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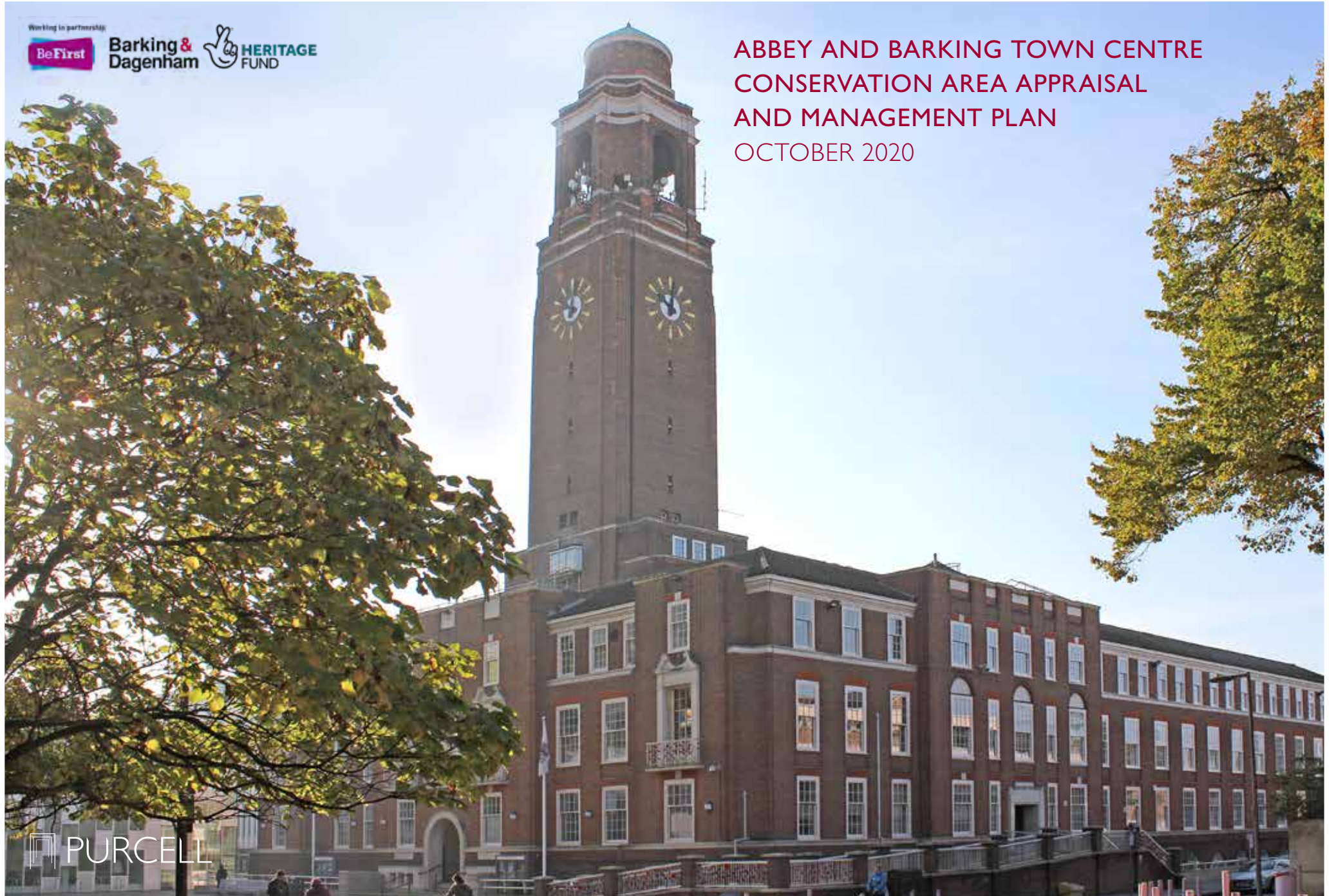
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ABBEY AND BARKING TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN OCTOBER 2020

PURCELL



ABBEY AND BARKING TOWN CENTRE: CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

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HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

For ease of use this document has been produced to be read on-screen as a PDF. It contains a series of features that make it easier to use and navigate between the different sections.

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SECTION I.0 INTRODUCTION

I.1 ABBEY AND BARKING TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

The Abbey and Barking Town Centre Conservation Area was designated 8 October 1975. It is one of four conservation areas under the jurisdiction of Barking and Dagenham Council. The area was original designated as the Barking Abbey Grounds and Town Quay Conservation Area, renamed and extended to include the town centre in May 1992, although not designated until June 1995.

The conservation area consists of the civic and commercial centre of Barking, focused along East Street and Ripple Road and St Margaret's Church and the remains of Barking Abbey set within Abbey Green, a public park. The conservation area also include the town quay to on the River Roding at the eastern end of the conservation area. The conservation area boundary is shown on the map opposite.

NAVIGATION

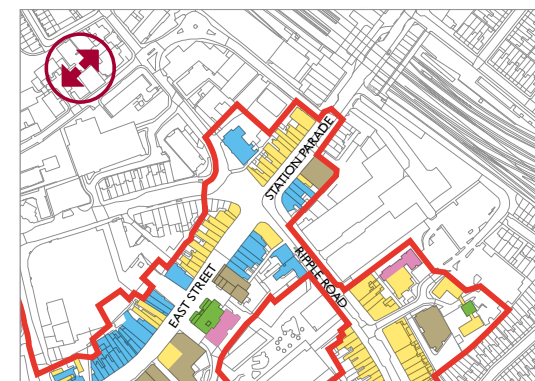
In addition to the contents pages, you can navigate between sections using the by clicking on the headings in the top bar. Once you've clicked on a section, it will turn bold so you know which section you are in.

You can also use the buttons in the bottom right hand corner to jump to the contents, appendices, or back to the page you were previously on.



PLANS

When you see this icon, click to see a full-sized version of the plan (located in [Appendix E](#)). To return to the page you were previously on from the full-sized plan, click the back button in the top right hand corner of the page.



USER GUIDE

This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is accompanied by a User Guide. This is a handy booklet for owners and occupiers of the conservation area providing useful guidance on building maintenance, what designation means and simple enhancements that can be made. The User Guide can be found here: [link tbc](#)

PART A: CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

This part of the document provides analysis of the character of the Abbey and Barking Town Centre Conservation Area and an assessment of its special interest. It also defines what a conservation area is, what designation means along with identifying relevant planning policy and guidance. It contains the following sections:

