

An aerial photograph of Durham, North Carolina, showing the city built on a peninsula surrounded by the River Swain. The image features lush green trees, a stone bridge with multiple arches crossing the river, and the prominent spire of a large cathedral in the background under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

Conservation Area Management Plan

Conservation Area Character Appraisals

Durham City Peninsula and Riverbanks Conservation Area



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I. Introduction



1.1 What is a conservation area?

The statutory definition of a conservation area, as defined in the primary legislation, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is:

"An area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance"

In determining the above there are no specific set criteria upon which an area is designated. But there are several key elements that are generally considered. This includes the topography and landscape, building ages and architectural styles, the materials used and detailing, street patterns and grain, land uses, the public realm, green spaces, boundary treatments, and views.

The extent to which buildings and structures contribute generally derives from their frontages onto the street that is most experienced in the public domain. But in many places the sides and rears of buildings and streets can also be viewed, particularly in Durham City where many buildings and areas can be seen three dimensionally. This is due to how the buildings have developed in response to the landform and how the city has evolved over the centuries, spreading out in all directions from the peninsula.

Spaces can contribute very positively, connecting buildings and places, dictating movement, and creating interactions. These range from key open historic civic spaces such as Durham Market Place, to the contemporary Millennium Square, intimate medieval streets, narrow historic vennels and green lanes, and the riverside footpaths.

Green spaces are in abundance in Durham City, and they contribute significantly to its special character, distinctiveness, and sense of place. They vary greatly in type, use and extent, ranging from large areas of dense ancient woodland, local nature reserves, community allotment gardens, public parks, private front gardens in the streetscene, roadside verges, the riverbanks, and street trees.

Such green assets and the wider surrounding landscape have high scenic and aesthetic qualities that enhance the setting of buildings, streets, spaces, and the city as a whole. All of the above, and the varying topography, create and provide different visual experiences, and ambiances, with notable historic landmarks featuring in a range of different views.

The designation of a conservation area under the Town and County Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/section/69> gives the Local Planning Authority (LPA) certain statutory and general duties:

- **s69(1)** requires the LPA to designate from time to time any areas which they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest as conservation areas,
- **s69(2)** requires the LPA to review such designations from time to time.
- **s71(1)** requires the LPA to formulate, prepare and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas from time to time.
- **s72(1)** requires that when assessing applications for development in conservation areas, the LPA must pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation areas.

1.2 What is the purpose of this appraisal?

The key objective of this character appraisal is to define the special interest of Durham City Peninsula and Riverbanks Conservation Area. It identifies and evaluates the contribution of the different elements and features that form the area’s distinctiveness, sense of place, character and appearance that justify its designation. It then identifies any issues, problems, and potential threats the conservation area faces, and the opportunities, that help to inform the overarching realistic and deliverable management aims and actions set out in the management strategy.

The appraisal will provide an important tool and evidence base to inform the area’s on-going management, to ensure its special architectural and historic interest is conserved and where possible enhanced moving forwards. It has been prepared in accordance with Historic England’s *Advice Note 1, Conservation Area, Appraisal, Designation and Management*, 2nd ed. (2019).

The individual character appraisals form **part 2** of the Durham City Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMP) process. **Part 1** is the Durham City Strategic Context document, and **part 3** the overarching Management Strategy. These documents should be read in combination.

The purpose of the CAMP Strategic Context document is to:

- Set out the approach to the protection of the City’s special architectural and historic interest and how this can deliver other positive outcomes.
- Set out an overview of the city in terms of its special interest, history timeline, topography & landscape context.
- Provide an understanding of the seven individual conservation areas, their interrelationships and how in combination they inform the overall heritage significance of Durham City.
- Provide an understanding of the process and methodology that has been carried out.
- Set out how the Durham City Conservation Area has evolved from its original designation in 1968 through to its subdivision to seven conservation areas.
- Set out the justification for the designation of the seven new conservation areas.
- Set out how the documents work
- Sit alongside other strategies and plans that are in place and emerging.

Fig 1 below. *The Baileys, part of the medieval defensive complex on the peninsula. A distinctive historic street lined by houses adapted over the centuries with a strong Georgian character.*



Together the conservation area character appraisal and CAMP overarching management strategy will:

- Help decision makers to be able to assess the impact of new development proposals and change upon the area’s special interest, character appearance and significance.
- Provide a detailed understanding of the area’s special interest that can be used to inform future planning decisions.
- Identify positive features to be preserved, negative features to be improved and identify potential future risks to the area’s special interest and character.
- Offer solutions to the issues and potential risks through the management aims and actions.
- Identify positive opportunities for change and improvements.
- Support the delivery of good design and assist in the preparation and implementation of enhancement and regeneration opportunities when they arise.

Fig 2 below. *The classic view from Milburngate Road Bridge, showing the association between castle, cathedral, River Wear, and riverbanks woodland; an exceptional sequential view demonstrating the world heritage sites (WHS) drama, beauty, and dominance over the city.*



2. Overview



2.1 Location and description

Durham City is one of the most historic cities in the UK founded in the 10th century with its core on the peninsula, crowned by the castle and cathedral, and bounded by the River Wear. It has always been, and continues to be, a place of change and growth. It is centrally located within County Durham and is well connected to many strategic road and rail routes, including the A1(M), and the east coast mainline. Within the city, radiating out from the peninsula is a network of streets, roads, and different routes spreading wider afield to connect the city with the surrounding villages.

The Durham City Peninsula and Riverbanks Conservation Area lies at the historic heart of the ancient city. It is focused upon the historic castle complex that comprises an inner bailey, castle keep and motte, and an outer bailey today marked by the streets named North and South Bailey which surrounds the cathedral precinct including the cathedral church, The College and Palace Green. Most of the historic castle outer defensive walls survive, though only one gateway, the Watergate remains.

Beyond this area are the commercial streets of Saddler Street, Silver Street, and Elvet Bridge, leading into the Market Place. Outside the built form the River Wear, its riverbanks and river valley sub-divides the historic core, continuing upstream to Finchale Priory and downstream to Shincliffe Village.

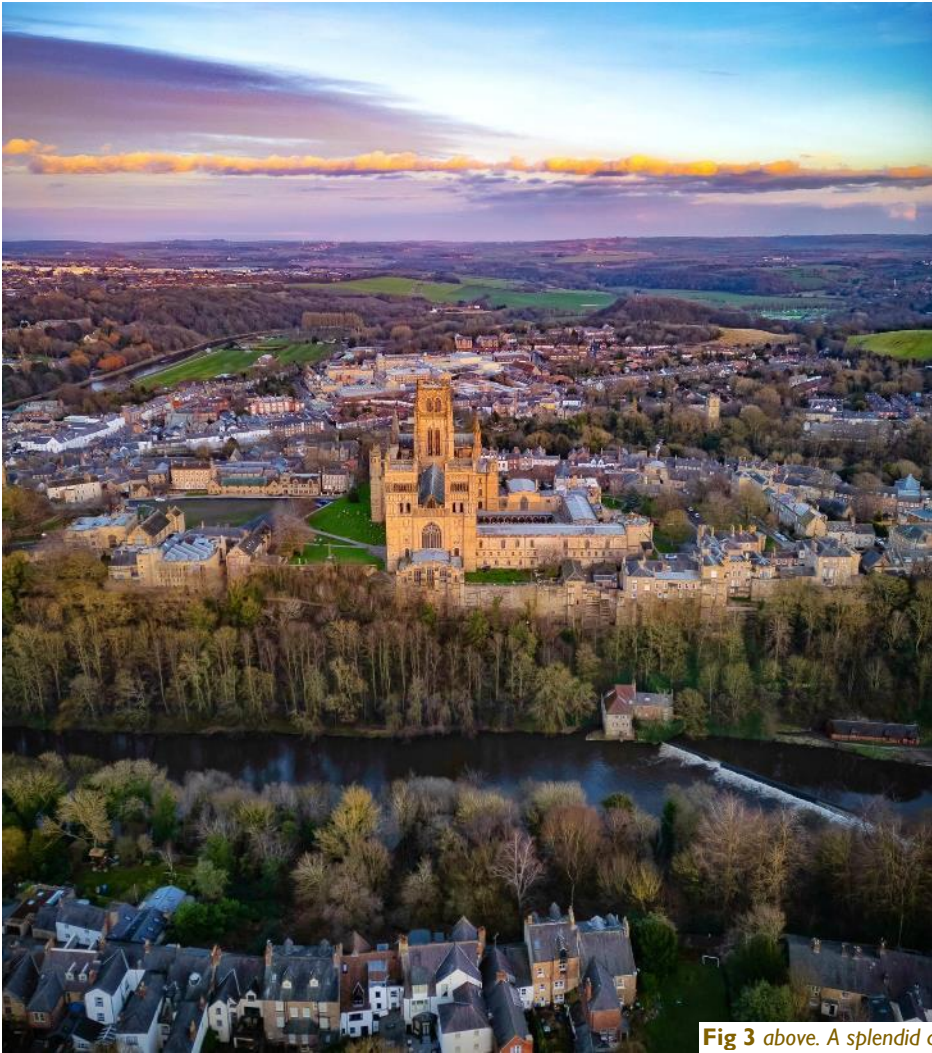



Image © Graeme Hall, used with permission.

Fig 3 above. A splendid drone view from the west looking over the peninsula, the cathedral shown in its broad townscape and landscape setting. Above right, the prebendal houses at The College, and the cobbled Bow Lane linking the peninsula to Elvet.

Map 1 Location plans

A location plan of Durham City highlighted in the wider county context (below) and an aerial map showing the Durham City Peninsula and Riverbanks Conservation Area in the city centre settlement context.



 Conservation Area

Every care has been taken to ensure the information contained on this map is correct. Durham County Council accepts no liability for error or misinterpretation of the information shown on this map.



27/11/2024

2.2 The conservation area boundary

An important part of the appraisal process is to provide an understanding as to how the boundary to the conservation area has been drawn, what is included and what has been excluded, and why certain physical features have been used to define it. The following provides a list of the key points that have informed the Durham City Peninsula Conservation Area boundary:

- Focused on the ancient core that the community of St Cuthbert settled on in the 10th century, and from which the city grew up.
- Area comprises of the surviving town plan identifiable on historic maps dating back to the 1600s and forming the heart of the “Bishops Borough”.
- The boundary is naturally defined by the River Wear gorge that separates the peninsula from other parts of the city capturing all the mature woodland on both sides of the riverbanks.
- The triangular plot of land between Pimlico and Quarryheads Lane is included as it is visually part of the riverbanks setting area, and conjecturally represents a remnant of how approaches to the cathedral may have once looked.

