

Romford Conservation Area Review

Public Consultation Presentation

29th May 2025



Why is the conservation area being reviewed?

- The Council is required to periodically review the condition and boundaries of conservation areas within their area.
- The Council have appointed Purcell as external consultants to assist them with the current review of three of the Borough's conservation areas – Romford, Gidea Park and Rainham.
- This consultation event and presentation are for Romford Conservation Area.
- As part of the review, a new Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) has been prepared for Romford Conservation Area.
- This document will be adopted as planning policy guidance and therefore is subject to public consultation.
- The review has also identified some potential changes to the boundary of the conservation area, these are also subject to public consultation before any changes are adopted.



Who are Purcell?

Purcell are a leading practice of conservation architects and heritage consultants

We specialise in finding bespoke design solutions and managing change in the historic environment

We were founded in 1947 and have regional offices across the UK.

Romford Conservation Area was reviewed by Purcell's Heritage Consultancy team.



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What is a Conservation Area?

A conservation area is defined as an:

“area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”

- (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990)

The designation recognises the quality of a place as a whole which comes from the combination of individual buildings, streets, green spaces, trees and other features.

Conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities and are a statutory designation.



What is a CAAMP?

Councils have a duty to “*formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement*” of conservation areas. The normal format is a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP). A CAAMP usually contains:

- A thorough analysis of the special character of the designated area
- Guidance and recommendations for its preservation and enhancement
- A review of the boundary of the conservation area and sets out any changes
- Identification of the extra planning controls and considerations which apply to buildings in conservation areas



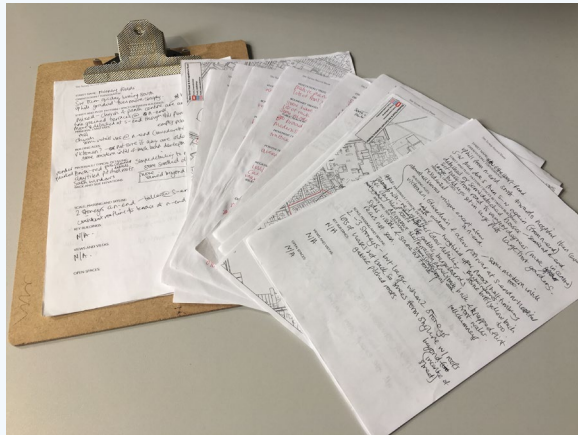
What Have We Done So Far?

Undertaken thorough review of the condition of the conservation area through on-site surveys

Developed an understanding of the evolution of Romford through desk-based and archival research

Prepared a CAAMP for Romford which includes proposed boundary changes and management recommendations

Following the public consultation we will review your responses and update the CAAMP as necessary. This will then be adopted by the Council's Cabinet.



Romford Conservation Area

Romford Conservation Area was designated in 1968. The existing Character Appraisal was produced in 2008. The boundary has never been updated and the guidance relating to the conservation area has not been updated for 17 years and therefore is due for review.