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

3.0 BRIEF HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF BARKING

4.0 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

5.0 AUDIT OF BUILDINGS

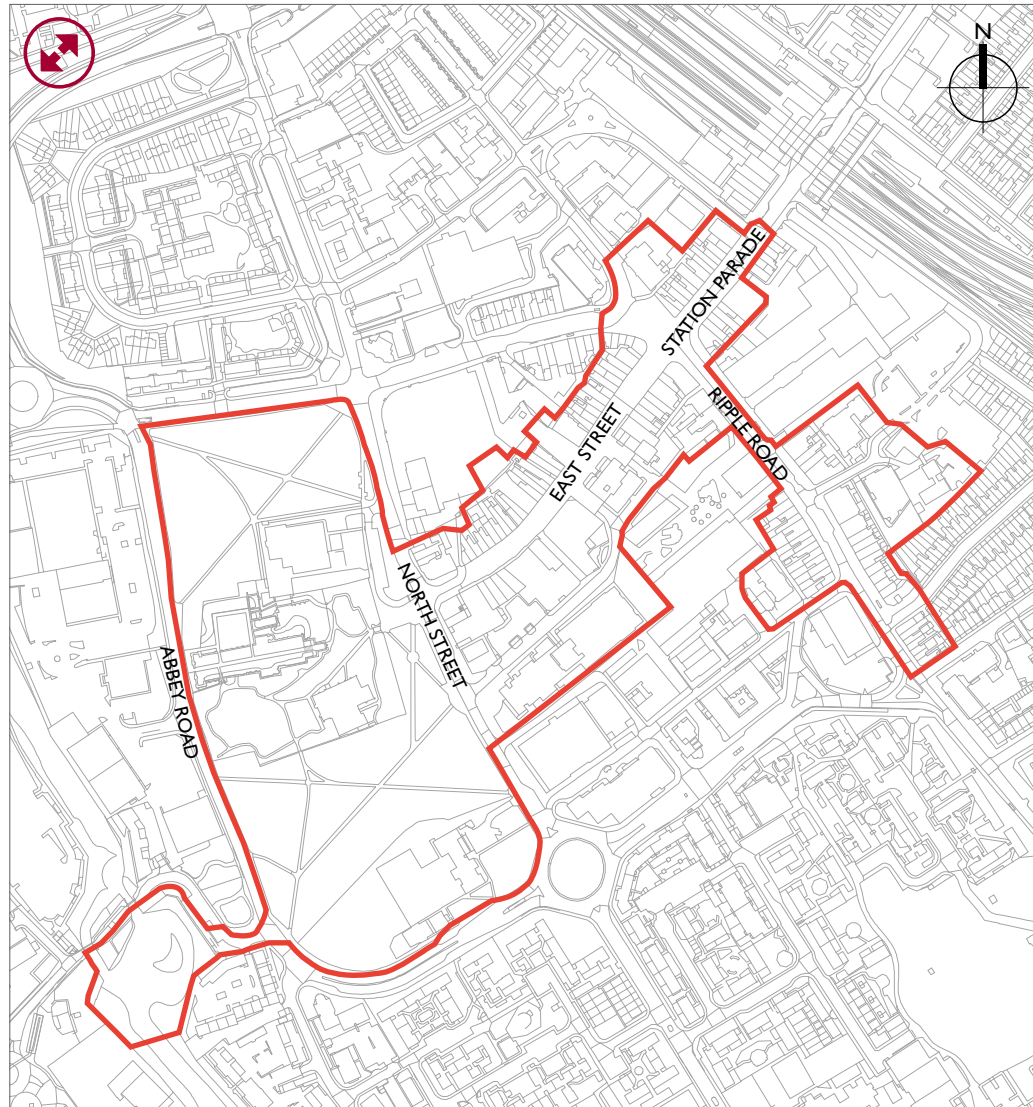


I.0 INTRODUCTION

I.1 ABBEY AND BARKING TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

The Abbey and Barking Town Centre Conservation Area was designated on 8 October 1975. It is one of four conservation areas under the jurisdiction of Barking and Dagenham Council. The area was originally designated as the Barking Abbey Grounds and Town Quay Conservation Area, the designation was renamed and extended to include the town centre in June 1995. A Conservation Area Appraisal for the area was first produced in April 2009, which was itself updated and replaced by this document in October 2020.

The conservation area consists of the civic and commercial centre of Barking, focused along East Street and Ripple Road and St Margaret's Church and the remains of Barking Abbey set within Abbey Green, a public park. The conservation area also include the town quay on the River Roding at the eastern end of the conservation area. The conservation area boundary is shown on **Plan 1**.



Plan 1: Current Abbey and Barking Town Centre Conservation Area boundary.

1.2 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 is it desirable to preserve or enhance.*”⁰¹

Designation of a conservation area recognises the unique quality of that area as a whole. This quality comes not only from individual buildings and monuments but also other features, including (but not limited to) topography, materials, thoroughfares, street furniture, open spaces and landscaping. These all contribute to the character and appearance of an area, resulting in a distinctive local identity and sense of place.

The extent to which a building, or group of buildings/ structures, positively shape the character of a conservation area is derived from their elevations, principally those which are street-facing but also side and rear elevations, the integrity of their historic fabric, overall scale and massing, detailing and materials. Open spaces can be public or private, green or hard-landscaped and still contribute to the special interest of an area. Furthermore, the spaces between buildings, alleys, streets and paths all contribute to appearance and character.

1.3 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Understanding the character and significance of conservation areas is essential for managing change within them. It is therefore a requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that all local planning authorities “*formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement*” of conservation areas within their jurisdiction, and that these proposals are periodically reviewed.⁰² The proposals are normally presented in the form of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP), which defines and records the special interest of a conservation area, as well as setting out a plan of action for its on-going protection and enhancement.

Conservation areas may be affected by direct physical change, by changes in their setting or in the uses of buildings or areas within them. A clear definition of those elements which contribute to the special architectural or historic interest of a place will enable the development of a robust policy framework for the future management of that area, against which applications can be considered.

Over time, conservation areas evolve and the characteristics which underpin their special interest may decrease in their integrity because of gradual alteration. It is therefore important to review and take stock of the character of a conservation area at intervals to ensure designation is still suitable and that the proper management of change is in place.

Often, conservation area boundaries have historically been drawn too tightly or include peripheral areas which do not contribute to an understanding of its character. Consequently, it is important to review the boundary and include/exclude buildings and spaces which do/do not meet conservation area designation criteria. The review of the Abbey and Barking Town Centre Conservation Area Conservation Area boundary can be found in Part C (Boundary Review) of this CAAMP.

Although this document is intended to be comprehensive, the scale and complexity of the conservation area means that specific mention cannot be made of every building or feature. The omission of any building, structure, feature or space does not imply that the element is not significant or does not positively contribute to the character and special interest of the conservation area. The protocols and guidance provided in Part B (Management Plan) are applicable in every instance.

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

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

The assessments which provide the baseline information for this CAAMP have been carried out utilising publicly available resources and thorough on-site analysis from the publicly accessible parts of the conservation area.

Site surveys for the preparation of this appraisal were undertaken in October and November 2019 with all photography included being of this date. The surveys were undertaken following a similar approach to that set out within the Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit.

1.4 PLANNING POLICY, GUIDANCE AND ADVICE

Conservation areas are governed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) sets out the overarching requirement for local planning authorities to identify and protect areas of special interest (paragraph 185). The Barking and Dagenham Local Development Framework sets out the Council's policies guiding development within the Borough, including policies and guidance for protecting and enhancing the historic environment including conservation areas.

In addition to these legislative requirements, this CAAMP has been prepared to align with the following best practice guidance published by Historic England, the public body who manage the care and protection of the historic environment:

- Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition) (February 2019)
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (April 2008)
- Valuing Places: Good Practice in Conservation Areas (January 2011)
- The Setting of Heritage Assets Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) (December 2017)
- Heritage at Risk: Conservation Areas (June 2009)

The relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance should be utilised when planning changes within the Abbey and Barking Town Centre Conservation Area to ensure that proposals align with policy and will preserve and enhance the special interest of the area.

Furthermore, when changes are being considered to buildings in the conservation area, or where new development is proposed, it is advised that the Council's Pre-Application Advice service is used to gain early guidance on proposals and highlight any constraints or opportunities.