- The boundary is drawn to capture the Chorister School playing field on the west side of the Church Street Head/Stockton Road junction as it retains its historic open character, important view of the cathedral, and remains in cathedral ownership providing a legible connection.
- The east boundary extends outwards to capture Durham University Elvet Riverside. The buildings were intentionally designed to face the river with a strong presence in the river corridor, turning their backs to New Elvet.
- Dunelm House is included as it has an integral architectural designed relationship to the river and Kingsgate Bridge.
- The Prince Bishops Shopping Centre is inseparable from the area owing to its position within the townscape, having been grafted into the medieval streets and with a strong visual presence facing the river.

The conclusion is that the conservation area boundary is logically informed representing a distinctive geological formation, an exceptionally significant built environment, and invaluable historical landscape. It includes Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site, which is

globally significant for its innovative Romanesque architecture, with the iconic cathedral and associated castle set within their conserved medieval bailey and defensive wall complex. This combined with the “romantic” landscape setting creates a unique townscape and unforgettable visual drama and experience. The area merits designation and deserves careful management to preserve or enhance its special interest and character.

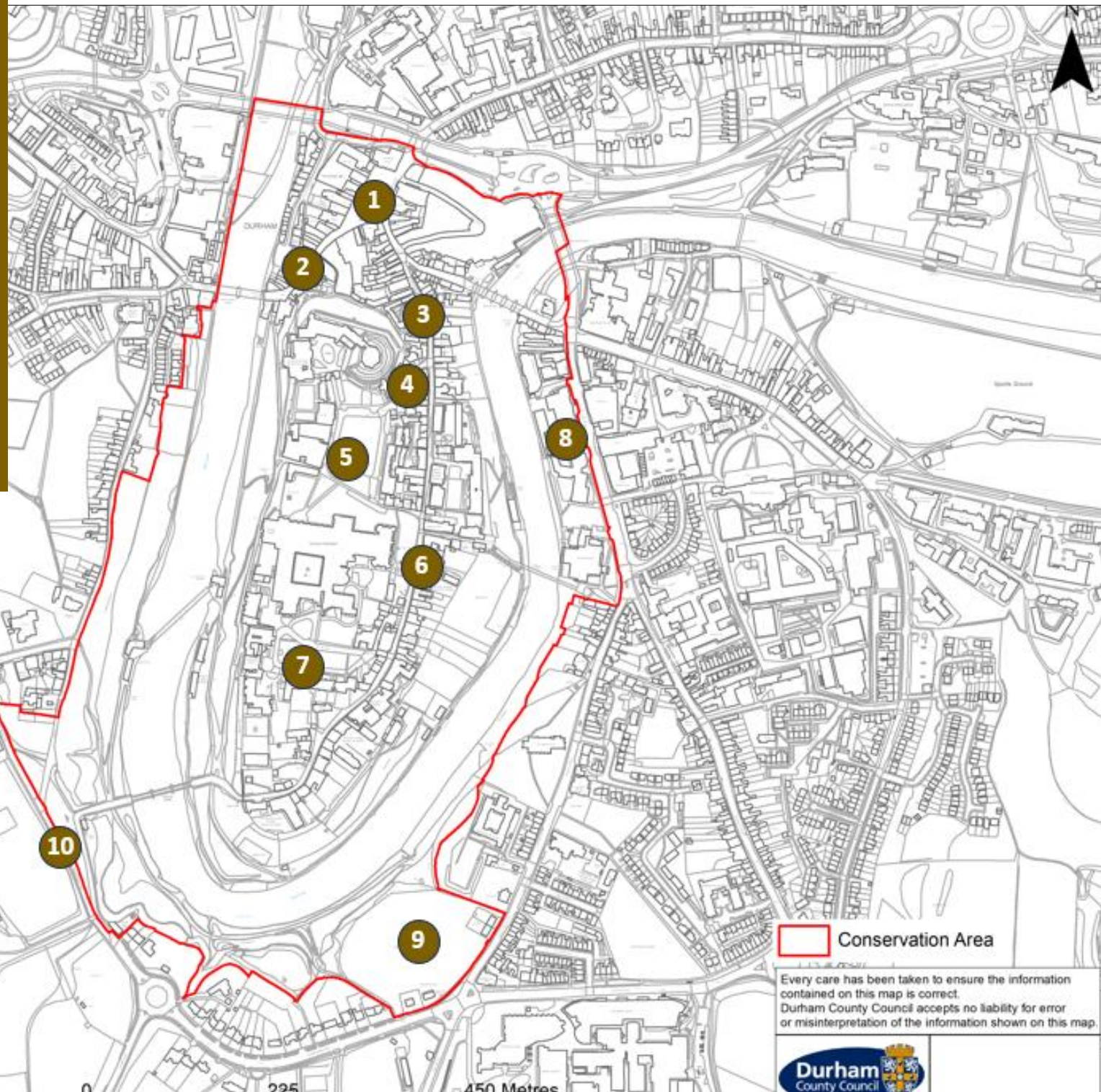
Fig 4 below. General views along the river corridor from Kingsgate Bridge, and below from Prebends Bridge, the river separates different parts of the city and provides a unique contrasting natural historic environment to the urban.



Map 2 Conservation area boundary

A detailed map of the conservation area boundary (red) with the main streets identified.

1. Market Place
2. Silver Street
3. Saddler Street
4. Owengate
5. Palace Green
6. North and South Bailey
7. The College
8. New Elvet Riverside
9. Choristor School playing fields
10. Quarryheads Lane



Map 3 Conservation area boundary (aerial map)

The aerial map shows the boundary in detail and the distinction between the urban and natural environments with the surrounding city faded out to give greater clarity.



 Conservation Area

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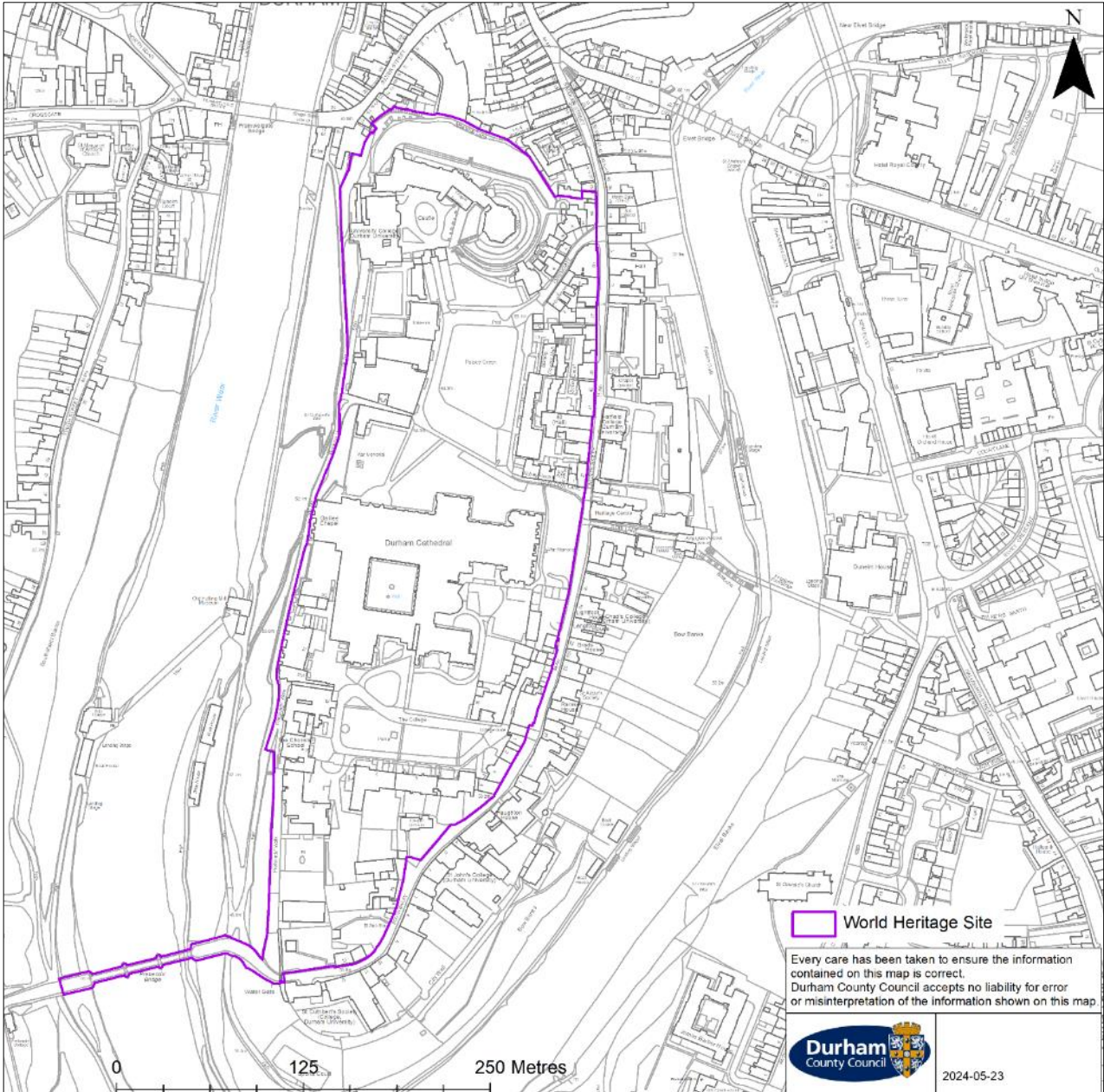
Map 4 Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site.

The map shows the boundary of the world heritage site that is located within the conservation area.

A major component of the conservation area is Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site. World Heritage sites are cultural and/or natural sites considered to be of "outstanding universal value," which have been inscribed on the World Heritage List by UNESCO. These places or buildings are thought to have special importance for everyone and represent unique, the most significant or best, examples of world culture or natural heritage.

World Heritage status is the highest accolade of heritage significance, with Durham Castle and Cathedral inscribed on the list in 1986. The sites Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and further information can be found at [Durham Castle and Cathedral - UNESCO World Heritage Centre](#)

The dual world heritage site and conservation area designation testifies to the area's historic and architectural importance, and the surrounding townscape, landscape and riverscape are fundamental to the perception and understanding of the area's cultural history.



