

## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

**Report to:** Planning Development Control Committee  
**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014  
**Report for:** Information  
**Report of:** Head of Planning Services

### Report Title

**Altrincham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisals: Consultation Draft Supplementary Planning Documents**

### Summary

This report presents the five consultation draft conservation area appraisals, for Altrincham town centre, to the Planning Development Control Committee for information.

The appraisals have been developed to support the delivery of Policy R1 of the Trafford Local Plan: Core Strategy and to assist in development management decisions in these conservation areas.

### Recommendation(s)

That Members of Planning and Development Control Committee note the publication of the five consultation draft conservation area appraisals, for Altrincham town centre.

### Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Rob Haslam (Head of Planning)  
Extension: 4788

#### Background Papers:

Conservation Area Appraisal – George Street - Consultation Draft  
Conservation Area Appraisal – Goose Green - Consultation Draft  
Conservation Area Appraisal – Old Market Place - Consultation Draft  
Conservation Area Appraisal – Stamford New Road - Consultation Draft  
Conservation Area Appraisal – The Downs - Consultation Draft

These documents can be found at:

<http://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/strategic-planning/local-development-framework/local-development-framework.aspx>

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	The conservation area appraisals contribute to a number of Corporate Priorities, in particular: Economic Growth and Development and Safe Place to Live - Fighting Crime.
Financial Implications	The preparation of the conservation area appraisals is funded from the existing EGP Directorate's overall budget.
Legal Implications:	The appraisals are being produced in accordance with the requirements of s69(2) Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Once adopted, planning decisions will be taken in accordance with the appraisals, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
Equality/Diversity Implications	The Core Strategy Equality Impact Assessment has been applied to the preparation of these conservation area appraisals and is considered to be compatible to the work to be carried out under the appraisals because they will help to deliver some of the objectives and policies of the Core Strategy.
Sustainability Implications	The main strategic objective of the conservation area appraisals is the same as the objective of Policy R1 of the Trafford Core Strategy which was found to be sustainable. Additionally SA has been carried out in relation to the proposed boundary changes.
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	None / None / None directly
Risk Management Implications	The appraisals support the delivery of the Council's Core Strategy and Development Management function. If the appraisals are not progressed it could undermine the delivery of the Trafford Core Strategy and the Council's development management function.
Health and Safety Implications	None.

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 Consultants were appointed to undertake the preparation of nine draft Conservation Area Appraisals (CAAs). This is the first time that this type of important heritage document has been prepared in Trafford. The commission was split into two discreet parts, the first relating to the five Altrincham conservation areas with the second relating to The Devisdale, Bowdon, South Hale and Ashley Heath conservation areas. This prioritisation reflects the Council's objectives in relation to Altrincham town centre.
- 1.2 Those relating to Altrincham have now been through a process of internal consultation, including colleagues within Environmental, Transport and Operations, and the Executive Member for Economic Growth and Prosperity approved them for public consultation purposes. Following this period of public consultation it is anticipated that the Council will adopt them as Supplementary Planning Documents, thus affording them "weight" in planning decisions. These will, in part, replace the current suite of planning guidance for Conservation Areas. Once this has happened, the associated Management Plans will be finalised for consultation and will follow the same process.

## **2.0 Purpose of Conservation Area Appraisals**

- 2.1 There are a total of 21 Conservation Areas in Trafford, however as English Heritage guidance sets out, designation is not sufficient to preserve and enhance these areas. Instead local authorities need to develop policies which clearly identify what features of the area should be preserved or enhanced and set out how this should be done.
- 2.2 This requires a clear assessment and definition of an area's interest and the action needed to protect it. Such assessments help to generate awareness and encourage local property owners to take the right sort of action. Appraisals can also identify areas where enhancement through development may be desirable.
- 2.3 Through the production of conservation area appraisals and management plans, the Council will be able to manage change in its historic areas in a way that will conserve and enhance them. In addition, the CAAs will form part of the necessary evidence base for the Local Plan: Land Allocations, in that they will help define the boundary of the Conservation Areas. They will also form part of the evidence base for the emerging Altrincham Business Neighbourhood Plan.