1.5 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

It is a statutory requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for conservation area guidance produced by or on behalf of Local Authorities to be subject to public consultation, including a public meeting, and for the local authority to have regard to any views expressed by consultees.⁰³

A draft of the Barking Conservation Area Appraisal underwent public consultation from 12th August to 23rd September 2020. The feedback was reviewed and incorporated within the adopted report.

During the early preparations for the production of this Appraisal in consultation was undertaken with local residents in the form of a questionnaire relating to the awareness of the conservation area designation and the current condition of the area. The results of this questionnaire have shaped the content and format of this Appraisal.

⁰³ Section 71 (1), Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

2.0 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Barking has an illustrious history stretching back nearly 1500 years. Its special interest is derived from the evolution of the town from small rural settlement dominated by Barking Abbey to the bustling retail and civic hub the town is today.

Barking Abbey was one of the most important religious foundations in England and played a vital role in shaping the layout and appearance of Barking. The historic East and North Streets converge on the Abbey's gatehouse, the Curfew Tower (the only building of the Abbey to survive), and the Town Quay to the west provided the nuns and later the town with a trade connection to the River Thames, via the River Roding. The wealth and protection the Abbey brought to the town, allowed it to grow and thrive and the precincts remains are both an important reminder and pleasant public green space for the community. The Abbey Green open spaces to the north and south of the precincts are equally important public amenities. Religious uses remain an important part of the town, most importantly with 13th century St Margaret's Church within the Abbey Precincts but also churches of other denominations in the town centre.

Retail and trade have long been a part of Barking's character with the regular market in East Street continuing a tradition of centuries past. The town's once important fishing industry is a lesser known feature of its past but evidence survives of this connection through the presence of the Town Quay and River Roding, Fawley House which was home to an important fishing family, and in

street names such as Blue Short Place. The importance of Barking as a retail and civic centre has evolved comparatively recently resulting from the suburban growth of the surrounding area following the arrival of the railway. As such the overarching character of the town centre is Victorian and Edwardian with some buildings of the inter-war and post-war period contributing to the urban town centre. Although there has been some loss of historic features many buildings retain their historic character, including shop fronts at ground floor and decorative features to the upper levels. Buildings such as the former Magistrates' Court and the Town Hall are particularly prominent architecturally demonstrating the importance of Barking as a local centre.

In contrast to the dense development of the town centre, Abbey Green is open and green in character and Town Quay is similarly open, although orientated around a body of water. There are therefore three distinct character areas which all contribute to the special interest of the conservation area in different but equally important ways.

Overall, the special interest of the Abbey and Barking Town Centre Conservation Area is derived from the town's historic development in relation to Barking Abbey and subsequent evolution into a thriving market and fishing town. The retail nature of Barking remains today and the busy town centre is ideally contrasted by the open public spaces of Abbey Green and Town Quay.



Character Area 1: East Street is home to Barking's market and is the principal retail street in the town centre



Character Area 2: The establishment of Barking Abbey was pivotal to the history of Barking. The remains of the Abbey Church and cloister are demarcated by low stone walls.



Character Area 3: The Town Quay on the River Roding was originally significant for being the location for receiving goods for the Abbey and was then the heart of Barking's fishing industry. Today it is a pleasant public space.

3.0 BRIEF HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF BARKING

This section provides a brief summary of the historic development of Barking. It identifies the key events, features and associations which make the conservation area what it is today. A more detailed and illustrated description of the historic development of the town is included in [Appendix D](#).

Barking has a history stretching back to the Saxon period with evidence of at least temporary settlement from pre-historic times. From the early beginnings of the settlement, Barking Abbey dominated the town. Today visual markers of the Abbey remain, in the form of the 15th century Curfew Tower, and the low walls, dating to the early 20th century, delineating the historic plan of the most important Abbey buildings including the Church and cloister.

The Abbey was established in c.666 by the Bishop of London and became the most important nunnery in England, attracting recruits from prestigious families, and with five of its abbesses becoming canonised. The significance of the Abbey is recognised by its designation both as a Scheduled Monument and also a Tier I Archaeological Priority Area, the latter demonstrating that considerable further remains

are likely to survive below ground. Shortly after the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16th century, the Abbey was pulled down, making the surviving built and archaeological remains particularly valuable. The development of Barking is intimately connected with the Abbey and the surviving remains, which contribute greatly to the special interest of the conservation area.

The town of Barking evolved around the Abbey precinct, with important buildings and the centre of the medieval town concentrating around what is now the middle of the conservation area, along Broadway / North Street and the western half of East Street (See Andre and Chapman's map of 1777 in Appendix D). St Margaret's Church was built within the Abbey precinct between the 13th and 15th centuries and a market hall was built in the mid-16th century adjacent to the south-east of the Abbey precinct, approximately where the open space in front of the Curfew Tower is now. The town grew as a bustling market town with the earliest market dating to the 12th century; a market still remains today on East Street many days of the week.

On the west side of the Abbey precinct is the River Roding. Proximity to the river is likely to have been the reason why the Abbey was located here, as it would

have allowed the occupants of the Abbey to easily receive and distribute food and other goods.

From the 14th century Barking became a productive fishing town, an industry which continued well into the 19th century until the arrival of the railway. The fishing industry was centred on the Town Quay on the River Roding and Barking supplied both the local and the London markets with fish from the North Sea. The successful fishing industry triggered a number of ancillary industries around Town Quay, to the south-west of the Abbey site. Barking's mercantile population grew and important associations include the Hewett family, for example, who drove the fishing industry at Barking, owned many smacks (a type of fishing boat) and introduced the use of artificial ice for preserving fish. Their house (Fawley House) remains the oldest secular building in Barking and a sign with a smack and a fish represents their role in the history and development of Barking.

The arrival of the railways in the mid-19th century brought a decline in the town's fishing industry; Town Quay and this part of the conservation area, once bustling, became less frequented and the town centre shifted to the north-east towards the railway station

(see OS maps of 1863 and 1893 in Appendix D). This period saw the development of terraced houses built at the north-east end of the conservation area as Barking became a commuter town to London. The shopping character of Barking as we know it today developed from this point, invaluable to Barking's character; this is represented by the historic shopfront fragments that remain in East Street, North Street, Station Parade and Ripple Road. Important civic buildings such as Barking Magistrates' Court, originally Public Offices and a Free Library, and the old police station, were also built in this period, creating areas of civic focus, which contribute to the conservation area's special interest.

Many of the buildings in Barking date to the 20th century, as Barking continued to expand as part of the suburban growth of London. Several 20th century buildings contribute to Barking's special interest; Barking Town Hall (1936-1958), designed by Herbert Jackson and Reginald Edmonds, is a notable landmark building in Barking owing to its distinctive clocktower. The building contributes greatly to the special interest of the town,

both through its use and landmark quality, and this is recognised through its local listing. Barking Station too was constructed in the mid-20th century by H. H. Powell; although it lies just outside the conservation area, this Grade II listed building is another significant 20th century building.

The town centre also features a number of recent buildings, largely tower blocks with colourful cladding, which lie immediately adjacent to the conservation area. Whilst sometimes inappropriate in terms of height, materiality and detailing, the new development reflects the continued importance of Barking as a town centre.



Historic view along East Street with the Magistrates' Court in the distance to the right. (Barking & Dagenham Archives and Local Studies, Valence House: DS245b)

4.0 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

This section provides analysis and assessment of the character and appearance of the conservation area and the way in which this contributes to its special interest. Sections 4.1 to 4.8 look at the conservation area as a whole, covering different elements of character including street and plot patterns, public realm, important views and setting. Then follows sections 4.9 to 4.12 which identify and assesses the different character areas within the conservation area.

