



# *BECCLES Conservation Area*

## *Character Appraisal*

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in conjunction with  
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on behalf of  
Waveney District Council and  
the Broads Authority*

*Published July 2014*





*Aerial view  
taken in 1928*



*Old Market, east side*



*St Michael's Church  
Tower from Saltgate*

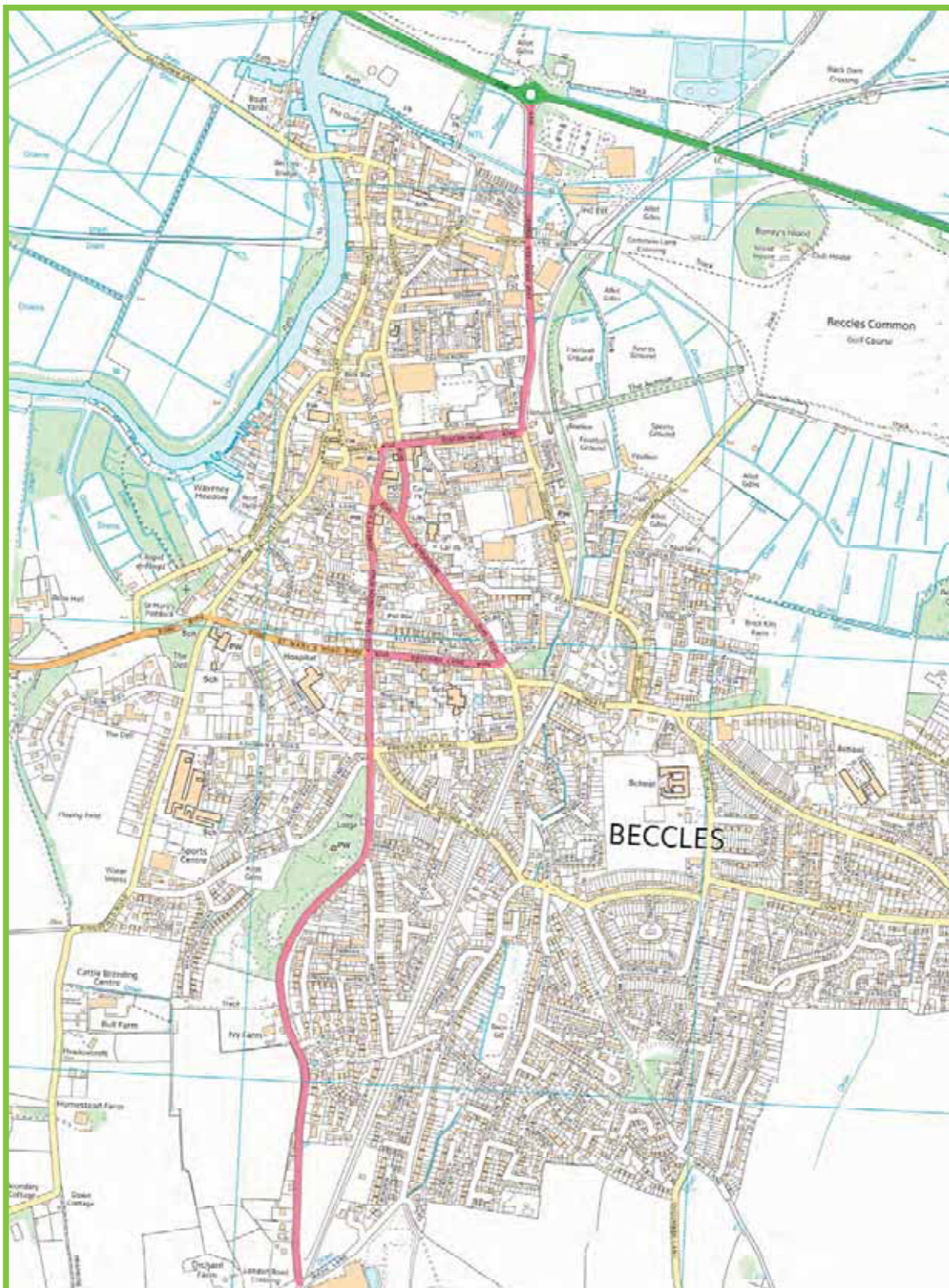


*The Waveney Valley  
from Ballygate*

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### ***Town Map of Beccles***

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***Aerial Photo of Beccles***

## ***Beccles Conservation Area Character Appraisal***

### ***Introduction***

The historic environment is all around us in the form of buildings, landscapes, archaeology and historic areas; it is a precious and irreplaceable asset. Once gone it is gone forever.

Caring for the historic environment is a dynamic process which involves managing change. This does not mean keeping everything from the past, but making careful judgements about the value and significance of buildings and landscapes. Critical to these decisions is an understanding and appreciation of an area's character, including its social and economic background, and the way in which such factors have shaped its urban fabric. This should be the starting point for making decisions about its management both in the present and the future.

This conservation area appraisal:

- Describes the character of the area;
- Identifies its special character;
- Puts forward a basis for effective control of development; and
- Identifies proposals for its enhancement

Conservation areas are defined by the government as 'areas of special interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. They were introduced through the Civic Amenities Act in 1967 and there are now sixteen in Waveney District. The Beccles Conservation Area was designated in 1967 and was extended in 1991. An article 4 direction was applied to the conservation area in 1997. Designation as a conservation area is not intended to prevent new development or stifle the area's economic life or potential, though it is expected that a high degree of attention will be paid to design, repair and maintenance in such areas. When exercising planning powers, the Council will pay special attention to the

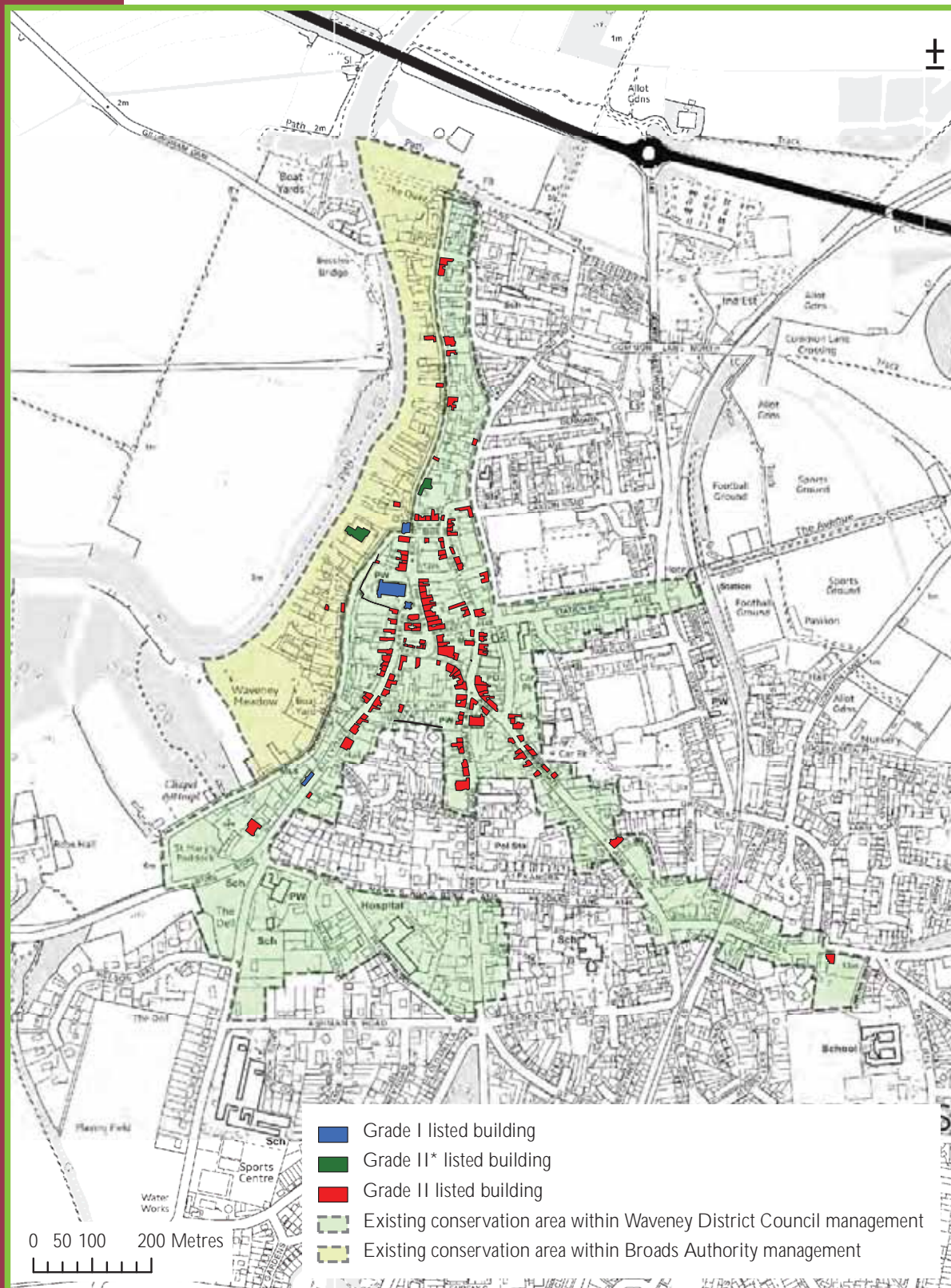
preservation and enhancement of the conservation area according to those policies for the built environment set out in the Waveney District Council Core Strategy 2009 and Development Management Policies 2011.

In recognition of these and in line with the requirements of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, the Council will continue to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area and consult the public on these proposals. The appraisal will be subject to a regular review in order that it remains a relevant and useful document.

The last review of the Beccles Conservation Area was carried out by the Waveney District Design and Conservation team in 2001. Since that time Beccles has seen considerable change both to the edges of the Conservation Area as well as within its built environment. It has seen large scale retail development at its (North) East edge with the redevelopment of the Caxton printing works, close to the historic core. Similarly a large scale residential development at the South-Eastern "gateway" to its inner core at the junction of Blyburgate and Peddars Way. Other individual refurbishments - developments including public space enhancements - have had considerable impact on the most historic part of town. Other significant developments still within the modern town but more peripheral to the existing Conservation Area are adding to the continuing changing face and character of the town.

Further changes have taken place. In part to the Planning system and in particular its administration. Since May 2008, The Broads Authority are now responsible for the policies and control of development within "The Broads" which has National Park status. See map overleaf.





### ***Existing Conservation Area and Listed Buildings***

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What is clear and is reflected in its form, is that Beccles is a market town comprising a resourceful and confident community which has been and continues to adapt to changing pressures (natural as well as socio-economic) and circumstance. Maintaining a strong sense of local pride and sense of place which in turn seems to have secured a modest yet real sense of economic prosperity.

### ***Assessment of Special Interest - a summary***

#### **General character and plan form**

Beccles is Waveney's largest market town with evidence of human habitation from prehistoric times. The present town follows a medieval pattern with a church and market at its core where initial expansion was confined to its main arteries. It lies on the edge of an escarpment on the South bank of the river Waveney where it bends to go North and then turning again to return to its easterly direction.

It first grew in response to its strategic location and then through local trade assisted by improvements in river, road and rail transport in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

Substantial rebuilding of the town following fires at the end of the 16th century and then again in the 17th, together with significant moments of expansion at the turn of the 19th century and again at its end have determined much of its architectural character. Growth has continued through the 20th century.

Expansion has been limited to the North and West by the river Waveney. Similarly a limited level of town growth has occurred to the east but again has been constrained by the terrain. The town's main historic expansion therefore has been confined in a southerly direction in the first instance directly following the medieval arteries of Ballygate and Ingate respectively. The twentieth century has seen considerable

expansion to such an extent as to now link with Worlingham to the South East, but with a natural break on the northern edge.

#### **Landscape setting**

Beccles stands on the south bank of the River Waveney about 13km (8 miles) inland, roughly midway between the small market town of Bungay (upstream to the west) and the east coast harbour port of Lowestoft. It sits on the edge of the North Suffolk clay land edge where the interaction of river, glaciation and sea level change have left a peninsula of raised ground close to the river's edge on its left. (The existing conservation area boundary reflects this well as does Hodkinson's map of 1783 overleaf). It stands at the North—South road crossing of the river. Here the river meanders through an extensive and picturesque floodplain justifying its inclusion within the Broads Authority domain (with national park status). The landscape setting has been one of the more critical factors in the town's development. It has seen considerable change both natural and man made during its human occupation.

Sea level rise is not something confined to the present day and Beccles is a good example of this. The doomsday book describes Beccles with a levy of 60,000 herrings. Beneath 18 Northgate is reputed to be a remnant of a harbour wall. It was surely a coastal port with a waterside considerably different from that visible now. The medieval warm period (approx 800-1300AD) resulting in rising water levels was then followed by the mini ice age of the 16th/17th century resulting in a similar and opposite retreat. The retreating water levels and introduction of large scale land draining techniques imported from the continental lowlands have left the landscape we see today.





1783 Map



## ***Historic Development and Archaeology***

### **The origins and historic development of the area**

Man has inhabited these areas since prehistoric times despite the different coast line. The first evidence of human activity in the British Isles has been found recently at two separate sites on the East Anglian coast with finds at Happisburgh Norfolk and Pakefield in Suffolk to c 700,000 yrs BC.

Early stone implements have been found on a number of sites in the Beccles area, although it must be remembered that the water line was different from that today and maps of Romano-Britain show a tidal river much wider than today. It is most likely for this reason that we have little evidence of more permanent settlement until the Saxon period when a Bailey fortification is referred to guarding the Waveney river estuary against Norse raiding parties which plagued east Anglia during the "dark ages" between the Roman era and the Norman conquest.

It is more likely that Beccles' strategic location was the reason for its development. There are no castles identifying it as of military strategic importance. Its characteristics are both as a port and as a major crossing point North to South across the river Waveney. The origin of the name too is revealing as there are two contrasting versions; one describes a possible origin from "Beata Ecclesia" - "The Christian Temple" showing a Romano-British origin- although the other is more plausible where "Bec Lea" - "Meadow by the stream" has an Anglo Saxon origin.

First documented evidence shows that Beccles was given to the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds by the Anglo-Saxon king Eadwig (AD 955-59). It certainly belonged to the abbey by the time of Domesday Book, 1086, and it was then one of the handful of places in Suffolk with a market

and burgesses, making it a town. It also had a church, and owed 60,000 herrings per year to the abbey, indicating a fishing industry of some importance. These saltwater fish are an important reminder that there are marine deposits up to the edge of Beccles, indicating that at one time the lower Waveney was an inlet of the sea and that the town's origins may well have been as a seaport. As the name suggests the Old Market (in use from Saxon times) was originally the location where trade, was carried on. The Chapel of St Peter on its west side indicates a planned approach to the layout. With waters receding and the trade in herring similarly declining there was a shift in commercial interests as well as a move to a new site with the development of a second market at New Market. By the late middle ages Beccles had two market places and an open space where fairs were held.

Beccles played an important part in the royal administration of Suffolk in the Middle Ages by acting as the northern 'capital' of the Geldable - the name given to the part of the county under direct royal administration (as opposed to the 'liberties' of St Edmund and St Ethedreda, controlled by the monasteries at Bury St Edmunds and Ely). This remains of some significance, as being a traditional centre for administration it maintained a certain status. Beccles during the Middle Ages had a number of churches. The first, St Peters, was demolished by 1470. St Michaels dates from 1369. A hospital and leper house, dedicated to St Mary Magdalene, (St Mary's Flats), was founded in 1267 and demolished in the 17th century, and the hermitage and Chapel of St Mary was decayed by the 16th century, and the site used for a public house called 'The Hermitage' which stood just over the bridge across the Waveney.

By 1584 the town was granted its charter by Queen Elizabeth I as commemorated by the town sign. The pre-Reformation influence of



1837 Map



Gilds also survived in Beccles. The Gild of the Holy Saints, one of two in Beccles during the medieval period, survived and became a civic gild with the power invested to a locally elected group known as Feoffees, who still exist today. (This may well be due in part to Beccles administrative independence from the 'liberties' of St Edmund and St Ethedreda, controlled by the monasteries at Bury St Edmunds and Ely). Their objectives being for ..'the benefit, profit and common utility of the inhabitants of Beccles.' After the reformation the dead could not be commemorated and the statute of 1547 dissolved charities and religious gilds and confiscated property devoted to the celebration of masses. It was however possible to redeem such property by making a payment to the Crown and it appears that the Beccles Feoffees did exactly that. The income was used after the 1540's to pay for poor relief, by paying poor rates and doctors' bills, buying coal, blankets and materials to make clothes for the poor. It paid for fire fighting equipment, more significantly.

In common with many medieval towns with their dense pattern and timber structures with thatched roofs, Beccles suffered a number of fires. The first, in 1586, destroyed the roof and interior of St Michaels as well as a number of town centre properties. An interesting specification appears, dated 1587 .."and the walls to be of mason's work to the eaves.." Further fires in 1669 and 1671 destroyed more than 100 town centre properties. Nevertheless a surprising amount of timber frame still exists in the town centre but the absence of any frame to the east of Saltgate suggests this is where the worst damage may have occurred. Otherwise the town still manages a good spread of timber frame still in situ within the late medieval confines of the town.

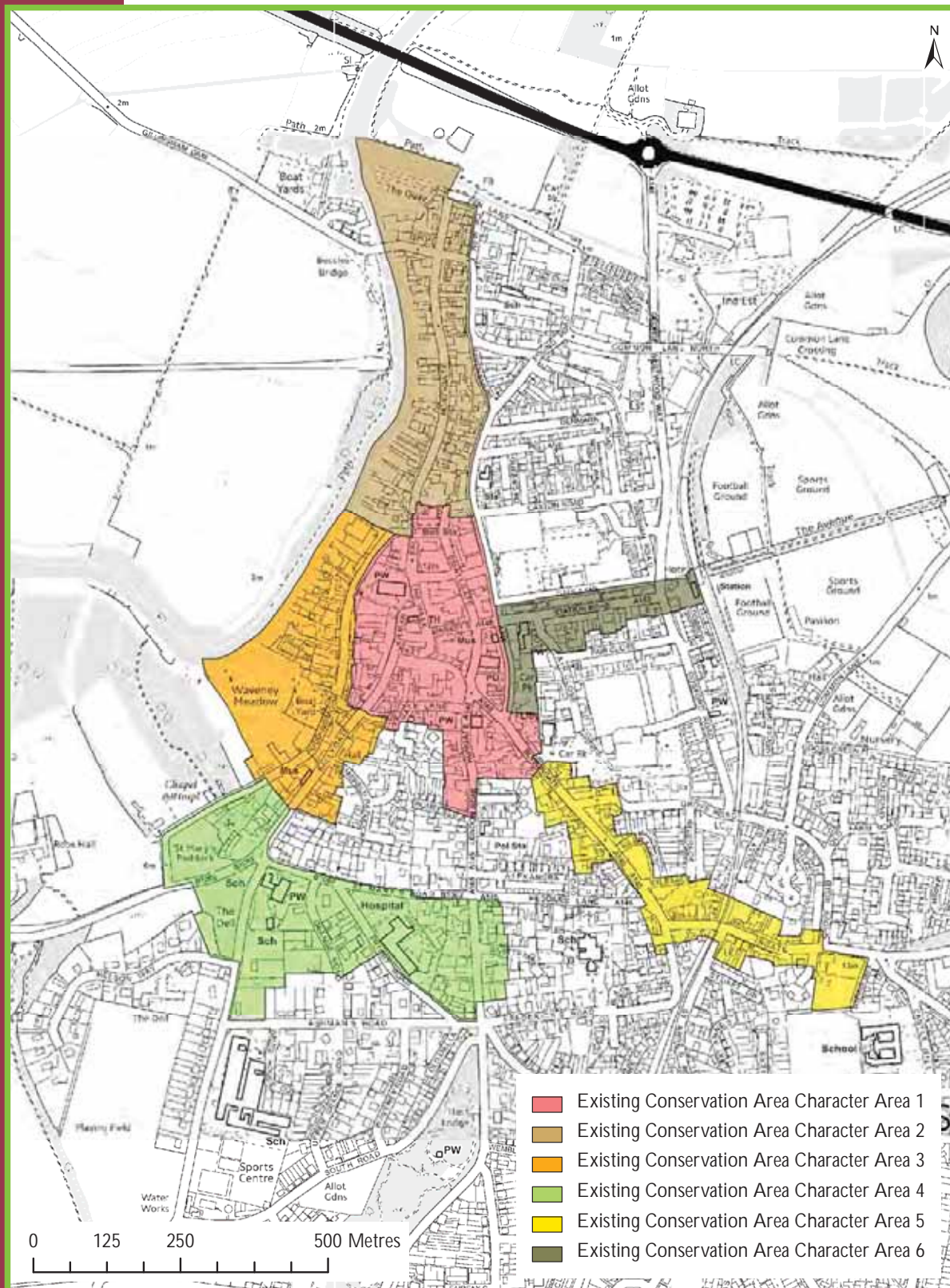
As a result of these experiences, as well as changing architectural trends, the introduction of large scale brick making for which the local

clay was suited, meant that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brick construction began to supersede timber. Historic evidence shows that in many cases this was superficial and amounted to re facing at best. Nevertheless the visible architecture of the town is derived in large measure from a 'polite' Georgian taste.

By the end of the seventeenth century the population of Beccles was in the region of two thousand. Beside the church and market, with over 50 stalls, it boasted a school (founded by Sir John Leman 1631), a leper hospital, several fine town houses, and numerous inns and taverns as well as the quayside activities. An early Quaker Meeting House was established in 1744 and this indicates the town's tolerance of non-conformity; by the end of the nineteenth century it had five such places of worship. John Wesley preached in the cockpit of 'the Falcon' in 1776.

Throughout the eighteenth century Beccles steadily expanded and consolidated its role as the principal market centre for the area inland from Lowestoft with commerce based chiefly upon wool, corn, malt and leather, with trade in meat and cattle becoming an ever increasing factor. A cattle market on the Fair grounds in 1740 had 3000 cattle.

During the Victorian era Beccles became increasingly urban and industrialised, although the weekly market continued to serve the traditional needs of the rural economy. The advent of the railway following the first line in 1854 from Halesworth to Haddiscoe and then in 1859 when it was connected to Lowestoft, Gt Yarmouth, Ipswich and London, dramatically improved the fortunes of the town. The advent of the railway opened new opportunities in transport and communication, encouraging the establishment of larger industries like Clowes print works and Elliott and Garrood's marine engineering. With rising prosperity, the town



### ***Existing Conservation Area Character Areas***

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expanded rapidly during the second half of the nineteenth century, with the population more than doubling during the century. Additional facilities were therefore required to serve the growing population—The first National School for boys and girls in 1837 and Beccles Cottage Hospital some years later. Large numbers of houses were built at this time and these form a considerable footprint on modern Beccles. These range from the respectable villas of Station Road and London Road, while the area to the north of the print works catered for the lower yet essential income bracket.

The 20th century saw another shift of emphasis spurred by the excursions of late nineteenth century tourism and the “discovery” of the Broads as a holiday venue, playing an increasing role in the future of the town. Further residential expansion has seen the two settlements of Beccles and Worlingham merge almost entirely but with one remaining green swathe to the north of the connecting road. A new hospital, schools and the replacement of the print works with a supermarket are all indicators of the changing nature of society in general today. In fact all the heavier industrial activities have more or less ceased and the marine skills are now devoted to the Broads tourism offer.

Despite these continually changing factors Beccles has shown an incredible ability to adapt to these market forces. It continues to prosper where others around do less well and this must be due in no small part to the characteristic vigour, common sense and hard work with which the local community conducts its way of life.

