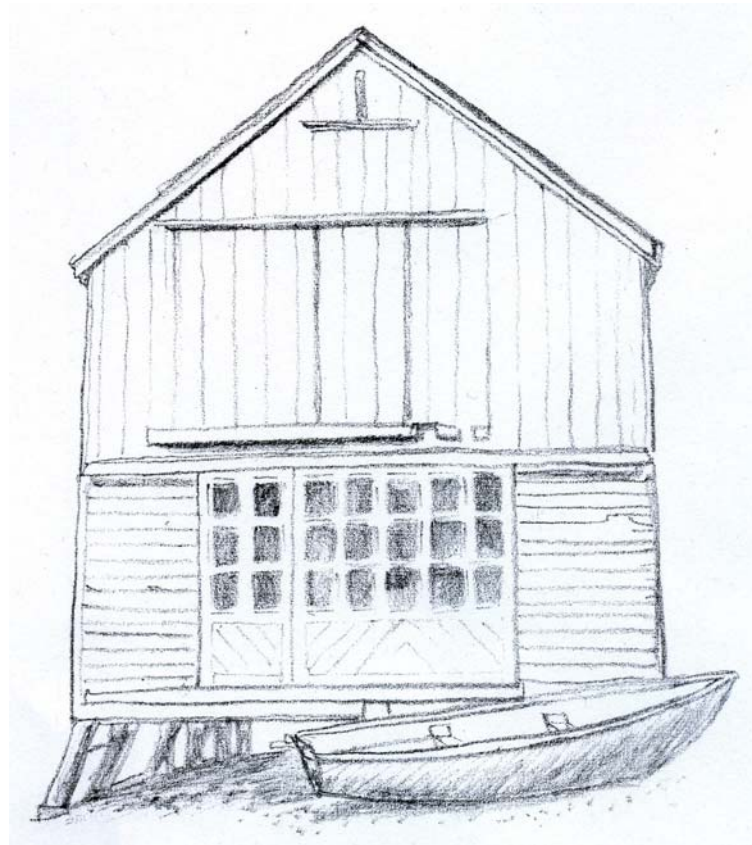


# TOLLESBURY

## Conservation Area Review and Character Appraisal



Front cover illustration: Boatshed at Tollesbury Riverside

This document was produced by Essex County Council  
for Maldon District Council.

Contributions to this document were made by the  
following officers of Essex County Council Historic  
Buildings and Conservation Team:

Pippa Colchester MA(Hons), MSc, IHBC

Michael Hurst BSc(Hons), MSc, MRICS, IHBC

With Document Production by Cathryn Thaiss

# CONTENTS

<b>1.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Character Statement	2
<b>2.</b>	<b>ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	Historical Development	6
2.2	Cartographic Evidence	8
<b>3.</b>	<b>TOWNSCAPE</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>USES</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>MATERIALS AND DETAILING</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>AREA ANALYSIS</b>	<b>16</b>
6.1	<b>West Street</b>	<b>18</b>
6.1.1	West Street, Northern Side (even numbers)	19
6.1.2	West Street, Southern Side (odd numbers)	20
6.2	<b>North Road</b>	<b>21</b>
6.3	<b>Elysian Gardens</b>	<b>22</b>
6.4	<b>High Street</b>	<b>22</b>
6.4.1	High Street, Northern Side (even numbers)	23
6.4.2	High Street, Southern Side (odd numbers)	24
6.5	<b>The Market Place</b>	<b>26</b>
6.6	<b>Church Street</b>	<b>27</b>
6.6.1	Church Street, Eastern Side (odd numbers)	27
6.6.2	Church Street, Western Side (even numbers)	28
6.7	<b>East Street</b>	<b>30</b>
6.7.1	East Street, Northern Side (United Reformed Church – number 29, odd)	30
6.7.2	East Street, Northern Side (number 31 – Masonic Hall, odd)	31
6.7.3	East Street, Southern Side (even numbers)	32
6.8	<b>Station Road</b>	<b>34</b>
6.9	<b>The Chase</b>	<b>34</b>
6.10	<b>Hall Road</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>36</b>
7.1	Changes to Boundaries	36
7.2	Additional Planning Controls	40
7.3	Enhancements	40
<b>8.</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>44</b>
9.1	Policy Content	44
9.2	Bibliography	44
<b>10.</b>	<b>INDEX TO STREETS</b>	<b>45</b>



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Conservation areas are 'Areas of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.' (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). The conservation area in Tollesbury was first designated on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 1970, since which the boundaries were amended slightly on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 1977. It covers the historic settlement, at centre of the village but excludes the nineteenth century expansion of the settlement and the river side.

The conservation area centres on the ancient market place, at The Green and includes West Street, High Street, Church Street, East Street, Hall Road and parts of North Road, Elysian Gardens, Station Road and Hunts Farm Close and The Chase (*fig. 1*).

There are 23 listed buildings within the conservation area (although this includes single entries for groups of buildings). All are grade II listed, except for the grade II\* listed church of St. Mary and Tollesbury Hall. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the conservation area.

Designation of a conservation area extends planning controls over certain types of development, including extensions, boundary treatments, the demolition of unlisted buildings and works to trees. However, it does not prevent any change to the area and it may be subject to many different pressures (good and bad) that will affect its character and appearance. Although Tollesbury is a relatively remote village, it still faces continuing pressure for change, and since the first conservation area designation in 1970 many changes have taken place. The greatest threat to the character is the continuing need for 'modernisation' and 'improvement', with alteration of existing buildings resulting in considerable loss of character, through works carried out as permitted development within the provisions of the General Development Order.

Maldon District Council commissioned Essex County Council to prepare the conservation area appraisal and review in May 2004, the research and fieldwork were carried out between December 2004 and February 2005.

The appraisal provides a brief development history of the current settlement. This is followed by a description of the townscape and assessment of character. The contribution of different elements to the character is identified through detailed street by street analysis. To do this, the conservation area has been divided into sub-areas relating to individual streets, which are described from west to east:

- West Street
- North Road
- Elysian Gardens
- High Street
- Church Street and The Green
- East Street
- Station Road
- Hall Road
- The Chase

Any issues which may affect the protection of character will be highlighted and opportunities for enhancement identified. This appraisal also considers alterations to the boundary of the conservation area.

### **1.1. Character Statement**

The character of Tollesbury has been determined by numerous factors, the following being the most significant: coastal location, agriculture, marine activity, medieval layout, vernacular buildings, local materials, rapid residential expansion in the late nineteenth century and twentieth century.

# Tollesbury Conservation Area

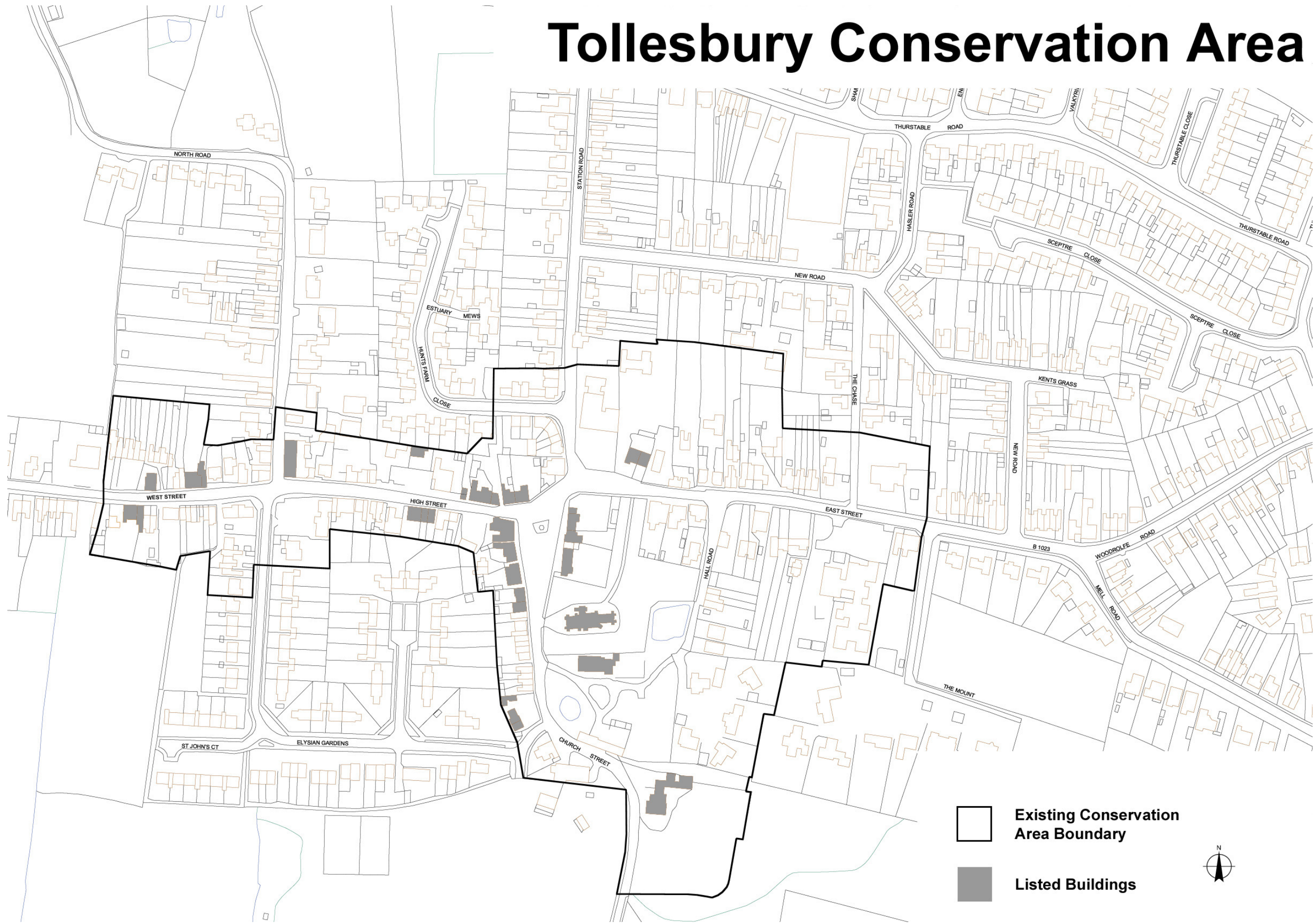


Fig.1. Tollesbury Conservation Area

Page intentionally left blank

## 2. ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Tollesbury is located in the north eastern corner of the district of Maldon, on a small peninsular between the River Blackwater and the Salcott Channel. The village is somewhat remote, linked to Tolleshunt D'arcy by the B1023. The nearest town is Maldon, approximately 9.5 miles away to the south west.