4.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

Barking is the main settlement in the south-west part of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. Barking is approximately seven miles east of the City of London and two miles north of the River Thames. Forming the western boundary of the conservation area is the River Roding. Close to the east of the conservation area is Barking Station served by mainline and London Underground and Overground trains. See **Plan 2** (overleaf) which shows the location of the conservation area within its wider surroundings.

The centre of the town is mainly in retail use with the surrounding areas as predominantly residential comprising Victorian and Edwardian terraces and post-war housing estates. The conservation area designation focuses on the more central, historic parts of the town including the site of Barking Abbey, the Town Quay, the medieval church of St Margaret and the historic shopping streets of North Street, Broadway, East Street, Station Parade and Ripple Road.

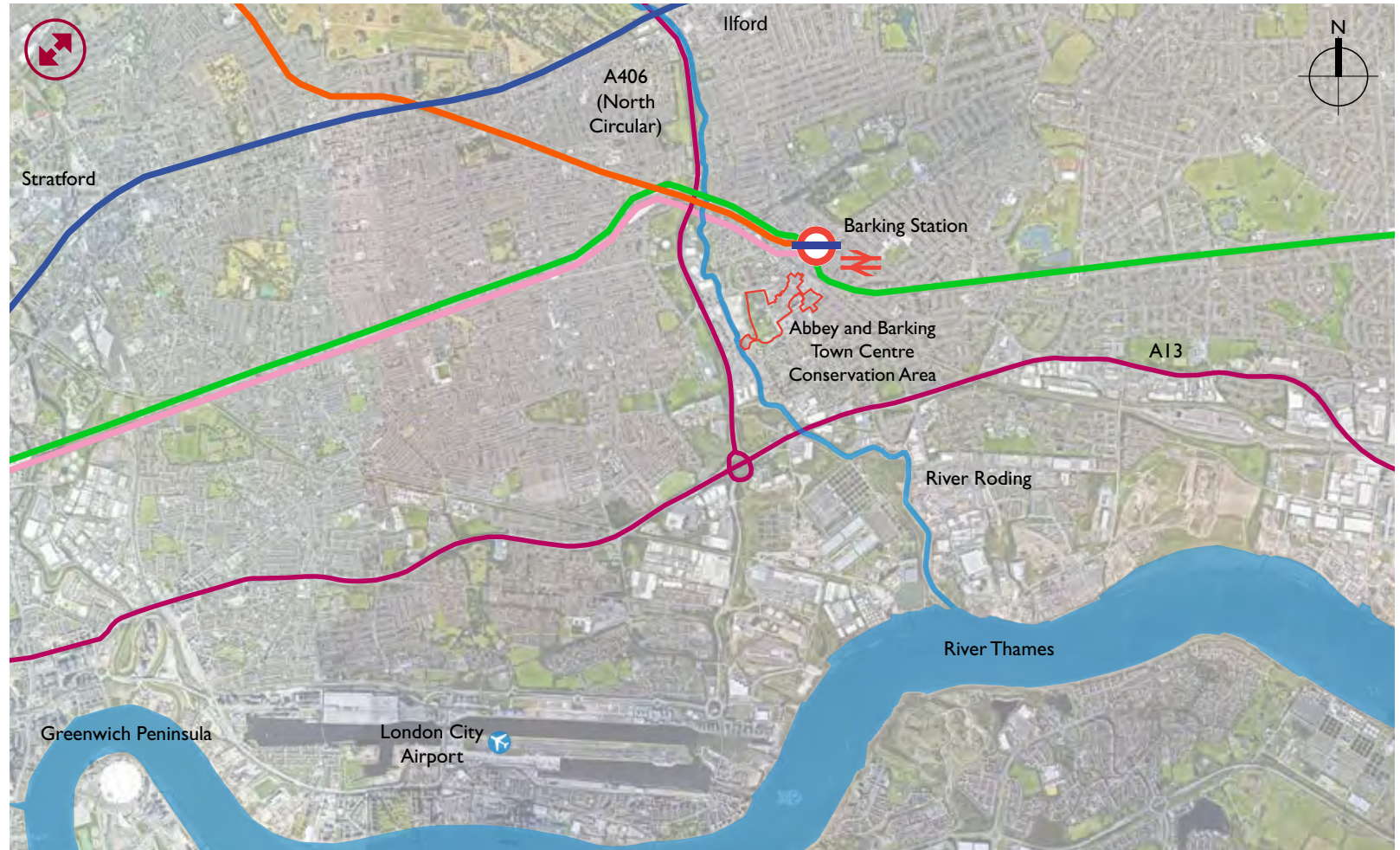
Barking's physical character derives from its relationship with the River Roding, a navigable tributary of the River Thames, which served to bring the settlement into existence. The Abbey was located close to the River and the Town Quay and relied on it for receiving and distributing goods. The town grew up immediately adjacent to the Abbey, focussed on the area in front of the Curfew Tower, and was much more compact than today. The town is now more dispersed with the centre now considered to be focussed towards East Street and the Station.

The conservation area is low-lying at around 11 metres above sea level at its centre; the area rises in gradient slightly to the north-east and lowers to the south-west, towards the river. In terms of geology, most of the Borough is underlain by various river terraces of the Thames and Roding, including the Flood Plain Gravel, Taplow Gravel and Boyn Hill Gravel. Younger (Holocene) Alluvium directly underlies the Borough on lower ground, next to major rivers, in particular the River Roding.

LOCATION OF ABBEY AND BARKING TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

- Conservation Area Boundary
- District Line
- Hammersmith and City Line
- London Overground Line
- TFL Rail (Elizabeth Line)
- Major Roads