### ***The need for subdivisions***

Beccles Conservation Area covers such an extensive part of the town and encompasses such a wide range of ages and types of building that attempts to describe and assess its character in any meaningful detail as a homogenous entity are fraught with difficulty. Similarly it was first designated in 1967 and extended in 1991 making it at that time the largest of all Waveney's Conservation areas. As a result of these factors the further detailed analysis of the conservation area is to be carried out in smaller manageable pieces, based on the original boundary changes and a previous assessment of the area in 2001.

Beccles Conservation Area was first designated in 1967. Three distinct areas were then identified.

#### **1 The Town Centre;**

Old Market, Saltgate, New Market, Smallgate, Sheepgate/Exchange Square, Hungate, Newgate, northern sections of Blyburgate and Ballygate.

#### **2 North Beccles;**

The Quay, Fen Lane, New Road, Bridge Street, Northgate and Ravensmere.

#### **3 The Cliff;**

Ballygate, Puddingmoor.

The Conservation area was further extended in 1991, when three further areas were added.

#### **4 South Beccles Extension;**

St Mary's Road, London Road, Priory Road, Grange Road, Ringsfield Road, The Dell.

#### **5 Ingate Extension;**

Ingate, Kilbrack and South Blyburgate.

#### **6 Station Road Extension;**

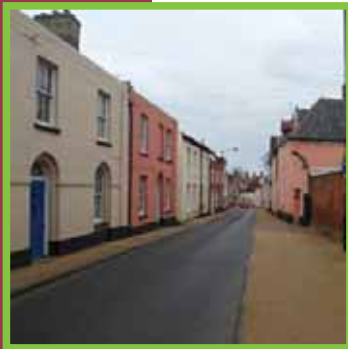
Station Road, Station Square, Fair Close.



*St Michael's Church  
Tower from New Market*



*Sheepgate from Exchange  
Square*



*Northgate, looking north*



*The Quay, off  
Fen Lane*

## ***Spatial Analysis + Key views and Vistas***

The relationship between public space (such as a market place, street, public garden or car park) and private space (gardens, courtyards or playing fields) reflects the way Beccles has developed since the medieval period.

Constrained by the river valley, essentially on 3 sides, the typical medieval pattern to the town centre drifts along its main arteries where building form and development plots reflect later periods of large scale developments.

## ***The Overall Picture***

Because of its geographic constraints Beccles is approached primarily from the North by road along the A146, at the junction of routes, connecting the three main local population centres of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. This crosses the river further north of the historic crossing but roughly along a similar axis. There are commanding views both from within but especially on approach, of the town across the marshes and meadows of the flood plain, to the north and west, with the ever dominant church tower commanding the horizon from miles around. To the south the views are broken partly as a result of the terrain but also of development growth. To the East again the wooded common and developments break views.

Further detailed analysis occurs by the subdivisions.



**1 The Town Centre;  
Old Market, Saltgate, New Market,  
Smallgate, Sheepgate/Exchange Square,  
Hungate, Newgate, northern sections of  
Blyburgate and Ballygate.**

This is the historic centre of trade and commerce from medieval times, with buildings of two and three storeys grouped around the two market places, close to the perpendicular church of St Michael and its detached sixteenth century tower, which remains the focal point of the town. Open space provided by the historic Old Market, in use from Saxon times, provides fine views to the valley, through strategic gaps at the Score, and New Market and the church and tower to the south. The central array of buildings forming the New Market are predominantly low 2 storeys and surrounded almost entirely by three storey facades forming the enclosure to the medieval market place. The roofscape (shapes and materials) of this portion is of considerable interest and impact. The narrow winding exit to the south west, Ballygate demonstrates the medieval grain with its closer frontages and provides stunning views back towards the tower. The South-east corner leads out via pedestrianised Sheepgate and winds towards Exchange Square. The Walk continues the 3 storey Georgian dominance albeit hiding in many cases timber frame still in situ. The Northern end between Rooks Lane and the Old Market however has lost any sense of the historic building form or pattern. The existing low roofs at this point provide no special advantage from views but do keep daylight high at this point which would otherwise be an intimidating bottleneck if enclosed on both sides.

**2 North Beccles;  
The Quay, Fen Lane, New Road, Bridge  
Street, Northgate and Ravensmere.**

This section is the neck of the town linking it to the historic crossing point, the public waterside and the Quay. From the town centre and the Old Market, Northgate is narrow and serpentine

with buildings abutting the road at either side. The street scene includes many fine red-brick frontages of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, punctuated with fine trees, with Dutch gables and dormer windows dominating the roof line. Occasionally vistas open either over walls, or along historic scores to the west providing tantalising glimpses of the river. Buildings are a mix of residential and commercial arising from the historic and commercial riverside setting. Ravensmere provided the historic stabling and ancillary buildings for the grander Northgate frontages and is dominated by sections of fine historic wall which in parts act as a retaining wall with Ravensmere below the level of the gardens alongside. Ravensmere continues to follow Northgate towards the river but turns sharply to line with Bridge Street and out of the town. The open green with the Town sign, at the bottom of Northgate, provides a suitable break in the building pattern. Here you are level with the river bank, and the views and vistas are considerably more open than those in Northgate and Ravensmere. Buildings are a mixture of age yet predominantly two storey in height. Trees and the river edge begin to take over and the quayside is dominated by boats, ducks and geese and families enjoying the main public access to the river. The Broads information point, cafeteria and public lavatories are amongst the last structures before the river edge. The quayside is wooded and breaks up views towards a new development erected on the opposite river bank. Views back to the east along Fen Lane provide a dramatic contrast, with two storey buildings of the early 19th century period on the one side and open slipways and the riverbank on the other. Opposite New Road at the north-eastern edge of the conservation area are a mixture of buildings, at first set back from the river edge and then along Ravensmere (of a more recent phase of development) considered suitable for inclusion in a new extension as proposed by this document. See Management Plan Proposals.



*Ballygate, looking north  
from Leman House*



*Puddingmoor from St  
Michael's Churchyard*



*St Mary's Flats,  
Ballygate*



*London Road  
looking north*

### 3 The Cliff;

#### **Ballygate, Puddingmoor.**

As the name suggests, this is part of the oldest area of the town and its habitation. Providing the best views across the Waveney valley apart from St Michael's Tower, this is considered by the Broads Authority as a grade 2 quality landscape (grade 1 being highest) at this part of the valley. Both arteries run roughly parallel, one at the top of the cliff and one at its base, slightly staggered where the eastern edge of Puddingmoor (the cliff top) is in effect the rear of the historic New Market plots. Ballygate leaves the south western tip of New Market and it too meanders away. Its first section is a mixture of two storey buildings of predominantly soft red brick with occasional painted rendered facades on both sides, but before the road turns out of sight, the picture is of steep pitched roofs of slate and pantile but with few dormer windows. Once you reach Stepping Hill the vista opens out to the west and across the valley. Trees begin to embellish the cliff edge and the continuity of the building line on both sides is interrupted, providing views and daylight through. You are leaving the town centre without doubt.

Puddingmoor is contrasting, certainly in stature of building, with the exception of Waveney House (now Waveney House Hotel). As you enter Puddingmoor from Old Market alongside St Peters House, the road turns abruptly and descends the cliff at sharp gradient. Besides a variety of dwelling types and ages and a selection of commercial premises, there is a boatyard and—an increasingly rare item—a heated open air swimming pool. Vistas open immediately to the west - the grade II\* hotel, the river and beyond as the land falls to the river edge. At this point there is the cliff with church above on the east side and a random mix of development between the road and river edge, providing intermittent views through to the river. Gardens to residential plots and the sloping terrain feature strongly. Buildings on the

east side are clustered where the cliff permits. A large retaining wall presents a significant feature. Made of a mixture of brick and flint and cobbles, it props up the cliff cottages. Once past the cluster on both sides the mood changes again with the open space of Waveney meadow on the right. It provides a valued public recreational area by the river. Views to the east are across land-drained meadows through to Roos Hall.

The boundary between Waveney District and the Broads Authority runs along Puddingmoor and Northgate. This means that planning policies are different on one side of the street from the other. This document therefore provides a singular opportunity to reflect and co-ordinate a joint approach in these locations and, based on these contents, proposals are being made jointly by the Broads Authority and Waveney District Council.

#### **4 South Beccles Extension;**

##### **St Mary's Road, London Road, Priory Road, Grange Road, Ringsfield Road, The Dell.**

This section provides the southern gateway into the town where historic routes from the west and south converge to enter the town along Ballygate. The spot is a key location, topographically and historically, and is marked by the town sign depicting Queen Elizabeth I granting the 1584 town charter to Sir John Baas, first Portreeve of Beccles. (The original sign of 1936 by local sculptress, Judy Quinton Barber, is now in the Beccles museum.)

Buildings are to the south and west only, as the terrain falls away sharply to the west and a rural scene dominates with glorious views to the meadows and river beyond with the setting of Roos Hall beginning to command attention. St Mary's Flats is a grand Georgian building set back from the road in wooded surroundings and is the early medieval site of St Mary's chapel and hospital. To the south east across the junction is the site of the Catholic church and

school of St Benet, a large imposing Victorian church, stone built in a Romanesque style, which can also be seen from some distance. This is closely followed by the war memorial and hospital which is an interesting group with some fine individual elements. Views cut across lower foreground buildings. The remaining dwellings at the junction of London Road present a different form and are of an older date and period of development, some as early as late 18th century. This is approaching the highest ground in the town which peaks at the Grange Estate directly to the south of this location. The south side of St Mary's Road sets the tone—comfortable middle class respectability and typical of the early 20th century. The buildings are set in good sized gardens well furnished with mature trees and shrubs and show a very different spatial arrangement from that of the town centre. Vistas and views are relatively short distant and reliant on the architectural and landscape detail for interest, which is nevertheless abundant and sufficient to merit increasing the conservation area to fully reflect the Grange Estate development of the turn of the 20th century. A study of maps of the era shows clearly how individual plots have been developed in a scattered way as opposed to a more densely packed approach.

#### **5 Ingate Extension;**

##### **Ingate, Kilbrack and South Blyburgate.**

This is the other principle historic gateway to the town from the east, now almost connected to Worlingham as 20th century expansion has seen both town and village grow. This is of course a medieval gateway and as such the road and certain parts of the area retain some medieval flavour. It is the routes which dominate this part of the conservation area and the building density and form varies along the length. Ironically most development potential lies closer to the town centre than fringe, where the car park and Kilbrack Cemetery provide large open areas close to the centre, whilst the





*Blyburgate looking north*



*Ingate looking west*



*Station Square*



*Fair Close looking south*

vista and view along Blyburgate to the centre is another classic with the tower reaching up at the end of the view. The Peddars Way junction is another key location where traffic east-west can by-pass the town centre—another historic route but not built upon in any substantial way until the 19th century or thereabouts. It is intended to include parts of Peddars Way in a new extension— see Management Plan.

The mood at Ingate is different again and reflects a low income dwelling type of the late 19th century. Typical of an industrial era, small narrow fronted red brick properties with slate roofs clustered in terraces following the road curve and straddling the railway line. The dip in terrain at the railway crossing provides some vertical relief and some greenery punctuates this densely packed entrance. There is significant room for improving the quality of this space in exerting proper controls over window and door replacements. The recent losses of original fabric has led to a disjointed and fragmentary appearance to this part of the conservation area. Views here rely on the local detail.

### **6 Station Road Extension; Station Road, Station Square, Fair Close.**

This is the last section of the existing conservation area and one which reflects the most recent and significant change to take place to the town's development. The railway was brought to Beccles in 1853 by the railway magnate Sir Morton Peto. By the end of the century "excursions" and trips were all the rage and the importance of the railway was exemplified by significant changes which were made. In order to accommodate the grand route to the station, buildings in both Newgate and Smallgate were demolished so as to widen the road. Station Road is a wide and straight road, flanked by late Victorian houses built of Suffolk white brick. Decorative brick and stonework details with attractive wrought iron porches, impart a distinctive touch to many of the houses. Station Square itself is in the middle of

a significant regeneration with the old Gosford Maltings site now developed to modern dwellings. The old maltings office and the old Railway Hotel opposite form the entrance to the square and have been sympathetically restored. This leaves the station buildings to be tackled to complete this important focal point. The station remains in use and the railway bridge over the tracks is the central pedestrian access to the common. Vistas are linear (at ground level) along the routes, opening at the road junctions, although from the town centre, Station Road slowly drops as it approaches the station and marshes beyond.

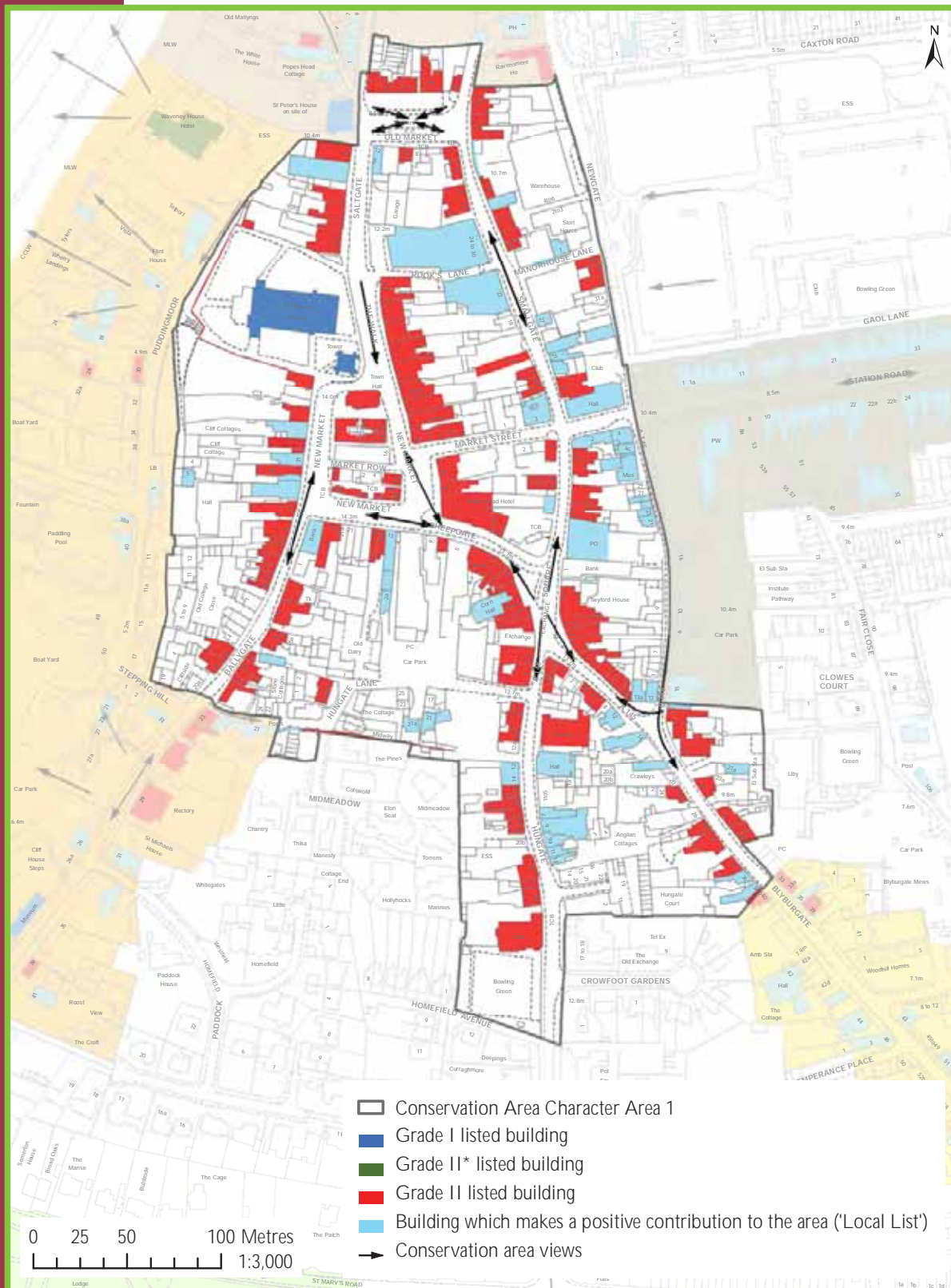
Fair Close was originally included because of the hospital which is of local historic importance. It is proposed to extend this further along its length to include the buildings along what was once called Shipwreck Alley, built as accommodation for the nurses. Vistas particularly from Fair Close are vulnerable. The current ambient mood is low rise with lots of mature trees. The historic route through to Grove Road is still extant and, as with so many other lanes and alleys, provides a distinct feature of the Beccles conservation area. This is an important pedestrian and historic route.

## ***Character Analysis***

Using the same sub divisions as before the following section seeks to expand on the spatial analysis of the area giving further insight into how and why the spatial form exists as it does today. It is often clear that cases of intrusion or damage within a conservation area are as a result of a misunderstanding or ignorance of the historic grain and organic development of an area. (Particularly where it has been in development for a thousand years plus and with a detailed record of 500 years or so.) The following section seeks to define the particular character of an area, the quality and contribution of the architecture, and to identify buildings of local interest (over and above those on the statutory list), identify local details and materials, the contribution of open space and gardens and thus the bio-diversity value of the area. Finally, identify areas of intrusion or damage to the conservation area.

### *Special Note:*

*Because of the review in 2001 and the sequence and nature of the extensions previously carried out, the subdivisions remain in their original format. However it is proposed (see Management Plan) to slightly revise the character area boundaries to more closely reflect a better understood historic development.*



### **Conservation Area Character Area 1**

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## Conservation Area Character Area 1: The Town Centre

- Old Market
- Saltgate
- New Market
- Smallgate
- Sheepgate/Exchange Square
- Hungate
- Newgate
- Northern sections of Blyburgate and Ballygate.

This is the historic focal point of the town retaining its medieval grain and forming almost a figure of eight with the two market places. It extends from the Old Market in the north, used in Saxon times and still an open square despite the continuing presence of the bus station, to New Market and the rear of medieval burgage plots backing onto Hungate Lane in the south. (The later medieval market place of rows of stalls was eventually bricked up to form permanent shops and dwellings and becoming the island group of New Market). Later medieval shops and businesses encircle these. This grain remains despite the extensive re-fronting / rebuilding of many of the older timber frame buildings.

Where the two markets are joined by The Walk and Smallgate, the space is dominated by the Church of St Michael and its detached tower. The group of the tower, church and present Town Hall are set in generous juxtaposition allowing plenty of sky into what otherwise might be an enclosed area. The buildings of The Walk are essentially of either 3 storeys, or 2 with dormers. Similarly the short extent of Saltgate shows a 3 storey Georgian frontage but this is balanced by low level modern development.

Many of the main streets in Beccles retain the suffix 'gate' derived from the old Norse word for a road or way. The road pattern being the

essential foundation of a settlement was therefore well established by Norman times.

This character area may be further subdivided as it is focused on the two market places either side of the church and tower and forms the core of the town's conservation area closely following the medieval extent of the town.

### The Old Market

#### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

The original medieval Old Market area is surrounded by an interesting array of buildings. A particularly fine row of timber framed buildings (no17 including remnants of early wall painting in the attic) and including the Bear and Bells Inn, form the north enclosure (all listed). In between the timber frame sits an interesting Georgian front. The recessed entrance to what was once the Rifle Volunteers (in a barn like structure to the rear), exaggerates the off-centre arrangement, yet with delicately staggered glazing bars and a fine door case. The east end is composed of four properties (all listed) alternating between (locally) high quality Georgian frontages in contrasting styles with remnants of earlier form alluding to a timber frame, with rough cast rendered walls and steep pitched roofs. The south end is a less glamorous affair with a more recent mix of building type and use. The corner of Smallgate belongs to that street rather than the square (listed). With its imposing 3 storeys, it is a little imposing on the market square. It also presents its side, as opposed to its 'best' view. The public convenience adjacent (not listed) is a less than attractive intrusion although the steep roof gives it more presence than its single storey which is unique in the square. This is followed by a group of three buildings sharing a common roof line and ridge height, albeit not all of the same era, the central one of the group being listed and a converted shop now in residential use. Two are painted brickwork and the



Old Market,  
north side



Old Market north  
and east sides



Old Market, south side



St Peter's House, Old  
Market, west side

workshop is painted render. The end and corner of Saltgate is not dissimilar to its opposite end in that it too stands uncomfortably above its neighbours, but the pair do balance as a pair of book ends to the elevation. This building was partially demolished to widen Saltgate and the result remains unbalanced. (Not listed).

This leaves the west end and one of the jewels of the square, of Beccles, and perhaps even of Waveney, as one of its finest residential buildings, and certainly the most interesting. St. Peters House faces east and is set back from the Old Market where Saltgate and Northgate join, on the northern route into and out of town. This is a key vista for pedestrians emerging from Northgate, incorporating the tower in the background as the narrow road opens into the Old Market. A sense of arrival takes place at this point.

Pevsner described the grade I listed building as ,  
*...A fine 18C brick house of seven bays and two storeys with a three bay pediment. It stands on the site of the pre-Dissolution St Peter's Chapel - a small portion of its flint fabric remains in a cupboard in the present house. Its back towards the garden, is to one's surprise Gothick, with a pretty cornice & a pretty though mutilated doorway. This rear building contains fragments of early stained glass possibly from St Peter's Chapel or from St Mary's demolished in the late 16th century. Delightful interior with an elaborate Gothic fireplace...*

Wilton Rix, the Beccles historian, describes the scene as very different in the 1790s with raised walks on either side of the Old Market several feet high and large trees, particularly on the west side where there were two large walnut trees and some ash trees in which the rooks built. St Peter's House was approached by several steps and had posts and chains in front.

### **Materials**

The Old Market presents a mixed bag of style and materials reflecting its age with painted rendered timber frame of 17th century or older,

two rough cast rendered fronts and a mixture of white brick and soft local reds of a distinct richness, combined to effect at No 1 Old Market, to painted modern smooth render and brickwork. Roofs are predominantly of pantile. Both red and black pantiles are visible. Black or "smuts" as they are known locally, are red pantiles with a scumble type glaze giving a dark brown colour close up— a common local feature.

The Bear and Bells has a re-laid peg tile roof and there are grey slates to three other roofs. Chimney stacks similarly are a feature silhouetted against the sky on three sides with the least cohesive elevation (south) with a solitary tall and remodelled stack.

### ***Open Space and Public Realm;***

The open space of the Old Market is currently used as the Bus Station. Efforts to relocate this facility from the square as the shelters only interrupt the views, have failed, although a recent resurfacing project carried out by Suffolk County Council, following lengthy consultations has provided a suitable compromise solution. Traffic must continue to pass through the Old Market and a more sensitive road layout has allowed the 3 finer elevations to dominate the square as the pavements have been widened and re-laid to suit. Bus shelters standing closer to the south and less cohesive elevation allow the others to impress. The increased paving restores a good third of the space to protected pedestrian priority and, weather permitting, provides an element of café culture to the townscape. Materials are sympathetic, well detailed and continue the overall 'saxon' paving approach used in the town centre. The high status of St Peters House is reflected in the choice of York stone to its narrow pavement front. The proliferation of bollards however does not enhance the space but these have been installed for safety reasons. A recent incident which originated in the square and ended with a car damaging the side entrance to St Peters garden, validates this approach. This remains a

busy thoroughfare—unfortunately.

### ***Enhancement potential***

The single most significant element which would transform this important part of Beccles' public realm would be the permanent removal of traffic. This however seems unlikely in the near future. The bus shelters and the south elevation generally are areas where improvement could be made. However the recent improvements in the public realm coupled with improvements by owners has left the Old Market looking better than it has for some time.

