state of repair.



The 'town square', the commercial and civic heart of the Conservation Area.

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

- 4.4.4 The other public open spaces in the Conservation Area are the churchyard of St Peter's Church and that associated with the River Bourne in the south of the Conservation Area. The churchyard is lawned with several tombs and planted with mature trees, the gravestones are arranged around the perimeter. The boundary with Church Walk is formed by modern railings, although the stone plinth of historic railings remains. The church hall is a nondescript, modern single storey brick building. The River Bourne passes through the Conservation Area at its southern end, it has pleasant treed footpaths on both sides with footbridges crossing it including one which is locally listed. The library, on the southern riverbank, is set within a low key but pleasant lawned open space planted with mature trees. These more secondary green public spaces contribute to the local amenity and in the case of the churchyard are also of significant historic value.



Chertsey Library set within a simply landscape public space



St Peter's Church churchyard to the rear of the church

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Footpath along southern bank of the Rover Bourne



Footbridge over the River Bourne

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- 4.4.5 At the eastern end of Abbey Green is a further area of green open space adjacent to a historic barn which was part of the Abbey complex. The lawned open space is privately owned but does nonetheless contribute to the visual amenity of the Conservation Area. It also contains visible earthworks and buried remains of the Abbey and so is of historic value.



Private green space to east of Abbey Green; the mounds are remains of the former Abbey

- 4.4.6 Other than these green open spaces, the main public realm in the Conservation Area are the pavements, in particular those on Guildford Street which is the main commercial street. Here, the pavements have in recent years been replaced with York Stone slabs with granite kerbstones. However, these finishes have been damaged by inappropriate vehicular parking. Elsewhere, a wide assortment of surface treatments is used including tarmac, stone and concrete slabs, bricks, gravel and some areas of historic cobbling.



Tarmacked road surface with granite-edged pavement along Guildford Street

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT



Pedestrianised space to the east of the Guildford Street

- 4.4.7 Across the Conservation Area there is an extensive array of street furniture including bollards, railings, benches, litter bins, lampposts, post boxes, broadband cabinets, wayfinding signage and road signs. The highest concentration is along Guildford Street and around the town square. Although the municipal street furniture (bollards, litter bins and seating) have a familial relationship, there are numerous different designs for each type which detracts from the overall appearance of the Conservation Area. Furthermore, many of the pieces are in a poor state of repair and are in need of maintenance, replacement or removal. There are some pieces of street furniture, such as post boxes and some historic lampposts, which make a positive contribution to the appearance of the Conservation Area.



The array of street furniture around the town square in front of St Peter's Church

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT



Bollards in Guildford Street, there are a variety of styles and many are in a poor state of repair

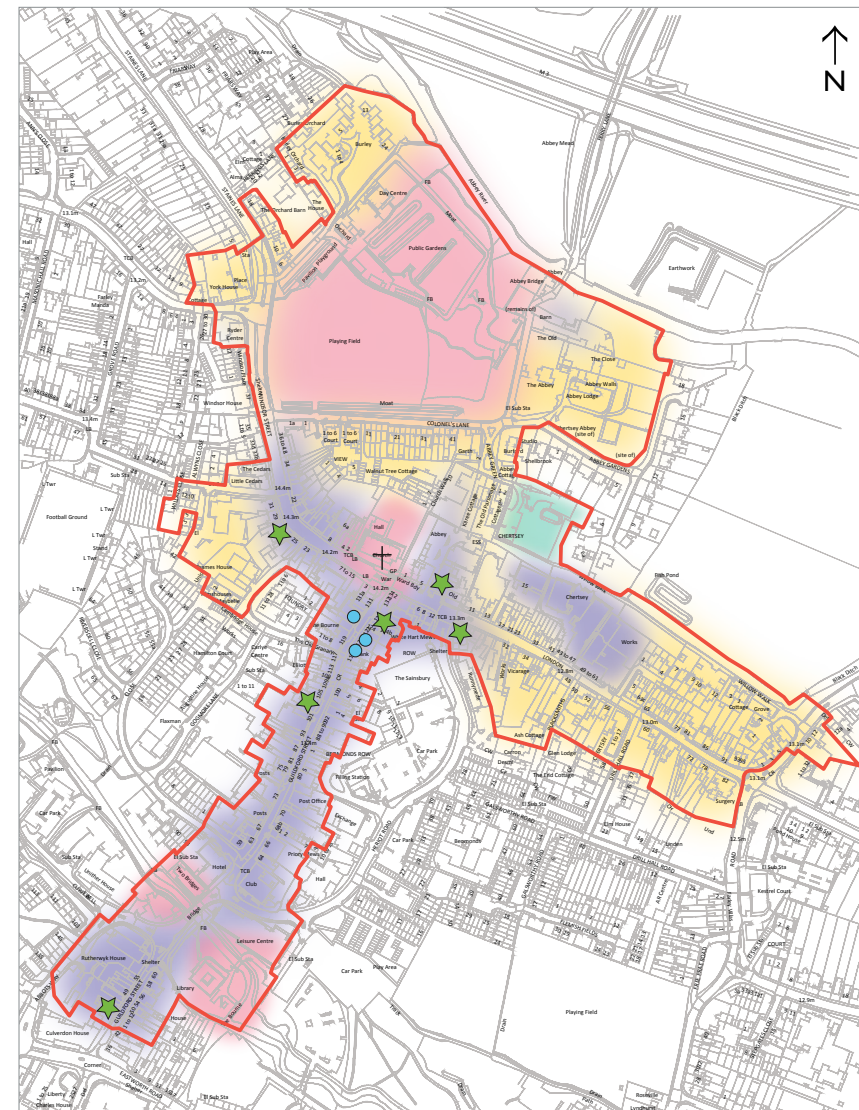
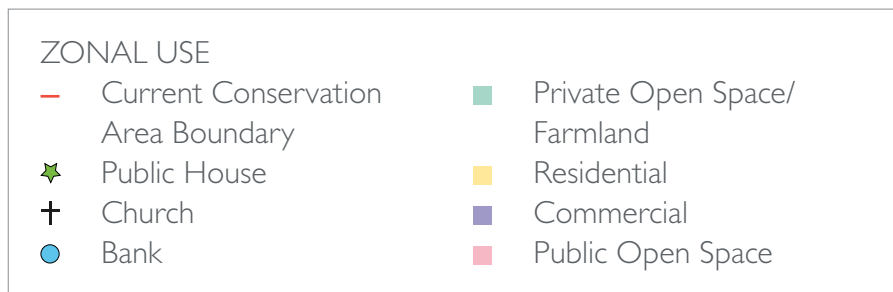
4.5 BUILDING TYPES AND USES