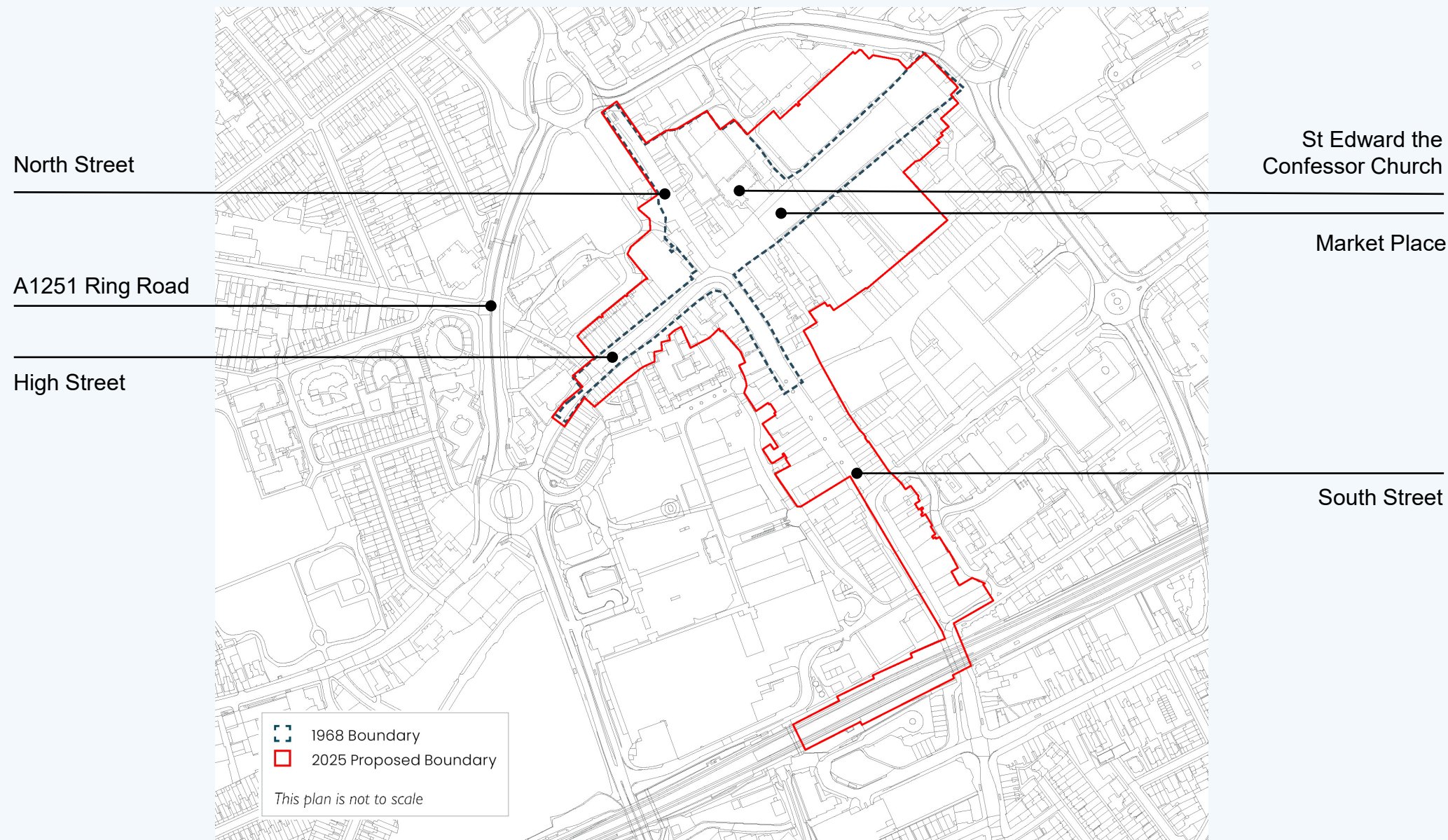
Romford is a historic market town northeast of London (historically in Essex). Its importance is reflected in the conservation area's historic buildings, erected over the centuries to accommodate local trade and industry, as well as in its street plan, which remains centred upon the crossroads of Market Place, High Street, North Street and South Street.

Modern redevelopment from the mid-20th century onward has eroded the character of the area to a degree; this and ongoing development pressures have resulted in the conservation area's placement on Historic England's register for Heritage at Risk. However, its special interest as a historic commercial centre of high local importance remains clearly legible.

The current boundary and the proposed amendments to it are shown on the following slide.