## **3.0 Key features, issues, threats and development principles which have emerged through these five Conservation Area Appraisals**

- 3.1 The appraisals contain a wealth of information about the town's heritage assets, including identifying landmark buildings and other buildings which contribute positively to the conservation area; an audit of the public realm, in terms of its impact on the heritage of the area; an assessment of key views and vistas in to and out of the conservation areas; an assessment of threats which exist and which may be undermining the heritage asset and; the identification of "negative" areas which need positive treatment to enhance them.
- 3.2 Listed below is a summary of the key features, issues, threats and development principles which have emerged through these five CAAs:
  - Architectural detail should be retained through new development, including the painting of stonework, roof lines and door and window details.
  - Alterations to the rear of properties should reflect the historic character of the area.
  - Alterations to shop fronts should reflect the historic character of the area.
  - New development should be of a high quality to reflect the design aesthetics and/or to reflect the historic character of the area.
  - The provision of parking (both on and off-street) should be designed in order not to detract from the historic character of the area.
  - A number of individual structures (including buildings and boundary walls) are demonstrating levels of decay and dereliction.
  - Intrusive modern additions and alterations to historic structures (including boundary treatments) have had negative impacts on historic assets in the town.
  - A number of open spaces, both public and private, are in a state of disrepair; opportunities should be explored to address these matters.
  - Street surfaces are made up of a variety of materials, which detract from the heritage assets of the town; opportunities should be explored to address this.
  - Current street furniture, including signage, is having a significant negative impact on the historic character of the area; opportunities should be explored to address this.

- High volumes of traffic are having negative effects on the character of many of Altrincham's historic assets; opportunities should be explored to address this.
- A number of historic ginnels are in a state of disrepair, with poor surfaces and examples of inappropriate materials having been used, with resultant negative impacts on the character of the area. Opportunities should be explored to address this.
- Opportunities should be explored to address the vacancy rates, balancing the need to adapt properties to today's needs whilst retaining the historic character.

3.3 These matters will help shape the associated management plans (which will be subject to separate consultation) and will be addressed and taken account of in new development within the conservation areas. The Management Plans will go through a similar process of internal consultation followed in respect of the CAAs, particularly in relation to transport, infrastructure and building control matters. Following the conclusion of this internal consultation, and approval by the Executive Member for Economic Growth and Prosperity, the management plans will also undergo a period of public consultation.

#### **4.0 Proposed Conservation Area Boundary Changes**

4.1 In addition to identifying key features, issues and threats, a number of boundary changes are proposed within the appraisals, both in terms of extensions and retractions. Appendix 1 of this report contains maps of the proposed boundary changes for each of the five Conservation Areas.

#### **5.0 Sustainability Appraisal**

5.1 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process used to assess how sustainable development is being addressed and included in plans and strategies prepared by organisations. To undertake scoping for a sustainability appraisal (SA), the document to be appraised needs to have strategic aims and objectives. However In the case of the CAAs the main strategic objective will be the same as the objective of the policy it supports, i.e. Policy R1 of the Trafford Core Strategy which seeks to preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. This policy was subject to SA during its production, it would not, therefore, be appropriate to carry out further SA on that element of the CAAs.

5.2 However, it would be appropriate for SA to be carried out in relation to the proposed boundary changes. This was carried out as part of the work on the emerging land allocations' plan and has been made available for consultation at the same time as the draft CAAs.

#### **6.0 Development Management Implications**

6.1 Although full "material" weight, in SPD terms, cannot be attributed to these appraisals at this point in time, they can be used to help inform planning decisions at this stage. Therefore, where appropriate, reference will be made to the draft appraisals in the Head of Planning Services' planning reports.

#### **7.0 Public Consultation**

7.1 Public consultation on the five draft conservation area appraisals will run for a period of 6 weeks until 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014, alongside that for the Land Allocations Plan. A wide range of consultation methods are being used, in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and relevant regulations, including a public meeting in Altrincham town centre.