- 4.5.1 The two principal use types within the Conservation Area are commercial and residential. The remainder of the Conservation Area is open space, either public or private.
- 4.5.2 Commercial uses are concentrated along Guildford Street and around its junction with Windsor and London Streets and is primarily retail and leisure (restaurants/pubs). The northern part of Windsor Street and the eastern end of London Street are principally residential in use. Residential use is also dominant in Staines Lane, Herrings Lane, Abbey Gardens and Abbey Green. However, there are some office or light-industrial commercial uses interspersed throughout these residential parts often in converted residential or agricultural buildings or else within purpose-built buildings. Burley Orchard is also in residential use, the historic mansion being converted into apartments and further residential accommodation being built within its grounds.

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

4.5.3 There are both public and private open spaces within the Conservation Area which provide important physical and visual amenity for the local community. The most significant is the Abbey Fields, which are playing fields and public gardens and a focal point of the Conservation Area and contains important remains of Chertsey Abbey. The other main public open spaces are the churchyard of St Peter's Church, to its rear, and the 'town square' created by the generous pavement and public realm in front of the Church on Windsor Street. On Abbey Green, adjacent to a barn converted to office use, is the main piece of private open space which may also contain archaeological remains of the medieval manor house of Bemonds Manor and the Abbey.

4.5.4 The plan on the next page shows the different use zones within and in the immediate surroundings of the Conservation Area. As well as the uses described above, it identifies specific use types, namely churches and pubs. The range of uses in the Conservation Area is characteristic of a small town and therefore contributes to the special interest of the Conservation Area.