### ***Saltgate***

#### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

The narrow connection of the two markets in the figure of eight formation, is Saltgate. On the west side, separated from the Old Market by Puddingmoor, is a row of mixed use buildings of three distinct periods. The first in the group (from Puddingmoor) is no. 11 a painted rendered front with steep pantiled roof. It is an odd building from more than a single view with an odd, much altered roof at the rear abutting the old cinema. Similarly its unsympathetic changes to windows (both structural and in style) and dormer make it an unsettled front. Yet it shows a distinct timber frame character and historic research identifies the Three Feathers on this site from the later half of the 17th century. Set back from the building line is another gem of the town centre, recently restored to expose the delightful frontage so evocative of its time. The old cinema (now Prezzo's restaurant) was built in 1914 and is similar to other contemporary edifices, such as the Public Hall façade, amongst others. A mixture of classic details with pediments both triangular and curved combined in the same front with some decorative mouldings thrown in, yet the focus is on the glass ceramic mosaic design above the entrance. The simple glass entrance below allows the building front, which





7-11 Saltgate



9 Saltgate, the old cinema



1-7 Saltgate



Saltgate, east side

has been restored beautifully, to take a suitable role, and using the space outside for eating also adds to the uplifted nature of this part of town. Until recently this façade was hidden by a single storey extension to the pavement edge when last used as a furniture showroom.

Restoring the original building line, the remainder of this section is an imposing yet not dominating group of three storey buildings of Georgian character.

Nos 7 and 5 share a gutter line with red pantile roof barely visible. The buildings are painted brickwork in a pastel shade and this helps to create a less dominant mood. Their fenestration is well ordered and they sit well as a pair.

The remainder, 1 and 3, now used as a residential care home, presents a less ordered façade to Saltgate with many bricked up windows, but proves historically more interesting and important to the south elevation facing the church and with the graveyard in between. Following the wall to the garden there is a gazebo which is described as containing a 17th century, square panelled room, about nine feet across, with domed ceiling painted with hunting, fishing and boating scenes, with background of village and church, rivers etc, perhaps by a painter of the Dutch School, on canvas fixed to the plaster and is in good preservation.

The east side of Saltgate is without any distinct character. The corner of Old Market and Saltgate has been altered as mentioned to widen the access, leaving a truncated building, its central rear bay now providing the street frontage.

The remainder of the section to Rooks Lane is a low single storey mid 20th century garage and forecourt and the rear of the old Co-op building (now Beales), an unattractive and disorganised group, the low roof levels however

making this less constrained than perhaps it might be otherwise.

### ***Materials***

All of the west side is painted either direct to brickwork or smooth render. Colours are light shades and reflect light levels well. Walls on the east are again painted up to the garage where modern brickwork both painted and fair faced break the subtleness of historic work within near eyesight. Visible roofs are red pantile with the exception of the garage building, which is pitched and has a grey corrugated appearance.

### ***Open Space, and Public realm***

The pavements have been gradually changed with a concerted effort in Beccles to form a pattern to the surfaces. Following on from the Old Market scheme (although carried out earlier) the 'saxon' paving theme continues, a hard paved surface emphasising the higher status. Detailing is simple and a series of channels cutting across the paving, taking rainwater from buildings to the road drains, is a typical feature of the whole town centre and beyond.

### ***Enhancement potential***

The modern garage and rear of the Co-op site are key areas for improvement. The existing buildings are not sympathetic to any historic layout or design, and are of unsympathetic materials, and therefore allow for a significant opportunity to complete the regeneration of this part of the town. However, extreme care should be taken, as some obvious historic precedent may damage some of the current qualities that the low roofs allow.

## **The Walk**

### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

This is the centrepiece and focal point of the town, containing the oldest and most significant architecture within it.

St Michael's Church, (grade I) was built during the fourteenth century in the decorated style, of flint rubble walls with stone dressings. A splendid perpendicular South Porch was added in 1450. The present simple hammer beam roof is a replacement of the original structure destroyed by fire in November 1586. The church possesses a number of interesting features, including the traceried windows, an early English octagonal font (possibly transferred from St Peter's Chapel), evidence of a former pulpit and on the North porch, some good flint flush work and an unusual carving on the spandrels above the doorway of a "woodwose" or Suffolk wild man quelling a dragon. One famous connection shown in the records of the church is the marriage on 11th May 1749 of the Revd. Edmund Nelson (curate of Beccles) and Catherine Suckling of Barsham, whose son was to be Admiral Horatio Nelson. The old graveyard immediately north of the church gives the building space to breathe. The west end has an ingenious church room and kitchen and toilets cut into the cliff, and provides a terrace above to enjoy the views over the valley. In a robust modern style, the use of materials and the hidden volume do not detract from the medieval setting. To the south is more graveyard, but at the south east corner of the church is the detached tower standing 97 feet tall. It is square with large tapering corner buttresses and resembles a folding telescope as it steps with four segments to its height. It is visible from many vantage points not only within the town but from across the valley on approach from Norwich. No clear reason has been recorded for the detached setting but it would not be unreasonable to assume it was positioned to avoid collapse from the proximity to the cliff edge. It may well have been taller had not the intervention of the Reformation halted building in 1554. The thick rubble walls are faced externally in Roche Abbey stone and lined with Tudor brickwork. The lower parts of the stonework, which are embellished by carving, have been badly eroded and the stone



*St Michael's Church  
from the west*



*A monument in the  
churchyard*



*St Michael's Church tower  
from the churchyard path*



*The Walk, east side*

tracery has gone from the three great windows. A considerable amount of repair was carried out in the 1970's when the ownership passed from Beccles Borough Council to Waveney District Council, but the condition of the tower, exacerbated by invasive pigeons, has deteriorated further over the years. The 2001 study wrote.. 'bringing it back into regular use could help secure its future. One suggested possible use is as a local exhibition and meeting place, perhaps with links to the Beccles museum.'

Such a project was carried out following consultations and mainly funded by the Feoffees, yet despite a very sensitively handled conversion of the ground floor space, including provision for a wc facility, the space remains unused, as its originally designated use did not follow through. The roof of the tower remains accessible to the public, and further repairs to the rooftop balustrade were carried out by the Council in 2007. The ground floor exhibition space needs to have a permanent function and this needs to be considered by the local community.

The opposite side of The Walk is a continuous group between Rooks Lane and the much altered Market Street, eventually widened to suit Station Road and the '19th century route'. Ranging from 2 to 3 storeys and presenting a Georgian appearance, behind the facades and visible in the roof forms, are in situ timber frames. Repairs to No 4 Wilson House recently exposed timber frame and wattle and daub infill panels at attic level, behind the raised parapet. The group does not have any distinguishing sites, and certainly cannot compete with the other side, but the buildings form a good group, with varied features, which continues the traditional use of the area as the major trading part of town.



### ***Materials***

On the east side of the street, a mixture of red and white bricks dominate the group with white brick frontages forming a continuous group in the middle. Each end drops to 2 storeys, making a more comfortable block. Roofs are a mixture of red and black 'smut' pantiles with a (joined) pair of peg tiled roofs fully exposed to the eaves. Roof lines are mainly continuous despite the varying storey heights and this has been carried out in the Georgian period as refurbishment rather than rebuilding.

### ***Open Space and Public realm***

The churchyard and environment is well tended and remains a highly used pedestrian area both for connectivity as well as more contemplative rest. However traffic dominates this highly sensitive location. Until we are prepared to stop expecting to be able to drive to the door, it is difficult to see how this area can be further improved. Existing subtle but obtrusive protection to the short retaining wall of the raised ground on which the tower is built is constantly hit by lorries making deliveries to New Market. However the extended carriageway width between the church and the shops opposite remains a well used short stay dropping off point and parking area for shoppers. Nevertheless the recent Tesco development has shown that business has increased to many within the town, and the to-date free supermarket car park so close to the town centre no doubt contributes to this effect.

### ***Enhancement Potential***

It may well be worth considering the removal of traffic from The Walk and New Market as a long term enhancement option. There is no need for specific enhancement, as this area has the maximum draw within Beccles architecturally, but it must be carefully and regularly maintained to the high standards expected at the heart of the town.

### ***New Market***

#### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

It would appear from historic evidence that the building of the church and tower and then the Reformation provided an early 'regeneration' opportunity for the town. With the shift of the religious centre from St Peter's Chapel to St Michael's coupled with a need to expand the areas of trade during the medieval period a second market, initially of open market stalls and then converted to brick buildings, forms the island group in the centre of New Market. The plan form of the group, including the site of the old Market Cross, which was replaced by the current Town Hall in 1765-6, shows clearly the line of five rows of stalls. The roofscape more dramatically exhibits these qualities as storey heights range from single to 3 storeys in close juxtaposition, revealing gable ends and roofs visible in a tight group from many vantage points in the space. The architectural quality of the group as a consequence of the origins is varied. Ranging from simply built enclosures of brick and pantiled roofs on the south side, to more traditional dwelling types of painted smooth render, with a central massive stack and steep pitched roof at the Swan House, suggesting a timber frame—a public house has been on this site for over 400 years. Another building of note is No 18 and is an early 19th century shop with a delicate ornamental iron grille to the first floor façade which neatly turns the corner. It has two hipped roofs of now modern black pantiles but retains its essential character, which is below eaves level.

The shops, with dwellings above, encircling the island group are taller, enhancing the island group by providing a backdrop of grander buildings.

The Walk provides the first and closest abutment and is described above. The next group along this line are set back, and the junction of Market Street and New Market was



*New Market, central group taken from the east*



*New Market, east side*



*New Market, south west corner*



*Ceiling at 23 New Market*

altered considerably, to widen the approach from the station, at the end of the 19th century. Nevertheless the first in this group is the Co-operative supermarket which sits within a 17th century frame refaced in the 18th century with a fine Dutch gable end to Market Street. It has 2 storeys of soft red brick and dormers set in a steep pitched red pantile roof, and a bowed shopfront rebuilt to mimic the 19th century shopfront. The next sequence of buildings are an impressive 3 storey late 18th century frontage in two distinct entities yet built at the same time when again for 'townscape' reasons, these were added to older existing buildings. The intention was to create a straight frontage in the group facing the end 'row of stalls'. The first, of white brick inserted between reds either side, has a hipped slate roof and stands distinct in the centre of the group. On the corner of Sheepgate begins the Kings Head site which takes up a key location at the entrance to the market square from Sheepgate, built in a succession of changes in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, each section in turn reflecting its origins and period. The former coaching inn retains its previous carriage entrance visible in the archway of the existing New Market entrance. It originally went through to an open courtyard at the rear.

The south elevation of New Market continues as Exchange Square to the south west and out of the centre. It, perhaps more than any other, reflects the medieval burgage plot pattern best, as these are still visible on the maps of today. However this interest and grain is lost in frontages modernised over the last two centuries, and architectural interest is limited to a handful of building in the group. Notably no. 7 (listed), Chambers the butchers, reflects a 3 storey timber frame with two jetties, and is a rare survivor. Its neighbour no.9, being similarly 3 storey but a single jetty, was lost to fire and demolished in 1963. What a frontage that would have made to the town! (see photos of the Falcon before it became W H Smith). The alley

to the rear and yard remains. (known both as Horse and Groom Lane and New Market Place). West of the Q.D. site (a modern 20th century insertion) is the remainder of this group, which has less 20th century alteration, and is particularly interesting above shop level. Greggs is a self confident 3 storey Victorian red brick and stone façade, which is followed by a sequence of earlier smooth rendered and painted frontages. The penultimate building before Barclays at the corner is a timber frame survivor (listed), but with a 19th century front, its steep black pantiled roof being diagnostic. One of the rooms at first floor possesses a fine ceiling, finely carved with Tudor Roses and Fleur-de-Lys. Over the fireplace were the arms of Queen Elizabeth, finely sculpted, with the motto, 'Fare God and Honor thy King', and dated 1589. [now moved to the Council Chamber in the Town Hall].

Barclays Bank forms a suitably confident later 19th century façade which successfully turns the corner into Ballygate and out of the town centre. The one constant factor here, however varied the shopfronts, is that all buildings in this group retain sliding sash windows thus giving a sense of visual continuity.

The last remaining enclosure to New Market, on the west side, is another mixed group of properties that formed the last group of burgage plots as they sit on top of the cliff. Many of the old yards in this section have now been redeveloped, but it is also believed to contain a large group of historic timber frames to the front.

Of note but not for its frame, which has a visible jetty, is No 25 (listed) with its fine double bowed shopfront of the early 19th century. Further along is the yard entrance and inn, The White Horse since about the 1760's and originally used as a saddlers workshop. It had one of the town's several cock pits of the Georgian era. Its painted rendered front, with

the window details picked out, enhances the architectural qualities of the building. The 3 storey painted rendered front adjacent is an unassuming façade but a view of the gable between the two shows evidence of an existing Dutch gable of early 18th century origin or earlier. Nos 33 and 35 share a common roof line and black 'smut' pantile roof yet the chimneys are revealing. However, the frontages could not be more contrasting, with painted smooth render and flat arched sashes to one side, and delicate brickwork of soft red with white detailing and decorated red key stones to arched windows and door adjacent. The remaining section to Tower House (on the corner and standing opposite the church), is an unsightly gap in the elevated form, where a modern garage and yard entrance adjoining break the rhythm. The detailing of the two houses follows through, though one is now painted and the other not. Both are 18th century and listed yet the south gable gives the clear impression of a truncated building.

### **Materials**

A thorough mixture of local materials is present in New Market. And it is this that provides its essential flavour. As with many shopping areas the place has a less coherent street level scene but above ground floor level there is plenty of interest to admire as well as discover. The roofs present a significant feature and the colour of tiles is incredibly important in this regard. The depth of tone in older pantiles and smuts is not replaceable with current modern product so it is essential that proper attention is paid to them. The tower is open to visitors and it too shows off the wonderful roofscape of Beccles to its best advantage. Well worth the effort!. The wealth of detailing in various styles and materials is the essential enjoyment of the space as there is almost too much to take in with bigger vistas. Yet it is they that identify the points of interest and are worth looking at more closely.





*New Market,  
west side*



*Tower House, 39  
New Market*



*The Kings Head,  
Sheepgate, north side*



*Sheepgate, south side*

### ***Open Space and Public Realm***

As with The Walk there is overall continuity in highway surface materials which is not dominant. Most of the open space around the market is devoted to parking and highway as traffic circumnavigates the New Market former stalls area. Parking provision at the Market Street junction allows for good views of the architecture but ultimately is it in the right place?

### ***Enhancement Potential***

The traffic issue remains a constant factor in this section of the conservation area and traffic permanently removed from the two market squares should be considered as a possible enhancement option. Otherwise attention should be focused on improving the quality and design of shopfronts and the retention of historic features, so many of which are still in situ in this part of the conservation area.

### ***Sheepgate / Exchange Square General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

Sheepgate, formerly the thoroughfare linking New Market and Exchange Square, was pedestrianised in the mid 1980's providing a wide paved area with seating and a public garden and shelter, the latter receiving a further 'make over' in 2007. Exchange Square is where both Blyburgate and Hungate converge and forms the widest and most visible entrance to New Market, the curve of the highway reflecting in the street frontages with some bold yet again contrasting architecture.

The northern section is almost entirely comprised of the Kings Head together with the public open space at the corner of Smallgate. It continues the red brick frontage of New Market but has a 17th century centre section preserved between the later additions. The southern elevation is a continuation of the south elevation of New Market and curves quite

dramatically to the south. Notable buildings that feature in this section are the two stone-faced banks. HSBC has a double height single storey stone façade with classical detailing and parapet running at the eaves level of the neighbouring more traditional shop types. This area has always been a banking 'quarter', as the first bank in Beccles was in fact located at no. 7 on the site of Simply Cards. Established in 1793, it had closed by 1803. The Lloyds Bank building is more restrained but is also a classically detailed fronted structure, of 3 storeys and hipped pantile roof (smuts but with some unfortunate visible repairs in red tiles), and is of much more significance and interest than it appears. As one can tell from the street the stone dressings only wrap around the front (seen well from the south side) suggesting an older building than its early 19th century front. Aerial photos and similar views from the tower reveal the auditorium of the Corn Exchange of the early 20th century, and before that a Fisher Theatre. David Fisher the elder bought the 'Mansion House' and ancillary buildings and with support from presumably a sponsor or benefactor, 'David Fisher to insure from fire and keep in repair. To take so much of the Mansion, with the back houses and Dairy House to erect a Theatre & to convert the Printing office into a dwelling House'. The Fisher Theatres are a very significant local and regional feature. These are among the oldest purpose built theatres in the country and Waveney is blessed with four that are known and still standing in some form, (the Bungay example, having recently been restored following considerable local effort, is functioning again as a theatre).

The road continues to curve and turns directly south leaving town and becomes Hungate. Buildings revert to 2 or 3 storey with shop and dwelling above.

The East side of Exchange square is a little reminiscent of the (Kings Head) New Market block in that they both present confident and

imposing 3 storey facades to the street. Yet both the red brick of Twyford's and the block of 2+4 in white brick are both only frontages, as can be seen at the south corner of the roof. Following these two buildings, the road becomes Blyburgate and the roofline returns to a less ordered affair with heights varying from property to property.

### ***Materials***

The local palette of red/white brick and red/black pantiles continues with the odd slate roof and of course stone. There is a clear appreciation from owners of the importance of maintaining their facades as in general the centre and core trading area presents a self confident face. Properties are generally well tended with care over fabric but again the importance of local black smut pantiles needs to be preserved. Fenestration on the whole is also very well maintained and this needs to continue. The edges of the area are showing signs of minor alterations which are not being controlled sufficiently.

### ***Open Space and public realm***

The pedestrianisation of Sheepgate has had a mixed outcome although it has unquestionably improved the lot of the buildings along it. One has lost the drama of entering the historic core by vehicle from the corner of the Kings Head with the Tower in full glory. However those on foot do get to enjoy this view and that is worthwhile. The material and detailing of the space is understated and appropriate for the location. Attractive planters and planting encroach the space and enclose a safe area for outdoor eating. The Sheepgate public space has been refurbished recently and this too is a significant improvement. The highway traffic, however, is forced down Smallgate, which is a traditional feature, as Smallgate forms the rear yards of the burgage plots facing New Market, and thus was always a 'carriageway'.



*Exchange Square,  
east side*



*2 & 4 Hungate*



*16-20b Hungate*



*Conservative Club,  
Hungate*

### ***Enhancement Potential***

This important gateway continues the previous theme, where little physical change is required to the fabric apart from its continuing maintenance. It is the traffic which is the main issue. However it is difficult to foresee any further reduction in accessibility to the centre and it is probably the proliferation of parking within the centre that continues to benefit businesses. This is an issue for the town to consider and it can only be stated that initial fears from the recent town centre supermarket were unfounded and the current provision of **free** parking has benefited all.

### **Hungate and north Blyburgate**

#### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

Both historic entrances to the town centre, these follow the medieval pattern of burgrave plot plan arrangement at this end, and hence their inclusion in the central core. However, in the late medieval period, Hungate extended only a short way, as far as the Conservative Club, then reverted to a more rustic setting. The Hungate buildings forming the fronts to the south end of medieval Beccles, were enclosed by Hungate Lane to the south. Blyburgate on the other hand benefited from a convergence of routes, Peddars Lane (an early medieval road bypassing the town centre), and Ingate. The development of a major brickworks at Ingate helped continue trade opportunity from the turn of the 19th century along its path and into the town centre. Blyburgate contains a number of timber frame buildings still in situ.

The architecture of Hungate reflects a predominantly 18th century side to the west and 19th century to the east. It starts with a finely restored shopfront and Georgian 3 storey façade at no. 2, now Bailey's delicatessen. The building has a fine interior with some interesting Victorian additions and workshops still part of the complex at the rear. Two pairs of 2 storey



painted facades sit either side of Hungate Lane the north pair in particular exhibit the perfect example of the way buildings have been adapted rather than rebuilt to suit changing times. See how the parapet has been built up to the Hungate façade above the shopfront while along the lane the hipped roof is revealed. It also reveals the façade of No 2 as a re-facing.

The block to the south of the lane is interrupted by the historic yard access which still provides a thoroughfare. It is a less cohesive group and the two end properties, both 3 storey, have lost almost all historic windows. The dominant feature of shopfronts begins to recede and with a few exceptions the type of building reflects a town house style of the late 18th century, modest in scale and detail but built with no less attention to the facades. A sequence of soft red brick walls finely fenestrated with pantiled roofs with protruding Dutch gables between properties makes a pleasing view. A single storey Victorian workshop is an oddity here, yet retains some historic character with its low gable end onto the street. The pantiled roof and brick walls allow it to blend in and the 20th century shopfront retains a sympathetic front with a traditional awning still in place.

The remaining sequence, the last before the Conservative Club, is an impressive mid 19th century public house with a cantilevered splayed end over the corner entrance. It is now the last shop in the street and is followed by Georgian town houses, now painted but well tended with fine windows. The Conservative Club and its walled bowling green finish Hungate on this side. Built in 1763 by Charles Wright it has been substantially altered in the 19th and 20th centuries, with stucco to the façade and now painted. Its fine red brick wall jars with the stark colour of the painted stucco but is a more pleasing tone despite some poor re-pointing. Beyond this the scene is of residential gardens and a distinct mood change has taken place.

The east side of Hungate has a more recent feel and is entirely post 1800. Nevertheless, the Blyburgate corner is turned rather acutely and the Wine Vault cottages and another little single storey gable end shop are followed by the Meeting House, the first of two massive gables fronting the street and visible from Exchange Square. Built at the start of the nineteenth century it replaced an earlier chapel on part of the same site. The second gable, Chapel Hall, was erected in 1879. Following these confidently and well detailed edifices the pattern dramatically changes to Victorian terrace of mixed houses and shops. Some modern alterations to shopfronts are unsympathetic but at first floor level there is a strong rhythm. There was a large iron and brass foundry behind this group where Anglian Cottages now stand.

### ***Hungate Lane***

This is a significant place in as much as it forms the rear access of the burgage plots of New Market. It is a narrow winding lane but is still open to traffic and part of the now unused yards is a public car park. Nevertheless in the census of 1881 it was revealed that 137 people lived here. Obviously many buildings did not survive modern standards and only one, Hungate House, stands out here as a piece of architecture, the remaining fabric being very much back yard, ancillary dwellings, making the recent alterations to the entrance of No 27 seem slightly out of place. It has a good listed 'crinkle crinkle' wall which is distinctive of the area.

### ***North Blyburgate***

The north end of Blyburgate retains the burgage plot pattern with outbuildings and yards whose uses have evolved over time, the frontages retaining shopfronts to the original footprints of buildings if not actual buildings themselves. The buildings to the east were backed by Fair Close and what is now the car park (the right of way is still in use by pedestrians) as it joins what is now Grove Road. The buildings on both sides of the street have



*Methodist Reform  
Church, Hungate*



*Hungate House,  
Hungate Lane*



*4-8 Ballygate*



*Ballygate House,  
27 Ballygate*

shopfronts bar one. They reflect the town centre feature of a mixture of timber frame structures either refaced or rebuilt with dutch gables and steep pitched roofs in evidence. Buildings retain their commercial uses and are well maintained, as shopkeepers try to entice customers from the more vibrant centre. The majority of this part of Blyburgate is listed, the significant characteristic here being that no two buildings are similar. Of particular note are the extensive cellars now used as a night club beneath no 2. This area was not refaced as other parts of the town, suggesting that it has always been fringe of centre. This character remains although there is again a further distinction as the quality fades as one gets further from the core trade area. Fenestration is generally historic but one or two have poor quality replacement to the first floor which breaks any rhythm. Shop fronts vary in style according to the building yet are in the main still early 20th century with some 19th century.

Blyburgate is interrupted by two features, the entrance of Newgate, and Providence Place. The latter includes some early brownfield development from 1859 but the rear yard equally shows some interesting roofscapes within sections of older but much altered properties. Nevertheless there is clearly more timber frame still in situ than one might expect. The next groups on both sides and roughly as far as the car park entrance retain the upper character with most buildings being listed still.

The land now occupied by the car park and supermarket is part within the rear yard burgage enclosures but also straddles across a historic alley onto what was a nursery (garden) until the 20th century. The redevelopment of this site should be careful not to destroy any historic links to Grove Road which of course predate the built form here.