2.3 Summary of special interest

Architectural interest

- The exceptional architecture of the cathedral and castle demonstrating architectural innovation and expressing Norman power, and the spiritual and secular powers of the medieval Prince Bishops.
- The exceptional significance of the Romanesque and early Gothic medieval architecture with iconic buildings set within the surviving remains of their early medieval Bailey and defensive wall.
- The exceptional architectural significance of the Claustral and The College Buildings representing one of the most complete collections of monastic buildings in England to have survived from the medieval period.
- The high significance of the buildings around Palace Green displaying important architectural references of the time relating to their original use.

- The high architectural quality and diversity within the Market Place, Silver Street, Elvet Bridge and Saddler Street with buildings of different periods, character and uses combining to generate high-quality historic streetscapes with a strong historic identity
- The very high number of listed buildings, non-designated heritage assets and landmarks.



Fig 5 above. The Chorister School a medieval prebendal house of high significance.

Historic interest

- The area’s ancient origins and significance as the starting point for the city, and its subsequent historic evolution.
- The exceptional interest of the surviving medieval town plan, with a high level of intactness, authenticity, and integrity.
- The historic interest and intangible link of the pilgrim routes to the character and relationship to the surrounding historic fabric.
- The significant archaeological value and potential with a wealth of archaeological remains adding to the understanding of the history of the place.
- The exceptional interest deriving from the continuation of historic uses.



Fig 6 above. The oak coffin made for St Cuthbert in 698.

Topography and setting

- The uniqueness of the peninsula and river, a picturesque natural landscape feature through the heart of the city.
- The importance of the topography being the reason for the original establishment and growth of the city and used to dramatically emphasise the power, status, and drama of the cathedral and castle.
- The river and gorge forming a natural barrier separating the peninsula and surrounding city with the higher encircling slopes and ridges, providing containment.
- The varied topography influencing the built form and character for example by creating intimate streets, staggered and stepped roofscapes, and steep vennels.
- The inseparable historic and visual relationship and setting contribution to the other city conservation areas.



Fig 7 above. The river looping around the peninsula providing a scenic natural setting to the castle and cathedral.

Green and blue infrastructure assets

- The abundance and variation in the green spaces that have significant historic interest, community, social and recreational value, and high visual amenity value.
- The riverbanks forming a distinctive historic environment in its own right, in part derived from its relationship with urban development above.
- The historic and evidential values of the riverbanks as a designed landscape shaped by different landowners over the centuries.
- The high visual amenity values of the green spaces in terms of enhancing the setting of the buildings, in particular the riverbanks and the notion of “romantic” beauty.
- The significance of Palace Green, its visual function as a piece of landscape design uniting the castle and cathedral.
- The high significance of the river and riverbanks in terms of its natural habitat, flora and fauna, biodiversity, recreational value, and its built development including the castle walls, bridges, and mills.

Views

- The wide variation and high quality of views and the changing visual experiences they provide. Including designed views such as those from Prebends Bridge that have become a symbol of Durham.
- The dynamic visual relationship between the WHS and the surrounding townscape and people’s experience of this.
- The visual quality, drama, and different experience of the WHS during the day and night.
- The exceptional value of the world renowned views of the WHS, inspiring painters, poets, and artists over the centuries.
- View of the WHS providing the city’s identity and people’s image of the place.



Fig 8 above. The view north across Palace Green towards the castle from in front of the cathedral.

Public realm

- The surviving medieval framework of streets, different spaces, vennels, terraced walks, and routes.
- The traditional floorscape enhancing the setting of the historic buildings and adding to the character and appearance of the historic streets and spaces.
- The historic boundary treatments that reinforce the linear nature and enclosed intimate character as well as defining building plots.
- The exceptional value of the market square, the centre of city life since medieval times, which continues today.



Fig 9 above. The narrow historic vennial at Saddler's Yard.

Other

- The different ambiances of the place from the vibrant and bustling Market Place to the tranquillity of the riverbanks, and the quiet academic air of the Bailey and The College.
- Durham as a place of pilgrimage since medieval times and continuing today.
- The significant intangible value in terms of people's memories of the place, the Cathedral being a spiritual, gathering, and social place, place of learning and worship, and invaluable community resource, with which people have a strong connection.
- The cultural significance of the place expressed and experienced through regular events and services.

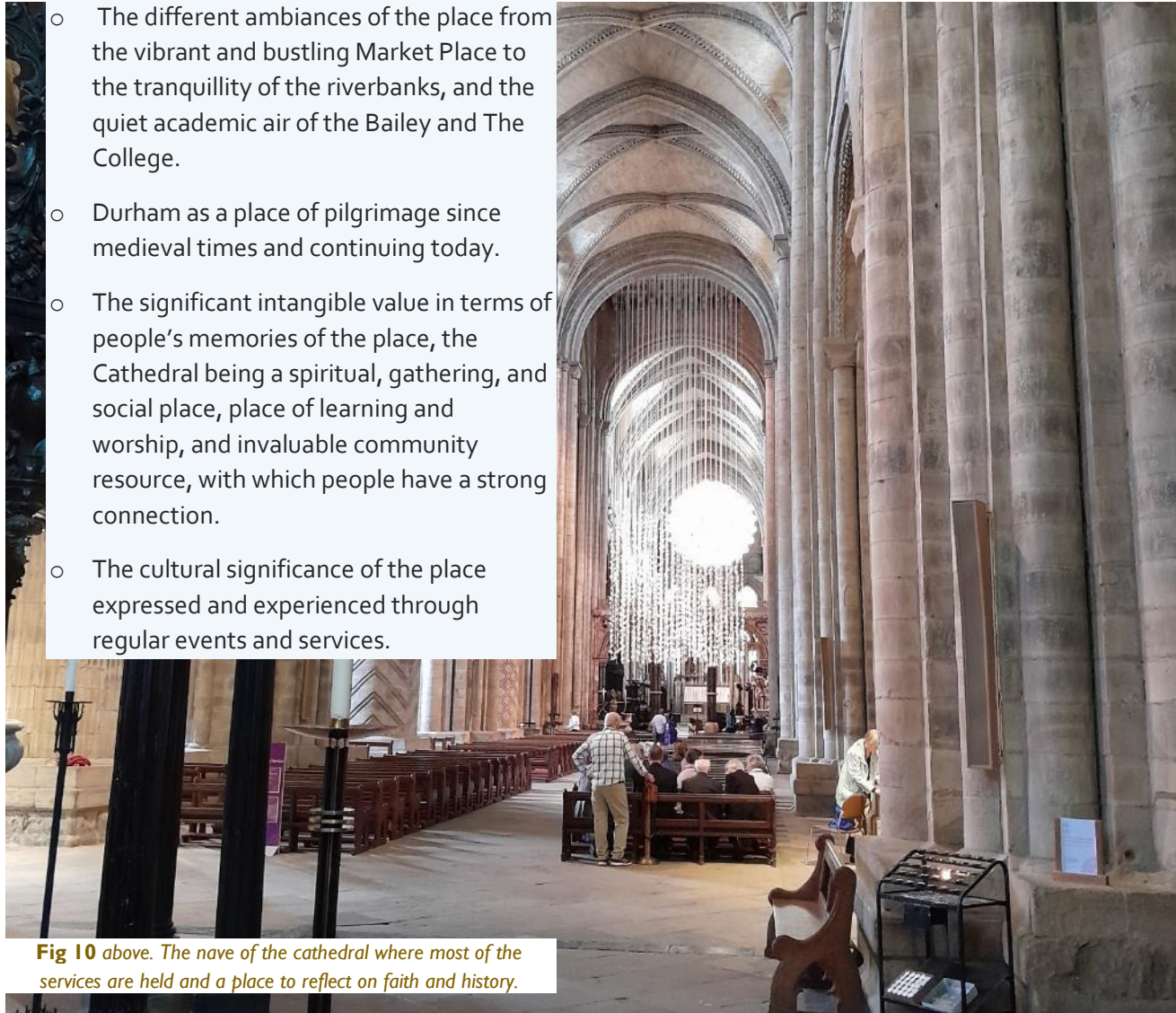


Fig 10 above. The nave of the cathedral where most of the services are held and a place to reflect on faith and history.

2.4 Topography and setting

The unique topography (*the physical form, features, and appearance of land surfaces for example rivers, valleys, hills*) of Durham City is one of its most significant features that has shaped its plan and built form and is a defining characteristic of its special interest.

Durham City lies within the broad valley of the Wear Lowlands which lies between the low escarpment of the East Durham Limestone Plateau and the higher ridges and valleys of the West Durham Coalfield. In the floor of this gently undulating lowland vale the River Wear carves an incised meandering course, in places lying deep within narrow gorges cutting down through the underlying sandstones and shales, in others wandering across open floodplains flanked by steep wooded bluffs.

The topography has had a profound influence on the evolution of the city and the way that it is experienced today. The historic core of the city is focussed on a deeply incised gorge forming a tight bend in the river which provided a strong defensive site and an arresting setting for the Norman castle and cathedral (and earlier Saxon fortifications). The medieval city lay on the peninsula behind its defensive walls, spreading out across the neck of the peninsula in the north and onto the opposing riverbanks from Framwellgate and Elvet bridges and up the ridge to the north-east towards Gilesgate.

The river sub-divides the city and there is a complex of ridge lines and hills that encircle and further separate the urban form. These are Whinney Hill, Mount Joy, Buck's Hill, Elvet Hill, Windmill Hill, Observatory Hill, Red Hills, Western Hill, Windy Hill, and Beacon Hill. They combine with features such as woodlands of Flass Vale and Wharton Park, parkland at the College of St Hild and Bede, the southern campus, the canopies of street and garden trees, to provide a scenic green "wall" backdrop that provides visual containment to the urban area.

The higher ground provides significant views across the city where the cathedral rises gloriously into the skyline, with the castle displaying Norman strength, the surrounding townscape subordinate to their dominance.

In views from lower ground within the city the wider landscape setting is rarely visible, and the immediate backdrop glimpsed above and between buildings is formed by the closer high ground which creates an intimacy of scale and a sense of enclosure.

The setting of the conservation area is highly varied. It can generally be described as comprising the surrounding historic townscape and landscape that extends outwardly to the surrounding hills and ridges that contain the historic core of the city. It is dense urban of changing character, that then transitions to a semi-rural character then open countryside beyond the city limits.