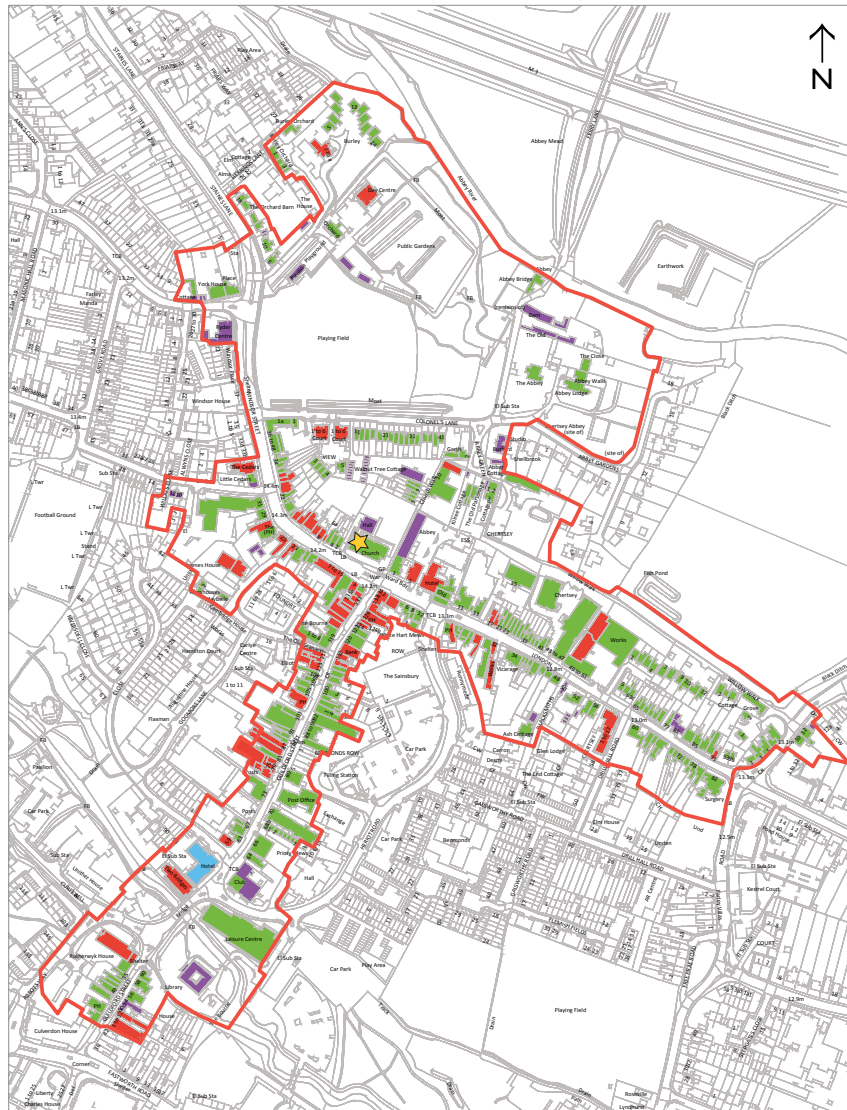
Plan 5: Use distribution across the Chertsey Conservation Area.
This plan is not to scale.

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

4.6 BUILDING SCALE AND MASSING

- 4.6.1 The scale of buildings in the Conservation Area ranges from single storey up to four storeys, with the exception of the tower of St Peter's Church. The majority of buildings both in the principal streets and in the residential areas are two storeys with a number of three storey buildings in Guildford, Windsor and London Streets.
- 4.6.2 Along Guildford Street, the main commercial street, the overall height of buildings varies although all are either two or three storeys high except for the modern Travelodge hotel at four storeys and Chertsey Library at one storey. The buildings at the southern end of the street, north of the junction with Riverdell Close, are generally lower in height and gradually increasing in scale towards the junction with Windsor and London Streets. Banks and pubs, which make an important commercial and social contribution to town life, are generally three storeys and utilise a grander proportions and greater presence in the street. Modern infill is generally in scale with the historic context.
- 4.6.3 The buildings lining Windsor Street are generally slightly taller in height than those in Guildford Street with a greater proportion at three storeys but there is likewise variety in the overall roofline. As the street turns north, leaving the town centre, the buildings become more residential in scale. London Street is also more domestic in scale being mainly two storey residential buildings except for a number of taller hotel and commercial buildings focussed at the junction with Windsor Street and Guildford Street.
- 4.6.4 Away from these principle streets buildings are mainly two storeys with also numerous one storey bungalows and garages. In these areas, the modern infill fits in with the historic scale.
- 4.6.5 At the commercial heart of the town along Guildford Street, the eastern end of Windsor Street and western end of London Street, the buildings all adjoin each other in a continuous row demonstrative of the fact that the land in these streets would have been at a premium and no space was wasted. Further east and west along London Street and Windsor Street respectively, there are shorter terraced rows and some semi-detached and detached buildings although the spaces between these groups is still limited. The situation is similar in Colonel's Lane, Abbey Green and Staines Lane. There are a number of larger detached houses set within spacious grounds namely Abbey House and the Abbey, both in Abbey Gardens, and Burley Orchard, which is now in use as sheltered housing.

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BUILDING HEIGHTS

- Current Conservation Area Boundary
- One Storey
- Two Storeys
- Three Storeys
- Four Storeys
- ★ The tower of St Peter's Church is taller than other buildings in the surrounding townscape

Note: The George Inn is currently in a dilapidated condition but is to be rebuilt in facsimile.

Plan 6: Range of building heights across the Chertsey Conservation Area.
This plan is not to scale.

4.0 | CHARACTER ASSESSMENT



Varied building height along Guildford Street

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More domestic scale of buildings in London Street

Grander scale buildings at the eastern end of Windsor Street