This plan is not to scale



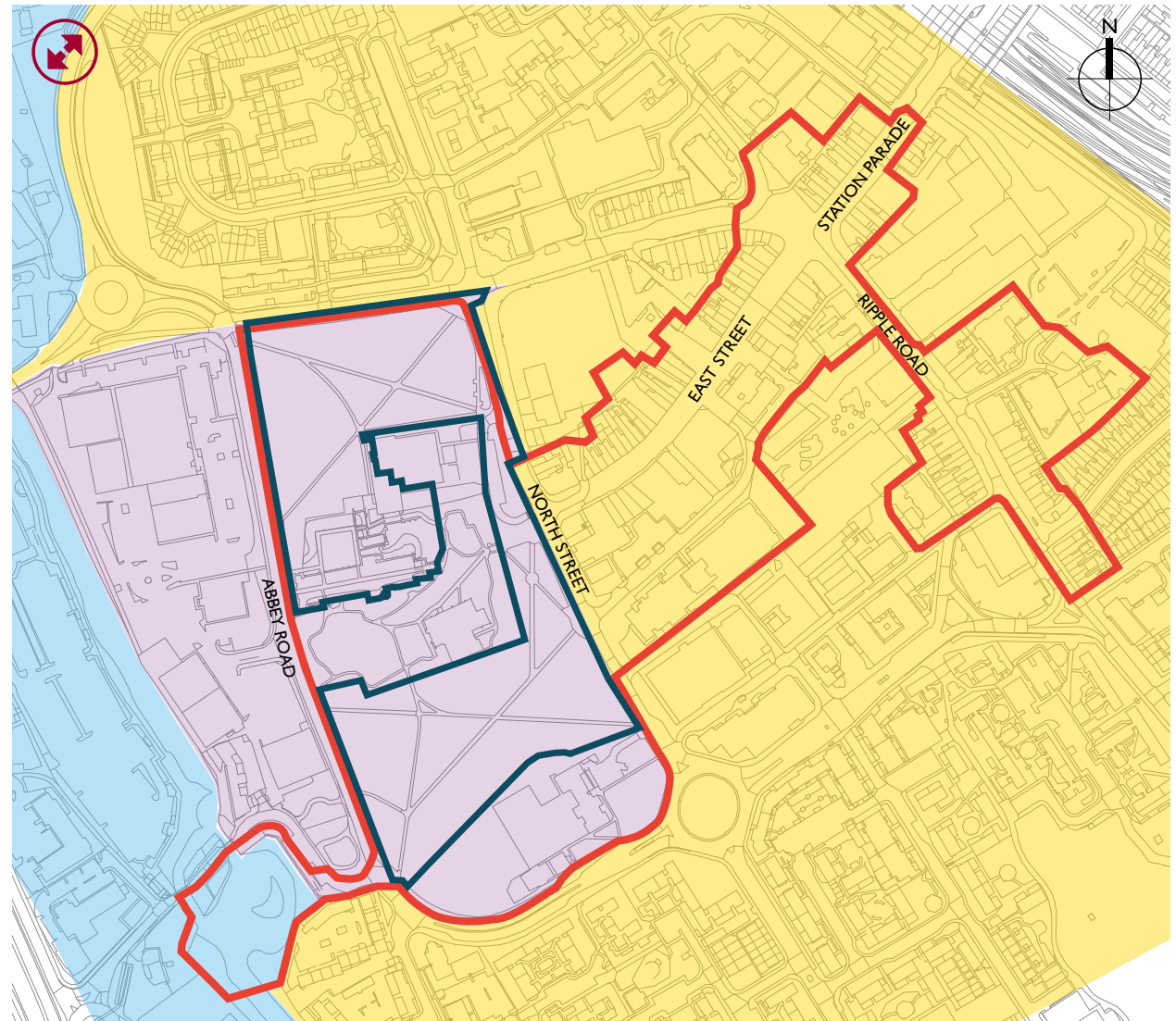
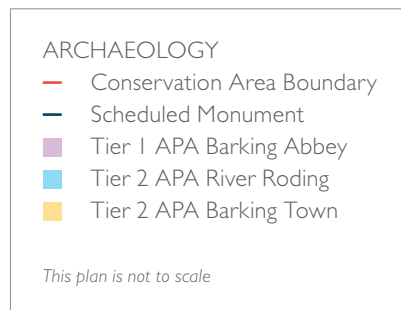
Plan 2: Location of Barking Abbey and Town Centre Conservation Area.

4.2 ARCHAEOLOGY

The conservation area includes the highly significant remains of Barking Abbey, which are designated as a Scheduled Monument, details of which are within the National Heritage List for England entry for the site found here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1003581>. The Abbey was founded by in 666 AD becoming one of the greatest nunneries in England. Many excavations and investigations have been undertaken through the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries leading to a good understanding of the layout and the wider development of the town. The Scheduled Monument is currently identified as 'at risk' by the Heritage Risk Register for London (2019).

In addition to this designation, the conservation area is entirely within three Archaeological Priority Areas (APA), designated by the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS). The centre of the conservation area, encompassing the former Abbey precinct and surrounding green open space, is a Tier 1 APA (Barking Abbey), the highest level of this type of designation. To the west is the River Roding Tier 2 APA and to the east the Barking Town Tier 2 APA. These areas are designated for their potential to contain remains of past occupation which stretches back to the Saxon period.

These designations, shown on **Plan 3**, reflect the long history of activity and development of Barking and the likely potential for further understanding of the evolution and significance of the Abbey and town core.



Plan 3: Barking Abbey Scheduled Monument and the Archaeological Priority Areas within the conservation area and its surroundings.

4.3 STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

As identified at the beginning of this section, the conservation area is divided into three distinct character areas. The distinction between these areas is perhaps most apparent when considering the street and current development patterns of the conservation area.

The eastern half of the conservation area, which constitutes the town centre sub-area, is centred on two principal junctions, the junctions of North Street, Broadway and East Street, and the junctions of Ripple Road, East Street and Station Parade. This demonstrates the importance of East Street, the principal route in the conservation area, which extends on a north-east / south-west orientation from Abbey Green and continues from the junction with Ripple Road as Station Parade. The plots along East Street were historically narrow fronted, deep terraced plots and this character is retained along the northern side of the street. However, on the south side, post-war redevelopment has led to the amalgamation of plots with most now having much broader frontages to the street. There are secondary open spaces formed around the junction of East Street with Short Blue Place, opposite the Magistrates' Court, which is the only building in East Street that is set back, and in front of the Technical Skills Academy. See **Plan 4** overleaf which identifies the location of these important junctions and spaces.

Station Parade and Ripple Road, which lies perpendicular to East Street / Station Parade, have a similar character of narrow fronted, terraced plots. On Ripple Road the large plot forming the Vicarage Field Shopping Centre disrupts

this historic pattern and as such is excluded from the conservation area.

Parallel with East Street is Clockhouse Avenue and there are a series alleys connecting the two. This route is characterised by larger plots, namely the locally listed Town Hall, and mirrored in the newer developments outside the conservation area boundary. An important open space has been established by the new square in front of the Town Hall.

The route of North Street and Broadway lies parallel with Ripple Road but located at the western end of East Street. It forms a boundary between the town centre, which has a densely developed and generally fine-grained character, and the large open spaces of Abbey Green.

The western half of the conservation area is dominated by Abbey Green, a large roughly rectangular park bounded by roads: St Paul's Road to the south, Broadway and North Street to the east, London Road to the north and Abbey Road to the west. The open space contains three large built plots; the schools of St Margaret's and St Joseph's to the north and south respectively and the Church of St Margaret's in the centre with the Curfew Tower at its entrance.

At the south-west corner of the conservation area is the Town Quay, also known as Mill Pond, an open area of water on the River Roding with some linear plots around its edges.