This creates a range of different approaches, many historic, that provide different experiences of both historic and modern character.

More intimately are the closely associated medieval streets and the romantic setting to the cathedral and castle provided by the undeveloped stretch of river, steep forbidding wooded riverbanks, the surviving stretches of the castle walls, Prebends Bridge, and the view it provides.

The wider setting to the area can be generally regarded as the more distant high ground with a succession of slopes, ridges and hills that provide either cathedral views or are important in the backdrop. Some wider routes and approaches are pilgrim routes for example Silent Bank near Cassop, with the central tower visible 5 miles away, with others more conjectural. These provide different and evolving experiences as the historic city core, cathedral and castle move in and out of view with some dramatic reveals giving a sudden sense of arrival. They are also important in marking the presence of the city in its very broad townscape and landscape surroundings.

Overall, typically, Durham's topography has been described as being "bowl like" surrounding the historic city core with an inner and outer bowl. The reality is that it is more fragmented with valley and countryside intrusions that enhance its character.

The wider setting of the city, and the conservation area, is provided in the west by the distant high ground of Brandon Hill, Findon Hill and Charlaw Fell. These are on the edge of the west Durham Coalfield, a broad landscape separated by river valleys with a strong west-east grain defined by valleys, woodland, and pasture land, heavily influenced by coal mining.

In the east and south the steep limestone escarpment forms an undulating skyline. The nearest spurs of Pittington Hill, Sherburn Hill, Old Cassop and Cassop Vale are often notable features in the backdrop of cathedral views across different parts of the city. Penshaw Hill is a distant landmark in the north. The limestone plateau is characterised by an open agricultural landscape with medieval settlements, historic farmsteads, and field patterns.

Fig 11 below. A digital terrain map showing the varied topography of the city's outer setting with the landscape geology types and main surrounding hills identified, with the conservation area highlighted in red.

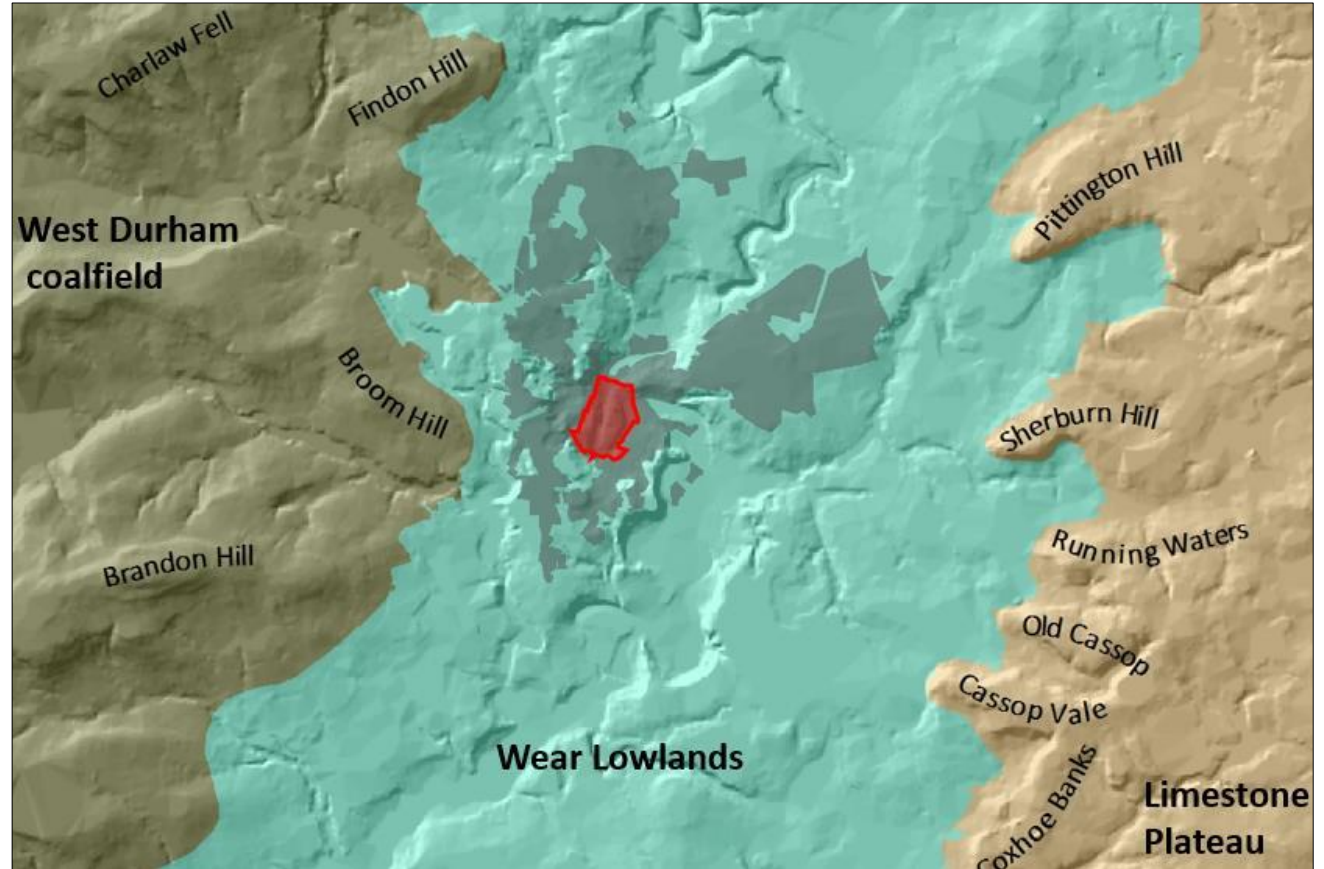
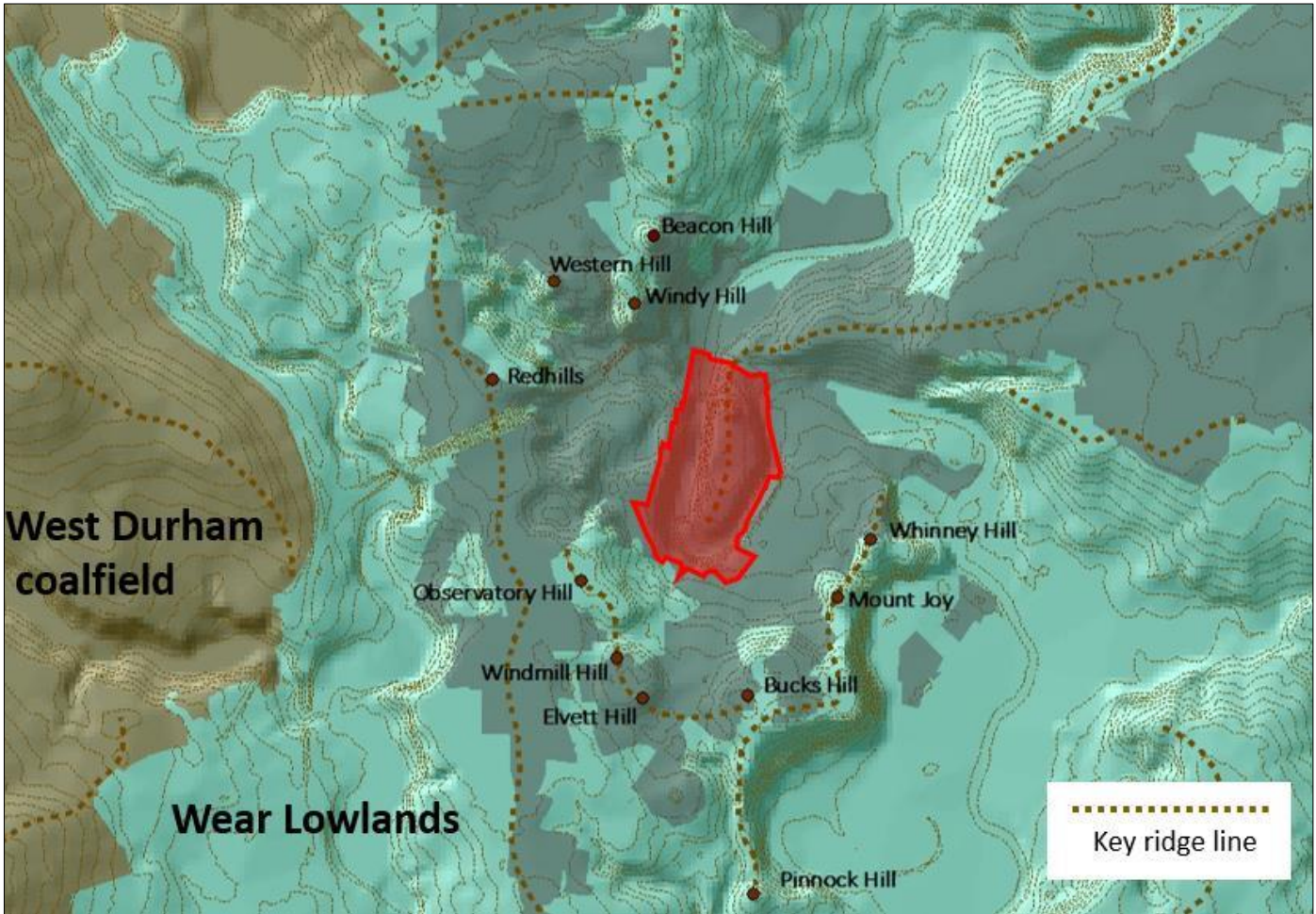


Fig 12 right. A digital terrain maps showing the varied topography of the city's more immediate setting with the main ridges (dashed) and hills identified and the conservation area highlighted in red.

Within the city centre the encircling ridges of high ground form a more immediate and intimate backdrop to the historic core. The peninsula and the Market Place sit lower than the ridges to the east, south and west creating a strong sense of enclosure. This arc of high ground includes the notable hills of Whinney Hill, Mount Joy, Buck's Hill, Elvet Hill, Windmill Hill, Observatory Hill, Red Hills, Western Hill, Windy Hill, and Beacon Hill. These provide varied landscapes and vantage points from which to view the city and its historic landmarks, and a green backdrop in parts of high aesthetic value. *Below views from Whinney Hill, Observatory Hill, Windmill Hill, and Wharton Park.*





The drone view perfectly captures the unique topography, romantic, and broader background landscape forming the setting to the peninsula. The landform rising outwardly up to the tree covered encircling ridges and hills.