Romford Conservation Area Boundary Review



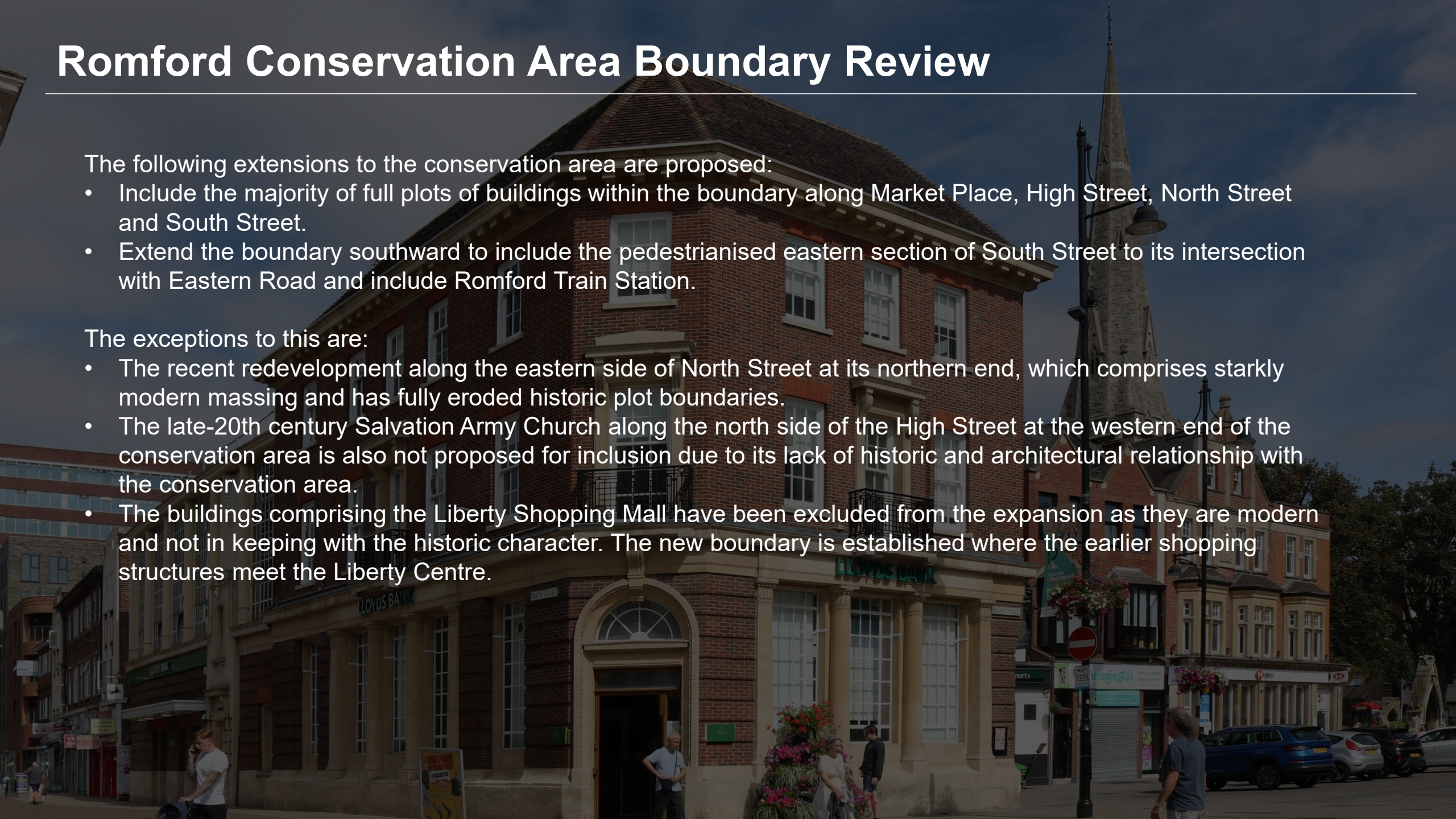
Romford Conservation Area Boundary Review

The following extensions to the conservation area are proposed:

- Include the majority of full plots of buildings within the boundary along Market Place, High Street, North Street and South Street.
- Extend the boundary southward to include the pedestrianised eastern section of South Street to its intersection with Eastern Road and include Romford Train Station.

The exceptions to this are:

- The recent redevelopment along the eastern side of North Street at its northern end, which comprises starkly modern massing and has fully eroded historic plot boundaries.
- The late-20th century Salvation Army Church along the north side of the High Street at the western end of the conservation area is also not proposed for inclusion due to its lack of historic and architectural relationship with the conservation area.
- The buildings comprising the Liberty Shopping Mall have been excluded from the expansion as they are modern and not in keeping with the historic character. The new boundary is established where the earlier shopping structures meet the Liberty Centre.



Why is Romford Special?

- Romford's special interest is drawn from its ancient crossroads and the historic buildings associated with its position as a commercial trading post, which has been in consistent use since at least the medieval period to the present day.
- Special interest is also drawn from the existence of a group of high-quality historic buildings at the western end of Market Place, some of which are listed. These focus on the parish church, a number of historic inns and a series of early 20th century bank buildings. This group contributes substantial historic and architectural character to the townscape, visible in part from each of the crossroads' principal streets.
- Special interest is also drawn from the representation of the evolving commercial shopping provision in Romford, originating from the historic market on Market Place which formed the crux of Romford's social and economic development, extending through the 20th century. Medieval burgage plots which remain legible in part along the southern side of Market Place and on the High Street add to the appreciation of the area's medieval past.
- The Quadrant Arcade remains one of the more prominent signifiers of Romford's commercial development in the Inter-war period, as does accompanying 1930s development along South Street. 1960s arcades similarly represent the continuously evolving commercial offer of Romford's centre.



Historical Development of Romford

Timeline

The following offers a summary of Romford's historic development.