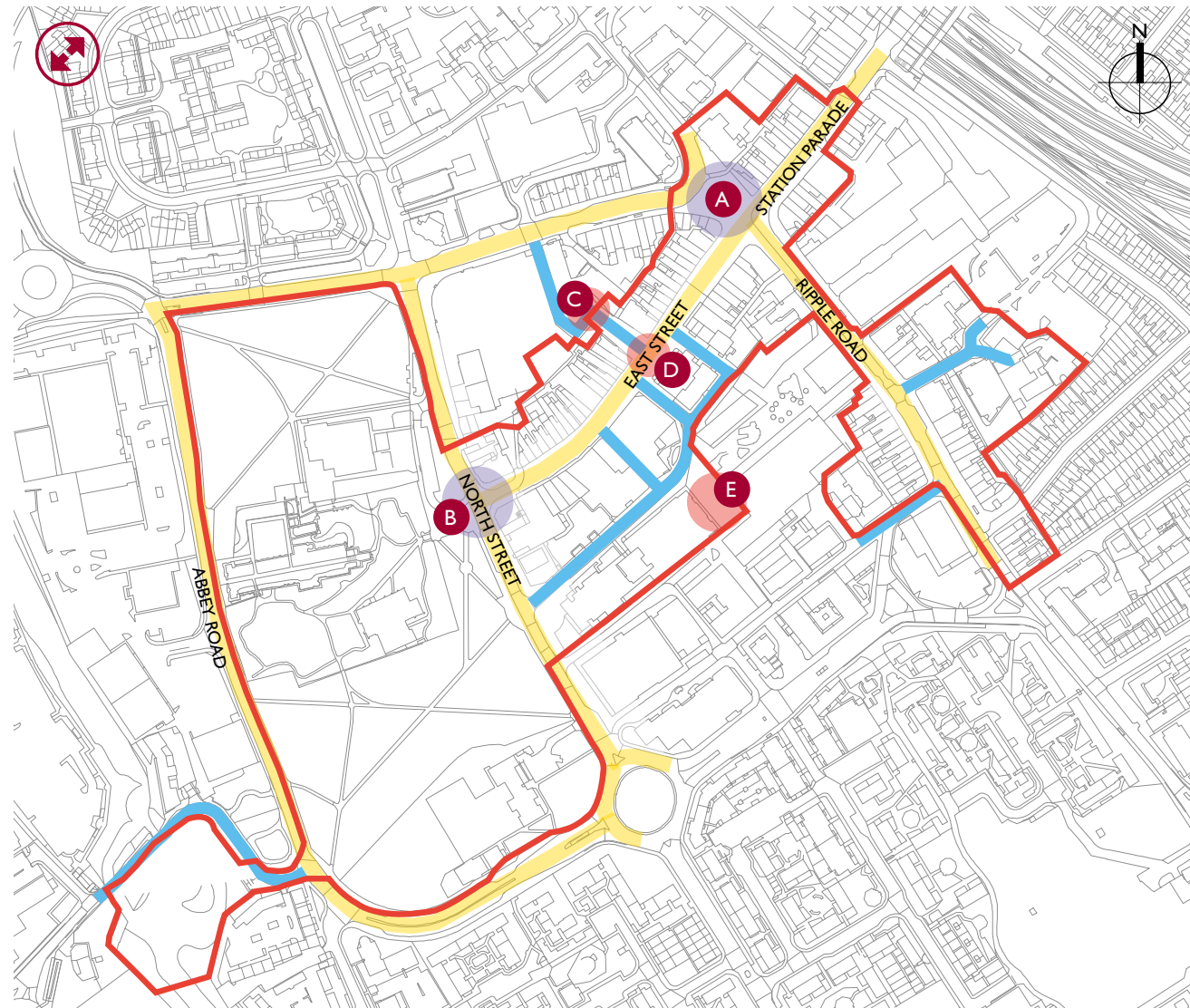


One of the two principal junctions within the conservation area is at the junction of Ripple Road and East Street; it forms an important public space.

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Primary Junctions
- Secondary Junctions
- Principal Streets and Routes
- Secondary Streets and Routes

- A** Station Parade, Ripple Road and East Street
- B** East Street and North Street
- C** Short Blue Place at the entrance Technical Skills Academy
- D** East Street and Short Blue Place (in front of Magistrates' Court)
- E** Public Square in front of Town Hall

This plan is not to scale



Plan 4: Hierarchy of streets and important junctions within the conservation area.



The fine-grain, narrow fronted plots which characterise Station Parade.



Narrow fronted plots along East Street.



The Town Quay is an open area of water with some surrounding linear plots.

4.4 BUILDING SCALE AND MASS

Building scale and massing varies across the conservation area and large areas are devoid of buildings entirely. As identified in the previous section, the plot pattern and footprint of buildings varies from fine-grained, which is the historic character, to larger buildings which have amalgamated historic plots. The height of buildings ranges from one to five storeys, with most buildings being two or three storeys in height, see **Plan 5** overleaf. Some buildings have a level of accommodation in the roof or have a much taller component such as the tower of St Margaret's Church and the prominent clocktower of the Town Hall. These form landmarks within the conservation area.

In East Street, Station Parade and Ripple Road, which are the most densely developed parts of the conservation area, buildings are generally two to three storey terraces with some larger footprint and taller buildings on the south side of East Street. Away from the town centre buildings are sparser and generally have larger footprints but are lower in height at one to two storeys, for example the two primary schools on Abbey Green.



Three storeys terraced buildings on the north side of East Street.



Two storey terraced buildings in Ripple Road.



Three storeys terraced buildings on the south side of East Street with attics in the pitch roofs and a five storey office building beyond.



The clocktower of the three storey Town Hall is visible from across the conservation area.