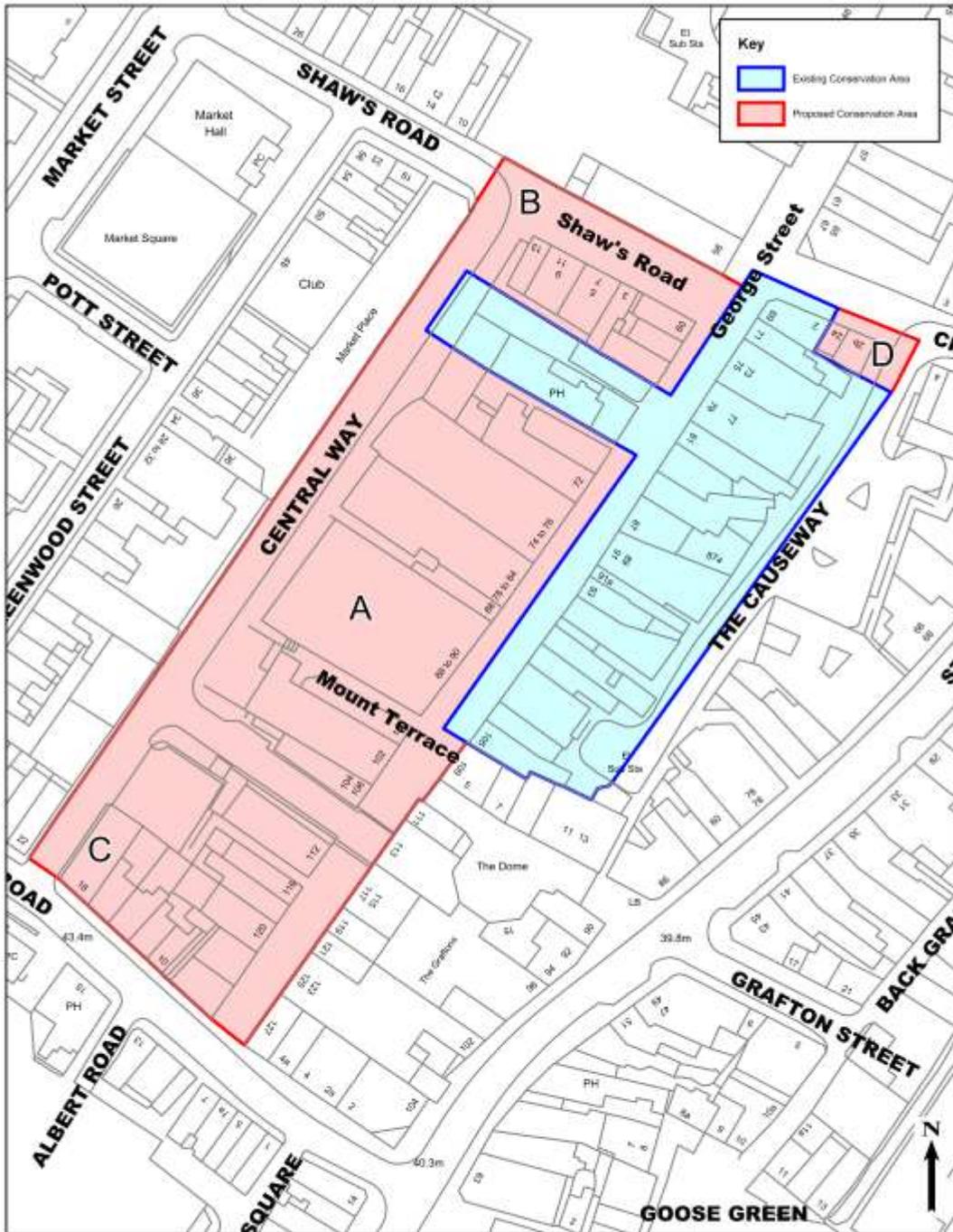
7.2 In addition to this formal consultation, the consultants met with a number of key stakeholders during the production of the draft appraisals; these groups are being formally consulted by the Council at this point in time.

## **8.0 Next Steps**

8.1 Following the closure of the formal public consultation period, the comments will be assessed and considered and where appropriate changes will be made to the documents prior to their submission to the Executive for formal adoption as supplementary planning documents. A similar process will be followed for the conservation area appraisals for the remaining four priority conservation areas. Additionally, given the need to produce assessments for each of the 21 adopted conservation areas, to support both the development management decision process the Trafford Local Plan: Allocations Plan, the preparation of the remaining 12 appraisals and management plans will follow in due course.