### **Materials**

These again primarily reflect the local palette

already described. Even the impressive chapels in Hungate are white brick. The three consecutive slate roofs of the workshop and two churches slightly cross the grain away from pantile but the material is correct for the building and does not in the end distract. Some of the fenestration however on the west side of Hungate needs to be addressed to maintain the character of this edge of the conservation area.

### ***Open Space and Public realm***

The public car park in Hungate Lane and behind New Market provides another good opportunity for access to the centre, with a great view of the town's roofscape, and it is from here one can see clearly the Fisher Theatre/Corn Exchange roof. The bowling green and gardens begin to make an appearance as one moves away from the centre. Until the second half of the 20th century, south of Hungate Lane were the gardens of Homefield House. Now a modern estate surrounds the house, which has therefore lost all sense of its historic setting. However the proliferation of mature and new planting ensures a strong bio-diverse attribute.

### ***Enhancement potential***

As before, sensitively designed shopfronts continue to be one of the principle targets. Window changes that are inappropriately designed (the way they operate or open) need to be guarded against. Similarly there are a number of back yard buildings (appropriately enough) but with the high profile of public car parks they do not give the car borne visitor the best of first close glimpses. Opportunities avail here for simple sensitive design. They may be back views but they are visited by many and leave an impression.

### **North end of Ballygate**

#### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

The historic route to the south and west follows Ballygate. The name originating from a reputed Saxon bailey fortification (At Stepping Hill?). It is a residential street although, from the New Market direction, the initial houses on the cliff side continue the market theme with shopfronts and historic commercial activities. (Now all in residential occupation).

The character area 1 section of Ballygate retains a number of timber frame properties and these can be identified from the street scene by their traditional form and materials. The views looking back to the tower which is in line, are a great example of a dense medieval town centre pattern and are evocative. Gaps begin to appear between groups of buildings in the traditional grain revealing to the rear their yards. At this point they are still level with the cliff top and these have now been developed in the 20th century. Almost invisible from Ballygate the density is evident in views from Puddingmoor. (See also character area 3—The Cliff, Puddingmoor and Ballygate). The entrance to the first development being fronted in a sympathetic way, only the newness of the materials makes them stand out. The scale of this part of the character area is suitably diminishing as one gets further from the centre.

The entire section from the bank (but not including it) to Hungate Lane on the east side is all listed. Following a pair of timber frame and painted facades the overall character of soft red brick and fine Georgian facades begins to take over.

### ***Materials***

Primarily soft red brick and a few painted facades to timber frame this part of Ballygate has a modest understated elegance with simple detailing but good quality material and finish. New development in some cases is visible by its newness but this should soften over time. Roof materials are visible between the closer frontages as the road meanders following the





15 Smallgate with Friends  
Meeting House behind



Smallgate, east side



Smallgate, looking south



Smallgate, west side

cliff edge. Smut and red pantiles abound but some peg tile roofs are mixed in between.

### ***Open Space and Public Realm***

This is limited. There are no front gardens and the old yards are now fully developed and form private courtyards for the residents. These are well tended and the area in general is well looked after. The modern developments do not impose as they are by and large tucked behind traditional street frontages.

### ***Enhancement Potential***

This area with exception of the council owned flats reflects an affluent community and the houses and spaces are all well tended. Simple monitoring and maintenance of the quality of the materials and design is all that is needed.

### ***Smallgate***

#### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

As has been seen, the rear of burgage plots are made up of an array of lower quality workshops, stables and other ancillary buildings. Smallgate on its west side is that. On the east side however these again are frontages of a second tier of higher status buildings. The scale and uses of the buildings still reflect this today. Smallgate contains a fascinating collection of buildings, both in terms of their history and architecture. A number of buildings retain a timber frame core. The west side is less cohesive because of the back yard accesses whilst on the opposite side is a well kept group of buildings from 17th to 20th century. Despite the proliferation of periods, the street hangs together as the frontages are generally very well maintained.

The Friends Meeting House and Quaker Cottage is one of a number of locations of cemeteries (in the yard) within the centre of town. (A number of skulls were dug up when

constructing foundations for the old cinema in Saltgate—Prezzos—presumably St Peters burial grounds, and on the Martyrs Church in Station Road, the yard is a burial ground).

At the turn of the 18th century, following much local debate, a Public Hall and Assembly Rooms was built on the corner of Market Street and Smallgate. The building has been altered since, despite being originally built '...to answer the purposes of an Assembly Room and a Playhouse'. According to records of the period it appears it was not large enough but, more significantly perhaps, because of unrest from unemployed rural workers, public meetings were banned in 1801, and hence the building of the Fisher Theatre not long afterwards. It therefore met its first refurbishment transferring its function more similar to a modern conference facility. A number of architects are associated with the building but it is generally credited to Thomas Fulcher, with later alterations by the local architect, A Pells.

Next to this is the White Lion, a much altered and imposing red brick building of 3 storeys and attic with dormers above, 'newly built in 1792'.

Adjoining this is the site of the old Guildhall. At a meeting of the Beccles Feoffees in 1838 *'it was agreed that leave be given to take down and remove and convert to their own use the materials of the present Feoffment Chamber known as the Gildhall Chamber for a new room to be erected and fitted up at the expense of the Town Council and that the Feoffees shall at all reasonable times have free access to and use of the room for holding their meetings.'* This was the ground floor of the building being used as the Police Station and it retains its metal shutters internally.

The street continues with a variety of ages and styles including some 20th century buildings, yet they are all carefully maintained and present an interesting and varied picture. The cohesiveness varies and remains strongest as one approaches

the Old Market. The most notable building on the west side is the former Co-op store, now Beales, with its later connecting bridge above Rooks Lane by Arthur Pells built in 1913. Its neo-classical façade is a formidable piece not enjoyable enough in its narrow street frontage but is beautifully detailed and merits more stringent protection from any loss of detail.

### **Materials**

This is another street with a full measure of the local palette. Less sensitive brickwork is self evident but overall the character is a continuation of the shopping area, its status suitably raised in quality and details as it approaches the Old Market.

### **Open Space and Public Realm**

There are two open areas of note along Smallgate. The first is private yard used for car parking by the businesses and created by the demolition of no.12 in the 1970s. When facing this one sees the tower soaring above the roofs but the views at lower level are not a good visual juxtaposition. A corrugated roof and essay in air conditioning units are hardly appropriate. The second, on the other hand, Manor House Lane, until recently unfriendly and rundown, has now been the recipient of a highway resurfacing project. Funding secured from the Tesco development has been used to resurface this lane. With the now heavily used car park this has become a significant gateway to the town emphasized by the recent entrance gateway designed for and on behalf of the Town Council and business community.

### **Enhancement Potential**

The most significant impact to this area would be the improvement of the existing view where 12 Smallgate once stood. Restoration of a pantile roof and either removal or re-siting of the array of air conditioning units should also be considered a priority. Apart from this, continuing monitoring and control of existing features is essential.



*Ravensmere House,  
Newgate, west side*



*Old National School,  
Newgate, west side*



*Tesco, Newgate, east side*



*Newgate, southern  
section, east side*

### **Newgate**

#### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

This is the last of the core streets and presents the medieval second tier of burgage layout as radiating from the centre, the cliff precluding development to the west.

The top end is marked by another fine listed building, Ravensmere House. It however does not follow the medieval pattern as it is on the fringe of the late medieval settlement. Its main aspect though remains via the Old Market, east side, set withdrawn and within a fine garden. Its aspect to Newgate has an odd late Victorian single storey extension along this face which is not its best view.

North of Station Road Newgate forms the boundary of the conservation area, which has seen considerable change since the last review in 2001. The demolition of the Caxton printing works has dramatically altered this very important historic street, removing what was a very long and tall late Victorian warehouse obscuring much daylight from this historically open space. Further recent development around the north side of Manor House Lane and the west side of Newgate is equally transforming this edge of the conservation area. However, the supermarket development and the Taylor's site development are both improvements, as they are restorations of the original grain of the medieval form. The warehouses to the west side fit in with the rear yard pattern on the one side whilst the open space now of the supermarket car park restores the site which was once known as Game Place. Until 2004 the site of the Game Place was covered by the southern end of Clowes' Printing Works bordering Gaol Lane and Newgate. Game place was an open air theatre but its use as such is assumed to have ended following the civil war and puritan control.

Opposite what was once Game Place but not



contemporary is the Old National School. Spot listed since the last review, it has been sensitively restored and is back in use now as shops. This particular group between Manor House Lane and Market Street now presents to many a first close view of the town centre as you get out of your car in the supermarket car park. The newly restored school buildings, kitchen showroom and remainder of the group have been well maintained and, despite their architectural variety, the various roofs in their conflicting directions and the St Michaels Tower in the background, give a pleasant view of the rear edge of a medieval town centre.

The southern section of Newgate leading towards Blyburgate presents a very mixed bag of space and building. It suffers very much from the 'edge of conservation area' condition and has also been the scene of significant redevelopment in the 20th century. It presents no cohesive qualities and appears a jumble of disjointed properties in the most part. However there are a number of interesting details to look out for, including the entrance to 13 Smallgate (see the initials and date on the gate.) tucked between Nos 25 & 27. Individual properties are generally typical of rear yard, stables etc on the west side with the exception of the 20th century post office service yard and a recent addition to the street in a modern dwelling in a period style, no. 9 Newgate. Its detailing and fine modern metalwork makes a valuable contribution to the street. The east side is less fortunate with most of it taken up by a modern car showroom and a public car park with a rather sad group isolated either side of the car park entrance. With random windows to each and some unfortunate unauthorised signage this group could be enhanced very easily. The cottages though low status are not without some detail.

### **Materials**

These exhibit a lower quality spectrum, red brick and painted surfaces prevail. Roof materials are more varied with less older pantiles

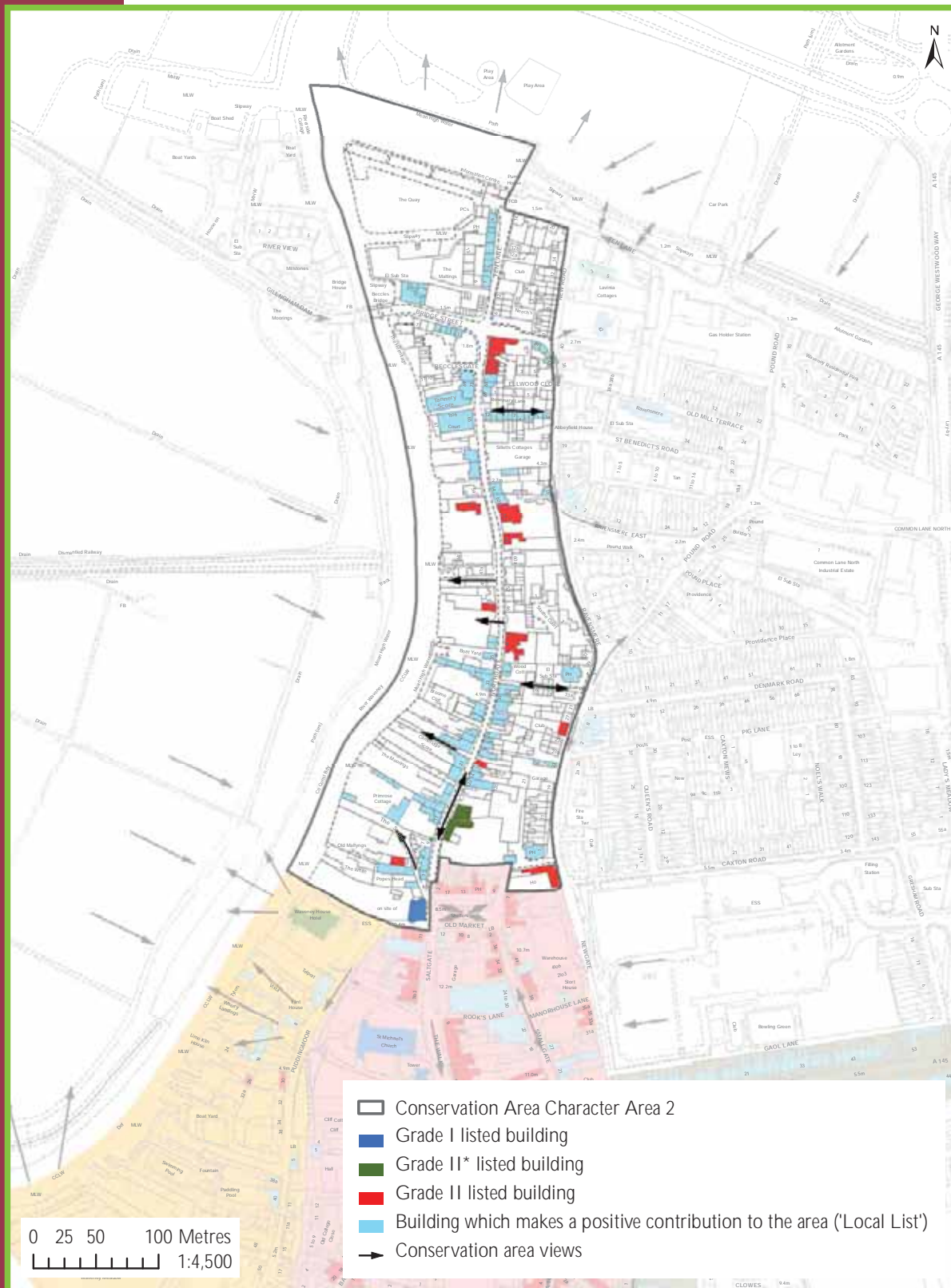
and in fact some poor modern tiles which simply do not look right. Windows are of a variety of types but few good historic examples remain.

### ***Open Space and public realm***

The restoration of the Game Place site at least to open space has to be a positive step. The car showroom and public car park site however are not features that enhance the conservation area, despite the opportunity for some greenery. The car park to the public hall and rear of the White Lion equally do not provide a positive contribution.

### ***Enhancement potential***

More than any other part of the core conservation area, there is potential for enhancement here. Some order to fenestration and roof materials would benefit many individual properties and particularly small groups. Better maintenance and some intervention should also be encouraged. Similarly a number of development opportunities exist, offering enhancement both of the town centre and the edge of the conservation area.



### Conservation Area Character Area 2

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## **Conservation Area Character**

### **Character Area 2:**

### **North Beccles**

- **The Quay**
- **Fen Lane**
- **New Road**
- **Bridge Street**
- **Northgate**
- **Ravensmere**

#### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

Moving out of the centre, the conservation area boundaries very much follow the medieval pattern by including its three principle routes in and out of the town. Ballygate, Blyburgate and Northgate. Of the three, the two closest the river show the best qualities consistently; however, the more industrial and commercial uses are closer to the 'docks', and therefore the density of building form is greatest along Northgate. Pevsner describes Ballygate as the 'most attractive street in Beccles' .....yet its counterpart to the north expresses much more of the essence of the town. It too has some outstanding individual pieces and of course on the river side retains memories of busier times past of a more commercial nature. Remembering of course that Beccles did not enjoy the bounty of a local resource it is more the location and thus opportunity for trade which is Beccles' legacy. Industry in this region means maltings, 'docks' - boatyards and agricultural based trade.

Northgate also has a less stable past and as described earlier the course of the river and extent of flood plain has changed considerably in the last 2000 years. It is reputed that in the cellar of 18 Northgate is a remnant of an old harbour wall. This is more than halfway along Northgate but the land levels suggest this may well be true. Similarly the burgage plot pattern begins to disappear at this point. However Bridge street follows the ancient route but this

may well have been subject to regular seasonal flooding and therefore the land around of limited 'permanent' use for habitation. As nature and particularly its management by man has altered the environment a more permanent and recent past is left behind.

Nevertheless Northgate on its own reflects a very accurate impression of the overall character not only of the conservation area but of Beccles itself. Prosperity is clearly evident from the late 18th century houses, but with the commercial source close by.

Leaving the Old Market the first section is revealing of the raised part of the cliff side as one gets a tantalising glimpse of the valley beyond along The Score. Not exclusive to Lowestoft, scores are prevalent in Beccles too. As with Lowestoft they are linear slices through the built terrain directly linking to the water edge and always linked to some 'industrial' activity. The Score is the largest of these and is now residential entirely on the site of an old maltings, but contains a very special dwelling at 1&2 The Score with a much older pedigree. Recently refurbished, the project has revealed some fascinating detail including remnants of a royal coat of arms dating from the Civil war. Most interesting is the Flint cross set in its river facing gable. Origins are unclear but this must surely be associated with St Peters Church which would have stood nearby. Back along Northgate the first buildings on both sides are modest late 18th / early 19th century, albeit those on the west side presenting an imposing gable end partly due to the lie of the land and partly as the east group turn the corner from Old Market and therefore present a 'softer' corner.

Northgate House (listed II\*) is set apart from its Southern neighbours by an imposing wall but with fine mature trees right by the pavement edge. With a palladian style front Northgate House was always set in generous gardens with





*1 & 2 The Score*



*Northgate House,  
12 Northgate*



*Staithe House,  
44 Northgate*



*Douglas Place,  
Ravensmere*

the coach house of considerable age and interest abutting the lane exiting the Old Market as it turns abruptly to meet Ravensmere.

The street scene continues with a wealth of fine houses (the grandest to the east side), red brick frontages and Dutch gables exhibit an air of 'success' as they will feature stunning valley views where site lines permit. These are balanced by painted frontages of well proportioned 2 storey, late 18th century facades, mixed with some brick faced and then modern dwellings generally of a lesser height.

Oeil-de-boeuf windows appear at Staithe House and both it and No 18 already mentioned have dominating gables. Montagu House, of considerable local importance for its residents as well as its architectural appearance, continues the wealthy outlook.

The west side of the road, built up densely in its first half, from Old Market, begins to become more broken with buildings either set back or within large gardens as the land begins to drop to river level. The industrial/commercial heritage of the quayside activities begins to take over and more imposing 19th century tannery and brewery buildings dominate the lower west side.

The lower east side of Northgate becomes a little surprising where following the early 19th century cottages of Rosemary Lane (the west end 2 properties once being a smithy), the last group before Ravensmere meets the end of Northgate, is a very fine group of listed early 18th century buildings, sharing a common roof line, recently restored. There is a fine carriageway entrance through to a rear courtyard. With the open green opposite these make a fine statement at the end of the road.

Ravensmere forms the medieval rear access route from the Northgate properties and features a number of rear yards now being filled

with modern 'brownfield' development. But similarly ground levels fall away this time to the east and at a lesser gradient but still readable. One of the significant features for this edge of the conservation area is the length of retaining wall from the gardens of Northgate and the pavement at Ravensmere. The fine old red brick wall is in some need of maintenance as vegetation at the base and ivy growing over the top is hastening the decline of the brickwork. Buildings where they occur, are of generally 19th century origin but with one or two much older properties scattered amongst more recent additions. Fair faced brickwork of mixed age and quality is interspersed with painted rendered elevations generally of 2 storey. A mixture of gables and ridges fronting the street adds to the irregular pattern of building form. Within its length are a number of interesting and well designed buildings as well as several of no value and even some which make a negative contribution to the conservation area. This includes some of the more modern additions, which do not reflect the historic grain or building type one would expect to find here. Equally some modern refurbishment of older cottages suggests a more rural setting. Nevertheless at either end of Ravensmere is a fine block of Victorian terraces. At the southern end Douglas Place a terrace of 8 dwellings and pub, was built by a single developer and in one united style. Now broken visually by some painted facades and loss of original fenestration to all but the pub, and No 5. At the other end as the road turns the corner into Bridge Street, there is a delightful piece of typical Victorian quality, known as the Quadrant with its well constructed simple frontage of red brick, 2 storey but with low eaves and shallow roof. Despite some loss of fenestration the group holds together better than Douglas place as they all retain a fair faced finish.

Bridge Street is only a short run to the Bridge, *The new bridge was erected in 1884 by the Beccles Navigation Commissioners, who had powers under their*

*Act of Parliament to remove the old bridge which was rebuilt in 1653, and which consisted of three arches, and supported a roadway of only 11 feet in width. The new structure is a wrought-iron bridge, consisting of two main continuous lattice girders, each 94 feet in length, resting, at the ends, upon masonry abutment piers, and upon four screw piers, which are 2 an 1/2 feet in diameter—giving 47 foot clear waterway in the centre of the river, and 18 inches more headway for navigation than the old bridge. The width over the bridge between the main girders is 20 feet, giving 17 feet of carriage-way and three feet foot-way. The road is supported between the main girders upon rolled steel plates, known as "Lindsay's Patent." The new bridge is repairable, as was the old one, jointly by the County Authorities of Norfolk and East Suffolk. The stonework in the old bridge was used, as far as it could be, in the construction of the abutments and wings of the new bridge. The new bridge was designed by R.M. Brereton, Esq., M.I.C.E., the County Bridge and Road Surveyor for the County of Norfolk, and executed under the joint directions of the said engineer and of B. M. Eyton, Esq., the County Surveyor for East Suffolk. The iron work was executed by Messrs Head, Wrightson, and Co, of Stockton-on-Tees, and the rest of the bridge work by Mr T.H. Blyth, of Foulsham in Norfolk, who had previously built the Falcon Bridge at Bungay. (courtesy of Beccles Society notes).*

Bridge Street is a key point at the North East corner of the conservation area marking the critical point where The Broads takes over and the town starts. The southern elevation is a maltings and brewery complex that has been sensitively converted leaving original window patterns to the street scene. The north side has a single painted early 19th century façade followed by a long low timber fence giving views to the Quay where a maltings building once stood.

Remnants of these maltings fronting Fen lane, were converted in the 1960s into an award winning residential scheme and have continued to age delightfully! Their timber first floor entries enhancing the historic elevation. The



*The Bridge,  
Bridge Street*



*The Maltings, Fen Lane*



*14-20 Fen Lane,  
facing the river*



*New Road*

land behind these to the west and to the north is now very much part of the Broads landscape with Quayside and slipways providing tree lined green open space and river beyond. This is the southern Gateway to the (Norfolk) Broads and as such is a major reflection on the present main source of commerce, within the region—tourism. It could nevertheless be suggested that there is more potential to this location in those terms; however, the past, with its history of flooding, and the current predictions of climate change and sea level rise, preclude serious change.

To the east of Fen Lane is a collection of simple cottages with their mixture of painted render and red brick yet not looking out of place. These are followed by a large 2 storey warehouse, gable end on to the street, and relatively imposing with its modern cottages adjacent. The corner property, though Georgian in origin, was recently entirely rebuilt save a small part of the north wall and is a facsimile of what was there. The northern elevation of four properties, including the corner above, form a well tended face to the Broads National Park. The two cottages in the middle with their modest proportions and painted brickwork are a reminder of the dwellings that would have been lived in by the many workers of this highly active commercial quayside. The modern end addition however jars slightly in scale and fenestration but its basic form and red brick and pantile roof help to mitigate this.

At this point the existing conservation area ends. It is proposed to amend this boundary and for further detail see the Management Plan section.

New Road, as the cottages facing north on Fen Lane, has a well maintained group of 2 Victorian terraces with a mixture of brick and flint adding significant feature to their appearance. Similarly constructed front garden walls and a timber fence at the entrance to this



‘unadopted’ road at the Ravensmere end are very evocative. The north end however has a modern addition which rather ignores the street rhythm.

### ***Materials***

These reflect the relative status of the locations. Northgate, one of the principle roads, maintains a high quality appearance with soft bricks of the key houses mixed with later Victorian brickwork of the commercial buildings. Roofs are less prominent in this rather narrow road but as it winds particularly when descending towards the river, it reveals wonderful glimpses of old red and black pantiles with their patina of age. The odd slate roof is not out of place and adds to the mixture.

Ravensmere on the other hand resembles the less formal facades of Northgate and dwellings are of a complete mixed batch of age and materials. Similarly roofs are reflecting these conditions.

Fen Lane, Bridge Street and New Road are no less distinctive.