The historic settlement grew on the eastern edge of a sand and gravel ridge, over a layer of London clay and overlooking the coastal marshland. This coastal landscape has been changing since the medieval period with drainage, embankments and enclosure of the marshland (*fig. 2*). This has had a direct influence on the layout and development of the village, particularly in the last two centuries.

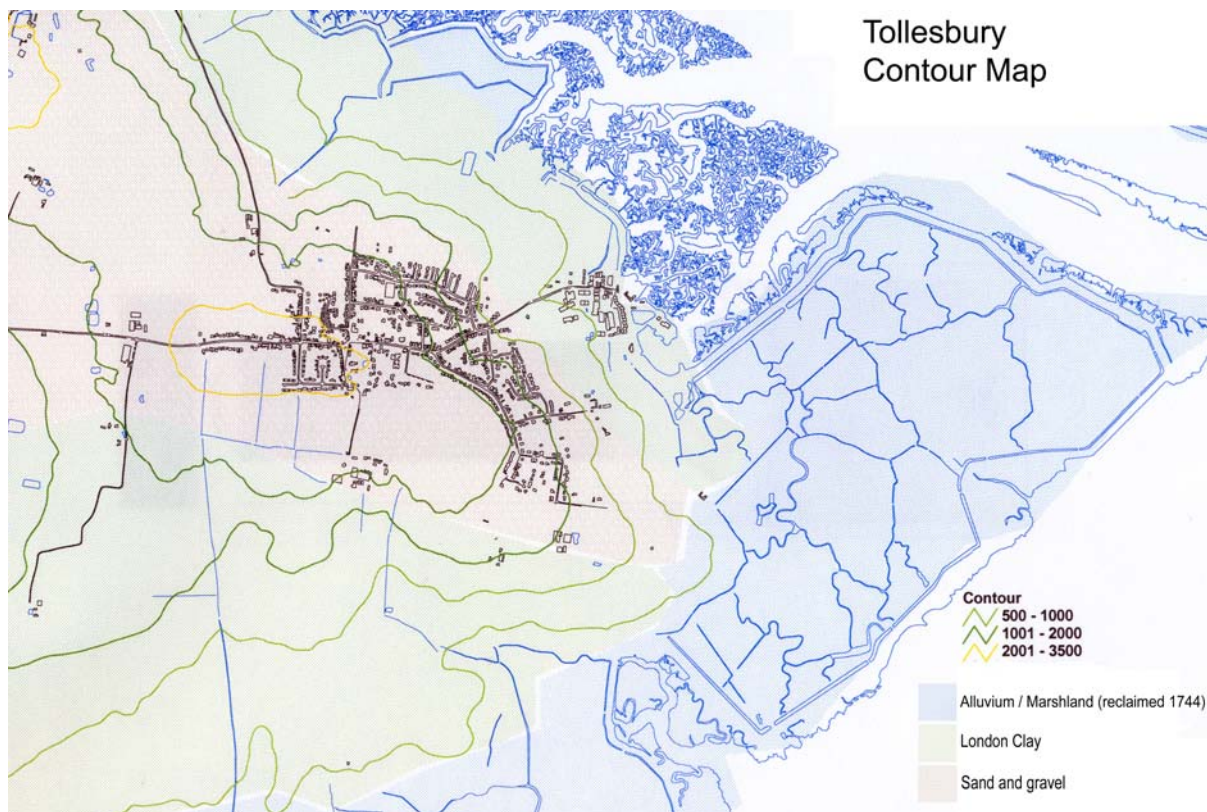


Fig. 2. Contour map showing marsh reclamation

## 2.1 Historical Development

There is evidence of human activity in the Tollesbury parish dating back to the prehistoric period, but the village seen today is based on the medieval settlement. The name derives from a large Saxon estate belonging to 'Toll', which included Tollesbury and the Tolleshunt villages. By the medieval period, the principal landholder was St Mary's Abbey of Barking, holding one of the two principal manors (Tollesbury Hall in the centre of the village), while Count Eustace of Essex held the other (Bouchiers Hall 1 mile to the north-west, outside the conservation area).

The medieval village was centred on the market place with the Church of St Mary on its southern edge. The church tower has been dated back to 1090, but is said to have Saxon origin. Tollesbury Hall is sited just behind the church and has been dated back to the thirteenth century. The high quality of the original carpentry reflects the patronage of the Abbess of Barking (McCann and Scott 1987). Remains of thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth century buildings around The Green show that the form of the medieval market place has survived into the present day. Only the east side has been encroached upon, but this dates back at least to the fourteenth century. Also, documentary evidence suggests that a guildhall occupied the site of 7-10 Church Street, opposite the church (Medlycott 2004).

The road layout is similarly historic, but building development was concentrated along the road west from the market place, until the nineteenth century. The roads north, south and east quickly led out to farms, marshland and creeks, with marine activity concentrated to the north at Old Hall wharf and to the east, as today, at Woodrope. Historical records – from the Domesday Book and 1381 poll tax up to nineteenth century directories and censuses – show that Tollesbury has continually exploited both its dryland and marine resources. The variety of resources and industry which has formed the basis of the village's existence and development is reflected in the pre-Reformation holdings of Tollesbury Hall: arable land, extensive sheep grazing on salt-marsh, a mill, salt-pans and oyster layings. Tollesbury was one of the richest medieval parishes in the east of Essex.

The post-medieval period is marked by an increase in the number of outlying farms with the break up of the Tollesbury Hall estate and the piece-meal reclamation of the marshland, but the extent of the village itself remained relatively static until the nineteenth century. In this century, there was considerable expansion of the village along East Street, Mell Road, North Road, Station Road (then Chapel Road) and West Street, reflecting the peak in the village's prosperity, a population increase and perhaps the changes to the outlying marshland. The 1851 census shows a self-sufficient village, with many businesses including blacksmiths, bricklayers, wheelwrights, saddlers, grocers, bakers, butchers, coal merchants. Oyster dredging and agriculture remained the main industries of the parish, though more of the dredgers lived in the village itself than the agricultural labourers.

Until the twentieth century road conditions meant that sailing barges provided the principal means of trade (*fig.3*). Chalk, coal, muck and ragstone were all imported for local use and the agricultural and marine industry exported to London (Crossley, Dunn and Hearch 1999. p.43). Exports were further encouraged by the opening of a railway line in 1904 but this was shortlived, closing in 1951. From the late nineteenth century, the growth in the popularity of yachting provided another source of income to the village.



*Fig. 3. Sailing Barges at Tollesbury*

The historic industries and businesses of the village have declined considerably in the twentieth century, particularly in oyster dredging and fishing. Many residents now work outside the village, but a few shopping facilities and two of the public houses remain and the marine industries are still active at Woodrope. Residential use has become much more prevalent through the village. This is partly due to the loss of businesses and due to the housing developments of the twentieth century. Mell Road witnessed the first council housing in the 1920s. The population had fallen from 1865 in 1901 to 1594 in 1951, but extensive residential development such as the housing built over Elysian Gardens has encouraged a rise again to 2900, in 1999 (Crossley 1999).

## 2.2 Cartographic Evidence

Cartographic evidence of the settlement is limited, the earliest surviving with any clarity is the Chapman and André map of 1777 (*fig. 4*) This shows the building forms in an over exaggerated plan form, but it does give a good indication of the extent and pattern of development, with tightly packed buildings onto the High Street and market place. This is thought to have changed little since the medieval period. The steep contours down to the riverside are also shown clearly.

The first relatively accurate maps are of the nineteenth century, the tithe map of 1840 and the first and second edition of 1874 and 1897 respectively – which can be compared (*figs. 5-7*). There was a gradual expansion in development, with the beginning of the late nineteenth century growth to the north becoming clear on the 1897 map.



*Fig. 4. 1777*



*Fig. 5. 1840*



*Fig. 6. 1874*



*Fig. 7. 1897*

### 3. TOWNSCAPE

The relationship between unity and variety is an important factor in the character of historic settlements. Over-unified places are dull and monotonous and too much variety means visual anarchy. Historic towns and villages embody the right balance and this is an important part of their charm.

Townscape is the art of public space, where buildings are arranged to provide a stimulating environment. The 'unity' element is formed by the interlinking thoroughfares which bind a settlement together. An attractive place has a variety of enclosed spaces, like outdoor rooms, joined to form continuous routes.