## **Appendix A**

### **Proposed Changes to Conservation Area Boundaries**



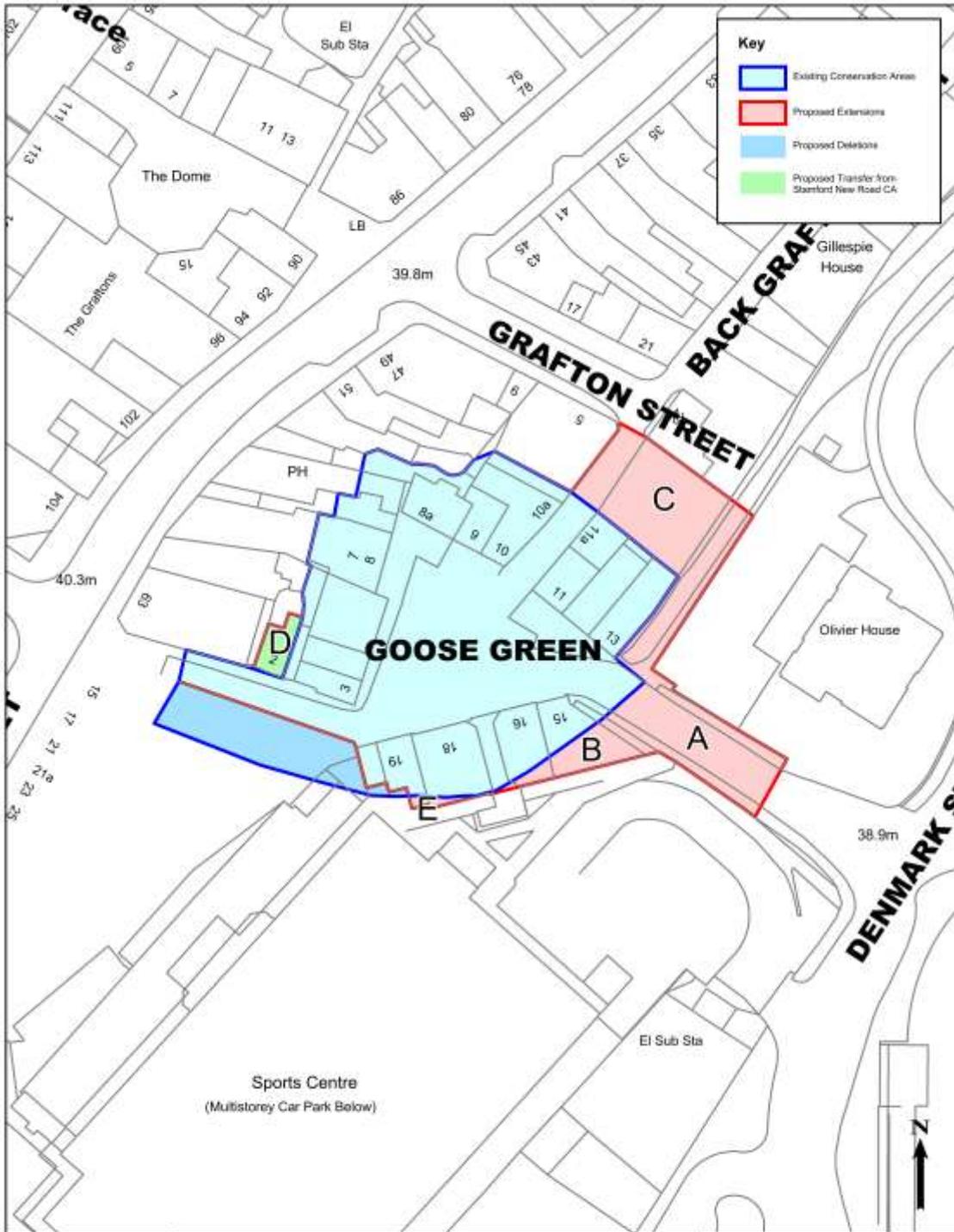
**George Street Conservation Area  
Proposed Changes to Boundaries**