Image, ©Graeme Hall, used with permission.

A major attribute of the conservation area's special interest is the role it plays as an essential component of the largely unaltered medieval city centre. The peninsula and riverbanks conservation area can be regarded as having greater significance than the other Durham City conservation areas. This is due to the city spanning out from it following the early 10th century settlement by the community of monks carrying St Cuthbert's coffin. The castle and the cathedral were constructed, and the city expanded beyond the defensive castle walls where development emerged between, along, and at the edges of key routes.

The seven Durham City Conservation Areas surrounding the peninsula and riverbanks on all sides provide its immediate setting, and in succession form a major part of the setting to Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site. They therefore contribute to its Outstanding Universal Value that elevates their collective significance. This is demonstrated by the map on the following page.

This is evidenced and can be understood by the city's history, evolution of the built environment, the framework of the different approaches along the principal historic streets and other historic routes, and the different visual connections and experiences provided moving from place to place.

The setting provides areas of different urban and landscape character, with significant kinetic and sequential views of the historic core many focused on the castle and cathedral, which are of high quality and value. This includes sequential glimpses moving through narrow winding and hilly streets as the cathedral and castle move in and out of view before dramatic revealing views. There are places within the conservation areas where the cathedral can be seen from elevated vantage points where it dominates the skyline and subordinate townscape set in landscape surrounds. Many views are significant in giving a sense of the city's separation by the river and of the castle and cathedral's elevation above the surrounding city, ensuring the legibility of its medieval form and dominance.

There are many distinctive changes in character moving between the conservation areas that enhance the experience of the peninsula and riverbanks and are important to its character and setting. For example, moving along the riverside within both Framwellgate and Gilesgate Conservation Areas towards the peninsula the experience is one of 20th and 21st century urban townscape with adjacent and background historic built development, the cathedral towers seen in the river corridor view towering above the tree canopy and fragmented townscape, its dominance and drama increasing with movement south.

From Wharton Park in Framwellgate Conservation Area there are fine expansive views over the Crossgate area that provide a wide panoramic view of the cathedral and castle. Such views contrast with the distinctly different visual experience from places such as Old Durham, which offers a splendid revealing view of the cathedral and castle in broader landscape perspective.

In wider terms, important elements of setting primarily derive from the historic approaches for example from through Frankland Park providing rural panoramas with the city in the backdrop and experiences of the cathedral tower.

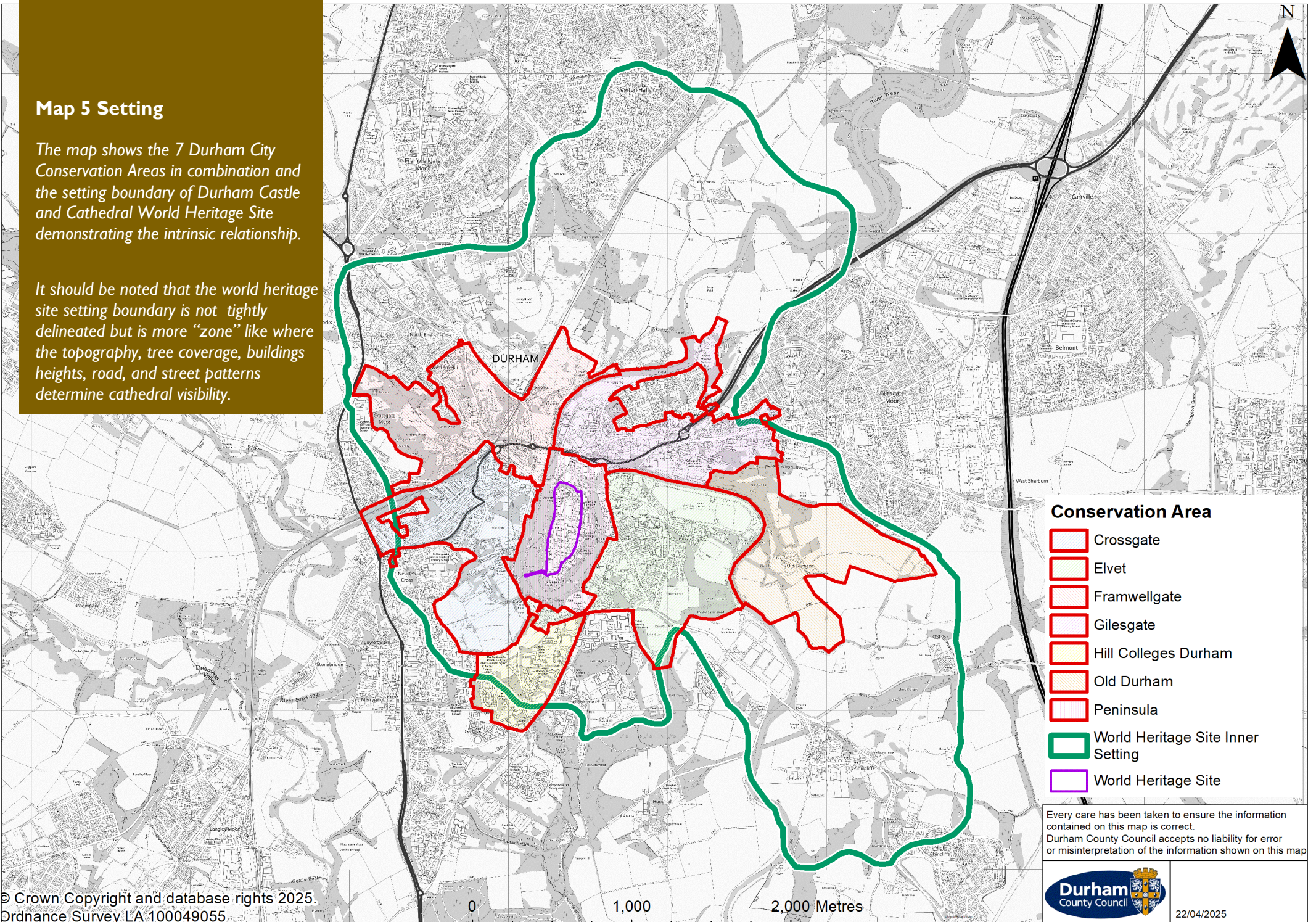
Of significance is the cathedral's impact as a landmark in the wider landscape of the city that not only conveys its high status, architectural marvel, but also in the way it was designed to summon its pilgrims towards the city and the shrine of St Cuthbert. The image of the cathedral as a far reaching object in the landscape still remains.

Some places have important historic connections that while not obvious still have value to setting that goes beyond visual receptors. For example, the intangible historic links between the cathedral priory estate to places such as the monks' retreat at Beaurepaire, Sherburn Hospital first established by the priory in medieval times, and Finchale Priory that was an outpost of the cathedral.










Map 5 Setting

The map shows the 7 Durham City Conservation Areas in combination and the setting boundary of Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site demonstrating the intrinsic relationship.

It should be noted that the world heritage site setting boundary is not tightly delineated but is more “zone” like where the topography, tree coverage, buildings heights, road, and street patterns determine cathedral visibility.



Conservation Area

-  Crossgate
-  Elvet
-  Framwellgate
-  Gilesgate
-  Hill Colleges Durham
-  Old Durham
-  Peninsula
-  World Heritage Site Inner Setting
-  World Heritage Site

Every care has been taken to ensure the information contained on this map is correct. Durham County Council accepts no liability for error or misinterpretation of the information shown on this map.

2.5 Historic development

The history of Durham City is well documented in many sources, and what follows is a brief historic overview of the conservation area and how it has developed over the centuries.

Early Medieval (5th century AD to AD 1066)

There is archaeological evidence of Saxon and earlier settlement on the peninsula which has been in use intermittently for 7000 years (since the middle stone age). But the main story is attributed to the community of monks from Lindisfarne carrying the body of St Cuthbert who arrived in Durham in the late 10th century. They found a defensible site and built a temporary timber church to hold St Cuthbert's remains. In 998 a more substantial stone church was built, the "*Alba Ecclesia*" the White Church.

Durham was established as a fortress; the castle, attributed to Waltheof, Earl of Northumberland, and Bishop Walcher, built as a symbol of the Norman King's power. The holder of the Office of the Bishop of Durham was appointed directly by the King and the castle was the main residence and power base of the Bishops of Durham until the 1830s.

The earliest known structure on the site was a motte and bailey. A wooden tower on an artificial mound (motte), overlooking timber buildings in a lower courtyard (bailey) surrounded by a ditch.

The bailey was separated from the motte by another ditch or moat which was crossed by a stairway leading up to the keep.

In 1071 Bishop Walcher, the first Norman Bishop of Durham, planned the change from a simple church to a larger monastery, and on August 11, 1093, the foundation stones for the new Norman Cathedral Church were laid. Various additions occurred over time including the Galilee Chapel around 1189, the Chapel of the Nine Altars in 1242-1280, the cloister of 1390-1418, and the central tower was rebuilt around 1470.

To the south of the cathedral The College, is the former outer court of the priory. Many of the buildings were adapted and converted to prebendal houses with later remodelling giving them a Georgian appearance. A prebendal house is one given by the church to a clergyman such as a canon or members of the chapter. The College Gatehouse was rebuilt in around 1500 with St Helen's Chapel above, replacing an earlier entrance.

The peninsula had defensive stone walls, likely replacing earlier simpler timber fortifications. The walls were strengthened with towers, buttress and turrets and supplemented by gates to guard key entry points. These were the North Gate, at the southern end of Saddler Street, Kings Gate (on modern Bow Lane), the Watergate or Bailey Gate (at the southern end of South Bailey), Oven Gate (at the west end of modern Owengate and Lye Gate or Side Gate (on modern Dun Cow Lane).

The lower land at the neck of the peninsula was exploited as a Market Place, possibly as early as the 11th century, and it is assumed that Saddler Street dates from this same period as a connection to Palace Green. This is supported by archaeological evidence from excavations in Saddler Street which uncovered timber buildings from about the year 1000.

The town plan of the city was largely established by the mid-13th century. It was sub-divided into six separate parts known as 'boroughs.' These were semi-independent urban communities. There was the fortified peninsula; the Old Borough (Crossgate/Allergate); the Bishops Borough (Framwellgate/Sidegate); Elvet Borough (Old Elvet/Church Street), the Barony of Elvet, and St Giles Borough (Claypath/Gilesgate).