Townscape analysis for the conservation area is shown on the following page (*fig. 8*). The continuous built frontages and boundary treatments help define a strong edge to the streets, particularly in High Street, Church Street and West Street. There is continual visual interest for the pedestrian, with gentle curves in the streets and narrow paths and alleys leading off of the principle routes. The presence of moving traffic and parked cars undermines the attractive flowing street pattern, especially at busiest times. However, The Chase and Hall Road remain relatively tranquil and pedestrian friendly.

The open space around the hall, both churches and to the south of the conservation area is particularly important. The following aerial photograph gives a good comparison of the interrelationship between soft planting, built forms and open spaces (*fig. 9*).





*Fig. 9. Aerial Photograph showing Conservation Area*

#### 4. USES

Residential use is predominant, but the local facilities – shops, pubs etc. – play an important part in the sustainability, vitality and variety of the area. Local facilities should be retained and, where possible, added to. Commercial uses have reduced, but fragmentary evidence of the former commercial nature of the village is present in the form of shop windows, but important local shops still remain. The map of non residential uses (*fig.10*) shows how the uses are spread throughout the area, with a commercial heart at the centre, based around The Green.

The temporary market stalls within Church Street also help to give vitality to the locality. Such removable features are difficult to protect but they are certainly a benefit to the locality and form part of the character of the conservation area. Likewise, the coming and going of boats from the riverside and storage of boats and associated paraphernalia in gardens and yards also contribute to the character of the area.



## 5. MATERIALS AND DETAILING

Traditional materials and detailing make a significant contribution to the character of the local area.

Painted render is the predominant walling finish at the historic centre of the village, where timber frame construction is dominant up until the nineteenth century. From the eighteenth century, but mostly from the mid-nineteenth century brick is used, mostly red hand-made, but yellow stock bricks appear from the late nineteenth century. The twentieth century practice of rendering over brick facades damages the appearance of the buildings and should not be repeated. Weatherboard is not as widespread as it once was, in contrast to other coastal settlements within the district, but it is still seen occasionally, typically on very vernacular cottages, on side elevations and on outbuildings, usually tarred or painted black (*fig. 11*).



*Fig. 11. A weatherboarded cottage in High Street*

There is a great variety of roof types, including gables, hips, mansards and gambrels (*fig. 12*). The rendered buildings predominantly have steep (47-50°) plain tiled roof coverings, which are handmade, red and double cambered, giving a varied and textured finish. From the nineteenth century natural slate becomes more common; this is used at a lower pitch (35-40°).



*Fig. 12. Varied roof types in Church Street*

Openings in brick buildings have cambered or gauged arches. Brick bonding is most commonly in Flemish bond but always historically in a solid wall traditional bond, rather than stretcher bond which is monotonous by comparison.

Windows largely remain traditional, in painted timber with either symmetrical flush casements or vertically sliding sashes (*fig.13*). Plastic replacements are seriously harming the appearance of the area due to their flat lifeless appearance and crude alien detailing.



*Fig. 13. A late nineteenth century house with traditional joinery*

Roofscape interest is provided by substantial red brick chimney stacks and, on low 1½ storey cottages, dormer windows. These should be very narrow, minor incidents within the roof (*fig.14*).



*Fig. 14. Narrow dormers to a 1½ storey cottage*

Boundary treatments are an important form of townscape enclosure and make a significant impact on the area. Boundary walls, railings and fences are typically low to front and side elevations on public through-fares. Brick boundaries are usually only used on prominent corner sites where enclosure by built form is lacking, such as to the perimeter of both church yards. Hedged boundaries and timber picket fences painted white are also found at the edges of the historic village, with iron railings at the more urban centre (*fig.15*). There are also a range of poor quality timber, concrete and brick boundaries which harm the appearance of the area.



*Fig. 15. Railings in High Street*

The main roads are all tarmac, although Hall Road has loose gravel, which helps to define its low key, semi rural character. The pavements are mostly tarmac, which is wholly inappropriate for this semi-rural village. Kerb stones have largely been replaced with concrete, which are bland and inappropriate by comparison to traditional granite kerb stones.

## 6. AREA ANALYSIS

Tollesbury has an impressive historic range of buildings, from remarkable thirteenth century timber frames to striking nineteenth century brick buildings. Each building has been assessed and its contribution to the appearance and character of the conservation area has been graded (*fig. 16*). Whilst this system is subjective, it aims to provide a guide to aid the planning process. The criteria for the grading were:

1. Negative buildings, which do not relate to the character of the area. Demolition and redevelopment would be encouraged.
2. Negative design or siting (including substantially altered or of poor materials). Enhancements may increase to 3 or 4.
3. Buildings which have a slight negative impact; this may include buildings which have been significantly altered.
4. Positive contribution through design, age, materials, siting or detailing, but may have been altered.
5. Positive contribution through design, age, materials, siting or detailing. Good examples of typical building types or periods of development.
6. Listed buildings, important landmarks, buildings making a significant positive contribution.

The character of the village is also derived from a significant amount of open space and gaps between buildings. Many of the building forms and materials are typical of a rural Essex village but local factors have combined to make up the special qualities and individual character of the village. The following paragraphs will define this special character, by aid of description and visual annotation.

The conservation area has been divided into streets for easy reference, with description from west to east.

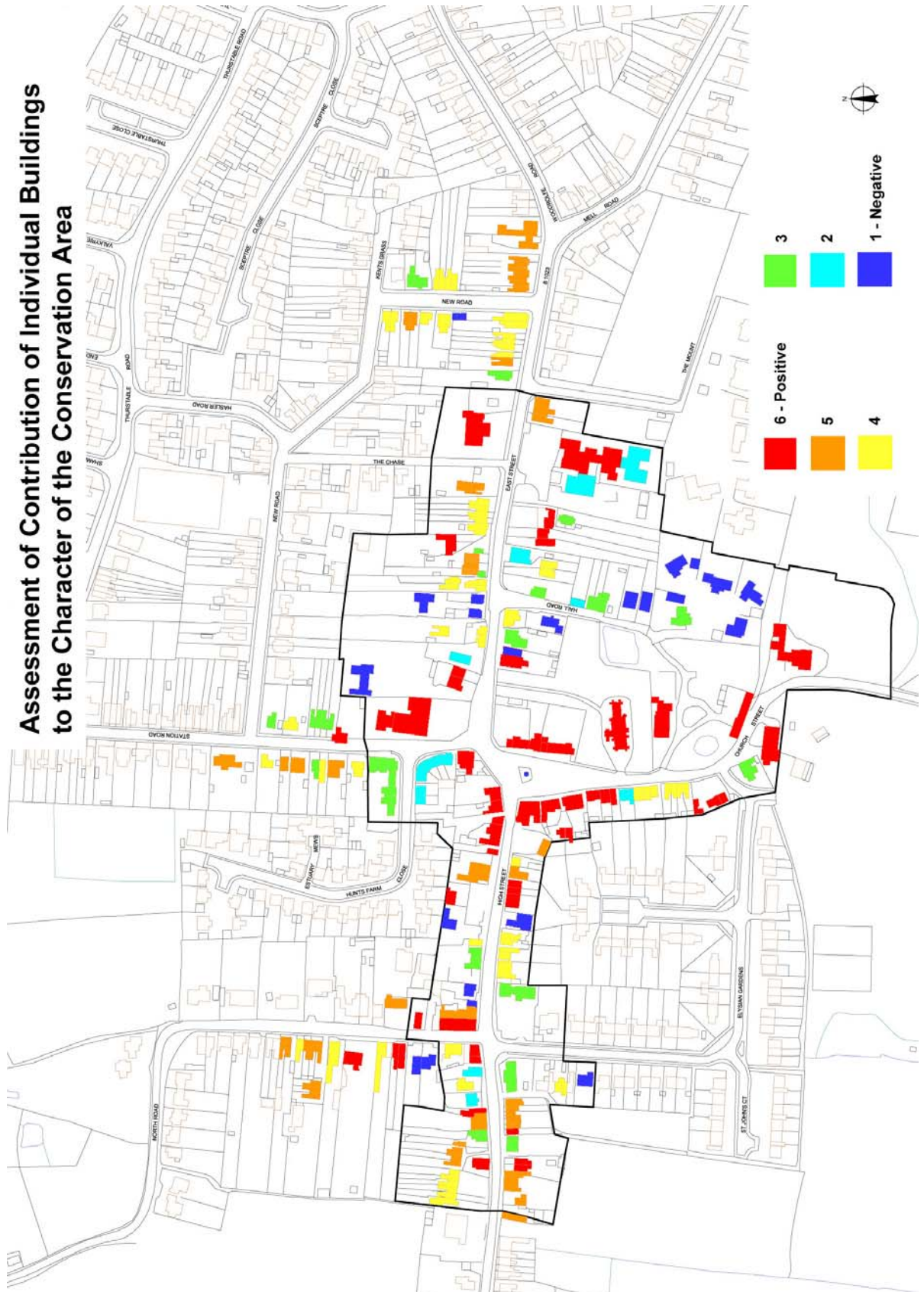


Fig. 16. Map showing the contribution of individual buildings

## 6.1 West Street

On West Street, the conservation area starts at what was the edge of the urban settlement in the nineteenth century. It contains buildings of Fifteenth and sixteenth century origin intermixed with nineteenth century terraces and twentieth century dwellings. It provides the main in-land route into the village. West Street flows into the High Street, beyond North Road. Their gentle winding draws the eye to the pleasing subtle variety of buildings lining the street, until Roebuck House (1-5 Church Street) captures the view, as the road kinks to the north and the market place opens up to the south.