DRAWN BY: David Harrison

DATE: 3 December 2013

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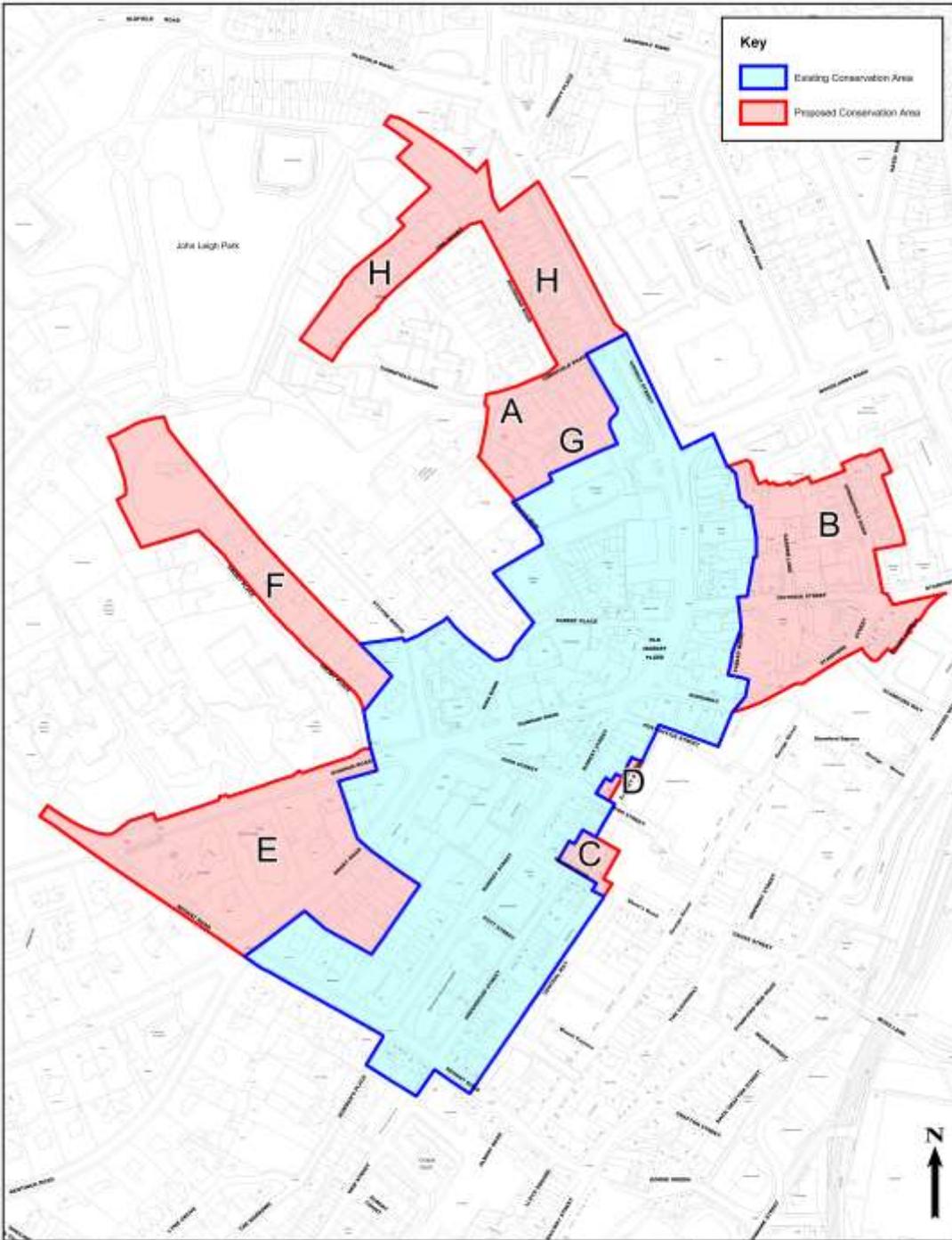
**Goose Green Conservation Area  
Proposed Changes to Boundaries**