BUILDING HEIGHTS

— Conservation Area Boundary

■ 1 Storey

■ 2 Storeys

■ 3 Storeys

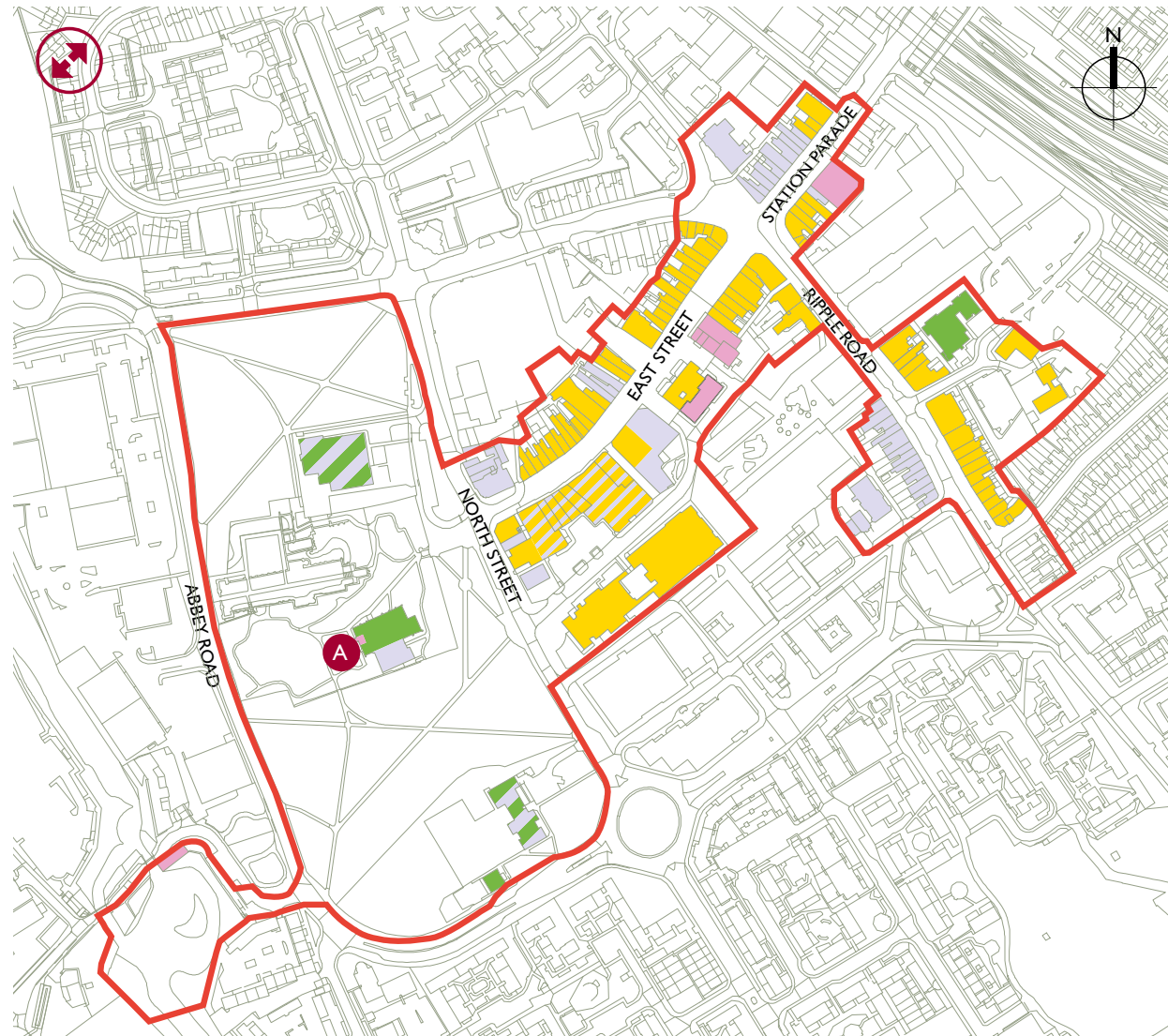
■ 4-5 Storeys

■ 6+ Storeys

A The tower of St Margaret's Church is the equivalent of a 4-5 Storey building

Hatched colours have been used where buildings possess a large area of additional storey but set back so not very visible from the street

This plan is not to scale



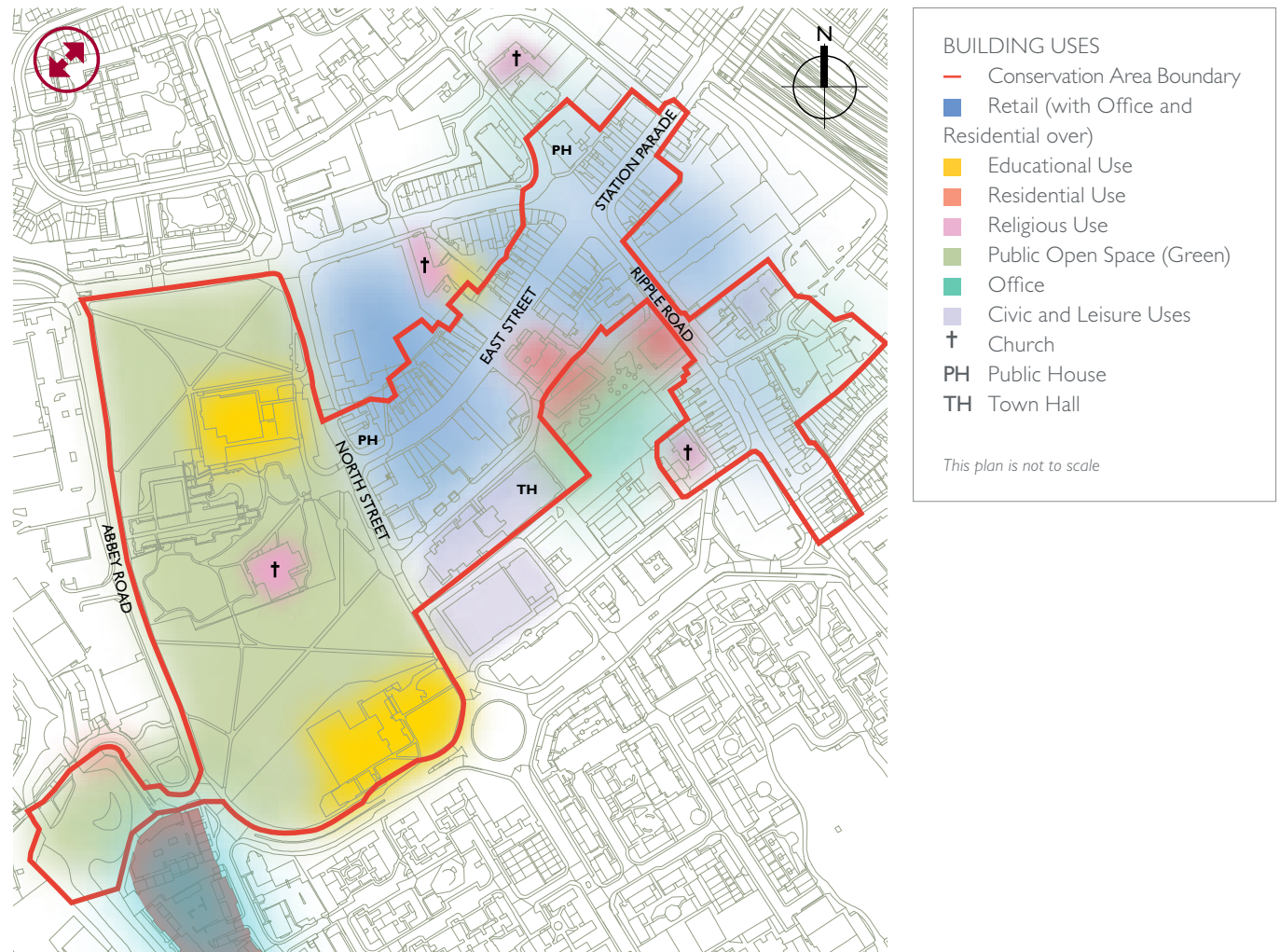
Plan 5: Approximate heights of buildings in the conservation area.

4.5 BUILDING USES

The conservation area is predominantly in use as either retail or public open space along with a number of other more secondary uses. The town centre part of the conservation area is almost exclusively in retail use with the upper levels of buildings in either residential or office uses. There are also some solely residential and office buildings in the conservation area such as the former Magistrates' Court which is now residential apartments. This part of the conservation area is also home to the Barking and Dagenham College Technical Skills Academy, one of several education institutions in the conservation area.

The western half of the conservation area is mainly public open space, in the form of Abbey Green. There is further public open space around the Town Quay. Within Abbey Green are two schools and the Church of St Margaret's contributing educational and religious uses to the conservation area. There is one other church within the area – Elim Church on Axe Street – and Barking Baptist Church and Barking Methodist Church are just outside the conservation area. Religious uses are of particular significance as the origins of Barking lie in the establishment of Barking Abbey in the 7th century. The other important use within the conservation area is the civic use associated with the town hall.

Plan 6, adjacent, shows the distribution of uses across the conservation area.



Plan 6: Plan showing the different uses present within the conservation area.

4.6 OPEN SPACE AND PUBLIC REALM

Although an urban conservation area, Abbey and Barking Town Centre Conservation Area has extensive open space. The most important open space is the Abbey Green public park which forms most of the western half of the conservation area. The park is approximately rectangular and bounded by roads on all sides. It is divided into two halves by St Margaret's Church and the remains of Barking Abbey, after which the park is named. The park is lawned and bisected with linear footpaths and scattered with clusters of mature trees. It is an important amenity for residents and visitors, providing relief from the densely built up streets of the town centre. The remains of the Abbey and the churchyard are also open to the public but are more secluded than Abbey Green. The sunken nature of the Abbey remains and the mature trees in the churchyard, some of which are the largest in the Borough, serve to provide both with a strong sense of enclosure. As well as being of amenity value, these areas in particular contribute to the historic value and special interest of the conservation area.

There is also public space around the Town Quay, at the south-western corner of the conservation area, overlooking the expanse of water so important in Barking's history. Part of this area, that adjacent to Highbridge Road, has been recently relandscaped to a high quality whilst the area to the east of the basin is more municipal in character.