Buildings are predominantly 2 storey in height, with only occasional attic accommodation revealed by a window in a gable. Dormers are not a feature of the street scene, except on the 1½ storey cottage (24 West Street). Building types are generally domestic, either as Victorian terraces of red brick and natural blue-grey slate roofs or timber frame and render with red hand-made clay plain tile roofs. Buildings are predominantly parallel to the road; gables onto the road appear only occasionally and usually on landmark buildings (such as the former bank or no.24). West Street suffers from poor boundary treatments and unsympathetic window alterations.



*Fig. 17. Nineteenth century view of West Street*



*Fig. 18. The same view up West Street in January 2005*

### 6.1.1 West Street, Northern Side (even numbers)

On the north side, 26-36 West Street is a Victorian terrace that has undergone considerable alteration to its fenestration and façade treatment, but retains key elements of its traditional character in its solid, linear form, uninterrupted slate roof and the symmetrical arrangement of hips and chimneys. Being set back from the road, front fences have been removed and areas of the front gardens eroded by parking, creating an ill-defined and messy edge to the road and detracting from views of the building.

The set back of the terrace gives no.24, Old Rose Cottage, greater prominence, which starts a building line closer to the road edge. Gable onto the road, this sixteenth century vernacular cottage faces east, presenting the attractive uninterrupted sweep of the tiled cat-slide roof to the west. Woven Willow fencing provides an appropriate boundary treatments, though hedging would have been a softer alternative.

The open space and green quality of the garden of no.18, part of another Victorian terrace in line with 26-36, is very significant (*fig. 19*). It keeps the traditional façade of no.24 with its two gabled dormer windows visible on views westward and provides views up to the relatively unspoilt brick terrace. The juxtaposition of these different yet traditional buildings and the garden creates an attractive group. Again only the boundary treatments detract from the view, namely the front wire fence and the close-boarded fence and concrete post on the east side.



*Fig. 19. The garden of 18 West Street*

8-16 is a range of buildings of varying ages, with a continuous painted frontage and varied roofline. The staggered eaves line, dropping for no.8, the richness of the handmade plain clay tiled roofs on 8-12, the dominant chimney stack on no.10 and low-set doors give a historic, picturesque effect. Only modern windows detract from the appearance of the group.

4-6 are much less visually pleasing. The set back buildings leave an ill-defined gap in the street scene and expose the blank side elevation of no.8. Modern features on no.4 and 6, including concrete pantiles and cement render, create a poor quality appearance. No.4, more prominently located on the road edge, is harsh and lifeless in its modern design and lack of detailing around openings.

No.2 is a landmark building, due to its height, corner location and strength of architectural character. It marks the junction of West Street, North Street and the High Street, and more recently Elysian Gardens. This Victorian building is particularly significant in views from the east, to which considerable regard was

obviously paid in its design, with the visually prominent corner angled to house the entrance and the stone 'Bank' panel. There is strong brick detailing with rusticated brick edging to windows and doors, brick arched heads with keystones and dentilling at the eaves. The gable end onto West Street appears over wide when viewed straight on from Elysian Gardens, but this view was never intended as this road replaced buildings. The modern shop front at its west corner reflects changing uses within the village, but it is poorly detailed: the large plate glass window leaves a gaping hole in the façade and it makes the modern dolls-house door appear even more incongruous.

### 6.1.2 West Street, Southern Side (odd numbers)

On the south side of West Street, the narrow single storey weatherboarded shop stretching back from the road (no.19) provides a good marker for the start of the conservation area. Its simple, traditional appearance reflects its subservient use and such forms are increasingly rare due to modern development pressures.

No.17, once the Plough and Sail, is a long 2 storey building of traditional character with painted render walls and a plain tile roof hipped at one end. Its chimneys help provide roofline interest and it retains traditional vertical sliding sash windows. The elevation appears slightly unbalanced having lost a central door (shown on historic photographs, see Lovell 1991 pp.84-85). The buff brick Victorian building adjacent (nos.13 and 15) is set back from the road, but by retaining the low front brick wall and garden, it maintains a good edge to the street and leaves the view of the building unspoilt by parking. The building is very significant for retaining traditional features – sash windows, front doors and decorative bargeboards – in both semis (fig. 13).

1-11 are an attractive brick terrace, dated 1860, with a modern building on the end. The terrace has a simple continuous slate roof, gabled at either end, attractively broken by chimneystacks, but the slates have unfortunately been coated in bitumen. Only some of the houses retain bare brick facades, but these reveal good quality rubbed and gauged shallow cambered arched heads to the windows and round arched heads to the doors. The terrace is set back slightly behind later low brick walls of generally poor detail, with piers and twentieth century tile creasing over-complicating the boundary treatment.

No.11 retains most of its original appearance, with sash windows, a vertically boarded and beaded Victorian front door and the remnant of a white picket fence, possibly an earlier front boundary treatment to the terrace (fig. 20). The new build adjacent to no.11 reflects some characteristics of the area – a good red brick in Flemish bond and a slate roof – while attempting a more modern language in the exposed steel I-beam to support the end jetty.



Fig. 20. Typical Victorian terrace

However, it fails where there is lack of detail in the brickwork around openings (windows appear lifeless). Its set back keeps the Victorian terrace more visible, but does not reflect the historic building line. The low stub wall in front is visually ambiguous, providing little definition to the townscape; the front boundary needs to follow the line of the front boundary of the terrace and visually link it to the wall at no.13.

St John's Street separates no.1 West Street from the new house on the corner of West Street and Elysian Gardens. This lane is little more than a grassed footpath to a terrace and allotments. St John's Terrace (1872) fronts onto the allotments, but the elevation is partly obscured by planting. Alterations which have detracted from its appearance include flat roofed porches, modern, asymmetric and upvc windows, render and paint on some elevations, but the simple line of the slate roof remains relatively unspoilt and there are areas of the original red brickwork with buff brick detailing and painted timber sash windows. St John's Street provides views of the rear of West Street, showing the organic growth of rear extensions, some more sympathetically designed than others. It also shows traditional weatherboarded outbuildings, typical historic back land structures, very significant for the variety and hierarchy of building types to be found in the conservation area.

The new building on the corner takes a traditional domestic form, addresses both West Street and Elysian Gardens in its composition and uses good quality materials, but the black weatherboard at first floor appears incongruous for the size and status of the building and in the street scene. Black weatherboard is traditionally associated with agricultural buildings or more subservient structures and elevations, so a lighter colour would be more appropriate in this context and might at least relate the building more to the locality. Set back within the site, the boundary treatments of a brick wall to West Street and a hedge to Elysian Gardens better reflect the character of each of these streets.

## 6.2 North Road

Two contrasting buildings flank the entrance into North Road – the large brick and slate bank building and the lower rendered and tiled Victoria public house. Both extend down North Road and their character is reflected in the buildings beyond. 3-7 continue the red brick theme with a hipped slate roof. Most of the window openings have been altered but there are some good rubbed and gauged arched heads. On the east side, the single storey range of the Victoria, with its traditional sash windows and door case, joins onto a gambrel roof cottage with slate roofed dormers. A high brick and flint wall and driveway provide a break before 2 North Road, a 1½ storey cottage, gable onto the road.



*Fig. 21. View into North Road*

### 6.3 Elysian Gardens

This is a new road to the twentieth century housing estate built over a nineteenth century public garden. It broke through the historic line of development along the south side of the High Street and the townscape still feels somewhat damaged and undefined at this junction. The boundary treatments are good at the junction, with a hedge on the west side and brick wall on the east side, but the car park feels too exposed. The new road has made the rear elevation of St John's Terrace much more visible, exposing all the typical twentieth century accretions. Poor quality garage forms, fencing and off-street parking detract from the townscape. The modern housing, including Mellowood and no.40, reflects little of the local character. The new road does provide a glimpse, between the modern housing, to the open rural setting of the village. This visual link to the marshes and river is very significant.

### 6.4 The High Street

**The High Street contains the greatest variety of building forms and heights. 2 storeys predominate, but there are also 1½ and 2½ storey buildings. The taller buildings are found closer to the market place. The roofscape is lively, with dormers and many gables onto the road. Building types vary from vernacular cottages, Victorian semis and terraces to early twentieth century pubs. Their age ranges from fifteenth century to the modern day. There is the traditional range of materials – painted render, plain clay tile, natural slate and red brick – but brick facades have often been painted or rendered over at a later date. The High Street suffers from unsympathetic window alterations, gaps in the street scene, poor boundary treatments and a lack of defined edges.**



*Fig. 22. The High Street, view to Market Place*

### 6.4.1 High Street, Northern Side (even numbers)

The start of the High Street is marked by the Victoria, a historic building very different in appearance to the Bank opposite but a pleasing contrast and just as visually significant. The building has a distinct and attractive appearance, with two gables to the road at relatively low heights. The western gable has the highly individual commercial frontage, with multi-paned windows flanking the half-glazed door within a classical surround, while the eastern gable is more low-key in its window details and slate roof. The new 2 storey building adjacent echoes the gables, but the over-hang at first floor (an archway runs beneath) is too deep and lacking in support, and ultimately the building appears too heavy and brutal.