### ***Open Space and Public Realm***

This is distinguished by being the southerly access point to the Broads ‘National Park’. Its position at the northern end of the historic town is a characteristic which has not only provided the town with its source of wealth but has formed it. Its significance therefore can not be understated.

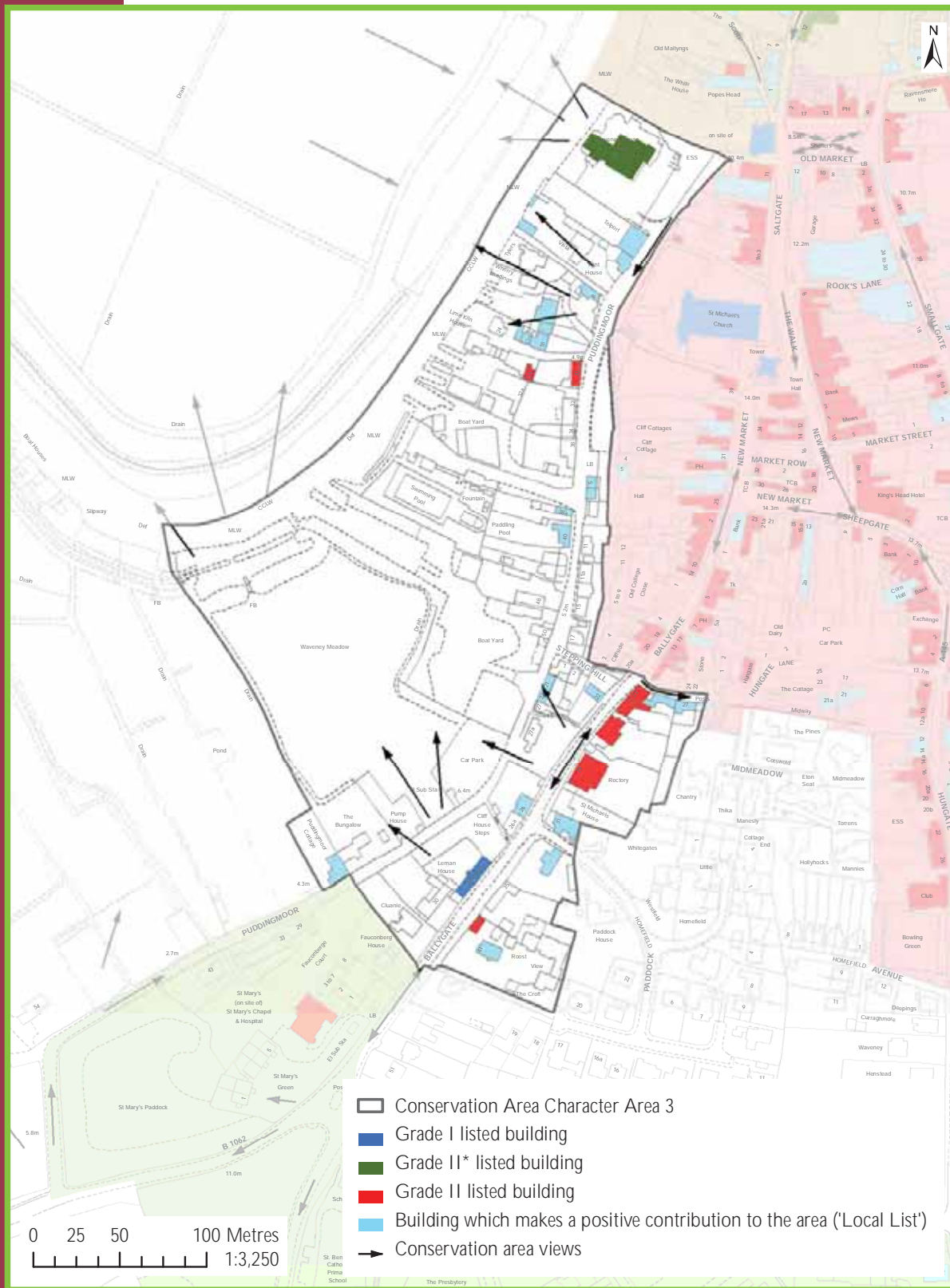
The rear yards to Ravensmere also are typical of the traditional pattern but this is being eroded with some insensitive infill development.

### ***Enhancement Potential***

In the first instance attention should be paid to the growing pressures of brownfield development and the opportunities provided by the remaining yards and outbuildings particularly to Ravensmere. Proposals need to

be well informed by the historic grain and palette of materials and should not be slave to inappropriate dwelling types, dropped in, as if from anywhere—any town.

The quayside and river edge is impossible to enhance. However existing facilities provided could be considered as modest when balanced by the significance of the location. Bearing in mind the ever increasing role of tourism on the local economy, both locally as well as regionally, more could be made of the “southern gateway to the Broads”.



### Conservation Area Character Area 3

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## Conservation Area Character Area 3: The Cliff

- The Cliff
- Ballygate
- Puddingmoor

### **General Character and contribution of the architecture;**

Character area 3 is still very much part of medieval Beccles running essentially along the length of the landscape feature, the cliff, where the river has always been closest to the town centre. However effects of flooding and the changing commercial drivers of the day, particularly of the riverside of Puddingmoor, which is now entirely within the Broads Authority's planning jurisdiction, (The east [cliff] side remaining within the jurisdiction of Waveney District Council planning authority—Northgate is divided in the same way), have resulted in a fragmentary array of dwellings and 'industrial' buildings of mixed age, material and quality, although today this is primarily a residential area, with some boatyard activities and public amenity facilities on the river side.

First mentioned in the 14th century, in its early period Puddingmoor had some of the wealthiest townsfolk living here. Waveney House is still standing and, prior to building Roos Hall, Thomas Colby resided near the present no. 48, but by the late 19th century there was incredible overcrowding here, and more humble dwellings. For example, at Steeping Hill (now demolished) rows of cottages lined the score with cases of cholera and an outbreak of smallpox recorded in 1872, while six years later at a two room dwelling referred to at the time as the 'Hole in the Wall', there was housed a family of seven. *"The house has only two rooms, one a wash house and the other the living room. The living room is about six yards square, the other room is about three. In each there is a bed. There are no upper rooms. Seven people sleep in the house, viz: defendant & her brother-in-law, a boy aged 16 years of age, one about 10, another about 7, a little*

*girl a year and a half old, and a baby.*

*Mr AG Love, Inspector of Nuisances, said he had served notices on defendant, who had repeatedly promised to get out some of the children, but she had not done so. Defendant said that the oldest boy was going to sleep out after this. Her children enjoyed excellent health while living there. One boy particularly weak before, was now quite jolly. It was her wish to get another house, but she could not get one. The Bench made an order that only one adult and four children under the age of 16 should sleep in the house. .... Interestingly enough the census of 1881 shows no change to the number of occupants.*

The most characteristic feature of Puddingmoor, however, is the gradient and lie of the land. This is beautifully expressed as one exits the Old Market through the narrow opening between St Peters House and the end of Saltgate. Following the old historic wall, the road turns abruptly to follow the course of the river, and descends behind the church from the upper cliff level down to a level always higher than the river, then levels approximately half or a little below the height of the cliff. The road meanders gently revealing constantly changing vistas and views both of the buildings and landscape alike. A very rewarding and pleasant walk.

Dominating the first views but continuing, albeit in varied forms, are the retaining walls (perhaps 20 feet in height in places) both to the cliff side as well as to the many scores as they cut through the cliff down to Puddingmoor. As a result the first buildings are concentrated on the riverside, as until you pass the church and Cliff Cottages, the gradient is too acute to allow any buildings.

These are built of a mixture of materials with much rebuilding and repair particularly to the huge wall below the church. Two sections of older flint rubble walls, one with stone quoin detail to the edge of the main steps, provide much interest and texture. Massive buttresses of



*Puddingmoor from  
the churchyard steps*



*Puddingmoor looking  
south*



*Further south*



*Cliff House Steps and rear  
of Leman House, Ballygate*

red brick add a sense of drama to the scene which is left to grass at the base. The embankment provides a wonderful springtime backdrop for the many spring bulbs in evidence at the time of the survey. Some sections however have been allowed to go wild with considerable amounts of vegetation, which is beginning to cause surface damage to some older sections of flint and rubble wall below cliff cottages. The (assumed) water supply to the cottages similarly is not an enhancement and its recent leak and very visible 'repair' is not only visually bad but it has also contributed to damage to the wall.

The remnants of Cliff cottages are an eclectic group of 2 storeys forming the rear burgage plots of New Market, with the centre property taking advantage of the dramatic views by means of a roof terrace. The end painted brick façade of No 5 reveals a fine probably late 18th century interior with many features intact.

Immediately below these is the first in the most densely packed group of Puddingmoor. The next hundred yards or so where the road gently curves back towards the river provides enough room for dwellings on both sides, with the cliff edge receding at a gentler gradient, providing opportunities for 20th century residential infill behind older properties to the road edge. There is no pavement as such.

Amongst those buildings to the road edge are scattered individual 20th century dwellings of mixed style but generally of modest and appropriate scale and form. There are hardly two buildings alike and many of older origin - although many of the modern external finishes (rendered, paint or both) belie this fact. Nevertheless the variety of architectural form itself forms a characteristic of this section where the gaps between the roadside properties allow significant views of rear terraced gardens and the developments of the yards of New Market and Ballygate. One fine gable end



remains of a much older property at No 40. Used as a warehouse and dwelling it was largely destroyed by fire in 1873 and "all the woodwork of which was consumed, merely the roofs and walls being left standing....." with JLH in iron ties. These refer to Joseph and Hannah Lambert. They were married in 1729.

The upper portion of the cliff side at this point comprises two late 20th century modern dense housing developments arranged to suit the topography but in scale with the historic surroundings Using traditional materials and form they do not look out of place. Furthermore the turret end of the Stepping Hill development presumably alludes to and is inspired by the possible location of a Saxon Bailey fortification which is the origin of 'Ballygate'. It looks well in its setting, in particular from Ballygate.

The character changes again at this point as the road again straightens slightly for a short distance before turning more abruptly to the riverside. The distance to Ballygate and the cliff gradient again preclude many buildings to that side and it is at its closest at the azimuth of the turn and just below Lemn House. With open space beginning to dominate the rhythm, the dominant 18th century facades of 25, 27 and 29 Ballygate, can be clearly seen and the rear of 26 with its semi circular arched lintols to the central 'column' of windows along its façade, contributing to the reason Ballygate is described by Pevsner as the most 'attractive' street in Beccles.

Walls return as a feature and of particular delight is the retaining wall to Cliff House Steps as it follows the gradient not in the usual stepped manner but curving in a wave like form and a tribute to the craftsman involved. An abundance of walled but otherwise 'natural' edging to the pavement-less road gives a distinct rural feeling. One more group of dwellings remains before the road follows the curve of

the land as St Marys Mount descends and turns abruptly to join the Bungay Road. The group comprises a much rebuilt cottage of a storey and a half with two dormers and low eaves to the front, a row of single storey cottages with only roofs visible behind a wonderful curved 'crinkle-crankle' wall, and a 20th century 2 storey modern dwelling with a 'contemporary' make-over, set back from the roadside and having the only front gardens to this side of the road.

The river side, at the Bungay Road end, which is part of the Broads National Park, is drained meadow flood plain. The river here too forms a 'u' bend but the public open space of Waveney Meadow is preceded by a couple of dwellings alongside the pumping station. (a modern unattractive enclosure). The first is a surprise as its uninspiring blank painted gable turns into a late 18th century simply balanced façade which despite its now painted render finish retains an understated elegance. Next is a modern bungalow with only roof visible from the road behind a tall set of timber gates and then green hedge. The pumping station follows with its raised antenna and is an unfortunate but necessary reminder of the location hazards. The entrance to Waveney Meadow follows, with the car park which is unmade and reveals the vulnerability and gradient of the location. Similarly a rather simple play facility reinforces the seasonal nature of the environment.

A sense of openness is retained as the boatyard railings follow allowing good views through to the activities and river beyond. The character then reverts to the built and compact form where buildings face each other as described earlier in this section. The wall to the other side of the boatyard is of significant age and interest locally as this marks the remnants of the site previously occupied by Thomas Colby who built Roos Hall. The wall cappings are triangular with a roll set into the apex. However this changes abruptly at capping level, revealing later



*50 Puddingmoor  
from Stepping Hill*



*River frontage*



*Pool with boatyard  
to rear*



*Flint House,  
Puddingmoor*

20th century alterations and detail where an entrance has been made by the side of No 50 (Wherry Cottage). Incorrect repairs have resulted in a loss of the historic capping to its contemporary structure. The historic shape should continue along the top of the dentil cornice which acts as its visual support.

No 50 (Wherry Cottage) has an unusual form suggesting a previous use. In the mid 19th century this building, formed part of the substantial granary and malthouse, with associated outbuildings etc., built on the old Colby site. The next site comprises a disused boatyard now occupied by a conservatory business amongst others. These light industrial activities are a good alternative use for the buildings retaining the light industrial tradition of riverside activity in the Broads. Hopefully boatbuilding will return! The narrowing of the street is relieved at this point where the next pair of mid 20th century properties are set back. Despite their rather suburban design they are well constructed with fine brick detailing to the entrance giving them merit on their own within this eclectic character area. The sensitively coloured rendered elevation of the intriguing Dutch gable follows and reveals its more traumatic past as the opposite parapet is a very humble affair in comparison. The next building side on to the street and with a road access to the river is an uninspiring elevation of painted brickwork and utilitarian fenestration, that conceals a much more interesting history. The Beccles Society records include some very interesting anecdotes for the Pickerel public house, which this once was.

Leading down to the river, the access past the Pickerel, takes you to the river edge and the rare amenity of a heated open air swimming pool.. The current facility was established after the last war and the committee (Beccles Thanksgiving, Remembrance, Fund Committee) made a condition that the provision is a permanent memorial and that the bathing place shall be

called the Beccles Town and War Memorial and Swimming Pool. Work originally began on a Bathing Place in the 1870s. After an uncertain few years, during which it was closed to the public, the pool has now reopened and its future looks brighter. Views both to the town and across the river are unparalleled from here. The next site is an early 19th century row of cottages well built but now modern materials and low quality features (doors and windows) do not set it in its best light. Two modern terraced houses recently replaced a 20th century building on the next site. (While surveying this site in 2009 there was an excavation in the front garden revealing a made floor and rendered wall with paint descending at least 10 feet below the ground/road level. Early maps show a row of cottages along this line.)

No 30 is listed and retains a timber frame core. One of the survivors! Simply refaced in the Georgian period, rendered and painted, the north elevation retains a mock rustication which is a common feature throughout the district. The rear of the plot was one of two lime kiln sites in the street and operated from the 18th century. The other grade II listed property revealing a timber frame form, is the remnant of a row of cottages associated with the kiln works, as shown on early maps and the small yard and outbuildings have been converted or rebuilt to form a small mews type assemblage by the riverbank of mixed age and from bungalow to 2 storeys, yet as they predominantly continue the grain of the historic footprint and re-use in part older buildings, are not out of place.

The pattern continues in the next group though the gradient is rising up to Old Market now and so there is room for generous front gardens in front of a row of cottages on the gently receding bank. These were built in two stages, though with not many years separating them. They have been very well tended, although the centre has been rendered, but it retains a cottage

feel, and the continuity of fenestration and roof material helps homogenise the group. The rest of the site to the river comprises the second lime kiln site and is now a modern housing development. Although the modern development is tall in scale compared to the rest of Puddingmoor the setting tucked behind the rising ground and last three street facing buildings makes this again not out of place. The fine mature tree in the centre courtyard of the largest building helps to make it appear smaller in the setting, as it is not the tallest element in view. Trees on the other bank play further tricks of perspective and continuity in the sight line. The palette of materials is sympathetic.

The next and perhaps oddest property is No 8 the old Rectory once known as the Parsonage. The odd shape would presumably be because there was an entrance to what is now the Waveney House Hotel, as evidenced by the position of Flint House. Faculty records (letter to the bishop of Norwich c 1778) suggest the existing buildings were demolished at the end of the 18th century. *"showing that the Parsonage House is a very small old brick building covered with thatch and contains only two rooms on a floor and has been for many years supported by props to prevent its falling down. That it is impossible to make the building habitable without taking it down and rebuilding it and if it was rebuilt on the present site it would only be fit for a cottage and not a sufficient habitation for the Rector and his family. ...."* However this is not confirmed and the shape of the existing buildings and the fenestration in particular - a pair of sashes in one opening with a narrow meeting style, on the first floor south elevation - suggest that it was in fact rebuilt and not demolished.

Flint House (Waveney Lodge), built as the lodge to Waveney House by Nathaniel Pells between 1851 and 1861 (and one of his earliest works), is a fine piece of architectural detailing albeit a fanciful design. With its fine knapped flint walls and painted quoins and finely patterned slate roof, it complements Waveney House. However



its imposing neighbour, Teleport, with its more robust scale and detailing, detracts from the scene with its stark white painted frontage. There is enough detail in the stone lintols and brickwork coupled with the scale to give the building interest. It should be subordinate in tone to Flint house. As it stands its colour does not enhance the scene.

Waveney House (now Hotel) completes the scene but, saving the best till last, this is a wonderful 16th century, flint-faced building of special interest. Listed grade II\*, its riverside setting and grounds have presented a superb opportunity. 'At Risk' at the time of the last appraisal in 2001, this building has been successfully refurbished as a hotel and features a large function room, bar and restaurant with stunning riverside terrace views. The 16th century part retains many period features and provides a significant marketing tool in addition to the building's location and setting.

NB

Ballygate will immediately follow but it is considered a sub-zone of this area and will be treated separately, and will be re-classified in the character areas in the Management Plan.

### ***Materials***

**Puddingmoor and the cliff** exhibit the full range of materials and finishes. However it is the very eclectic nature of building type, form and use, which is reflected in the materials, that presents the overriding feature of this character area. The juxtaposition of contrasting materials and form softened by lots of vegetation and a varying building line are all intrinsic ingredients in the character of this part of town. Similarly the vast swathes of retaining wall create a canvas and palette which modern buildings can draw from. Yet the refurbishment at the St Marys Mount end, despite its foreign palette, is far enough removed and in its own way distinctive, which helps to make this too not out of place. It is very much at the edge, separate



almost, and not connected to the centre where the palette is unmistakable.

### **Open Space and Public Realm**

Similarly the spaces between buildings and land gradient (on the riverside), and the way many are no more than 2 or 3 in the largest group, is another factor contributing to the overall character, giving the differing architectural styles, building uses and materials all room to breathe. This makes the area work as a whole giving it cohesion without an obvious reason. The dense cliff top developments similarly because of the form and material palette all appear to fit within the setting and only the odd quirky intrusion interferes.

The numerous scores to the river and down the cliff are again intrinsic features in Beccles as a whole and are perfectly exhibited here. The meadow, car park and boatyards all reflect the mixture of activities as a direct result of the river edge.

### **Enhancement Potential**

Generally the character area reflects its more vulnerable position and environmental hazards and therefore the level of finishes particularly to the public realm may appear appropriate. However threats to the area are beginning to occur. This is a clear example of where more pro-active design advice particularly for windows and doors would benefit owners in maintaining the quality of the area. Maintenance of the retaining walls is also a priority here and although the vegetation of the area provides significant character, this needs to be managed as it is causing damage to the walls in some cases, as are inappropriate repairs where large areas of render over the historic brickwork are now 'blowing' and causing a potential threat.

## **Ballygate**

### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture;***

Described by Pevsner as the most attractive street in Beccles, it contains some of the best houses and although it has two distinct densities, hence its current split into more than a single character area, it is one of the three principle routes into and out of town from medieval times and before. For this reason it is proposed to consider it as a single character area in the proposed Management Plan.

For the section of Ballygate between Hungate Lane and New Market, please see character area 1 description.

From Hungate Lane there is a clear change in feel as the road curves to lose sight of the tower and centre and out into the rural countryside beyond. Yet it is close enough to the centre to allow for prestigious houses with generous gardens to stand proud and look out across the valley. The topography is also of significance as the proximity of the cliff edge at this point means few buildings on the west side, leaving generous views over a low brick wall for both residents of the houses on the other side and for pedestrians. Possibly some of the finest views are at this location because of the elevation. The well-tended gardens below the pavement level add to this feeling, the mature trees adding to the character.

Almost all the houses are worthy of individual attention and are listed with the exception of the small cluster at the entrance to Homefield Paddock and those either side of Leman House, but the dominant style is 18th century carried out with confidence and individuality but retaining a cohesive presence. No 23 is the odd one with a rendered façade but elegant elevation of 2 storeys and dormers in the roof. Immediately adjacent however is a 3 storey late



*The Old Rectory,  
29 Ballygate*



*Garden of 22 Ballygate*



*Cliff House Steps*



*Leman House, Ballygate*

18th century red brick elevation yet maintaining a narrow depth as can be seen from the side. It was rebuilt in 1780's presumably over an existing footprint. The red brick marches in a sequence now where the buildings are separated by garden walls and outbuildings between the elegant facades. No 27 continues the theme though with its 2 storeys and delicately balanced elevation is more comfortable somehow. The Old Rectory follows with its grander scale but 2 storeys and dormers concealed behind central pediment and parapet making a real statement.

The next building and end of the red brick parade is a much lower building once marketed in sale particulars of 1868 as 'a handsome, lofty and well fitted Billiard or Music Room nearly 50ft long', belonging to 29 Ballygate. It has clearly undergone extensive alterations to the front elevation yet has been converted sensitively with appropriate design and material.

Either side of Homefield Paddock are two extensively altered properties which formed the entrance to the Homefield House site. Sensitively altered these form a transition between the two. The House was built between 1865 and 1867 by JE Crisp and originally consisted of the house itself, the lodge, a coach house, stables and garden. The house was extended between 1871 and 1881. This is clearly distinguishable in the building itself, which is set in large gardens extending all the way to St Marys Road.

The remaining two buildings on the east side are both much older properties again revealing that this part of Ballygate was still very much part of a late medieval scene. St Marys Mount where St Marys flats now stand is an early leper hospital and chapel. It continued in use as a hospital after the reformation and was only superseded when almshouses were built to replace it at the end of 17th century. (By that time the chapel and hospital were described as 'wasted'). The first is of less clear origin though the

appearance suggests a possible timber frame albeit with an altered roof. The fenestration adds to this suggestion. The next is listed despite the mock exposed framing and painted front. The list description states a lime washed ground floor condition and the added framing can not be seen as beneficial.

Behind this, at No 41, is the last in the section and is a rather well detailed early 19th century building of white brick. An unfortunate later porch conceals a fine door and fanlight.

Opposite these, on the cliff side, is the finest individual building of Beccles which is fittingly in use today as the town museum. Here there is an opportunity for everyone to enjoy a beautifully maintained building of 16th century origin but substantially rebuilt in 1763 (including the present flint and brick façade). Although the building has had a variety of uses, this only adds to its interest. Sir John Leman after whom the house is named, an ex mayor of London, endowed the school in 1631. The building provides an unparalleled opportunity to study the history of Beccles. The enthusiasm and professionalism in research and authenticity makes this a unique facility for the local community and visitor alike. It is an invaluable local resource, run by volunteers and owned by the Beccles Corporation.

Leman House is against the pavement edge, set within its own grounds where the cliff is closest, which is fitting as not a lot could compete with its brick and flint frontage.