As a result of the city's expansion and growth, Bishop Flambard constructed the first 'Old Bridge' in 1120, now Framwellgate Bridge, to connect the peninsula with the Old Borough. This was followed later by Elvet Bridge constructed in 1228 to link the peninsula with Elvet. In the 14th century it was incorporated into the castle walls with a gate and tower built at its west end.

Fig 13 below. Speeds map of 1627 is one of the best early representations of the city. It shows the cathedral with its western spires within the walled castle enclosure, and at the south end of the peninsula is the original bridge replaced by Prebends Bridge in 1771.

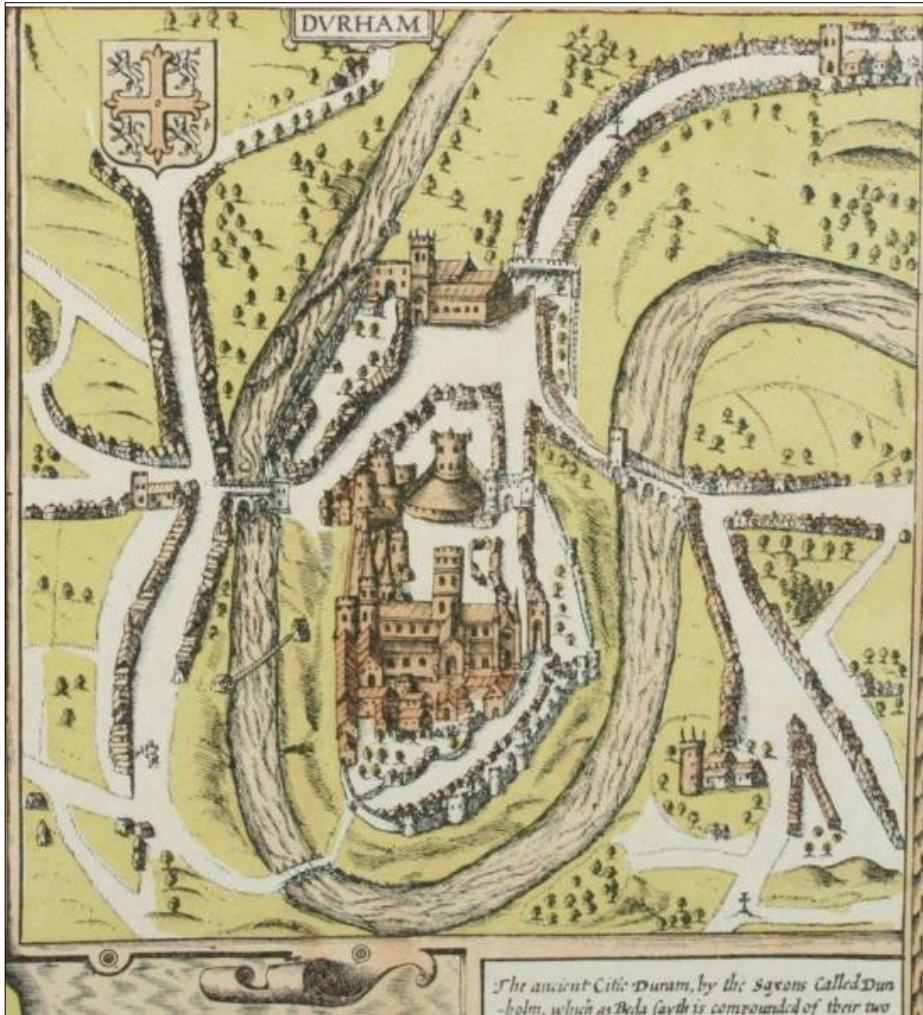
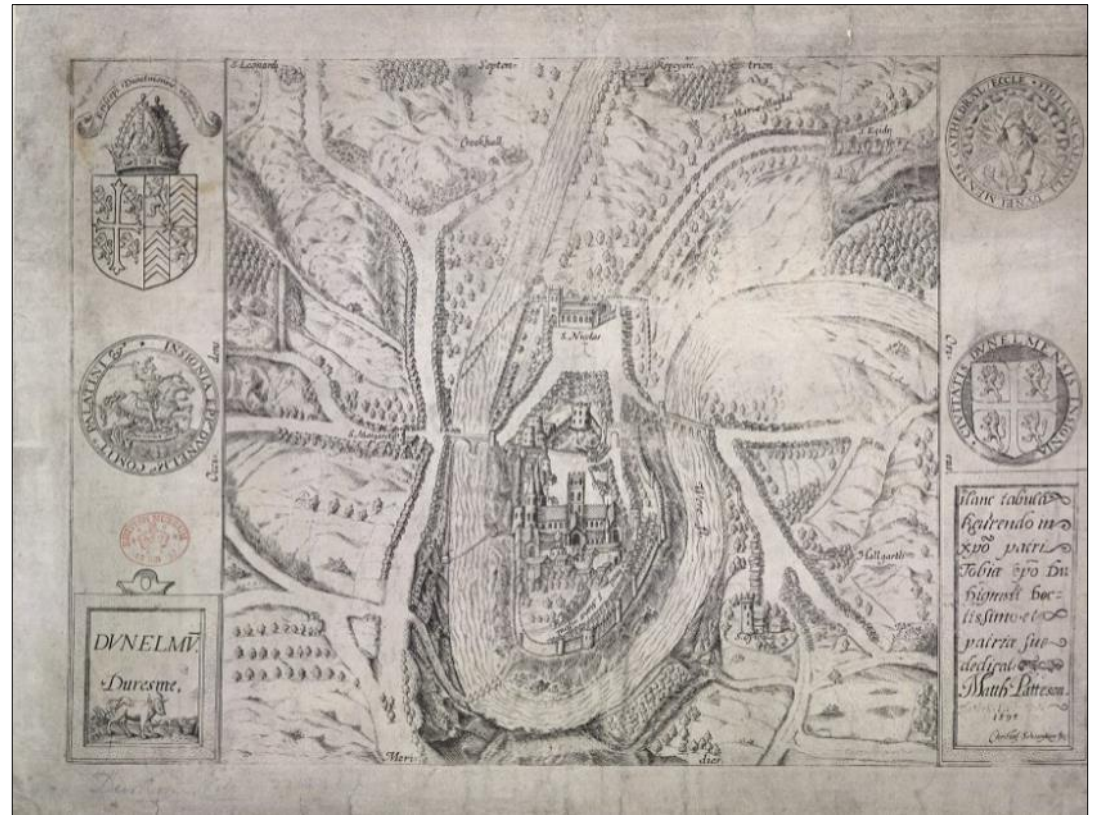


Fig 14 below. Map by Christoph Schweitzer, 1595, Record number 1910. Schweitzer's map and Speed's map are the first large-scale plans of the city. They show the Oven Gate and Lye Gate removed but otherwise the castle walls are complete. Outside the peninsula the Market Place is shown, together with Silver Street, Saddler Street and Framwellgate and Elvet Bridges. Beyond these are Claypath, Old and New Elvet, Hallgarth Street, Church Street, South Street, Crossgate, Allergate and Millburngate.



The houses of the medieval city tended to be laid out within long narrow strips of land or burgage plots, with the buildings positioned directly on to the street. As the houses built up across the street frontages narrow alleys, or vennels were established to serve the rears.

The Post-Medieval period (1541 to 1899)

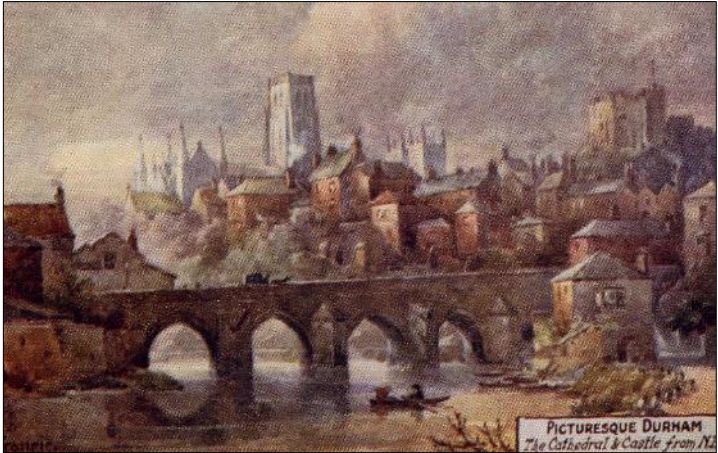
During the mid to late 17th century Bishop John Cosin carried out restoration work to the cathedral, castle, and the city in general. On Palace Green this included construction of the grammar school (now Divinity House) in 1661, Cosin’s Almshouses in 1666, Cosin’s Library around 1667-8 and Bishop Cosin’s Hall around 1700.

In the 18th and early 19th centuries, Durham changed gradually with larger houses being built, and older houses adapted to suite changing fashions that was a particular feature within the Baileys where earlier structures are hidden behind Georgian facades.

Under an Act of Parliament in 1832 the University was founded and Durham Castle and many of the buildings on Palace Green were handed over for use to the University. By the early 20th century, the University occupied the majority of the properties around Palace Green and along the baileys.

At the end of the Medieval period the city’s administration centre was concentrated on the peninsula, but three centuries later this moved to the Market Place. A tollbooth was built comprising a free-standing timber framed building at the southern end of the market square. This was later re-built in stone on the western side in 1535 by Bishop Tunstall and by the 17th century had developed into the Guildhall. It was re-built again in 1665 and much of the present building dates from this period. It was altered further in 1754 when the present façade was added.

Fig 15 below. A painting by JMW Turner of Framwellgate Bridge 1830, © CBA.



By the middle of the 19th century, the Guildhall had become unsuitable for the purpose of accommodating all the city’s business so in 1850 almost the entire northwest corner of the Market Place was redeveloped. The current Town Hall and Market Hall (1851), St Nicholas’ Church (1857-8) and the statue of Lord Londonderry (1858) were added.