The modern detached house adjacent is similar in character, but it also has poor detailing in the use of brick lintels in render (this confuses the language of materials and indicates standard modern blockwork construction) and brown stained windows. A detached house appears incongruous in this location; the street requires a more continuous frontage and firm edge, but here the house is set back and leaves the edge onto the pavement undefined to the front and either side. The gap between this and no. 36 has a particularly poor townscape affect, with space bleeding out of the High Street, leaving two blank side elevations exposed and revealing parking, private domestic clutter and the large corrugated shed beyond.

30–36 comprise a bare red brick range with a very active roofscape - two gables are juxtaposed with a heavily dormered roof – that provides variety in its form and material. However, the building suffers greatly from poor repointing, alterations to window openings, the insertion of straight soldier course brick lintels instead of its original shallow arched heads and upvc windows. The dormers breaking through the eaves line has resulted in a large number of rainwater goods dominating the elevation.

The open space between no.30 and the Hope Inn contains the garden to no.28 and the car park. The only townscape benefit that this provides is the view of no.18, but both this and no.28 are dominated by the concrete tiled roofs of the mundane, modern development beyond. It leaves the side elevation of the Hope Inn, with its utilitarian flat roofed extensions and fire escape stair, too exposed. This space weakens the townscape considerably and requires much greater definition, such as might be achieved through boundary treatments. No.18 is a low-lying black weather-boarded cottage with a plain tile roof and central chimney stack. It is very significant to the character of the conservation area as a small, low-key vernacular cottage, adding to the visual hierarchy of built forms to be found in Tollesbury. No.28 reflects the back-land character of no.18, particularly in the use of black weather-boarding, but its setting is damaged, as the front garden has been lost to concrete and parking. The traditional red phone box is a significant feature in the conservation area.

The Hope Inn is a landmark building particularly on the western approach and from East Street, due to its exposed location, height and strong architectural character, which reflects more of its era (1923) than its locality. The ground floor comprises yellow London stock bricks, while the first floor changes to render with tiled details characteristic of Arts and Crafts taste. The window details and wide dormers in the

hipped roof are also characteristic of this period. Its slight set back leaves an ambiguous open space to the front, which would benefit from a front boundary like the white picket fence to the side, on the building line of the adjacent buildings.

No.14 is a 1½ storey cottage with a gambrel roof, gable onto the road, in black weatherboard and tile with a stout chimney stack. It is well-detailed with a traditional cropped verge (more typical of the area than barge boards) and a pleasing contrast of vertical and horizontal sliding sash windows. It provides great visual variety in the street scene and forms part of an attractive group with 4-12.

8-12 is a very attractive historic range, with painted render, a plain tile roof and a variety of traditional window details. No.8 has large bowed windows with fixed panes at ground floor and sash windows above; the roof is hipped, quoins are lined out in the render and the use of black weatherboard on the side wall reflects a traditional hierarchy of material. 10 and 12 appear to be a separate build, with ground floor openings set much lower and dentils formed under the eaves. It has gabled dormers, side hung casement windows, a fine classical door surround and distinctive metal railings. The later shop bay window adds a quirky character and variety to the façade.

4-6 lines the northern edge of the market place. This is an attractive red brick range, with a dominant hipped gambrel roof and traditional sash windows. The concrete tiles and poor quality pointing are detracting features.

#### **6.4.2 High Street, Southern Side (odd numbers)**

On the south side of the High Street, the corner with Elysian Gardens is marked by a bench and traditional lamp-post. This is a remnant of the historic streetscape and a pleasing contrast to the modern concrete posts elsewhere. A brick boundary wall provides a solid edge to the car park, however, its open hard landscape still feels too exposed. Careful tree planting behind the wall would restore more of the nineteenth century character of the western approach. In contrast the conifer appears over-large and incongruous, a poor comparison to the trees shown in historic photographs.

15-25 are a group of traditional 2 storey buildings that closely line the south side of the road. They have a linear character with no gables or dormers, and rooflines are only broken by chimney stacks; their simplicity provides a good foil for the architectural liveliness on the north side. No.25 is set back slightly, but a solid brick wall maintains the front building line. Dentils at the eaves and rubbed and gauged flat brick heads over the first floor windows reveal that this was once a very well detailed classical brick building, but the central render strip, modern casements and cement pointing now detract from its appearance. 15-23 are pleasing in their general form and traditional features, like the timber sash windows, but all have suffered from unsympathetic alterations: concrete pantiles on 19, 21 and 23 and bland upvc windows in no.23. The carriage arch in no.23 adds visual interest, providing a glimpse of a brick paved yard.

The fire station is a bland, modern building, with a low gable range set forward, but the main building set well back leaving a gap in the street scene. This exposes the somewhat blind side elevation of 7-11, comprising the gambrel gable and rear wing.

7-11 is a long 1½ storey row, with a gambrel roof and gabled dormers. The low height and vernacular character provides a pleasing contrast with the taller buildings on the north side of the street and adds to the built variety along the High Street. The brick façade has been plastered, unfortunately leaving a modern bell-mouth drip over the windows. It retains good traditional sash windows at ground floor but the dormer windows have been replaced with poor quality modern storm-proof casements.

3-5 are stepped in height. The single storey range relates to 7-11 adjacent, then it steps up to a low and then a higher 2 storey block, gable onto the street. The increase in height at the centre is softened by the use of black weatherboard at first floor. Asbestos tiles and no.3's poorly designed windows detract from the group.

Between this group and the Kings Head, another large gap for the car park leaves an awkward break in the High Street townscape. This does provide a very attractive view of the rear of the historic buildings along Church Street, showing rear wings in a variety of traditional forms and materials, a collection of chimney stacks and the church tower beyond (*fig. 23*). A four bay garage lines the south edge of the car park and a less traditional leylandii hedge the east edge, but some boundary treatment is required to break up the flow of tarmac from the road into this space.



*Fig. 23. Backland view from High Street*

The Kings Head turns the corner into Church Street and like 2 West Street exploits this position to become a landmark building. It is made distinctive by its large size (at 2½ storeys), the angled corner with turret detail and the façade treatment of brick and render, with mock timbering and bay windows, creating a very busy façade. Such liveliness is in sharp contrast to other buildings on the market place, but it reflects its use and adds to the visual variety of the conservation area.

## 6.5 The Market Place



*Fig. 24. The Market Place*

The historic market place is known as The Green, The Square and latterly as Church Street. This last name suggests a loss of identity as a meeting place for trade and recreation, and this is reflected in its appearance. Today a modern non-descript bus shelter occupies a traffic island, in a sea of tarmac, with the rest of the open land used as a street or for parking. Vehicles have dictated its current form and finish. Only occasionally is the old character re-established when a mobile stall appears. This is the heart of the historic settlement and the heart of the conservation area. It is surrounded by the highest number of historic buildings. With such a picturesque backdrop, this open space is ripe for enhancement.

The market place is well enclosed except on its northern edge. The garden and parking to the east of 4 High Street leaves a gap in the scene of buildings, but it does provide views of the house from the east. The gate and solid brick boundary wall help provide some definition to this edge. The post office building provides more enclosure but it addresses East Street more than the market place. In the brick gable to East Street, a plaque identifies it as Commerce House, 1895. To the market place, it presents a painted façade with slate roof and traditional sash windows, behind a brick boundary wall and slate roofed outbuildings.

## 6.6 Church Street



*Fig. 25. Church Street*

**Church Street begins at the centre of the village, namely the market place. Here are concentrated the highest number of historic buildings, before the road quickly leads out into the marshes. It has not witnessed the modern linear development of East and West Street. Buildings are traditional in character, ranging from fourteenth century timber-framed cross-wings to the nineteenth century brick village hall. On the market place they are a full 2, even 2½ storeys, but to the south the building heights, forms, settings become more varied depending on the status of the building. Roofs are predominantly plain clay tile, with occasional use of slate on nineteenth century buildings and pantile on outbuildings. The west side of Church Street is closely lined by buildings, while the east side has a much more spacious and green character with the Church of St Mary, Tollesbury Hall and Glebe House. Undeveloped to the south, with the recreation ground to the west and agricultural fields to the east, the historic entry into the village remains unspoilt.**

### 6.6.1 Church Street, Eastern Side (odd numbers)

St Mary's Church is a landmark building, yet being set to the south of the main east-west route, with the historic infill of part of the market place and with the growth of trees in the churchyard is not particularly prominent until further down Church Street. The medieval infill is where 1–7 Church Street are situated. These two ranges are very prominent in views on all approaches into the centre. They provide a strong edge to the current market place, with their linear footprint and traditional character. Both are 2 storeys with hand-made plain clay tile roofs. The gables of the cross wings on 1-5 (Roebuck House) draw the eye and the lean-to on no.1 is very significant at providing a strong visual stop to the range. No.5 contains a medieval shop front. The brick ground floor and painted timber Victorian casements have become a significant part of its character. 1-5 is only spoilt by the hard cement render at first floor.

No.7 is a linear range, with historic sash windows. The curved heads and recess of the windows indicate that this is a brick façade, beneath the painted render, which all hides a sixteenth century timber frame. It forms a very pleasing group with the church. Sandwiched between them is the eighteenth century lock-up, The Cage, restored in the twentieth century with waney edged boarding and an acorn finial on top. It appears somewhat forgotten in this new location.

### **6.6.2 Church Street, Western Side (even number)**

On the west side, buildings are closely grouped with long frontages separated by narrow passages. 1 High Street is very much a land-mark building, turning the corner for the High Street and Church Street. Onto the market place, its lively character contrasts with the simple character of the adjacent historic buildings. 2 Church Street is 2 storey, with painted brick façade (hiding a late medieval hall-house), sash windows rather curiously enlivened at ground floor by shutters (a common feature of the Victorian period) and two simple doorways with infilled arched heads. The roof is hipped with gablets, covered in hand-made clay plain tiles.