Adjacent to the east of the Curfew Tower, opposite East Street, is an area of hard-landscaped public realm with car parking to the north. Although finished with durable flagstone and granite setts, the area is becoming dilapidated and enhancements could be made to improve the setting of the highly significant tower and this important gateway between Abbey Green and town centre.

In the town centre, public open spaces are formed around the important and secondary road junctions. These hard-landscaped spaces also offer a contrast and relief from the density of buildings. Perhaps the most important is the space formed by the set back former Magistrates' Court and Short Blue Place at the heart of East Street which is a popular gathering place. Also important are the square in front of the town hall and the open space at the junction of East Street, Station Parade, Ripple Road and Linton Road.

Aside from these open spaces the public realm in the conservation area comprises the pavements and some streets with pedestrian priority, such as East Street where the roads are shared surfaces. These along the generally generous pavements mean good provision of public realm in the conservation area. The surfaces treatments are of mixed quality and appearance. East Street is laid with brick setts whereas Ripple Road and Station Parade have durable and traditional granite slabs. Elsewhere pavements are tarmacked.

Across the conservation area there is an extensive array of street furniture including bollards, railings, benches, litter bins, lampposts, post boxes, broadband cabinets, wayfinding signage, interpretive signage and road signs. There are numerous different designs for each, which detracts from the coherence and overall appearance of the conservation area. Furthermore, many of the pieces are in a poor state of repair having suffered from vandalism and degradation and are in need of maintenance, replacement or removal. However, some historic pieces of street furniture survive including post boxes and lampposts which make a positive contribution to the conservation area. Where there are high concentrations of street furniture, this can impede pedestrian movement, negatively affecting the experience of the area; this is particularly the case along North Street and Broadway. A recent lighting scheme on East street has removed the clutter of lampposts from the public realm. There is also interpretive signage which assists in raising awareness of the history and value of Barking.



Abbey Green is a large green public park, divided into two halves by St Margaret's Church and Abbey remains.



Examples of historic lamp standards in the conservation area





The churchyard of St Margaret's.



The remains of Barking Abbey are in a sunken but more open public space.



The Town Quay, also known as the Mill Pool, on the River Roding.



Public realm around the Town Quay



Open space in the setting of the Magistrates' Court.



Public realm around the Town Quay.



Recently resurfaced public realm at the junction of Ripple Road and East Street

4.7 IMPORTANT VIEWS AND LANDMARK BUILDINGS

This section considers the most important views into and within the conservation area, as well as the buildings which feature most prominently within the townscape. Views are an important part of establishing the special interest and heritage value of a conservation area. They may be static, from fixed positions, or kinetic, changing as a viewer moves through a place. They may be short or long range, or look across, through, to or from a heritage asset, in this case the conservation area.

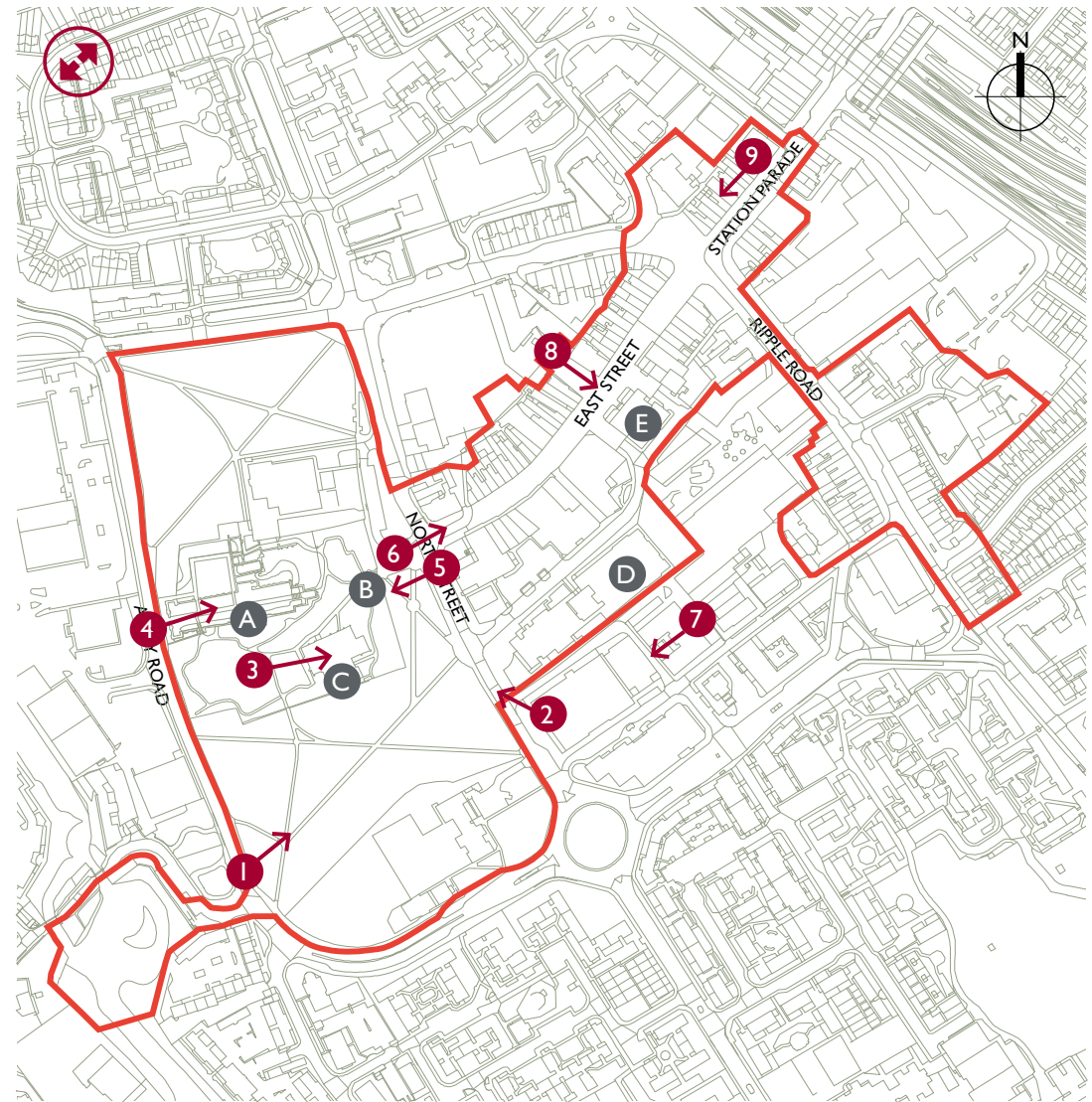
All views which take in the historic buildings, listed or not, and general historic environment of the area are important and contribute to the understanding and experience of the conservation area. As a consequence, the views considered in this section are only an indicative selection and not intended to be a comprehensive set of the important views in the conservation area. When proposals for change are being considered a detailed study of the views important for any given site and the contribution they make to the conservation area will be necessary. The important views that are considered are identified on **Plan 7**, adjacent, and detailed over the following pages. The important landmarks, which are frequently the focus in views, are also identified on the plan with a description in [section 4.7.2](#).

IMPORTANT VIEWS AND LANDMARK BUILDINGS

- Conservation Area Boundary
- View Point
- View Direction
- ⊗ Landmark Buildings

- A Remains of Barking Abbey
- B Curfew Tower
- C St Margaret's Church
- D Barking Town Hall
- E Former Magistrates' Court

This plan is not to scale



Plan 7: Important views and landmark buildings within the conservation area.