DRAWN BY: David Harrison

DATE: 3 December 2013

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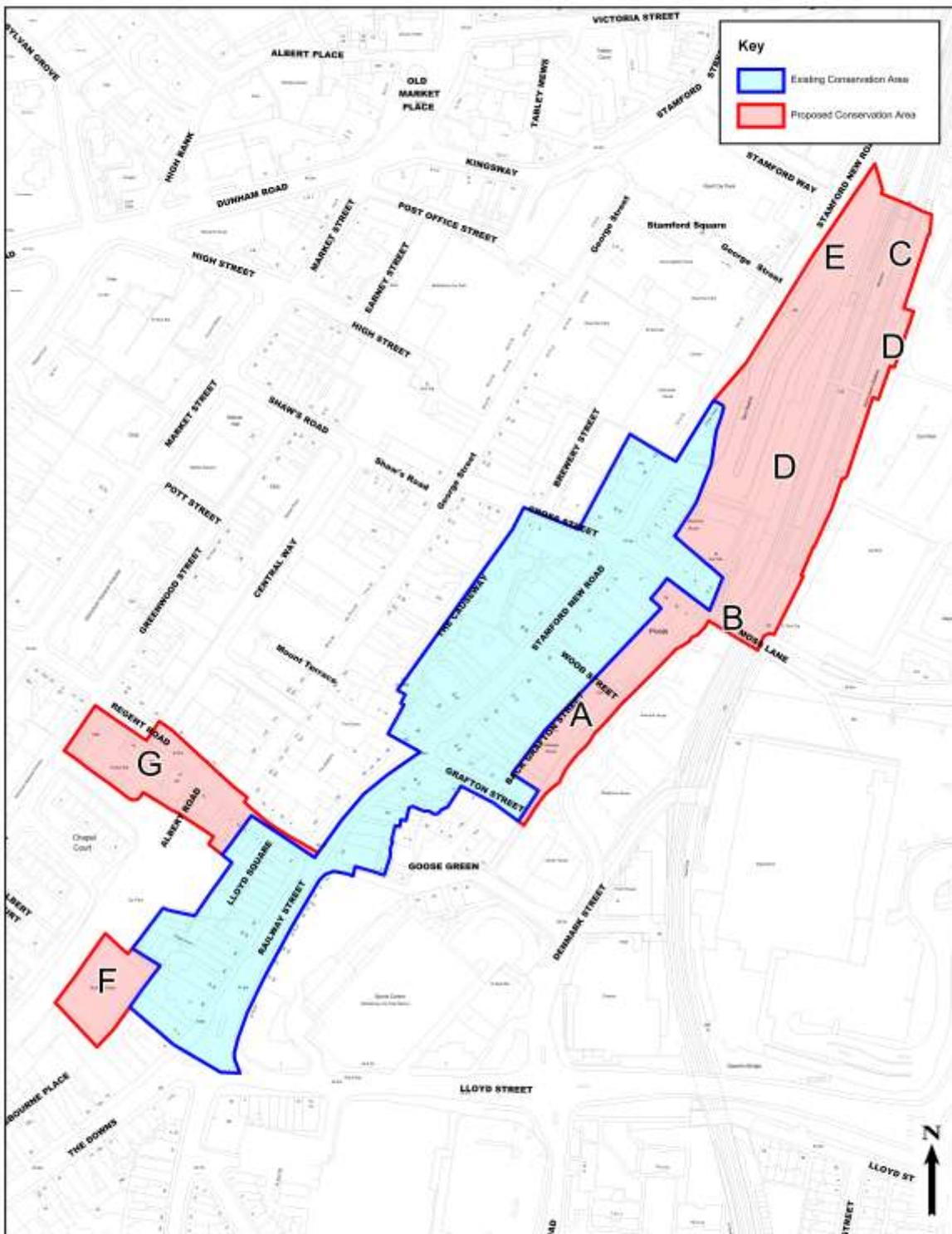


**Old Market Place Conservation Area  
Proposed Changes to Boundaries**

DRAWN BY: David Harrison

DATE: 3 December 2013

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**Stamford New Road Conservation Area  
Proposed Changes to Boundaries**

**DRAWN BY:** David Harrison

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