- Settlement originates where the Colchester to London Roman Road forded the River Rom.
- 1247**
A Market Charter was granted, and a town grew up around the common ground beside the Great Essex Road.
- 1410**
Chapel dedicated to St Edward the Confessor built on the Market Place.
- 1465**
Royal Charter formed the liberty of Havering.
- 1670**
c.323 houses formed a linear town around the Market Place and High Street.
- 1709**
A brewery was established behind the Star Inn, the forerunner to the prosperous Ind Coope & Sons Brewery.
- 1839**
The railway arrives in Romford.
- 1849**
The parish church, St Edward the Confessor, is rebuilt.
- 1894**
Romford Urban District Council formed.
- 1937**
The Municipal Borough of Romford formed following rapid suburban expansion and redevelopment of the town centre.

1944

Romford heavily bombed during WWII, including the parish church.

1965

London Borough of Havering formed, incorporating Romford.

1960s-70s

Radical replanning of Romford erodes a large part of the historic town centre, with the ring road built 1970, truncating the market town crossroads.

1972

The Liberty Shopping Centre was completed, replacing historic townscape southwest of the crossroads

1993

Ind Coope & Sons Brewery was closed and demolished, replaced by a shopping centre called The Brewery to the southwest of the crossroads

2006

Tollgate House built at the western end of Market Place

2013

Romford Shopping Hall completed



Chapman & Andre's 1777 map, showing linear development expanding into a four-quartered settlement around a crossroads (British Library)



A view of Market Place in 1898, looking west. The old Bull Inn is visible to the far left, the church spire to the right. (Havering Libraries Local Studies)

Character Assets

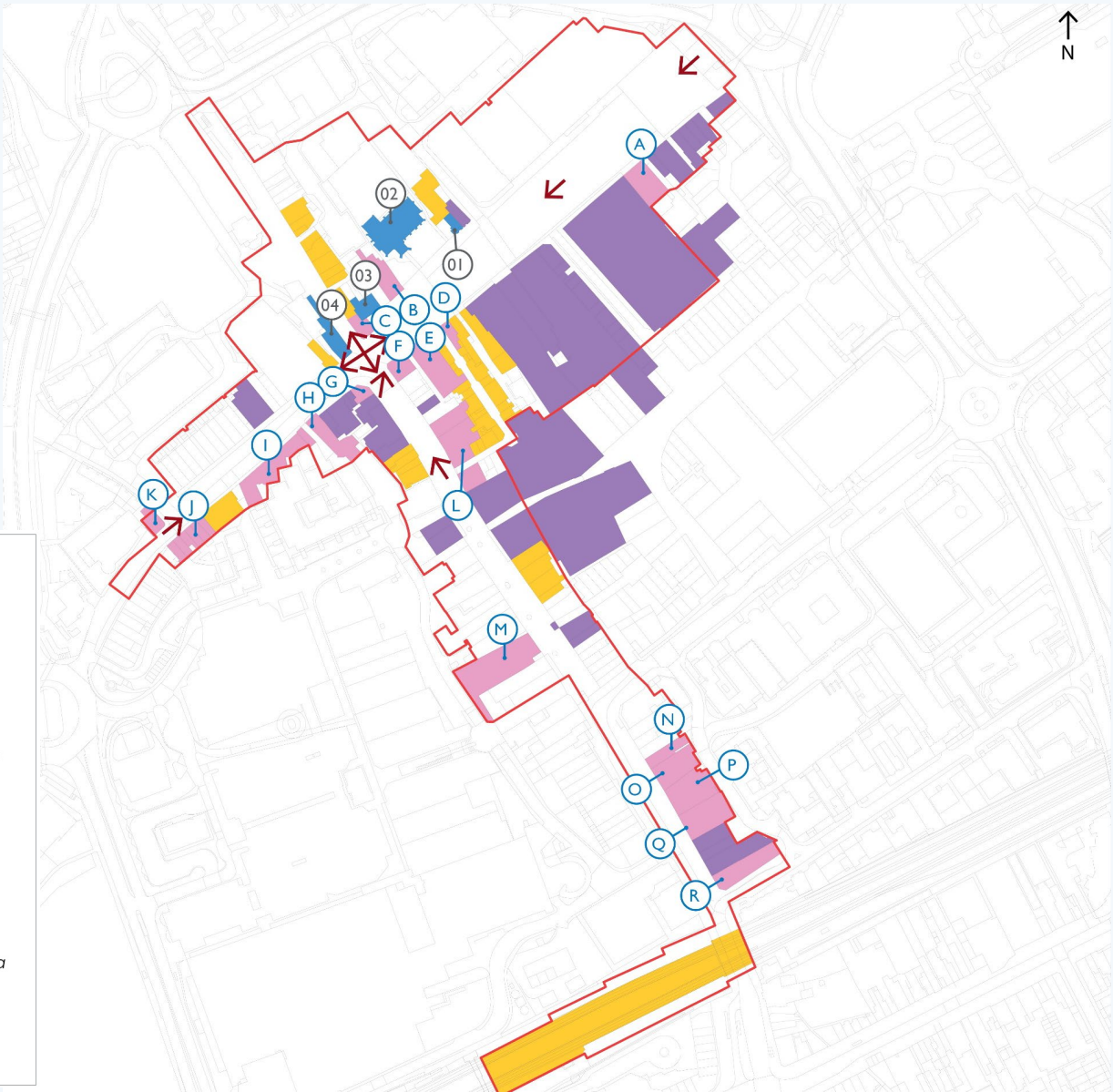
We have assessed the character of Romford using the following elements:

- Location, topography and geology
- Archaeological potential
- Setting and important views
- Key buildings and spaces
- Open space and trees
- Public realm
- Building use
- Boundary treatments
- Scale and mass of buildings
- Building materials
- Architectural types and details

→	Key Views	G	Prudential Building
■	Listed Building	H	The White Hart (The Bitter End)
01	Church House (Grade II)	I	Romford Brewery, High Street, Romford
02	Parish Church of St Edward the Confessor (Grade II*)	J	25-35 High Street
03	The Lamb Public House (Grade II)	K	The Woolpack
04	The Golden Lion Public House (Grade II)	L	Quadrant Arcade
■	Positive Contributor	M	64 South Street (Façade is old post office)
■	Opportunity for Enhancement	N	97 South Street
■	Locally Listed Asset	O	97 - 101 South Street
A	The Bull Inn	P	103 - 111 South Street
B	9 Market Place (HSBC)	Q	113 - 117 South Street
C	Lloyds Bank	R	131 South Street
D	28 Market Place		
E	Quadrant Arcade		
F	The Co-op Bank		

Note: Details of the locally listed buildings in the conservation area are included as Appendix A.

This plan is not to scale



Issues and Opportunities

We identified the following issues and opportunities during our review:

- Detracting Buildings, Elements and Additions
- Shopfronts and Advertising
- Open Spaces and Public Realm
- Maintenance and Repair of Buildings
- Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- Development Opportunity
- Interpretation and Raising Awareness



Managing Change

- Legislation and policy relating to conservation areas
- Control measures brought about by conservation area designation
- Good practice maintenance and repair of buildings
- Advice on proposing change to buildings
- Advice on new development
- How the public realm should be treated
- Specific recommendations for Romford

- 01 The historic environment of Romford, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area, should be maintained to ensure the area remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 02 Strategies for the long-term and sensitive use of Market Place as an open commercial space which enhance the historic character of the conservation area should be carefully considered.
- 03 Proposals for extension, alteration and new development should preserve or enhance the special interest of the conservation area, or where the public benefits would outweigh any harm. New development should integrate contextual design and prioritize the preservation and enhancement of the area's distinctive character.
- 04 The design, construction and materials of any new development, extension, alteration or repair should be of the highest quality and respect their local context.
- 05 Development within the setting of the conservation area should be sympathetic to its special interest in terms of its scale, massing, proportions, materials and detailing. Applicants proposing new development in the setting of the conservation area should assess and describe the likely impact of their proposals on the significance and character of the Conservation Area and its setting.

- 06 Trees which contribute to the character of the conservation area should be retained, or replaced as necessary; opportunities for additional tree planting, linking green corridors and pocket parks and other green landscaping should also be carefully considered, ensuring it is sensitive whilst working to alleviate the current green space deficit in the conservation area.
- 07 Changes to buildings in response to climate change are encouraged but should take into consideration the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 08 Careful removal of inappropriate and unsympathetic additions to buildings and the street scene is encouraged.
- 09 Reinstatement of lost historic features, such as timber or metal windows to upper floors or corbels and stall risers on shopfronts within historic frontages is encouraged, where appropriate.
- 10 Replacement of inappropriate modern alterations to shopfronts with suitably designed traditional or sympathetically designed alternatives is encouraged.
- 11 The condition of the conservation area should be monitored and reviewed periodically.



We want to hear from you



Please let us know your comments and opinions on the new CAAMP, the proposed boundary changes and any other comments you have about the review.

The consultation period is open from 28th April to 9th June 2025 during which time the CAAMP document can be found on the Council's website here:
<https://consultation.havering.gov.uk/planning/conservation-area-appraisals/>

Please fill in the online survey on the above webpage or send us your comments by email to: DevelopmentPlanning@havering.gov.uk

**Thank you for taking the time to come
to this presentation and we are happy
to take questions.**

**After, please complete the
consultation questionnaire.**