### ***Materials***

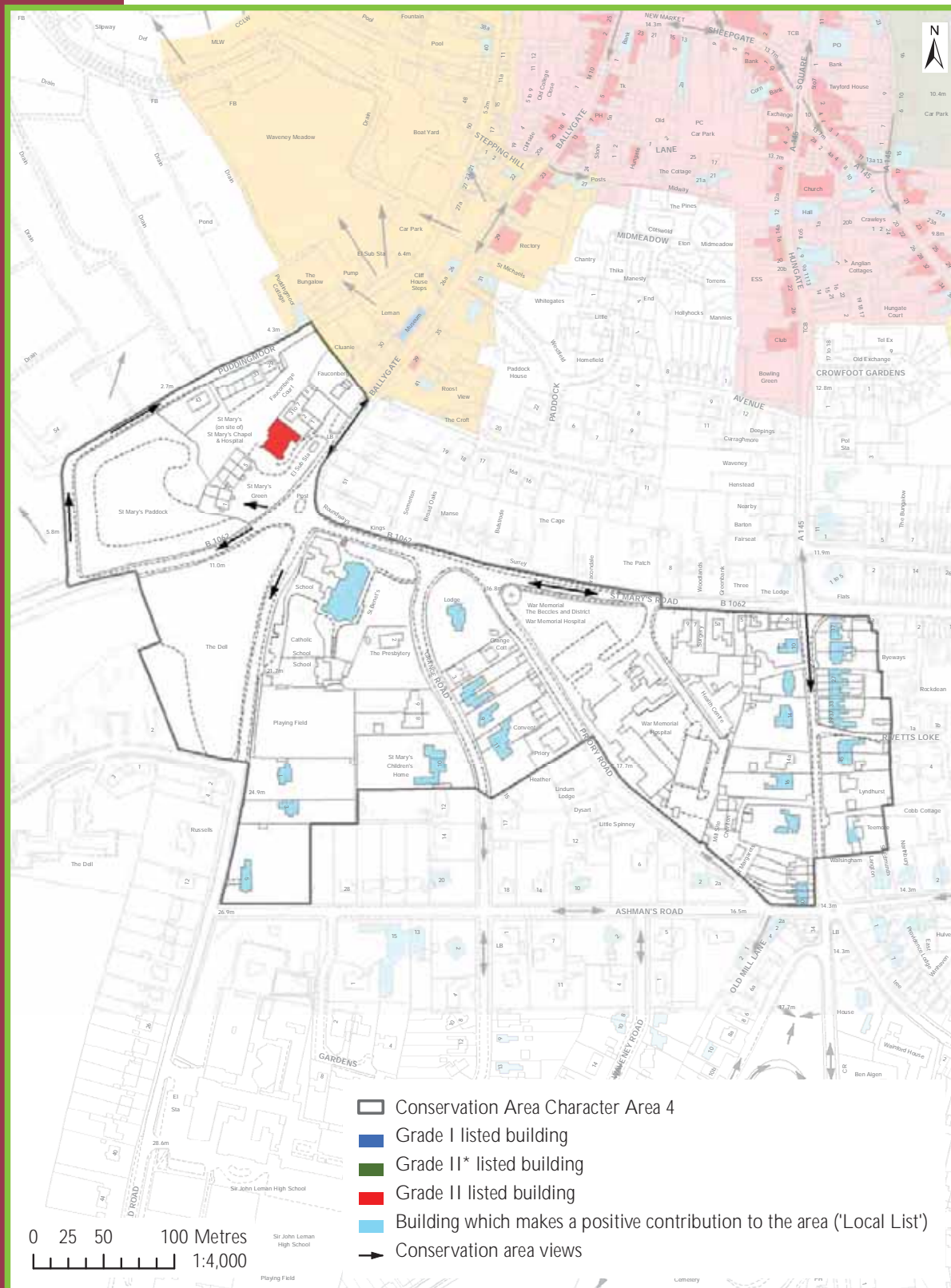
The traditional historic palette is in abundance in this section with soft red bricks featuring in both houses and the low brick wall of the west side. Roofs retain original finishes, albeit in some cases replaced with modern materials, but in the appropriate style. Knapped flint and cobble both make an appearance.

### ***Open Space and Public realm***

The only open space is that of private gardens yet these form a significant feature because of the topography on the one hand and enclosure on the other. The affluent location inspires a well ordered and cared for area. Steps down to Puddingmoor are historic and of interest. Links to Puddingmoor make this a very pleasant and enjoyable walk of interesting buildings and outstanding landscape views.

### ***Enhancement potential***

There is little to improve on.



### Conservation Area Character Area 4

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### **Conservation Area Character Area 4: South Beccles Extension**

- **St Mary's Hill**
- **St Mary's Road**
- **London Road**
- **Priory Road**
- **Grange Road**
- **Ringsfield Road**
- **The Dell**

The first of the extended areas to the conservation area designated in 1967, it was referred to as 'The Avenues' and forms a key part of the late 19th and early 20th century expansions of the town. However as stated this is a slightly confused picture as it also includes the end of Ballygate known as St Mary's Hill and also as St Mary's Mount. This is very much part of the medieval fabric of the town albeit demarking the boundary. For this reason it is proposed in the management plan that follows to reorganise the character areas in a way that better reflects their historic origin. This is particularly relevant to Ballygate.

St Mary's Hill, the end of Ballygate containing the site known as St Mary's Flats is currently a housing scheme run by the District Council. Its focus is a large late 18th century house of 2 storeys in white brick with 20th century subordinate housing grouped either side. Set within generous grounds with mature trees and shrubs, the groups are removed from the street scene.

The historic significance of the site however is much more interesting being that of the medieval hospital (for lepers initially and built 'near' the site of a 'healing' spring) and chapel, and much later Fauconberge School. This would have marked a town boundary being on the edge of, if not just beyond, the town boundary. It was first mentioned in 1267 and was still maintaining the poor in the 17th century. Although the original buildings have been

demolished, it is suggested that re-used materials may be seen in some walls in the vicinity. Natural forces having shaped the land, the site is at a strategic point where several routes converge, and the topography is more undulating than normal for this area. Routes now diverge to the west and Bungay, following the top of the river escarpment, while Ringsfield Road takes you south and St Mary's Road back east (also historic routes).

The town sign marks this spot and it celebrates the granting of the town charter to the first Portreeve of Beccles, Sir John Baas, in 1584 by Queen Elizabeth I. The original sign, now in the Beccles Museum, was carved by local sculptress Judy Quinton Barber in 1936 and has now been replaced with a facsimile.

The Dell, is a small informal public open green space with steep, tree covered slopes which together with St Mary's Paddock on the other side of Bungay Road and bordered by the junction of Puddingmoor, are a clear signal of a change in place. With the meadows to the visible horizon a sense of a rural location is quickly developed.

The conservation area boundary runs along St Mary's Road away from the river. The road rises as it turns slowly towards London Road and the limit of this extension. The density of building reflects the edge of the town and its various periods of expansion. Towards the town centre to the north, but outside the conservation area, is the edge of the development of the Homefield House gardens though these predate much of the paddock site 'within'. These properties form a pleasant edge as they are set back from the road in well-tended gardens. Most are mid 20th century, detached, with some semi-detached properties forming the outside boundary up to London Road and the old lodge building to the Conservative Club. The density increases at the junction.



*17-23 London Road*



*43 & 45 London Road*



*Gothic House, 12  
London Road*



*London Road  
looking north*

The junction of London Road and St Mary's Road (which continues into Peddars Lane) is a historic crossroads albeit by-passing the town centre. It marks an early 'suburbia' of the town dating back to the 19th century, where between here and the town centre as far as the site of the Conservative Club was large open space to both sides of the road. The character area includes a short stretch of London Road from the St Mary's junction to Ashmans Road, including both sides of the road (with the exception of the corner property to Fredericks Road.)

The buildings are 19th century with the older ones further south and to the east. They are set within generous gardens giving an air of ostentation. The first in the group reveal an interesting aspect where development begins to be of a speculative and more derivative nature. Nos 21 and 23 were built in the 1840s while the first two, 17 and 19 were built later (1870s) and mimicking their neighbour in style. Though the lower roof pitch and wider elevation on the earlier pair is more appropriate and better proportioned. The painted façade of 23 is an unfortunate alteration to the appearance of the group. These are followed by a later group of 19th century terraces (25-31 and 33-39 respectively) which reflect a distinct change in house design that occurred during the middle of the 19th century. In Nos 25-31, the need for narrower frontages and more density has been mitigated by canted bay frontages. The arch of the doorway remains but the quality of materials, construction and design (in particular the overall proportions) is of a generally lesser standard. Nevertheless they are no less significant in their importance to the development of the 'dwelling' in Beccles. These were built 1871-74. The next group reflect an urban development process in that they are a mixture of age neatly reflected by the sudden re-appearance of black (smut) pantiles to 33/35 and 37. Built in 1832 and 1838 respectively. Their lower roof line and material and lack of bay frontage are a reminder of a

previous style. The porch to No 33 however detracts from what should be a flush elevation as at No 37. The end of the group makes two jumps and into the 20th century (just), but displays an urban feel in the density of the form. With its part 3 storey front elevation the emphasis is not on the design but the functionality of the dwelling. Massive bays with continuous expressed lintols dwarf the older cottages adjacent.

Between this and 43/45 is the entrance to Rivetts Loke development, on the site of the Homestead. Nos. 43 and 45 are a fine pair of houses dating to the 1840s in white brick with 3 storeys and delicate detailing to the ground and first floor windows, the open gardens giving full views of the imposing elevation.

In contrast, the next property Lyndhurst is perhaps better set within heavily overgrown gardens. It was built between 1927-33 and reflects the period well with its roughcast render and fenestration pattern and general shape. Slightly alien in a market town setting and certainly for Beccles, the stark white paint (at time of survey) is contrary to the more subtle original intentions. Teemore follows and reverts back to an early 19th century form with its wider frontage and shallow roof distinctive.

The other side of London Road forms a similar picture and the eastern tip of this part of the conservation area. Almost at the highest point in the town, the land behind this section of London Road is of great local significance as is revealed by Mill Lane. A narrow lane leads to a small group houses on the site of Haddingham's Mill. It is lost to us now but the description of its demolition in 1922 (courtesy once again of the Beccles Society), shows what a significant feature this was. *The fine well built tower flour mill near London Road, long in the use of the late Mr Hadenham and later by NW Pells, deceased, which has been a conspicuous land mark in the district for upwards of 200 years [this is probably wrong], is*

*undergoing demolition, Mr Wiles having purchased the property to make use of the bricks in the erection of houses on the Homefield Estate. The mill has not been in use for many years and the sails were removed some long time ago, because of the loud whistling sound, amounting to a nuisance, produced in windy weather and the possibility of their being wrecked in stormy weather. The tower could be plainly seen from the water as far distant as Oulton Dyke.*

Facing London Road at the corner of Ashmans Road at the southernmost point of the conservation area, are two small late 19th century terrace groups. The corner group (26-30) presents an odd appearance when looked at more closely. Clearly trying to be more than they are, the grand architectural form is 'betrayed' by the need to provide an entrance to the centre house, and the asymmetric fenestration is at odds with the architectural form. The next group is more traditional in form and, although late 19th century, is without bays. No 18 is set within gardens and above road level (same to both sides here) and is early 19th century with pantiles. Mill Lane cuts between this and No 16 which is of considerably more substance than its preceding neighbour. Built in 1828 as a private School for Girls. It is bigger in scale and conforms to the simply detailed local style of the period. No 14a is a small modern bungalow set well back from the road again behind vegetation and does not impinge on the scene. No 14 is set behind an open garden and railings, giving excellent views of this building, which is of late 18th century origin though much altered, the interesting and unusual semi circular south end and bays being added in 1870/80s. Gothic House (no. 12) follows. Built between 1824 and 1828, its fine door and porch are more honest than the fenestration, but the gothic arched casements all appear original. Its wilder cottage garden adds to the romanticism of the architecture. No. 10 is probably late 18th century with flush windows and a fine fanlight and door but the roughcast render and painted finish hide the original fair

*St Marys Road**War Memorial**St Benets  
Catholic Church**Town Sign*

faced surface. The end of the section and forming the corner back to St Mary's Road, is a pair of late 19th century houses (**nos. 6 & 8**) mimicking the approach on the opposite corner, in a reinterpretation of a Georgian style, in white brick with balanced elevation even to the extent of a blind window. Modern windows and doors are inappropriate and do not enhance the pair.

The next little cluster of St Marys Road (south side) from the corner of London Road contains the remnants of pre 20th century houses, 1, 3 & 5, a group of late 18th century cottages no longer retaining a cohesive form. A 20th century bungalow follows, on what was open space fronting a development withdrawn from the road but now subsumed within the hospital site. Nos. 7 & 9 form another pair and were built between 1845 and 1850. The suburban nature opens up considerably now as the War Memorial Hospital site and then war memorial follow.

War Memorial Cross was unveiled by Colonel Sir T Courtenay Warner, CB, MP, the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk and was designed by Mr Gerald Cogswell, of London, and erected by Mr HA King, a local stonemason. The hospital was built in 1924 at a cost of £13,000 which was raised by public subscription. Set in generous surroundings and with fine mature trees it is an important element of this area and reminds of the significance health care has had in the history of the town.

The final group of buildings and bringing us back to the Town Sign junction, is the St Benet's RC church and school complex. The Victorian church in its Romanesque style stands out against the skyline and its square tower has a higher vantage point than its town centre rival. In a soft sandstone finish and strong geometric detail it is unique in the architectural styles visible in the town.



### ***Materials***

Brick colour and detailing in this area more than any other is a good indicator of age. White bricks and better proportions single out the early 19th century buildings and their later imitators. Red bricks and canted bay windows identify late 19th century and onwards. A few of the older properties of good architecture have lost character with either inappropriate finishes or having been insensitively altered. The treatment of front gardens is of significance in this area and the current balance between 'overgrown' and open reflects the quality of architecture behind in most cases and needs to be maintained. Roof materials begin to show a slate dominance though many of these have been replaced with cheaper alternatives.

### ***Open Space and Public Realm***

This is a character area of two halves, the eastern half being predominantly built up / urban with front gardens providing respite from the busy highways (all). The western half in contrast is open with grand complexes set in green surroundings with the meadow and the Broads National Park obviously beckoning. The relatively affluent residential and community aspect of the buildings ensures a well cared for area.

### ***Enhancement Potential***

There is little opportunity and need to enhance this particular character area apart from the need again of perhaps more pro-active design advice and appropriate features for alterations. Similarly, monitoring and enforcement of planning indiscretions needs to be kept up.



### Conservation Area Character Area 5

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## Conservation Area Character Area 5: Ingate Extension

- Ingate
- Kilbrack
- South Blyburgate

This second of the 1991 extensions follows the continuation of Blyburgate, the last of the described medieval routes of the town, this one being on a south easterly axis finally kicking out in a more easterly direction following the river valley and to Worlingham, which has now formed an almost continuous urban connection with Beccles.

### ***General Character and contribution of the architecture; South Blyburgate***

The west side of the middle section of Blyburgate has seen much more change than North Blyburgate. This part does not have the traditional rear access lane and plots here simply were in more generous surroundings with larger gardens and the odd grander house, only one of these remaining in situ along the street at Dencora House further down on the east side. Larger infill sites being therefore available, these have been most densely filled in between Blyburgate and Hungate.

The medieval rhythm of Blyburgate is definitely cut short where the current ambulance site (Blyburgate House and Beccles Brewery behind it were cleared in the 20th century,) now rests, the old character area 1 boundary reflecting this. Open space of the set back ambulance buildings and rear yard on the one side, and the car park entrance and new public conveniences on the other, give a breathing space to the street frontage and clear visual break. The contrast of old and new building forms on both sides almost in line is a further clear indicator that a pattern has been broken.

The sequence on the west side is of 20th century single storey flat roof construction,

with the building line set back, and shop fronts continuing to dominate, giving good views over and beyond the low buildings, and the gently rising ground towards the town centre allowing the roof scape to make a strong addition to the mood. No 44, a private house, was designed by FE Banham and built in 1898 for WM Crowfoot MD, a name of significance and some history within the town.

No 46, the butchers shop, presents an unusual appearance for Beccles, with its gable facing the street and jetty frontage. This is a false jetty, however, as it was created when the road was widened. The shape of roof nevertheless implies a timber frame and the way the building form kinks away reinforces this. There is a yard access here and the frontage to Blyburgate has been reinforced by a modern copy of the jettied butchers shop. Temperance Place is formed within this historic open space and is a dense modern 20th century development completely hidden from view.

The east side of this central portion and in front of the car park facing the street is a group of two blocks comprising 3 buildings. The first No 33 with its pair of Dutch gables at either end reveals the oldest form and is described as early 18th century (in the list) although most other dutch gables in town are late 17th century. There is a narrow yard access and then a late 18th century shop with a pair of earlier 18th century town houses adjacent. Note the taller ground floor of the former and the roof shape and material. There is another gap before the next corner group, the gap leading to a 21st century development in traditional materials and form. This forms an important backdrop to the car park, yet the rear of 33 Blyburgate and its more modern outbuildings form an uncomfortable juxtaposition, providing a significant unresolved element to the development.

The corner group is the Wood Hill Homes



46 Blyburgate with wall  
of 44 in foreground



33-39 Blyburgate



General view into town



New development on  
former petrol station site

complex and was built in 1951. *'For letting and not for sale to elderly persons of limited means. The dwellings to be let for a period of 60 years for such rents as the Association may determine'.* They were refurbished extensively in 2003 and are now maintained by a housing association.

The overall character becomes very fragmentary from now on with a short section to both sides of the road of in part neglected and/or poorly re-fronted properties.

The west side immediately next to the south entrance to Temperance Place and its modern 'bookend', is flanked by an early 19th century or later well balanced frontage but with an unfortunate covering of unpainted pebbledash render and poor smooth cement repairs. It is followed by a 19th century double gabled (to the street) commercial property with large cart entrance within its ground floor façade. It is half timbered to the upper storey and the poor maintenance to this part and the unfinished ground floor alterations similarly give this building a very run down feel. It is adjoined by a 1930 essay in period detailing with its massive chimneys and crow stepped gables, an interesting building (originally The Fleece) that adds needed architectural interest to this location.

A small yard access is followed by another public house, now private residence, one of the finer houses with its external flemish chimney, steep roof and soft painted render suggesting another timber frame. Records show a history of pub use ... *'tent in Blyburgate, the Public House now called the Crown, formerly the Six Bells, late Bartholomew Purvis, before his father, formerly Murdoch ...'* is dated 1829.

The building line is also lost at this point. The next sequence is not only set back but faces slightly away from the front. On the other side is the open space of Kilbrack Gardens behind an early 19th century garden wall in red brick.



These features combine to act as a visual funnel leading to the tower in full view at the top of Blyburgate, which also gradually rises towards the horizon.

The splayed group is begun by a single dwelling of no value visually and its modern fenestration and roof disguise a building of possible 18th century origin. The next pair at a more acute angle however retain their historic qualities and details. Their more humble scale is a fitting reduction as Ingate approaches.

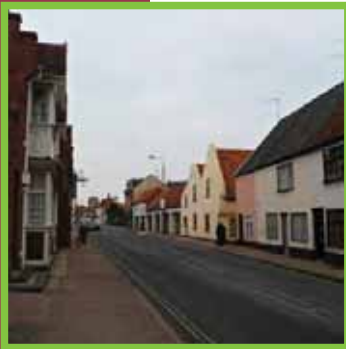
The Salvation Hall was built in the 1960s on the site of what must have been a splendid house known as Nightingale's. A record at the time of demolition in 1958 reads 'Timber-framed - Jacobean stairway of four flights - two extremely large oak-panelled rooms (discovered at time of demolition) into which dividing walls had been inserted to turn the property into two cottages about 1859 - panelling in splendid condition, having been covered with endless wallpapers. Fireback [2001 in Beccles Museum] found amongst rubble behind small cast iron Victorian grate in the upper panelled room, is dated 1697. Staircase lighted by Elizabethan window found bricked up in end wall facing Poor's Pightle.'

A modern housing development now turns the corner into Peddars Lane where the old petrol station stood, also known in former times as 'Poor's Pightle', part of the farm and then an auction market. Built of traditional materials and form with the low black roofs to the curved group forming a suitable reference to the overall feature of the town and its soft red bricks. The trees planted in the 70s form a mature frontage to this 21st century development which makes a significant improvement to this gateway location. This site was omitted from the conservation area; however, it is to be proposed for inclusion in this round of boundary revision.

The east side of Blyburgate from Grove Road to Kilbrack Cemetary retains a more regular building pattern but again with a short section which has lost some of its historic reference.

The first element is a rebuilt property with its row of outbuildings forming a new housing development. Set forward rather than behind the return to No 43 this is at odds with the historic footprint but the traditional form of the buildings helps to blend in. Nos. 45-49 are an alien insertion into the street scene for Beccles. In what appears as a late 20th century interpretation of vernacular market town design, the shops are set back beneath a projecting roof and modern arched arcade. These have no design references in the region let alone Beccles and are totally out of place. Their stark white painted smooth render equally does not help. The protection offered by the arcade has only meant the shopfronts are lost in shadow and consequently businesses have not thrived. They are adjoined by a building that reveals behind its newly re-rendered exterior a fascinating building form and one worthy of further investigation. The crow-stepped gable sits on what appears a jetty like formation on the corner as the gable then returns underneath itself with the wall narrower than the gable above it. A rebuilt axial chimney suggests a pre 1700 origin. The second gable is a 19th century addition. The recent re-rendering and sympathetic replacement windows have significantly lifted this part of Blyburgate.

The next group, nos. 53-59, under its single roof, shows an historic form. None of these are listed. However the differing fenestration which would similarly reflect a timber frame, has been poorly chosen in design and materials and does not help to give any cohesion to this important group. Site visits to no. 55 have confirmed the presence of a timber frame structure and exposed the top of a vaulted cellar (underneath 53) where access is apparently via 59 (not visited). A very large and old cellar?



*Blyburgate looking north*



*Kilbrack House,  
Blyburgate*



*Kilbrack cemetery*



*Ingate from the west*

Kilbrack House and outbuildings and grounds now follow. With its late 18th century side facing Blyburgate and tall red brick wall it slightly shuns the road.

The mature trees in front of the Peddars Lane corner and of Kilbrack House gardens and then the cemetery give this area a very informal yet pleasant urban feel. With the 20th century council houses set back and hiding the rear gardens of Kilbrack (the road), there is a strong urban park character to this space. The margins to the Victorian cemetery are cohesive architecturally giving the space a good sense of enclosure yet still open to Blyburgate.

Another change of character to Blyburgate occurs, marked by the acute change of direction in the road. Historically the road forked as it still does but the railway line has now taken up that route and the southern fork only extends a short way. This is where the Black Boy stood, roughly on the site of the modern development facing east and Ingate, historically an important point with a large open area to its south used for fairs and other similar activities. As it turns the corner the road is at its lowest point and signifies the route of an old water course that fed down to the common roughly along the line of the railway.

The Kilbrack side as it turns is marked by another good cohesive group despite the various shop fronts and alterations. Following this is a significant group of terraces (with the odd exception particularly on the south side) signifying the late 19th century growth of this part of the town. The presence of Ingate Brickworks a little further along on the other side of the tracks, and in operation from the late 18th century, provided significant further industry and source for labour. Then of course the railway came to Beccles in 1850s, and these properties are mainly from this period, although many precede the railway. They are humble

dwellings tight against the pavement, two up, two down, with gardens at the rear. Their humble origins however have persisted through time and fenestration and some rendering to the ground floors as an attempt to prevent spalling and damp penetration has not helped the group. Some structural alterations similarly make the restoration of the terraces difficult. The humble quality is reflected today and pressure to cut maintenance costs with either inappropriate or cheaper materials prevails. Despite significant controls available, a lack of close monitoring has left this area vulnerable to unsympathetic change. It remains however a significant first example of 'mass' housing in Beccles, before construction of the terraces above the old Caxton works site.

Individual properties show some highlights, in particular nos. 50-52 with its steeped pitch roof suggesting a timber frame structure. Similarly the land gradient gives rise to the need for steps to enter most on the south and these, many with individual steps and metal railings, form a significant feature, but there is no consistency in maintenance approach from property to property and this creates a lack of cohesion. Front gardens are another feature to the south side, contrasting with the gardenless north side. With the current refuse collection arrangements and because of the lack of gardens and/or garden access, the bins that line the pavement make it impassable on occasion and do not enhance one of the principle entrances to the town. Fenestration alterations similarly are unhelpful.