No.10 is similarly simple set parallel to the road with a painted plaster façade and late eighteenth century sash windows. The roof is more dominant, comprising a gambrel with first floor dormer windows, with lean-to slate roofs. An 1884 conveyance suggests that this was built on the site of a Guildhall.

12-16 is enlivened by gables, with 12-14 containing the two end cross-wings of a fifteenth century house, and 16 a later building that has been linked to no.14. The shop window to no.12 – a canted bay with a wide sash – is significant for the history and visual variety that it provides. The dreary pebble-dash is the only detracting feature. The somewhat random arrangement of windows within the façade is due to the infill of a passage between 14 and 16. Again painted render hides brick. The poor window details of no.16, which is unlisted, contrast adversely with those on 12 and 14.

18–28 is a long terrace that suffers from poor quality alterations and details. The form, with the long continuous roof, sits well in the street, but no.18 stands out starkly due to the use of uncharacteristic modern materials for the tiles and brick, and modern window proportions. The remainder also suffer from loss of a traditional sash window detail, but the brick detailing at ground floor remains of good quality, with rubbed arched heads to openings. The lower set no.28, with its hipped roof, softens the end of the building, but again suffers from heavy sand-cement pargetting at first floor.

30-36 are an attractive Victorian range, with a slate roof at the traditional shallow pitch and the first floor beaded featheredged weatherboarding contrasting with the brick ground floor.

38 is a wonderfully vernacular small cottage, set well back from Church Street at the end of a narrow garden and partly obscured by a single storey red brick block. The tiled gambrel roof with cat-slide dormers, horizontal sliding sash windows and weatherboarded walls make it very picturesque. At the front, a low red brick wall continues in front of no.40, a slightly larger 1½ storey cottage, still with the vernacular character of weatherboard, horizontal sliding sash windows, and dormer windows, this time with gables (*fig. 26*). The uninterrupted cat-slide roof on the rear is an attractive feature, showing the textural quality of the handmade plain clay tiles. This cottage and its garden provide a significant view on the approach from the south.



*Fig. 26. 40 Church Street*

44-46 appears somewhat isolated beyond the road junction with Elysian Gardens and as a consequence, awkwardly aligned. A simple terrace, unsympathetic modern alterations noticeably detract from its appearance, particularly the sand cement render, asymmetric windows and modern brick boundary wall. The view from Elysian Gardens is dominated by its bare side elevation.

The east side of Church Street is dominated by the church and Tollesbury Hall, which together form an extremely attractive view. These are set behind a low red brick wall that curves around Church Street. The churchyard provides glimpses across to Hall Road. The open grounds of the hall, with the duck pond at its south edge, are particularly significant. The Hall retains its traditional appearance, with a long linear range finished by a gable cross-wing at the east end. Unfortunately, the roof lacks the richness of a traditional hand-made clay tile roof and there are some jarring window alterations, but it remains an attractive building, with its small dormers and grand chimney stack.

The simple linear brick and clay pantile outbuilding along the south boundary is significant for giving a more rural feel to Church Street and providing variety in building types. The Parish Hall (c.1907) on the south side also introduces another building type, with its simple form and robust brick character. However, it leaves the edge of the road poorly defined. Hedging dominates the west side of Church Street, as it curves round to flank the playing field.

The Glebe, no.17, is a sizeable building partly obscured from Church Street by planting and a high brick wall. The gault brick and Italianate classicism of the nineteenth century range contrasts with the red brick and gambrel roof of the original Rectory building. It is orientated to take advantage of views to the South, and with its garden setting has more the character of a country villa. The house marks an important transition from the village to the countryside, as Church Street becomes a narrow rural lane flanked by hedges.

## 6.7 East Street

**East Street is varied in its building types and forms. The density is markedly reduced and the pattern of development noticeably different from the High Street and Church Street, with more gaps between buildings and large open spaces. There are small groups of buildings which are tightly packed and relatively uniform, however the building line is constantly varied and building orientations change occasionally, from being predominantly parallel to the road, to being at right angles with the road.**

East Street curves at each end, limiting its visual length and enticing the pedestrian either into The Green, or into Mell or Woodrolfe Road. The narrow paths and drives which meander off East Street to back land housing and properties set well back from the road are visually interesting, tempting to the casual passer by, but private in appearance. The materials are varied, with a predominance of slate roofs and buff brick to the eastern end and red brick, render and a mix of plain tiles and slates to the western end.

At the western end the road is relatively wide, possibly the extent of the medieval market place; this open space is flanked by the United Reform Church yard, the Post Office and brick boundary walls to St Mary's church yard. The narrow pavements, walls and vehicles (both moving and parked) make this small area quite dynamic and not very pedestrian friendly. However the widened path and attractive shop front at the Post Office form a counterpoint to activity and vitality.

### 6.7.1 East Street, Northern Side (United Reform Church – number 29, odd)

The United Reform Church of c.1864 is set a long way back from the pavements edge, preventing its mass from overly dominating the street scene (*fig. 27*). Its frontage is enclosed by a low brick wall, although it has unfortunately been rebuilt in a poorly matched modern brick at the corner. The mature trees form a pleasant group, help to identify this break in the pattern of development and give an attractive green space through warmer months. The number of parked cars at this end of the street seriously undermines its appearance.



*Fig. 27. The Western end of East Street*

1 and 3 are set back from the road and comprise a seventeenth/eighteenth century gambrel roofed building of plain tiles and rendered walls. This marks the edge of the historic core to the village; the remainder of East Street is expansion of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The 1 ½ storey form and substantial open space at 1 and 3, combine with the adjacent church yard to give a spacious, low density character. However 'the stables' to the rear is overly dominant in views north.

7, a late twentieth century bungalow is un-pretentious, but its materials are slightly harsh. The side lean-to is box-like and blocks the break between buildings. The hedged boundary makes an important contribution to the street scene and helps to mask the parking area at the front.

9 and 11 on the north side and 2 on the south mark an increase in density and a building line that is much tighter to the edge of the pavement. Their 1½ storey gambrel roof marks a pinch point in the street; looking westward the dominant roof of the Hope Inn public house is visible in the distance. To the rear 13 and 15 are an example of the somewhat rare pattern of development found in Tollesbury: back land cottages set behind buildings fronting the street and separated by small courtyards. They remain subservient and well hidden from view.

17 and 19 take the form of medieval crosswings, but they are overly wide and alien in this context, where the buildings are mostly parallel to the road with a predominantly Victorian character. They do however provide a strong feature in the street scene, particularly when viewed from Hall Road.

23 and 25 maintain the tight built form up to the pavement edge. The red brick walls and slate roof are typical of the remainder of East Street, westward, although unfortunately the replacement windows and changes to elevations seriously harm the appearance of the building. There is further back land cottage development at the rear, which again remains subservient and well hidden.

### **6.7.2 East Street, Northern Side (number 31 – Masonic Hall, odd)**

31 to 35 gradually step back the building line, maintaining the domestic scale, but with a greater emphasis on vertically proportioned elevations. The concrete parking area and garage are a negative point; a combination of hedged boundary and painted timber gates would help improve the street frontage.

There is a break in the street frontage with 37 and 39 set well back, attractively framed by soft planting and a curving pea shingle driveway. This mid-nineteenth century cottage is picturesque and gives a fine view that opens up when moving along the street.

41-49 a buff brick terrace of c.1884 has a continuous unbroken slate roof, with substantial axial chimney stacks projecting through the ridge, giving considerable roofscape interest. Alterations to windows, doors, wall finishes and boundaries harm the simple uniformity of the terrace.

At 90° to the road, 51-53 front The Chase. They are of shallow plan with a cat slide projection at the rear, mid nineteenth century with a natural slate roof. Mature hedges screen the East Street boundary. The parking areas at the front could be enhanced with greater soft planted screening, and the poor timber fence and shed to the front of 51 improved.

The mid nineteenth century hall (formerly the national school for boys and girls), sits in a wide open plot, enclosed by railings (*fig. 28*). The school was extended and converted to the Masonic hall in the late nineteenth century, with the construction of the new school opposite. There is a pleasing combination of gables and the fine detailing - including buff brick quoins, timber sashes and casements and roof vent - make an attractive building. The gravel surfacing gives variation in colour and texture and the wide open space is important to this building's setting, although it could be improved with the introduction of a hedge along The Chase boundary set behind the existing railings and some further tree planting to the perimeter of the plot.



*Fig. 28. The Masonic Hall*

### **6.7.3 East Street, Southern Side (even numbers).**

On the southern side of East Street, The Mount is a tree lined road leading up to the playing field. On the corner, 38 and 40 sits raised up from street level, as a strong corner building, with combined large pane timber sash windows. Unfortunately the roof slates have been replaced with lifeless concrete tiles.

The late nineteenth century school sits on a large plot, enclosed by railings. Opposite the similar hall complex, with which it forms an important group, is also articulated with small gabled blocks, although its additions are indifferent and beginning to sprawl. The extent of car parking to the front is unfortunate; this may be able to be partly screened with hedging and the addition of further trees.

16 and 18 are set well back, helping to give a feeling of large open space combining with the ground of the school, hall and 51 and 53, all forming a widening in the built street frontage, broken up by mature trees. 16 and 18 is a long low 1 ½ story gambrel roofed range, a building form quite typical within the village. A one off feature is the more peculiar addition of a late nineteenth century red brick crosswing at the western end. The lack of boundary frontage and extent of hard standings detracts from this picturesque group.