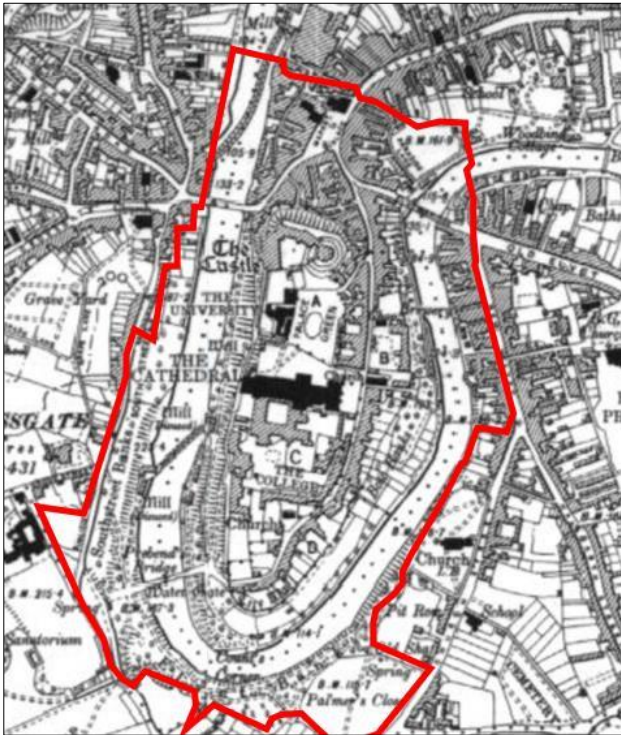
Fig 16 below. A painting of the castle and cathedral from Observatory Hill, John Wilson c.1847, © CBA.



Fig 18 below. A sequence of historic maps with the conservation area boundary shown in red.



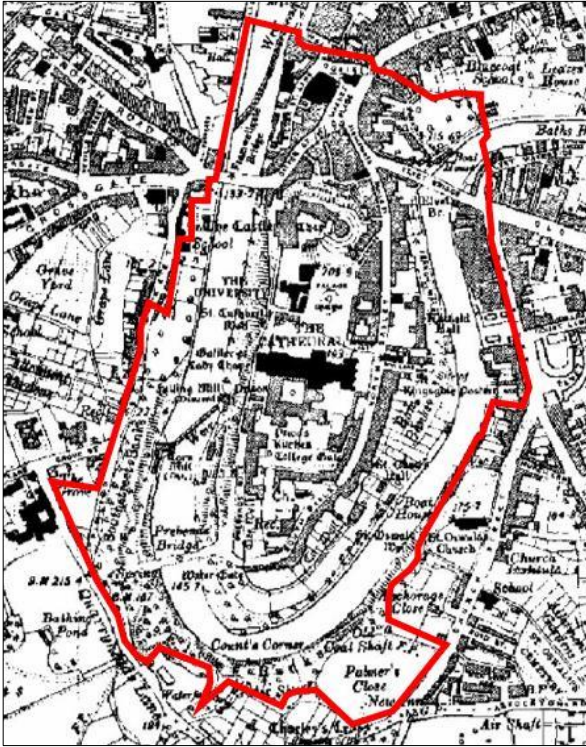
OS map c.1860, is one of best surviving guides to the plan form of the city, it shows the conservation area largely as its original medieval layout including the historic connection between Claypath and the Market Place and the riverside Paradise Gardens. It depicts the Bailey gardens layout in detail the riverside terraced walks, boathouse, weirs, and mill buildings. The riverside area to the Back Silver Street is extensively developed by carpet manufacturers in the north.



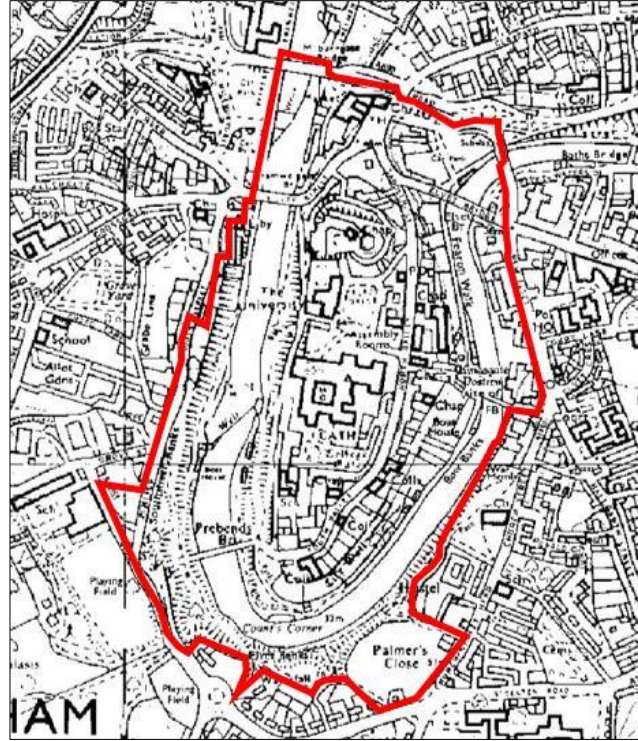
OS map c.1898, by the middle of the 19th century the foundations of the “modern” city were in place. The peninsula had been opened up by the removal of its gates and fortifications, roads bypassed it to the west and the railways arrived from three different directions. Within the conservation area boundary there is little change, but the mill buildings are labeled as disused and St Cuthbert’s Well and the Castle walls identified.



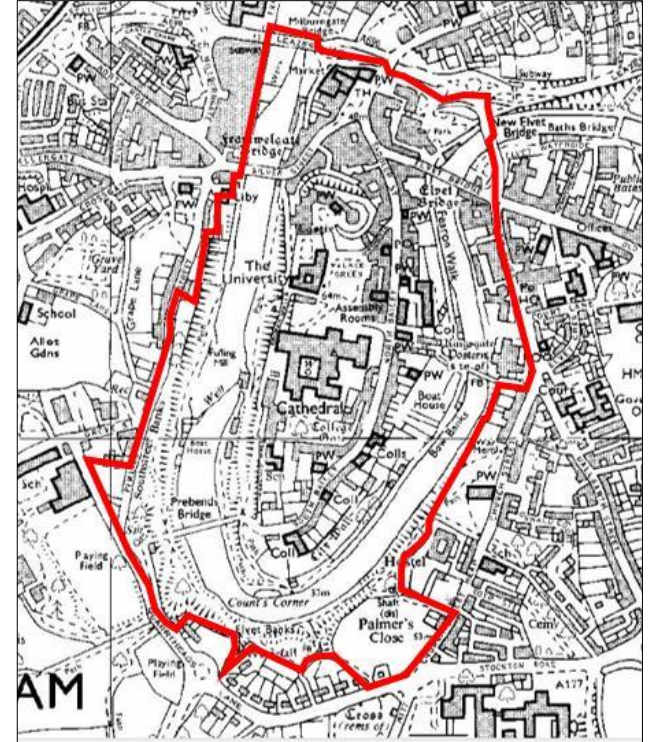
OS map c.1923, the early 20th century map shows the only notable changes by two new boat houses on the inner east riverbank.



OS map c.1950-59, the mid-20th century map shows no notable changes within the conservation area.



OS map c.1970-79, the late 20th century map shows the main change to the plan form of the being the introduction of the new "through road" that included the construction of New Elvet Bridge and Leazes Road in the north severing the historic connection between Claypath and the Market Place. New developments include Durham University Elvet Riverside, Kingsgate Bridge and Dunelm House.



OS map c.1980-94, the late 20th century map shows the no notable changes within the conservation area.

The riverbanks

From the earliest occupation it was essential to keep the banks of the river free from all vegetation to ensure a wide open view from the garrison. The river and its riverbanks had other uses including a working quarry providing the sandstone for the buildings on the peninsula, and as an industrial power source. The Prince Bishops quickly built bridges to avoid fords and ferries across the Wear's polluted waters and to provide more solid links to the outer boroughs.

The military function of the castle and its defensive walls declined during the 17th century as did the quarrying on the riverbanks because of improved transportation from better quarries further afield. As a result, the greening of the riverbanks began. During this period Durham City also underwent a programme of modernisation, and a newly fashionable Durham society evolved. As military control decreased, mobility around the city became easier and leisure was a catalyst to the change in use of gardens from being productive to ornamental.

This continued into the 18th century as the 'improvers' in Durham City took advantage of the riverbanks and its components to create the classical Romantic landscape; a combination of a dramatic site, ancient buildings, and water, only found to be lacking in trees.

As a result, pockets of trees were planted and ornamental features added into the emerging wooded landscape, including the gardener's Greek cottage (Count's House), icehouses and a few wellheads and springs. They also embellished the castle walls and towers as gazebos and grottos and enriched their Medieval appearance with new castellations. Most notably in 1771 Prebend's Bridge was constructed, although it replaced an earlier bridge swept away by a flood, the bridge was built in a new position carefully planned to provide delivery to the prebendary houses on the peninsula and for pedestrians to take in what is now the iconic view of the Durham.

A series of terraced gardens, promenades and walks were laid out at Bishops' Walk, North Terrace and Prebends' Walk which illustrate the form and interest of 17th century restoration gardens with the focus on walks with panoramic views. By the mid-18th century, the long terraces had been supplemented by major garden developments on the east side and the southern tip of the peninsula.

Here the narrow burgage plots of the bailey houses were extended beyond the castle wall in a series of cascading terraced gardens.

Tree planting on the important western peninsula slopes developed gradually from 1750 to 1825 when they were largely covered. They begin to appear on engravings c1775 which implies planting 10 – 20 years earlier and even in 1846 when Billings was drawing the cathedral, the tree

canopy is still light, and the planting generously spaced. On the eastern peninsula side there were pockets of trees in 1750 but the gentler slopes here below the walls have been cultivated for gardens up to the mid-19th century. Their subsequent change to woodland is more because of abandonment than deliberate policy.

The growth of the University had a great impact on the riverbank with various boathouses added and the elegant Kingsgate Bridge built in 1963, linking Dunelm House to the University buildings on the bailey.

The riverbanks were added to the County Durham Local List of Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes in 2020.

2.6 Heritage assets

The conservation area contains a significant number of individual heritage assets including both designated and non-designated buildings, structures and sites that create its historic identity and distinctiveness making an invaluable positive contribution to the conservation area.



Fig 19 above. *The Water Gate at South Bailey, a scheduled monument.*

The designated and non-designated heritage assets within the conservation area are identified on the following page.

Definition of heritage assets

Scheduled monuments

Archaeological sites and monuments which meet the test of national importance may be scheduled.

Listed buildings

Listed Buildings are buildings and structures defined by the Secretary of State as being of "special architectural or historic interest." They include buildings and structures that are deemed to be of importance on a national scale.

Grade I buildings are of exceptional interest, (only c.2.5% of listed buildings)

Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest; (c.5.8% of listed buildings)

Grade II buildings are of special interest; (c.91.7% of all listed buildings)

Non-designated heritage assets and Locally Listed assets (NDHA)

These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas, landscapes, or archaeology, identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of their heritage interest but which do not meet the criteria for listing.