As Ingate rises again and begins to depart Beccles, the conservation area is stopped by an imposing building of note to each side. On the north there is the late Victorian/Edwardian public house with its oversized classically inspired details, in good repair and well maintained, and to the other is The Grove, listed grade II. With a series of alterations in each century from the 16th onwards, this house

has been well cared for and is a fitting gateway to the town. It reflects the periods dominant in the town, hiding its timber frame origin behind 17th century and later brickwork.

### ***Materials***

Most of the modern developments, of which this character area has many, show a good use of traditional materials that help these blend into the surroundings. However it is many of the older properties that have been less than wisely maintained and thus show an unsatisfactory overall appearance. Similarly one or two recent insertions have failed to use appropriate designs and equally look out of place. Roof finishes are important along Blyburgate and in particular as you look towards the tower. Windows and doors present the single most important feature and the lack of consistency. This character area reflects the edge of conservation area locality, and intrusion and fragmentary decay of the fabric is evident.

### ***Open Space and Public Realm***

The open space of the gardens of Kilbrack House, the cemetery and the trees to Peddars Lane corner provide a fine frame for views through to the tower. The cemetery, now disused, with the headstones neatly arranged to the sides, creates a park-like atmosphere of pleasant quality. The atmosphere is different, however, along Ingate and the pavements are more visible as the land gradient makes much of them within sight lines. The texture is generally appropriate but worn and, where private forecourts abut the usual concrete finish, is less well aged. The red brick highway to Laurels End is in contrast and perhaps does not match the 'blacktop' pavement.

### ***Enhancement Potential***

Another example of where a more pro-active approach to house refurbishments and upgrades is needed. With the ever increasing pressure for homeowners to install more energy efficient features, it is low income dwellings such as



*Ingate looking east*



*50-52 Ingate*



*The Grove, Ingate*

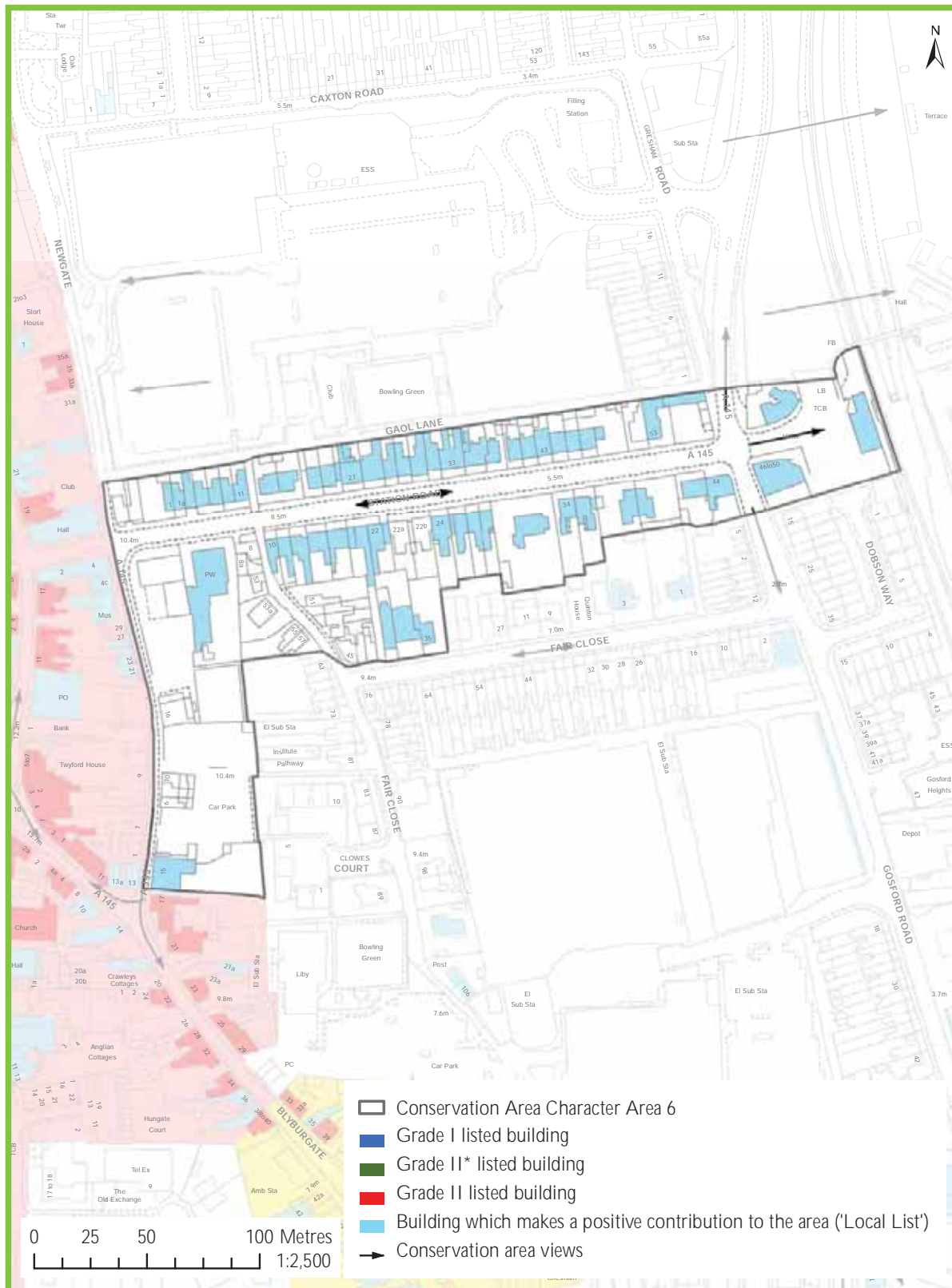


*Decorative brickwork at  
The Grove*

those of Ingate which are most at risk. Inappropriate changes are mainly driven by lack of knowledge and better designs need not cost more. When lifetime of materials is included in comparisons it is clear that the cheapest to buy is NOT best value.

Controls have been in place for 10 years now on door and window alterations though this has not helped to maintain the line at this point. This is due in part to the inability to monitor development properly, and economic pressures on owners. A design advisory leaflet identifying appropriate feature styles would definitely be of use to owners and make monitoring and then enforcement (if required) easier. It would take away the guesswork for applicants, who generally only want to do what is best.





### **Conservation Area Character Area 6**

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*Baptist Chapel,  
Station Road*



*Alexander House, 32  
Station Road*



*Station Square*



*The Railway  
Restaurant*

## **Conservation Area Character Area 6: Station Road Extension**

- **Station Road**
- **Station Square**
- **Fair Close**

This is the last of the 1991 extensions and the area which reflects the most significant change to take place to Beccles for many centuries. However there is more significance than the railway to this part of the town. We know that in medieval times the built town really ended along Newgate. The land now occupied by the supermarket car park to Newgate and behind Gaol Lane was Game Place and Camping Close comprised in parts Station Road. Also to the east of Fair Close is where the right to hold fairs was granted to the Abbot of St Edmund at Bury (the Lord of the Manor of Beccles from 960AD) in 1205. In late medieval times Game Place was the site of an open air theatre. (See character area 1 / Newgate) and then became the site of the prison (built in 1803 by Francis Sandys, who designed Worlingham Hall, but demolished by 1937), hence Gaol Lane. On the open ground is also where the three Beccles Martyrs were burned. It was used for cattle fairs up to the middle of the 19th century (as many as 3000 in 1740) until the land was divided and sold for the developments that we see today. Camping Close, which is now in part Station Road, was where an early form of football was played. *The game was fought out by two sides, usually twelve of each. It resembled football, but was much rougher. It was peculiar to the East Anglian coast and its neighbourhood, and is very ancient. The ball used was the size of a cricket ball, but sometimes a large football was substituted, in which case the game was called "Kicking Camp", and if played with shoes on, "Savage Camp."* The game fell into disuse in Suffolk at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in consequence, it is said, of two men being killed at Easton in their struggle at a grand match. Courtesy Beccles Society.

The buildings of Station Road were therefore erected within a short space of time. The

significance of the railway and its importance to the town was exemplified by the fact that Market Street was specifically formed by widening a previously narrow lane, to enhance the entrance to New Market. The street is generous in width with front gardens separating the houses from the pavement. They are almost all with white brick frontages, (though some have been painted, - note sides) and with their building in almost one continuous effort, giving this street more than any other in Beccles, a sense of cohesion.

The land falls gently towards the station at the bottom. It is intersected about one third down by a narrow lane and the continuation of Fair Close across to Gaol Lane. The style varies to each side. The north side has a commercial building at each end sandwiching an almost continuous terrace of residential dwellings, but with a semi detached appearance at first. The other side is dominated by now one, but originally two, churches. The second (Wesleyan Chapel built in 1871 and pulled down after the amalgamation and creation of the United Reform Church in the 1970's) has been replaced by a modern pair of houses also in white brick, the square bays mimicking the rest of the street. They are not eye-catching and allow the better quality detail of the older properties to read through. The remaining church however is the Martyrs Memorial Baptist Chapel and was erected in 1872 in memory of the three Beccles men burnt at the stake during Queen Mary's backlash against the Reformation in 1556, (protestantism returning with Queen Elizabeth 2 years later). Its double storey height and full width triangular pediment give it architectural presence, yet its undecorated features give it a solemn and unmemorable appearance. A sequence of white brick fronted facades follows in smaller subdivisions reflecting the way the plots were sold and developed. The Wesleyan Chapel stood where 22a and b stand followed by another short group of three.

At this point Alexander House, the main house of Station Road, takes its place set well back from the others, detached and in more generous gardens. It was built by the man who owned it, Robert Alexander King, a bricklayer by trade who was one of two contractors who built the Fair Close hospital. This is followed by two larger semi detached properties, before ending with what was originally the Star Inn Hotel.

The building on the opposite corner was built as a speculative commercial facility eventually housing a building firm, both corners taking advantage of the proximity to the station.

Across the busy junction is the Station Square complex which is currently undergoing a renaissance. Unfortunately the incredible impact of the railway was short lived and the demise of rail travel generally has seen this area neglected both commercially and by travellers alike. The maltings buildings that formed the southern end were demolished with exception of the office building on the corner. These have been recently converted to residential flats and their frontages well restored. The Gosford Road maltings office building is counterpoised on the other corner of the Square by the Railway Hotel. Although successfully surviving the recent declining years it is now benefiting from the Square developments and has been given a makeover itself. Retaining sash windows, both buildings show off the architectural features of their inception. The station, as with the railway, was thanks to Sir Morton Peto, (the railway magnate so influential to Lowestoft and who rebuilt Somerleyton Hall), and was designed 'in the style of Peto', the architecture of Somerleyton exemplifying his interest in architecture stylish as well as social.

The north gap between the Railway Hotel and the station is open ground currently.

The last remaining building of note lies just behind Station Road in Fair Close. The former



*Baptist Chapel,  
Station Road*



*Alexander House, 32  
Station Road*



*Station Square*



*The Railway  
Restaurant*

Cottage Hospital was built in the middle of the 19th century and then superseded in the 1920s by the War Memorial Hospital in St Marys Road. It is associated with the Crowfoot family, who were amongst the most respected families from the mid 18th century and were doctors in the town throughout the 19th century. In response to Queen Victoria's jubilee celebrations, the town was inspired by Crowfoot to celebrate with the building of nurses cottages, thus continuing a tradition of health care provision which dates back to the origins of the town. These cottages in Fair Close are the subject of a proposed extension to this part of the conservation area.

### ***Materials***

White brick frontages are the theme but with cheaper red flanks where visible, except Alexander House, as one would expect. Slate roofs are also of the era. The bottom end of the north side has a series of delicate iron porches which give a very evocative theme and form one of the memorable features of the road. Good quality materials and a selection of interesting features with many original sash windows still in situ give this road a sense of past grandeur.

### ***Open Space and Public Realm***

The wide carriageway unfortunately means that today Station Road is a busy traffic route in both directions. This together with overhead wires provides a poorer quality of space now than originally intended.

The Station Square however is at an important point where development around it, and to the disused station building itself, is ongoing. Crucial elements remain unresolved and it is not until this has occurred that a sensible final outcome for this important public space can be enacted. The railway bridge is a key pedestrian access route to the Common. It is hoped that with an ever increasingly energy conscious society, the railway may once again feature more



strongly as a means of travel. But this is highly dependant on the 'whims' of government.

### ***Enhancement Potential***

As stated Station Square remains the target. Development is taking place as this is being written, so hopefully this all important historic site will again benefit and enhance the town. Under-grounding of overhead cables and restoring of slate roofs would be highly beneficial. Once again this street on its own would merit a short design guide for owners.

### ***Community involvement***

The draft document was distributed for stakeholder consultation. External consultees included the Secretary of State, English Heritage, Suffolk County Council, Beccles Town Council, The Beccles Society, etc. (A full list of consultees is available from the Design & Conservation Department on request). A web consultation was set up on the Waveney District Council website.

Additionally, a public exhibition was held on 19th and 20th March 2014, at Beccles Public Hall, where residents were asked to give their written views.

Comments were generally positive; Statutory consultee responses were overwhelmingly positive. 73% of responses from residents were supportive, 16% were against and the remainder did not specify.

A number of respondents suggested that the extension to the conservation area proposed on the Norfolk side of the River Waveney should be further extended upstream, but this was not thought justifiable in conservation area terms.

Two small areas originally proposed to be added to the conservation area have now been removed – School Cottages and St Georges Close. School Cottages are set back behind cottages fronting Peddars Lane, and are surrounded on all 4 sides by private land, with only a private footpath for access. This would mean that article 4 direction controls would not apply here. St Georges Close is set back behind St Georges Road and is a recent development. Both of these are low key locations where conservation area controls would achieve little.

Several highways and parking issues were identified, and these will be brought to the attention of the Suffolk County Council Highways Department. Concern was expressed that disabled parking spaces in the town would



*Stone facade at  
53 Station Road*



*39-49 Station Road*



*Station Road, north side*



*Cottage Hospital,  
Fair Close*

be removed; this was never intended. The proposal to reduce non disabled parking spaces from the two market squares was not well received and has been modified accordingly.

All comments received were considered by officers and, where appropriate, management proposals modified to include suggestions. These are incorporated in the Beccles Conservation Area Management Plan, which is available as a stand-alone document on the Waveney District Council website.

Full details of comments received during the consultation process, and how these were dealt with, is available from the Waveney District Council Design & Conservation Department.

### ***Local Generic Guidance***

Guidance is contained in the Beccles Conservation Area Management Plan, the partner to this appraisal; also Waveney District Council's 'A guide for owners and occupiers of properties in conservation areas' and 'A guide for owners and occupiers of listed buildings'. Further guidance is provided by Waveney District Council's Built Heritage and Design Supplementary Planning Document. See also the Waveney District Council Core Strategy 2009, and in particular policies CS02 and CS17; also Development Management Policies 2011, policies DM02 and DM30. All of these documents can be found on the Waveney District Council website at [www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk).

## Appendices to the Beccles Conservation Area Appraisal

### Appendix A: List descriptions of Listed Buildings within the Beccles Conservation Area

The statutory list of buildings of historic or architectural significance is maintained by English Heritage and can be found on their website at [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk).

### Appendix B: Locally Listed Buildings within the Beccles Conservation Area

With thanks to the Beccles Society for providing some of the following building descriptions and historical data.

It is considered that all the buildings in appendix B contribute to the value of the townscape (local list criterion A – see page 14 of management plan). Where additional criteria apply, these are shown in brackets after the address to which they apply.

#### Ballygate

*Odds:*

31

(C) Lodge to Homefield House, built 1865-67 by J Edwin Crisp. Single storey, red brick, hipped slate roof, large central chimney stack.

33

(B) (C) Lodge to Homefield House, built 1865-67 by J Edwin Crisp. Single storey red brick and flint, hipped slate roof, casement windows with transome.

35 (*Ballygate Cottage*)

(B) Former farmhouse, part of the Ashman's Estate. Two storey, rendered with gables parapets and red clay pantiled roof.

41

St Mary's Cottage.

Probably built circa 1824.

Well-detailed early C19 building of white brick, set side on to the street.

*Evens:*

22

(B) Believed to have been built as stables for Ballygate House but now a cottage. Red brick. Semi circular windows with multiple panes.

26 (*Cliff House*)

Built in 1866. Two storey red brick house with hipped slate roof and end chimney stacks. Three window front with central six panel door with transome light in open porch. 2/2 pane inset horned sash windows with segmental arched heads with keystones.

#### Blyburgate

*Odds:*

13, 13a

Two storey, rendered, with red clay pantiled roof, casement windows to first floor, shopfronts.

15, 15a, 15b

Slate roof, rendered wall, 8/8 pane vertical sliding sash windows to first floor, shopfronts.

21a, 35

51

(B) Crow step gable, jettied on south side? Rebuilt axial chimney suggest a pre 1700 date but only south gable predates 1850. Red pantiled roof. New windows and render.

53 – 59

(B) Timber framed under a single roof of mostly black glazed pantiles. Contains a large vaulted cellar accessible only from no 59, which also has a small historic shopfront.

*Evens:*

10/12

2 storey white brick with gabled slate roof with end stacks. 3 window front, 6/6 pane vertical sliding sash windows with margin lights under flat arches with keystones, central roof dormer, shopfront.

14 (*Providence House and flat*)

C19, white brick with hipped slate roof and 6/6 panel vertical sliding sash windows with margin lights and flat arches with keystones, shopfront. Probably built late 1860s or 1870s. One of the buildings in the alley at the side bears the date 1859, but the rest of the building at

the back is probably 16th or 17th century & the new and old roofs join in an extraordinary way.

*18, 18a*

Render, hipped red pantile roof, mullion and transome window, shopfront.

*36, 36a*

Probably mid-late Victorian. Painted brick, 3 window front, 2/2 pane vertical sliding sash windows with segmental arched heads with keystones, white brick chimney stacks, modern shopfront.

*38, 38a*

Black glazed pantile roof with gable parapets and end stack. Two 2/2 pane vertical sliding sash windows, shopfront.

*42 (The Cottage)*

*44 (Oakleigh House) and detached outbuilding (C)*

Private House designed by F E Banham and built in 1898 for W M Crowfoot MD. Built by E J Hindes for £1450. Two and a half storey, red brick with plain tile roof and turret to the north, roof dormers and mullion and transome windows.

*46*

Appears to be a jettied building, but the jetty is modern, to broaden the pavement. Roof form implies a timber frame. Red and black glazed pantiles, render, gable onto the street, modern windows, shopfront.

*60*

(B) Appears in a drawing of 1830s. Large external chimney on south side. Two storey, rendered, gable parapets, red pantiled roof, exposed rafter feet, Two 3/3 pane vertical sliding sash windows with margin lights, central modern door.

*Blyburgate Hall*

### **Blyburgate – Temperance Place**

*2, 3*

### **Bridge Street**

The Ship (former PH) and its outbuildings  
Two storey pebbledashed, 3 window front with central door and replacement vertical sliding sash windows with margin lights. Slate roof with white brick gable end chimney stacks.

*1-4 Becclesgate*

(B) Former maltings, red brick laid in English bond with red clay pantile roof.

### **Exchange Square – west side**

*Corn Hall (rear of bank)*

(D) Formerly a Fisher Theatre. Fisher Theatres are a very significant local and regional feature. These are among the earliest purpose-built theatres in the country.

### **Fair Close**

*35, 37, 39*

(C) Built in 1873-4 as cottage hospital by architect J L Clemence.

### **Fen Lane**

*1-8 The Maltings*

(B) Former maltings. Red brick with red clay pantile roof.

### **Grange Road**

*Odds:*

*5, 7*

A pair of two and a half storey red brick houses with two storey canted bays. 2/2 and 1/1 pane vertical sliding sash windows under white brick segmental arches with moulded red brick keystones and pediments. 6 panel doors, concrete tiled roofs.

*9*

Red brick two and a half storey with pebbledashed and half timbered frieze and gable in bay set at 45 degree angle. 2/2 pane vertical sliding sash windows and neo-classical moulded brick doorcase. Red plain tiled roof.

*11, 11a*

Two and a half storey red brick with clay plain tiled roof. Dutch gable to front elevation. 4/1 pane vertical sliding sash windows, brick arches. Stone string course and detailing to doorway of no 11.

*Evens:*

St Benets Church

*10 (St Mary's Children's Home)*

Two and a half storey, red brick with quoins, flat arches,



aprons and string course. A timber dentil course to eaves and verges. 6/6 pane vertical sliding sash windows, central doorway with forward projecting wings either side. Round windows in gables.

### Grove Road

10

*108 (Ingate Hotel)*

Two storey, red brick and pebbledash with half timbered projecting gables on timber brackets. Cornice, 4/4 pane vertical sliding sash windows, curved in places.

### Horse And Groom Lane

2, 2a

### Hungate

*Odds:*

*Hungate Hall Playgroup*

Single storey white brick with unusual decorative detailing to verge, three round headed windows grouped under a single round arch. Gable onto street, round headed doorways in lean-tos either side.

7, 9, 9a, 9b

Built 1880s. 2 storey red brick with white brick dressings, 2/2 pane sashes with bracketed sills.

11, 13

2 storey red brick cottages with black pantiled roofs. 3 window front, 8/8 pane sashes, shopfront to no 11, modern half glazed door under round rubbed brick arch. Elsewhere flat arches.

*Evens:*

12-14, 14-16 flats 1, 2 & 3, The Studio, The Flat, The Studio

2 storey red brick with pantiled roof. No 12 has a single 2/2 pane sash window with shopfront below. No 14 has three 2/2 pane sash windows with double fronted shopfront below. No visible chimneys.

### Hungate Lane

20,

*21 and store to rear, 21a*

Two storey red brick with slate roof. Large axial chimney

stack and remains of truncated older stack to west end (no 21) 8 pane side hung casement windows. Red brick store.

### Littlegate

27

### Ingate

1

Two storey, red brick. 2/2 pane vertical sliding sash windows, slate roof, shopfront with stained glass frieze.

2-4

*Building to rear of no 10 and north of Daisy Cottage*

22

Red brick with black pantiled roof, gable parapet, 3/3 pane vertical sliding sash windows with margin lights.

50-52

(B) Steep pitched roof suggests a timber framed structure. Red brick, black pantiles, replacement windows.

*Ingate Hotel (see 108 Grove Road)*

### London Road

*Odds:*

17, 19

Built between 1871 and 1881. White brick with hipped, slate roof and central shared chimney stack. Rubbed brick flat arches over inset 6/6 pane sliding sash windows, those to no 17 now replaced with flush fitted upvc. Round brick arches over doors with plain fanlights.

21, 23

Built between 1841 and 1845. White brick, no 23 now painted. All other details as for nos 17 and 19, other than chimney stacks, which are situated at either end of ridge.

*25, 27, 29, 31 (Esdelle Terrace)*

Built 1871-1874. Two storey red brick terrace of two handed pairs with shared gabled roof and two storey canted bay frontages. No 25 only retains original slate roof. Two shared chimney stacks. 2/2 pane inset vertical sliding sash windows under flat arches with keystones. Round arches over doorways.

33-35

Built between 1832 and 1838. Two storey red brick cottages with shared black pantiled roof.

37 (*Rose Cottage*)

Built between 1841 and 1851. Two storey red brick cottage with black pantiled roof.

39

Built between 1904 and 1914. Two and a half storey red brick house.

43, 45

Built between 1841 and 1851. A fine pair of imposing hipped roofed houses in white brick with three storeys and delicate detailing to the ground and first floor windows. Double reveal to doorways.

*Teemore*

Built between 1820 and 1824. Wide frontage and shallow, hipped slate roof. White brick, 3 window front with ventral doorway and open porch. 6/6 pane flush fitted vertical sliding sash windows. Attached red brick hipped slate roofed garaging set back to north and two storey red brick wing set back to south.