Further back land development is found at the rear, but turned at 90°, fronting the school grounds, this forms part of a tight-knit group with 1 Hall Road, and 8-18 (odd) East Street. Again development overlaps, with the rendered cottages sitting behind 12. This shop's scale relates well to the locality, but its bland, lifeless materials are a strong negative feature; a rendered finish and natural slate roof would help to soften its appearance.

The open corner plot at the junction with Hall Road helps to give a low density feeling, contrasting with the centre of the village, giving views to the back land cottages. This is, however, spoilt by the modern fence with concrete posts; a low brick wall or timber picket fence combined with a hedge would be a significant improvement.

2-6 form a relatively tight group, with great variety, set close to the pavement's edge (*fig. 29*). The sharp contrast between the very low cottage at number 6 and dominant shop at number 2 is immediately apparent. The two shops between are of no great interest, but their scale and commercial vitality is a positive factor. The flat roofed building is particularly unwelcome. Number 6 has a fine shop front, windows and detailing, all of c.1906. This building stands as a dominant feature, set next to the open space of the church yard entrance; such scale would be inappropriate without this context. It is one of the three gateway buildings at the entrance to the western end of East Street, with the United Reform Church and the Post Office.



*Fig. 29. East Street*

The low nineteenth century red brick wall encloses the gardens and church yard on the corner. There are good views, broken by small outbuildings and trees, to the church. The views back along the rear of properties in East Street from the elevated church yard give an outlook of the varied roof lines, but box like rear additions of poor materials have begun to erode this quality to an unfortunate extent.

## 6.8 Station Road

The buff brick Post Office and United Reform Church form an attractive gateway at the entrance to Station Road. The new development at the entrance to Hunts Farm Close, the Skippers and St Mary's Mews, is competent in its scale but the unfortunate sight splay, bland detailing and materials detract from the overall quality of the scheme. St Mary's is the better of the two, with greater articulation. The view south is stopped by the church tower. To the north number 4 (just beyond the present conservation area boundary), an early nineteenth century cottage (*fig. 30*), with a cat slide projecting into the road, serves as an interesting feature and gateway building to the expanded village.



*Fig. 30. Station Road*

## 6.9 The Chase

The Chase is a narrow pedestrian friendly lane and it gives good views along to the late nineteenth century expansion of the village. The southern end is flanked by hedges and railings, with simple buildings of domestic scale to the northern end. The open space and dense planting at the entrance is particularly important. The timber fence with concrete posts is an alien feature at the corner; a hedge would be a significant improvement.

## 6.10 Hall Road

Hall Road's loose gravel finish, combined with its low density and extensive planting give a semi rural character, which is not found elsewhere in this part of the village. The entrance from East Street is very wide and lacks definition (*fig. 31*); it may benefit from a hedge or picket fence to narrow the entrance. About half way along the road, there are good views west across the church yard and pond, to the tower and hall. The boundary treatments are a significant negative factor, with concrete blocks, poor quality bricks and concrete fence posts. 3-7 is of some interest as a typical building form in this semi rural context on the periphery, but unsympathetic alterations have seriously damaged its appearance. 11 and 15 are of no individual interest, but are in a very sensitive location, adjacent to the hall and church yard. The modern housing at the end in Church Acre is informally laid out. The retreat adjacent to the entrance is the most competent, but the other houses lack the linear pattern and low scale common to the locality.



*Fig. 31. Hall Road from East Street entrance*

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1 Changes to Boundaries

The conservation area boundary has not been amended since 1977. Since which there have been significant redevelopment, expansion and alteration. This means that some areas have been robbed of their special interest and some of the boundaries have been rendered meaningless, particularly where dissected by modern development. Additionally, since the first designation the recognition of the importance of later buildings has become more widespread. There is considerable scope for the amendment of the boundaries. The proposed changes are set out below and shown on the following map (*fig. 32*).

#### 1. 27A New Road.

This modern house is cut into two by the present boundary. Neither the house or its plot make any positive contribution to the conservation area; it is proposed to omit the building and follow the adjacent property boundaries.

#### 2. 1 The Chase, Alma Cottage.

1 The Chase is an attractive late nineteenth house (c.1884) of buff brick with red brick string courses and arches and a slate roof. It remains in a relatively original condition and makes a significant contribution to the street scene. Its front boundary wall is of poor quality brickwork and concrete blocks, which could be improved with a timber picket fence or wall of hand made red bricks laid in Flemish bond. The other properties within The Chase predominantly relate to the late nineteenth century expansion of the village, but these have been altered to a greater extent and are not considered of sufficient quality to be included.

#### 3. East Street and New Road

This area was developed from the late 1870s onwards. The buildings are subtly varied, but laid out uniformly as part of a gradual speculative development. The houses are domestic in scale, predominantly slightly set back from the pavements edge, with some more substantial frontages in East Street. They are of red and buff brick, with natural slate roofs with vertically sliding sash windows. 87 East



*Fig. 33. 87 East Street*

Street is at the end of the proposed group, this is a substantial red brick house, of c.1906, which stands as a landmark at the road junction, forming

part of an attractive group with the butchers shop and East Terrace (*fig. 33*). The remainder of the houses in New Road have been omitted due to their more sporadic architectural quality and the loss of many original features. The verge on the southern side of East Street, adjacent to the modern house (42-48) has been included for its contribution to the street scene, due to the wide grass verge and trees, which also continue up the tree lined The Mount (see below).

#### 4. The Mount

The Mount runs adjacent to the School playground. The tree lined verge complements the soft planting to East Street and the rear of the school grounds. The corner of the playground had been omitted; it makes sense to follow the site boundary in this case.

#### 5. Elysian Gardens

Mellowood and number 40 are part of the modern housing in Elysian Gardens. They are of no interest whatsoever and do not warrant inclusion.

#### 6. 19 West Street

19 West Street is a weather boarded range at the entrance to the conservation area and forms an important group with the adjacent buildings.

#### 7. North Road

North Road is another area which the village expanded into from the late nineteenth century onwards. The southern end includes many relatively unaltered houses, mostly of red or buff brick, with slate roofs. The majority of properties have long gardens, with extensive soft planting. Some back land development is also found, as in West and East Streets, turned at 90° to the road. The quality of buildings and spaces further north and on the west side diminishes and are mainly modern housing of no interest, although the workshop adjacent to number 2 is a simple utilitarian building, with activity and character, which has been included.

#### 8. Station Road.

Station Road is a further area of late nineteenth century expansion. This includes some relatively unaltered brick and slate roofed houses, and number 17, a large rendered house sitting in a substantial plot, marks the end of the area proposed for inclusion. The picturesque early nineteenth century cottage, number 4, is also included (*see fig. 30*). The more altered housing to the North has not been included.

# Tollesbury Conservation Area

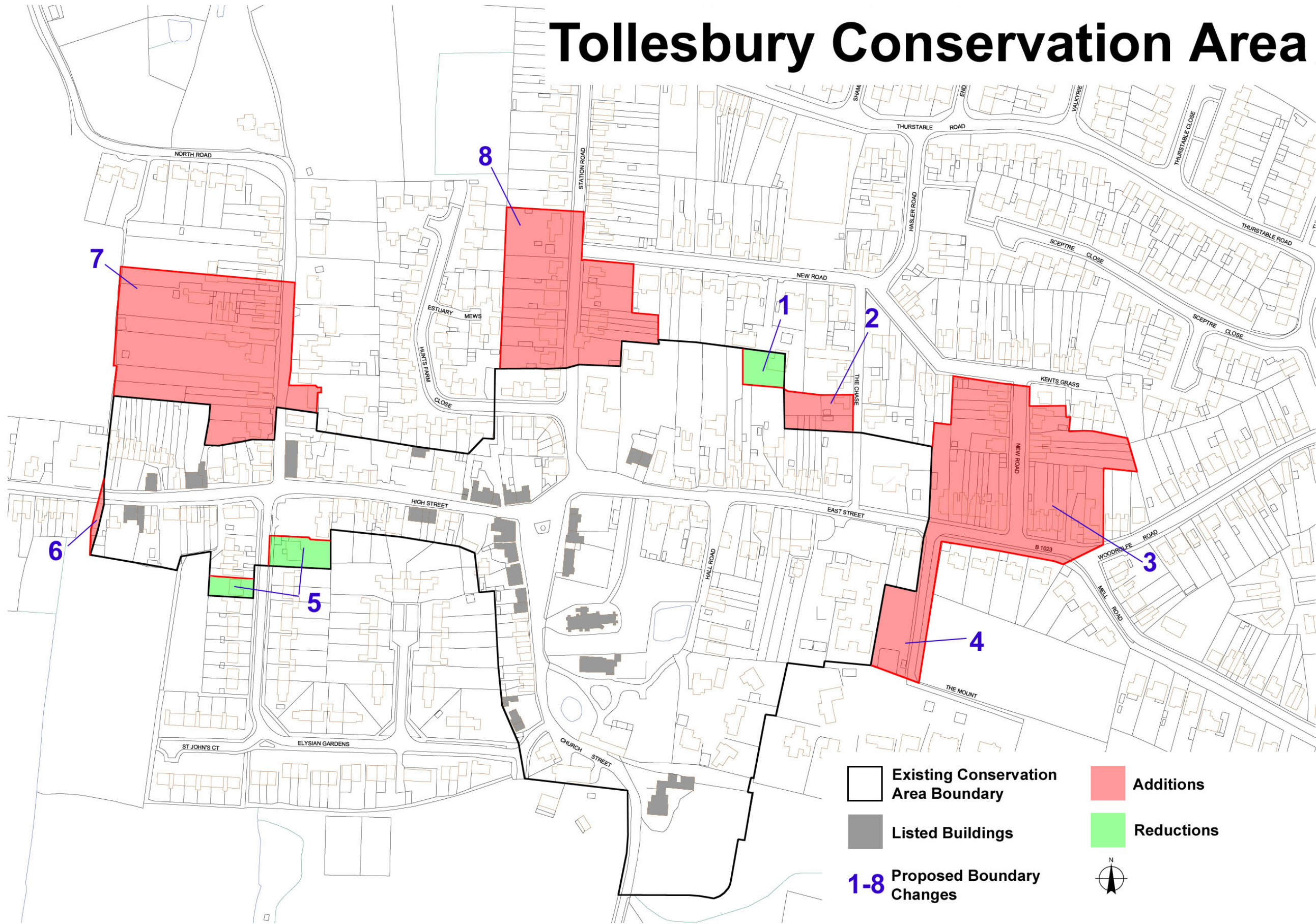


Fig. 32. Proposed boundary changes

Page intentionally left blank

## 7.2 Additional Planning Controls

The major threat to conservation area character is gradual erosion by minor changes, most of which do not currently require planning permission. Many of these objectives could be achieved in less damaging ways, if proper care and thought can be given, which is the benefit of the planning process.

The local planning authority can bring many of the changes within the remit of the planning system with the use of Article 4(2) controls. Changes and alterations have begun to take place within the conservation area to a damaging extent; traditional details, windows types, doors, materials, boundary treatments all play an important role in defining the character of the area. It is proposed that article 4(2) directions are sought to control the following works within the conservation area:

- Alteration of a Dwelling house affecting windows, doors or other openings to the front and side elevations including the insertion of dormer or other windows in the roofs and the change of roof materials.
- The application of any form of cladding or rendering to the external walls of the front and side elevations.
- The erection or construction of a porch outside the front or side door of a dwelling house.
- The erection or construction of any fences, walls, gates or other forms of enclosure to the front or sides of a dwelling house.
- Additionally on the outskirts of the conservation area soft landscaped front gardens are particularly important and there would be benefit in controlling the creation of vehicle hard standings.
- The construction within the curtilage of a dwelling house of a vehicle hard standing incidental to the dwelling house. The formation of an access to a dwelling house from an unclassified road.

Where additional planning controls are imposed it is important to make it clear to residents that existing listed building controls are far more stringent, so that there is no misunderstandings regarding the control of works.

## 7.3 Enhancements

An important part of the role of conservation area designation is the duty to enhance, not only preserve. There are a number of opportunities to reinforce the character and improve the appearance of the conservation area, which are set out below.

## 1. The Green

The Green is at the centre of the conservation and forms the focal point of the settlement. There are three main elements which could be addressed to achieve significant enhancements: the road and paving materials, the extent of car parking and the bus shelter.

The road and paving materials within The Green are bland and of poor quality, making a sharp contrast with the traditional materials of the locality. It is suggested that the floorscape could be improved with the pavements being covered in bonded pea shingle, the concrete kerb stones replaced with natural granite and the road resurfaced with tarmac with large aggregate rolled into it.

At present the parking is spread throughout The Green. Whilst removing parking would be impossible, it is desirable to reduce its impact. Concentration of the parking, to one area, in the centre behind the bus shelter would help to minimise its impact. The parking area could be subtly differentiated, with a change of surfacing to stone sets. Any restricted parking markings or signs would have to be very carefully considered. Provision for the continuation of the temporary market stalls should also be made.



*Fig. 33. Enhancements to The Green*

The bus shelter is a very crude and harsh structure, which is very prominently positioned within the conservation area. Its demolition would be very welcomed. The site does however serve as an important feature at the junction between the High Street, The Green and East Street and also plays an important functional role as a bus stop. The structure could be replaced with a timber framed shelter covered with a steep plain tile roof (*fig. 33*), which would be more appropriate for this context. Alternatively a high quality modern design could be adopted, excellent detailing and materials would be essential for this approach to be successful.

## 2. The Cage, The Green.

The Cage, an eighteenth century village lock up, has undergone twentieth century restoration. It has been moved in the 1960's from its original location and its weatherboard replaced with modern wainy edged weatherboard. In order to reinstate its historic integrity it is proposed that it is moved back to its original position (*fig. 34*) and the weatherboard replaced with minimum 200 x 20 mm timber featheredged boards tarred black.



*Fig. 34. The Cage in original position*

## 3. Boundary Treatments

Boundary treatments play an important role in the enclosure of the street edge within the conservation area. Painted timber fences, hedges, brick walls and iron railings are all found within the village. New boundary treatments would be beneficial at a number of sites where streetscape enclosure is lacking or poor quality fences, walls or coniferous hedges are present.

## 4. Sites With Development / Redevelopment Potential

There are few sites with development potential within the conservation area. Infill has taken place, particularly through the second half of the twentieth century, using up most of the free plots. The open space, including gardens are an important part of the character of the area and further infill should be avoided. There is scope for redevelopment in sites which comprise of negative buildings (*see fig. 16*), but care should be taken to ensure siting, scale, detailing and materials are appropriate for the context.

## 5. Relocation of services below ground

Above ground electricity and telephone cables and associated poles make a considerable intrusion into the conservation area. They are a particular problem in East Street and West Street. Their relocation below ground should be encouraged.

## 6. Additional soft landscaping

Soft landscaping is an important feature of the conservation area, helping to define open spaces and soften built forms. Additional hedge and tree planting could be provided at the rear of 1 Church Street to enhance and soften the back land view towards the church, and to the school ground and Masonic hall to help screen the parked cars and provide more definition to the boundaries fronting East Street and The Chase.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Tollesbury is a unique village. Its history has been shaped by close links with agriculture and coastal trade. It retains a medieval street pattern and many fine timber framed buildings. There are also many buildings which are not of special merit in their own right, such as the numerous Victorian terraces, but in many cases these form important groups within the townscape.

The great variety of building types, ranging from simple, vernacular cottages to Edwardian pubs and halls makes a diverse village with an interesting townscape.

The long standing commercial base of the village has unfortunately been eroded in recent years. What was once a self sufficient community full of shops now has but a few local facilities. The activity and sustainability of local facilities is certainly a definable characteristic but it is much more difficult to protect, a fundamental challenge for the twenty-first century.

The most harmful changes to the character of the area are the continuing pressure for modernisation. At present many changes, such as replacement windows can be carried out without the benefit of planning permission. The proposed article 4(2) directions would bring alterations with the most potential for harm within the planning system allowing more control over the changes which are proposed.

The enhancement proposals provide opportunities to reinforce the special character of the village and improve its appearance. There is considerable scope to improve the former market place, which includes many fine buildings, but is undermined by the poor flooring materials in this large open public space.

The boundary of the conservation area has not been reviewed or amended for almost thirty years. The large area of late nineteenth century expansion in East Street, New road and North Road are of considerable interest and form an important part in the villages history. It is proposed to include the best examples of this Victorian expansion within the conservation area.

The character appraisal and review should help to allow the local planning authority, the highway authority, local residents, developers and other organisations to make informed decisions about the changes affecting the conservation area and preserve its special character for future generations.

## 9. APPENDIX

### 9.1 Policy Content

Maldon District (Draft 2003) Replacement Local Plan

Tollesbury is situated in the Coastal Zone (Policy M/CC/10) and the Blackwater Special Landscapes Area (M/CC/6). The District Councils general Conservation Area Policies are as follows :- M/BE/17 (Protection) M/BE/16 (Advertisements) M/BE/18 (Demolition) M/BE/19 (Development) M/BE/27 (Satellite dishes). Protection for Listed Buildings is contained in :- M/BE/20 (Demolition) M/BE/21 (Change of Use) M/BE/22 (Curtilage) M/BE/16 (Advertisements) M/BE/27 (Satellite dishes) Archaeological sites in Historic Towns are subject to M/BE/23 (Protection).

### 9.2 Bibliography

Chapman, A. & André, P. (1777)

A map of the County of Essex.

Crossley, A. Dunn, M. & Heard, F. (1999)

Tollesbury 2000.

English Heritage (1997)

Conservation Area Appraisals

Lovell, K. (1991)

In the Land of the Tolles

Maldon District Council (2003)

Maldon District Draft Replacement Local Plan.

McCann, J & Scott, D. (1987).

Essex Archaeology and History. p.53.

Medleycot, M. (2004)

Tollesbury Historic Settlement Assessment, ECC.

Morant, P. (1763-1768)

The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex, Volume 1.

Reaney, P.H. (1935)

The Place Names of Essex.

**10. INDEX TO STREETS**

Church Street	1, 6, 9, 12, 14, 18, 25-30, 42
East Street	1, 6, 23, 26, 30-33, 35-37, 41-43
Elysian Gardens	1, 7, 19-22, 24, 29, 37
Hall Road	1, 9, 15, 29, 31, 33, 35
High Street	1, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 19, 22-26, 28, 30, 41
North Road	1, 6, 18, 21, 37, 43
Station Road	1, 6, 34, 37
The Chase	1, 9, 32, 34, 36, 42
West Street	1, 9, 9, 18-21, 25, 27, 37, 42