*Evens:*

10

Probably late C18, flush windows and fine fanlight and door. Painted roughcast render now covers original fair-faced brickwork elevations.

12 (*Gothic House*)

(B) Built between 1824 and 1828. Two storey, red brick house with hipped, slate roof. Symmetrical front with lean-to side wings with parapets. Fine gothic arched half glazed double doors with hood over and apparently original gothic fenestration. Gothic railings to front boundary.

14 (*The Larches*)

(B) Built 1802. Set behind an open garden and railings. Two storey red brick with hipped, pantiled roof and single storey canted bays to either side of central 6 panel doorway. Simple timber doorcase with pediment within larger pedimented porch. The interesting and unusual semi-circular south end and bays being added in 1870s or 80s.

16 (*Millbank*)

(B) Built 1828, originally part of 14. Purpose built as private girls' school. Double revealed entrance to side. A large house of simple vernacular detailing. Two storey, red brick with hipped slate roof. 3 window front, handsome white brick and flint boundary wall.

18

Set above road level, pantiled.

20 (*Victoria Cottage*)

Built 1880. Plaque on front of house 'FKP 1880'. F K Peachey was a reader at Caxton Press for 54 years.

26, 28, 30 (*Providence Cottages*)

Built circa 1875. Two storey red brick with hipped, tiled roof with projecting gabled central bay. White brick quoins. Decorative metal flat arches. Only no 28 retains original fenestration.

### Manor House Lane

7

Built between 1870 and 1875. Two storey, red brick cottage with pantiled roof and dentil eaves cornice. Three window front has 3/3 pane vertical sliding sash windows with margin lights and central six panel door in simple timber doorcase.

*Side elevation of former Taylors building (fronting Smallgate)*

(C) Previously a Primitive Methodist Chapel, designed by William Wright Woodroffe and built in 1872 by Mr Hindes. Red brick with white brick dressings. Two storey high narrow round topped, vertical sliding sash windows with margin lights, a lower bay to the rear having bricked up windows. Bay fronting Smallgate modified and painted.

### Market Street

3, 3a, 3b

Painted brick with canted corner and double shopfront. Two storey, painted brick with bracketed eaves, brick architraves and dentil string course, 1/1 pane vertical sliding sash windows.

### Newgate

21-23

May have been part of 11 and 13 Smallgate at one time. Initials on gateway BF EE 1720 possibly Benjamin Folkard and Elizabeth Elmy or Ely. Pantiled roof with gable parapets and dormer windows, 3 window front, 2/2 pane vertical sliding sashes, painted arches.

## New Market

13

Three storey, red brick, tripartite window to first floor 6/1, 12/1, 6/1 under a single stone lintel. A pair of similar windows to second floor. Moulded brick detailing including triangular pediment. Modern shopfront to ground floor.

23 (*Barclays Bank*)

Built in 1868 for Gurneys Bank. Much altered since built. Three storey, red brick, three window front, square headed sliding sashes under three connected red and white brick gothic arches, infilled with moulded red brickwork. Plain stone lintel to second floor over a pair of 2/2 pane sashes. Barclays Bank in large tablet to second floor side elevation.

27, 27b,

Two storey with parapet. Painted brickwork, 5 window front, 2/2 pane vertical sliding sashes.

31

Simple parapeted three storey façade, 3 mullion and transome windows with shopfront below.

33, 35

33 and 35 share a black glazed pantile roof and may have originally been one building. No 33 has a painted façade, a three window front of 6/6 pane vertical sliding sashes and a modern shopfront. No 35 is red brick with an asymmetrical 3 window front of 2/2 pane vertical sliding sashes, two dormers above and a shopfront below with separate six panel door with plain fanlight under a round arch. Large ridge chimney stack reduced in height. Elsewhere, arches are segmental white brick with red brick moulded keystone. Moulded white brick cornice to eaves.

## Northgate

*Odds:*

*Popes Head Cottage*

1, 3a & b, 5

11, 13 and outbuildings

Brick facade, painted. Pantile roof, continuous, but with gable ends projecting at each end. No chimneys. Change of angle of pantiles at base, suggesting thatch, but the angle of the roof too shallow. Modern windows, but wider than tall flat arched.

No 11:- One ground floor window to street indented,

but blocked up. One of two of first storey also blocked. Smaller height, probably the original size. Sign of earlier doorway blocked up. Doorcase looks authentic.

Doorscraper to left of door.

No 13:- Upper storey 2 windows, new, probably enlarged.

1 central window filled in and smaller. Doorcase looks authentic, Adam-like swag decoration. Two lower windows, left one sash, 10 panes top & bottom, but Victorian. Right: modern.

15, 17

Built by John Pedgrift. All one house, but two buildings. Brick, painted. Simple columns or pilasters at either end of No 11. Parapet roof to both buildings, [a change from gable to parapet occurred between 1933 and the listing] with shallow roofs. One chimney between two buildings, one on the left.

No 15: two adjacent inset doorways, arched with fanlights. Left one, simple spoked. Right one more decorative curved ends to spokes. Three windows on top floor, 6 pane sash windows top & bottom. Not Victorian, but narrow glazing bars. Irregular spacing between windows. Right window inset within arch, possibly original doorway, as it goes down to ground.

No 17: three sash windows, 6 panes top and bottom on upper storey, one blocked up, but inset. Similar window below. Door inset arched with fan vault.

19, 21

Built c 1860-70

No 19: Brick facade, painted. Shallow roof, with projected eaves to the front with braces. Upper storey: 4 windows inset, 6 glazing bars top & bottom, not Victorian. Lower floor: 2 windows, right one does not open, perhaps originally the doorway. Sash window, 6 panes. Door modern. Round window to the right, possibly original, no sign of disturbance to brickwork.

No 21: Brick, 18th century. Parapet roof, hipped, steepish, pantiled & house at right angles to street. Facade appears to have been added to the front of the building. Square house. Upper floor windows flush with wall, seemingly 18th century with 8 panes. Lower floor: 2 original arched doorways bricked up. Modern, odd, windows, one with new top. Doorcase very wide, broken pediment.

23 (*Cambridge House*) and flat 1

Flemish gable. 1 chimney at south end built outside. Steep roof. 2 large dormers, not original. Tiles. Rendered surface. Wooden? beam projecting under roof line, irregular, projecting outwards. Upper windows well below eaves. Casement windows (newish) flush with facade. Low ground floor. Steps up to door. Very low, inset, modern.

25, 27

No 25: fairly steep roof. Flemish gable with iron ties at north end. Upper storey red brick with 2 flush frame sash windows, 6 panes. Doorway authentic? older brickwork.

No 27: Central plain chimney. New roof tiles. Older brickwork top and bottom. New windows and door. Much disturbance of brick.

29, 31

No 29 The Volunteer Arms then The Lord Nelson Steep roof with pantiles. Small high dormer windows. Change of roof angle at bottom suggesting earlier use of thatch. Facade rendered, brick on south side. Chimneys either end. Raised gable ends. Upper storey: 3 squarish windows, with one opening central casement. 9 panes. Doorcase possibly original. signs of neighbouring doorcase (now closed) Lower window, right, wooden. Ironwork on north side: 1670: IH (standing for Joseph Harbor)

33 and outbuildings

35

This property has been a boat yard for most of the last 200 years. For 150 of those years it was run by the Wright family. It is difficult to trace back earlier than 1804 as it was not owned by either of the two manors of Beccles. It might have belonged to one of the manors which owned a small quantity of property in the town, such as Barsham Hall, whose Court Books have been lost.

37-39

Marquis of Granby Opened c 1837, closed in 1899. Although many pubs named "The Marquis of Granby" were given by the Marquis to the Landlord as a gift for soldiering, this does not appear to be one of them, as the 1837 Manor record says that it is NOW a Public House, suggesting that this was not the case in the past, perhaps ten years ago. The Marquis died in 1770 aged 49.

61 (*The Tannery*)

63 (*Waveney Lodge*)

(1-6 *The Tannery*)

Red brick, slate roof.

### **Tannery Score**

69, 71, 73

*Evans:*

*Outbuilding to rear of Northgate House (12)*

12a

Former stables and accommodation for Northgate House (12 Northgate). Painted brick, black pantiled roof, dormers.

14, 16, 20

22

Built between 1853 and 1877.

24, 26, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38 and annexe, 40, 40a

42

Could date from 1620.

*Garage to 62 (Montague House)*

62a

Became part of Montague House in 1751. Was separated from it in the mid 1990s.

64, 66, 68, 70

### **Old Market**

12

Partially demolished circa 1933 to widen Saltgate. Pantiled roof, painted ashlar render, one window front, dentil course.

*Outbuilding to rear of Northgate House, 12 Northgate*  
(B) Red brick, pantiled roof.

### **Puddingmoor**

*Odds:*

5, 7

*5 Cliff Cottages*

Painted brick. A fine probably late c18 interior with many features intact.

*Crinkle crankle wall at 33-41*  
(B)

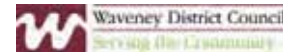
*Evans:*

*Puddingmoor Place*

Render, concrete tiled roof with end chimney stacks, 2 window front, 2/2 pane inset sashes, central door.

8, 12, 14, 18, 20, 22, 38a





40

One fine gable end remains of a much older property at no 40. The House has iron ties on the North end Flemish Gable: JHL standing for Joseph and Hannah Lambert. They were married in 1729. He died in 1786 aged 86, she in 1766 aged 62.

#### *Vista outbuildings*

#### *Flint House (Waveney Lodge)*

(B) (C) Built as a lodge to Waveney House by Nathaniel Pells between 1851 and 1861. A fine piece of architectural detailing. Coursed, knapped flint walls and painted brick dressings, fishscale slate roof with moulded timber bargeboards and dominant multi-shafted chimney stack.

#### *Telport*

Planning permission granted in 1881. A building of robust scale and detailing.

### **Ravensmere**

#### *1 (Caxton Arms PH)*

Built between 1875 and 1881. Two storey, painted brick. Single storey canted bays, 6/6 pane vertical sliding sash windows with margin lights.

#### *23 and its outbuildings*

Three storey, pebbledashed, slate roof. 1 window front, 6 pane vertical sliding sash window with margin lights to first floor, side hung casements above and shopfront below.

#### *35 (The Royal Oak PH)*

Red brick and pebbledash with half-timbered gable, red clay plain tiled roof, large decorative chimney stack with engaged diagonal shafts to front elevation, a further smaller ridge stack to north.

41

45, 47, 49

The Quadrant, built between 1881 and 1885. Well-constructed simple frontage of red brick, two storey but with low eaves and shallow roof.

#### *1, 1a, 2, 3 and 4 Silletts Cottages*

### **Ringsfield Road**

#### *1 (Lawn House)*

Two and a half storey, red brick and pebbledash with half timbered gable. 4/1 pane mullion and transome windows. Semi circular arch over recessed doorway.

3

Arts & Crafts. Two storey red brick and pebbledash with casement windows. Deep eaves overhang, dormer window.

5

Arts & Crafts. Two storey, red brick and red clay tile hung with red clay plain tiled roof with exposed rafter feet. Mullioned windows with leaded lights. Deep porch.

### **Rosemary Lane, Northgate**

7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

### **St Marys Road**

#### *St Michaels Lodge*

Two and a half storey, red brick with half timbered gables, red clay plain tiled roof, 1/1 pane vertical sliding sash windows, an oriel window to the front elevation and an open porch.

### **Saltgate**

#### *The Old Cinema*

Built 1914. Single storey purpose built cinema now used as a restaurant. Triangular and curved pediments are combined in the front elevation with the word 'cinema' in a striking mosaic design above the entrance.

### **Smallgate**

#### *Post Office*

Two storey, red brick with parapet and Dutch gables to gauged slate roof. 8 window front, 6/9 pane sashes at first floor level. Round topped metal windows to ground floor with entrance doors at either end. Double reveals. Stone plinth, keystones and string courses.

#### *Public Hall*

(C) Built circa 1790 as an assembly room. Architect Thomas Fulcher, with later alterations by local architect A Pells. Render with parapet. Quoins, architraves and triangular pediments. Hipped black pantiled roof. 4 windows, to ground floor central doors with window either side. Two blind windows and four others to side elevation.

#### *Buildings to rear of 13*

#### *Quaker Hall to rear of no 15*

15a

21

Site of former guildhall. White brick, parapet to north gable, 4 window front, 6/6 pane, round headed to all openings, 2 doors to ground floor.

23, 25,

(B) Two and a half storey, rendered, timber framed. Red clay pantiles to no 23, slate to no 25. Modern shopfronts.

*Building to rear of 23*

27

Two storey, painted brick with slate roof. Chimney to north. Three window front, 6/6 pane vertical sliding sash windows under painted cambered arches with keystones. 1 similar window to ground floor and shopfront with cornice supported on large timber consoles.

*Former Taylors site – Manor House Lane elevation – see under Manor House Lane.*

47

Built by William Moore before 1875. Two storey red brick with parapet and chimney to north. Decorative brick detailing to parapet, arches and aprons. Two window front, unusual 1/2 pane mullion and transome windows. One large 3/3 pane mullion and transome window to ground floor with entrance door to right. 1/2/2 panel historic door.

*Wall to north of 49*

White brick wall with red brick panels and half round capping.

22-30

(C) Co-op building with its later connecting bridge above Rooks Lane by local architect Arthur Pells, built in 1895/1913. Range south of Rooks Lane is dated 1895. Two storey, huge 2/2 pane vertical sliding sash windows. Red brick with decorative moulded brick detailing to cornices, triangular pediments and aprons. Shopfronts incorporate a stained glass frieze below fascia level. C20 tiling to ground floor. Range north of Rooks Lane is a pale terracotta with red brick banding. Neo-classical façade incorporating triangular pediments. Five window front – 4/1, 10/1, 4/1 panes. Shop windows retain pull out awnings and incorporate multiple pane frieze and curved glass into doorways.

## Station Road

*Odds:*

1, 1a, 3

No 1 built between 1861 and 1864. No 3 built in gap between houses on either side between 1875 and 1881. West side added probably between 1927 and 1936. 1 is white brick with red clay pantiled roof, 1a has been rendered.

5, 7, 9, 11 (*Wellington Terrace*)

Built circa 1864. White brick with slate roof apart from no 5 which has concrete tiles. Original windows except no 5.

13, 15

Built between 1861 and 1864. White brick with concrete tile roof. 13 has original joinery, both appear to have had bay windows added, no 13 canted, no 15 square.

17, 19

Built between 1865 and 1871. White brick. 17 has slate roof and original joinery, 19 has concrete tiles and upvc windows.

21, 23

Built between 1864 and 1871. 21 has slate roof and upvc windows, 23 has concrete roof tiles and upvc windows and porch.

25, 27

Built between 1875 and 1881. 25 has had its brickwork cleaned and has aluminium windows, 27 has original joinery and a concrete pantiled roof.

29

Joined onto 31 in 1900. Built forward of established building line. Designed by Arthur Pells. Built by George & Herbert Hipperson. Cost £459.00. White brick, cleaned, upvc windows, red clay pantiled roof.

31, 33

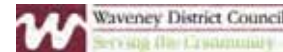
Built circa 1864. 31 White brick, concrete tiled roof, upvc windows, 33 White brick, concrete tiled roof, original windows, modern door. Now attached to 35, originally had no bay windows.

35, 37 and building to rear of 35

Built 1864. No 35 attached to no 33 after 1883. Original joinery. No 35 has a slate roof, no 37 is concrete tile.

39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49 (*Norfolk Terrace*)

Built between 1865 and 1871. 39 and 41 have slate roofs, the remainder concrete tile. 39, 41, 43 and 47 have



original joinery although the door to 41 has been modified, 45 has aluminium windows and an original door and 49 has modern timber windows.

*51, 53*

Built between 1885 and 1891. 51 is brick, 53 (Ferndale) is stone. Slate roofs, original joinery.

*Hipperson Mews*

Former workshop, painted brick, windows are modern timber replacements

*Railway Hotel*

Painted brick, some upvc windows.

*Former station building*

Red brick, now mostly painted. Asymmetrical two storey front with single storey wings. Mullion windows, hood moulds.

*Evens:*

*2, 4a, b & c*

Built 1854 as part of terrace including Smallgate and Newgate properties.  
No 4 formerly the Suffolk Hotel, but entirely rebuilt. Two storey, white brick, no 4 now painted. Hipped slate roof. Bracketed eaves, corner shopfronts. 6/6 pane vertical sliding sash windows with margin lights.

*Baptist Chapel (6 Station Road)*

Built 1860-61/1872?. Designed by an unnamed London architect. Double storey height and full width triangular pediment give the building architectural presence.

*8*

White brick, cleaned. Double fronted plus bay to side now a garage.

*10, 12, 14*

Built between 1865 and 1871.

*16, 18, 20, 22*

Were being built in 1871. White brick. No 18 is painted. Nos 20 and 22 have carriage arches at either end.

*24, 26, 28, 30 (Salisbury Place)*

Built between 1875 and 1881.  
White brick terrace

*32 (Alexander House)*

Built in 1881-2 by Robert Alexander King, builder and owner. White brick, cleaned. Detached, double fronted with two storey bay windows.

*34 (Chumleigh), 36*

Built between 1885 and 1891.

*38 (Carlton Villa), 40 (Hollybank)*

Built between 1881 and 1883

*42, 44 flats 1-4*

Built between 1865 and 1871. No 44 (Star House) formerly the Star Inn/Hotel.

*46, 48, 50*

Two storey, red brick with hipped, slate roof. Segmental arches over 2/2 pane vertical sliding sash windows, moulded brick detailing.

## The Score

*Primrose Cottage and outbuildings*

*Petcham House*

## Appendix C: Sources including Bibliography

### Beccles Society

#### Beccles & District Museum

Leman House Ballygate, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9ND,  
01502 715722  
[www.becclesmuseum.org.uk](http://www.becclesmuseum.org.uk)

#### Foxearth and District Local History Society:

[www.foxearth.org.uk/BecclesStreets/index.html](http://www.foxearth.org.uk/BecclesStreets/index.html)

### English Heritage

Understanding Place, Guidance on conservation area appraisals, London 2005.

Understanding Place, Guidance on the management of conservation areas, London 2005.

Developing Best Practice Guidance for Local Heritage Assets, London 2010.

### Department of the Environment

7th list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest: Suffolk, London 1985

### Pevsner, Nikolaus & Radcliffe, Enid

The Buildings of England: Suffolk, Harmondsworth 1974.

### Dymond, David & Martin, Edward

An Historical Atlas of Suffolk, Suffolk, 1988.

**Suffolk Record Office, Lowestoft.**

White's Directories for Suffolk  
Historic maps

**Appendix D: Useful information****Ancient Monuments Society**

[www.ancientmonumentsociety.org.uk](http://www.ancientmonumentsociety.org.uk)

**Council for British Archaeology**

[www.britarch.ac.uk](http://www.britarch.ac.uk)

**English Heritage**

[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

**Institute of Historic Building Conservation**

[www.ihbc.org.uk](http://www.ihbc.org.uk)

**The Garden History Society**

[www.gardenhistorysociety.org](http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org)

**The Georgian Group**

[www.georgiangroup.org.uk](http://www.georgiangroup.org.uk)

**The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings**

[www.spab.org.uk](http://www.spab.org.uk)

**The Twentieth Century Society**

[www.c20society.org.uk](http://www.c20society.org.uk)

**The Victorian Society**

[www.victorian-society.org.uk](http://www.victorian-society.org.uk)

**Appendix E: Legislation & Guidance**

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012.

Planning Practice Guidance  
[www.planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk)

Waveney District Council Core Strategy, 2009.

Waveney District Council Development Management Policies, 2011.

Waveney District Council Built Heritage and Design Supplementary Planning Document, 2012.

[www.waveney.gov.uk/LDF](http://www.waveney.gov.uk/LDF)

Waveney district Article 4 directions, available from the planning department at a cost of £9 each.

**Appendix F: Glossary**

**Bargeboards:** A corruption of 'vergeboards'. Boards which are often carved or fretted which are fixed beneath the eaves of a gable to protect the rafters.

**Bracket:** A projection from a wall designed as a light-duty support, eg. for a hood over a door.

**Casement:** Hinged light, (window) hung at the side unless specified as top hung, traditionally made of wrought iron in this part of Suffolk.

**Catslide roof:** One which has a pitch very much longer than the other, usually coming close to the ground.

**Coping:** A course of stone, brick or cast iron laid on top of a wall.

**Cornice:** The uppermost of the three main divisions of the Classical entablature. Often used in isolation above an opening.

**Dentil:** A small square block tightly packed in series, in the cornice of the Ionic and Corinthian orders just above the frieze. May refer to header bricks employed in this way in a band or cornice.

**Dog's tooth corbelling:** A corbel is a projection from a wall or reveal designed to support a weight. Dog's tooth corbelling refers to a course of brickwork which projects outwards in a series of forty-five degree angles, resembling dogs' teeth

**Dressings:** Precise work often in a different material, surrounding the openings and protecting the vulnerable parts of an exterior.

**Eaves:** Overhanging edge of roof: hence eaves cornice in this location.

**English bond:** A brick bond created from alternate courses of headers and stretchers.

**Flemish bond:** A brick bond where alternate headers and stretchers are used in each course.

**Flush sash box:** The outer wooden housing of a sliding sash window, where it is mounted level with the outer



surface of the building.

**Gable:** The triangular section of wall supporting a pitched roof. Often exhibiting tumbled brickwork.

**Gauged brick:** Soft brick sawn roughly; then rubbed to a precise (gauged) surface. Mostly used for door and window openings. See also rubbed brick.

**Horned sash window:** One in which the stiles of the upper sash are prolonged down below the meeting rail as horns.

**Hipped roof:** One without gables, in which the pitches are joined along a line which bisects the angle between them.

**Keystone:** Central stone in an arch or vault often projecting for decorative effect.

**Lintel:** Horizontal beam, wedge of vertical bricks, or stone bridging an opening.

**Mullion:** The upright dividing the lights of a window.

**Monk bond:** A brick bond which is a variation of Flemish bond, with two stretchers in place of one between each pair of headers.

**Parapet:** A low wall at the top of a wall, ie above the eaves line (which the parapet conceals) or in a similar position.

**'Pintle' window:** See casement. A pintle is a type of hinge, most commonly seen nowadays on a gate.

**Quoins:** Dressed or otherwise emphasized stones at the angles of buildings, or their imitation in brick or other materials.

**Rat-trap bond:** A brick bond which is a variation of Flemish bond, but with the bricks laid on edge instead of on bed. The resultant wall has a cavity between each pair of stretchers.

**Rendering:** The effect or surface produced by covering a wall with a uniform surface.

**Rubbed brick arch:** An arch, usually flat both top and bottom, made from soft bricks which have been sawn and then rubbed to the required shape.

**Segmental arch:** A curved arch the shape of a segment, formed by its centre far below the springing line of the

arch.

**Soldier course:** A course of headers, laid on their sides.

**Tumbled-in brickwork:** Courses of brickwork laid at ninety degrees to the slope of a buttress, chimney, gable or other feature and tapering into the horizontal courses; used instead of a coping.

**Vernacular:** Unpretentious, simple, indigenous, traditional structures made of local materials and following well-tried forms.

## *Appendix G: Acknowledgements*

Waveney District Council Design and Conservation Team gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Beccles Society and the Broads Authority in the preparation of this document.

We are also indebted to David Lindley, whose pages from the Foxearth website with street by street data were the basis for the historic analysis of Beccles:

[www.foxearth.org.uk/BecclesStreets/index.html](http://www.foxearth.org.uk/BecclesStreets/index.html)

If you would like this document in a large print, other formats or in a language other than English, we will do our best to help. Please call the design & conservation team on 01502 523077 or email [pbcc@waveney.gov.uk](mailto:pbcc@waveney.gov.uk)

*[www.waveney.gov.uk](http://www.waveney.gov.uk)*

***Design and conservation***

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