Fig 20 right. *Image showing the variation of heritage assets within the conservation area, the grade II listed timber framed house at 32 Silver Street, and the grade II and grade I listed 17 and 18 Elvet Bridge, that incorporates the medieval bridge prison.*

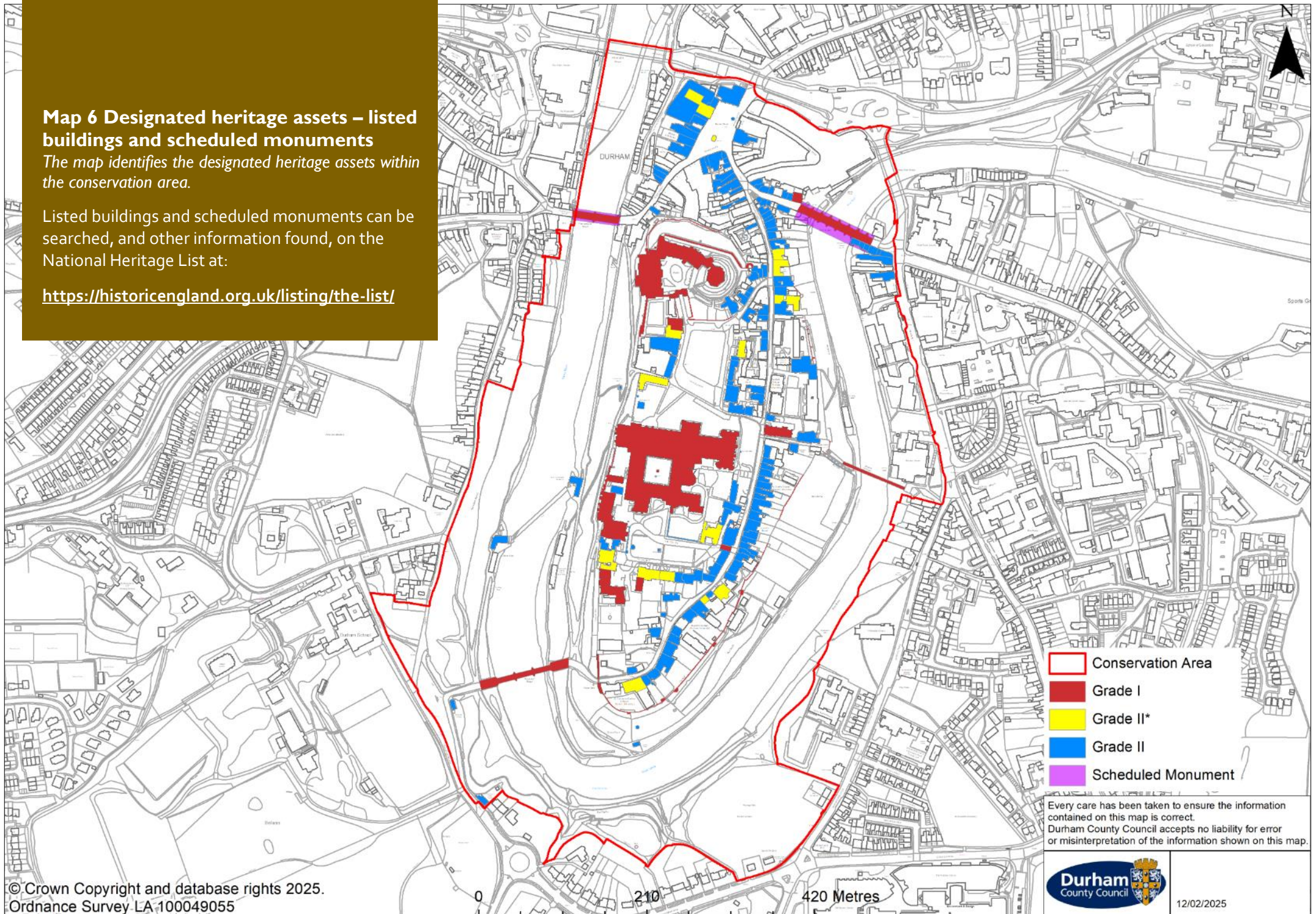


Map 6 Designated heritage assets – listed buildings and scheduled monuments

The map identifies the designated heritage assets within the conservation area.

Listed buildings and scheduled monuments can be searched, and other information found, on the National Heritage List at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>



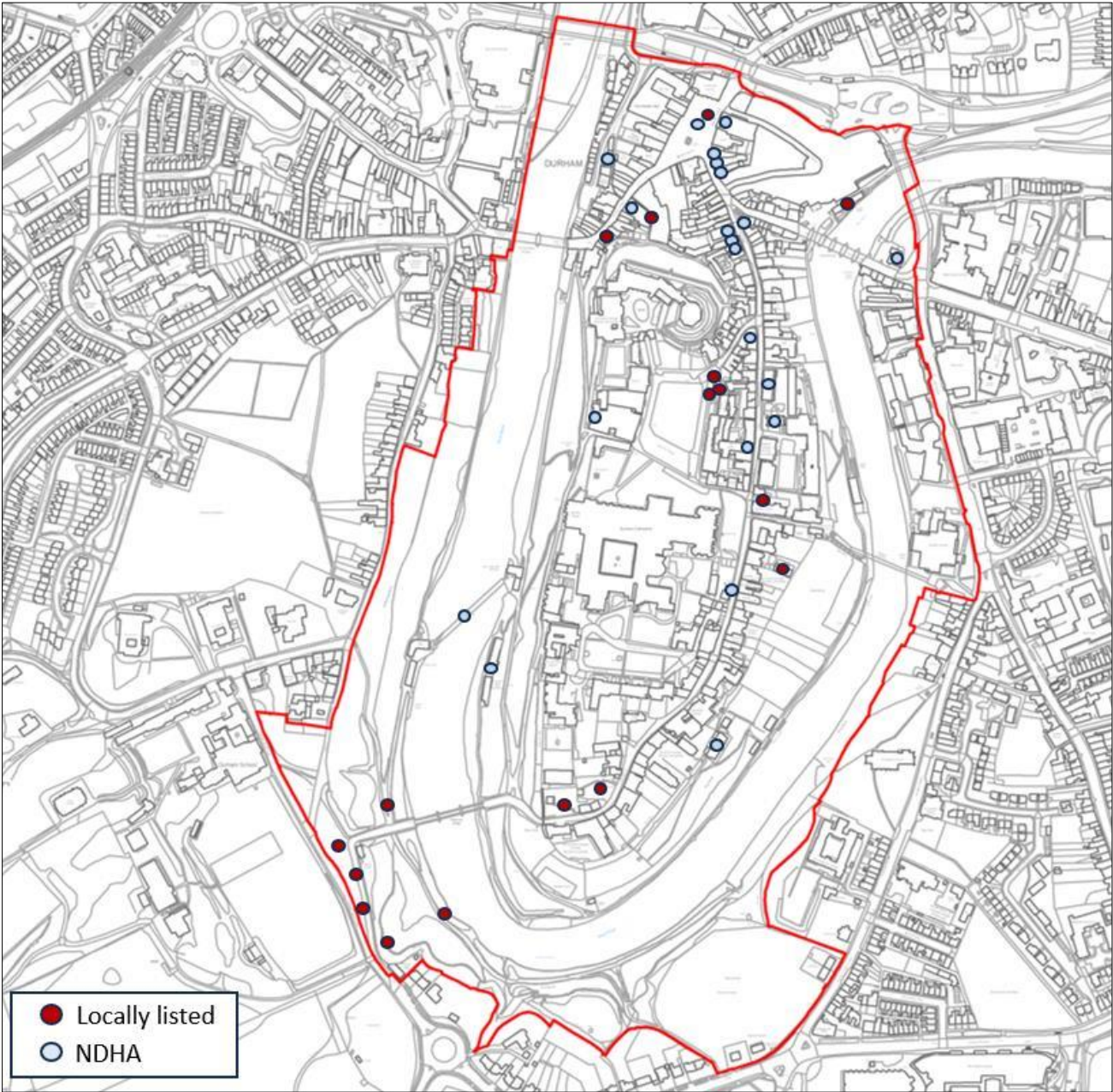
Map 7 NDHAs (buildings)

The map identifies the NDHAs identified within the conservation area.

The CAMP Strategic Context document describes the process by which NDHAs are identified. It should be noted that they can be subject to change and that omission of a particular building, structure, or feature, at this time should not be taken as an automatic assumption that it is not a NDHA.

Locally listed: Painting attached to front of No 13-15 Silver Street. Vennel between Nos 6 and 7 Silver Street. Post box, Palace Green. Telephone box, Palace Green. DLI Memorial Stone, Palace Green. The "Cuthbert of Farne" sculpture, Church of St Mary Le Bow, North Bailey. Gardens between 14 and 15 South Bailey. Garden adjacent No 13 South Bailey. Private Chapel at St Chad's College. Bridge footings, Riverbanks near Count's Corner. Stone sculpture, South Street Bank. Stone wall and cast-iron gate post near Prebends Bridge Cottage. Timber gate, piers, and wall at Prebends Bridge Cottage. Stone archway upper riverbanks path near Quarryheads Lane. Historic floorscape upper riverbanks path near Quarryheads Lane. Brown's Boathouse (The Boat Club Public House) Riverside. DLI Statue Market Place.

NDHAs: The Pace Building, Palace Green. No 50 North Bailey. HSBC Bank building No 1 Saddler Street. Nos 32-33 Saddler Street. Nos 64, 66, and 69 Saddler Street. The Shakespeare Public House, Sadder Street. Market Place. Nos 4-5, and 9 Nationwide Bank, No 10 Market Place. Nos 7-8 Silver Street. City Theatre, Back Silver Street. Hatfield College Chapel, North Bailey. The Assembly Rooms Theatre, No 40, North Bailey. Cruddas House, St John's College, South Bailey. Weir at the Fulling Mill. Riverbanks boathouses. Gas pipe, North Bailey. Swan and Three Signets Public House, Elvet Bridge.



Map 7.1 NDHAs (locally listed parks, gardens, and designed landscapes)

The map shows the boundary of the locally listed parks, gardens and design landscapes identified within the conservation area – Durham Peninsula area’s 1-4.

The heritage asset is sub-divided into the following parts:

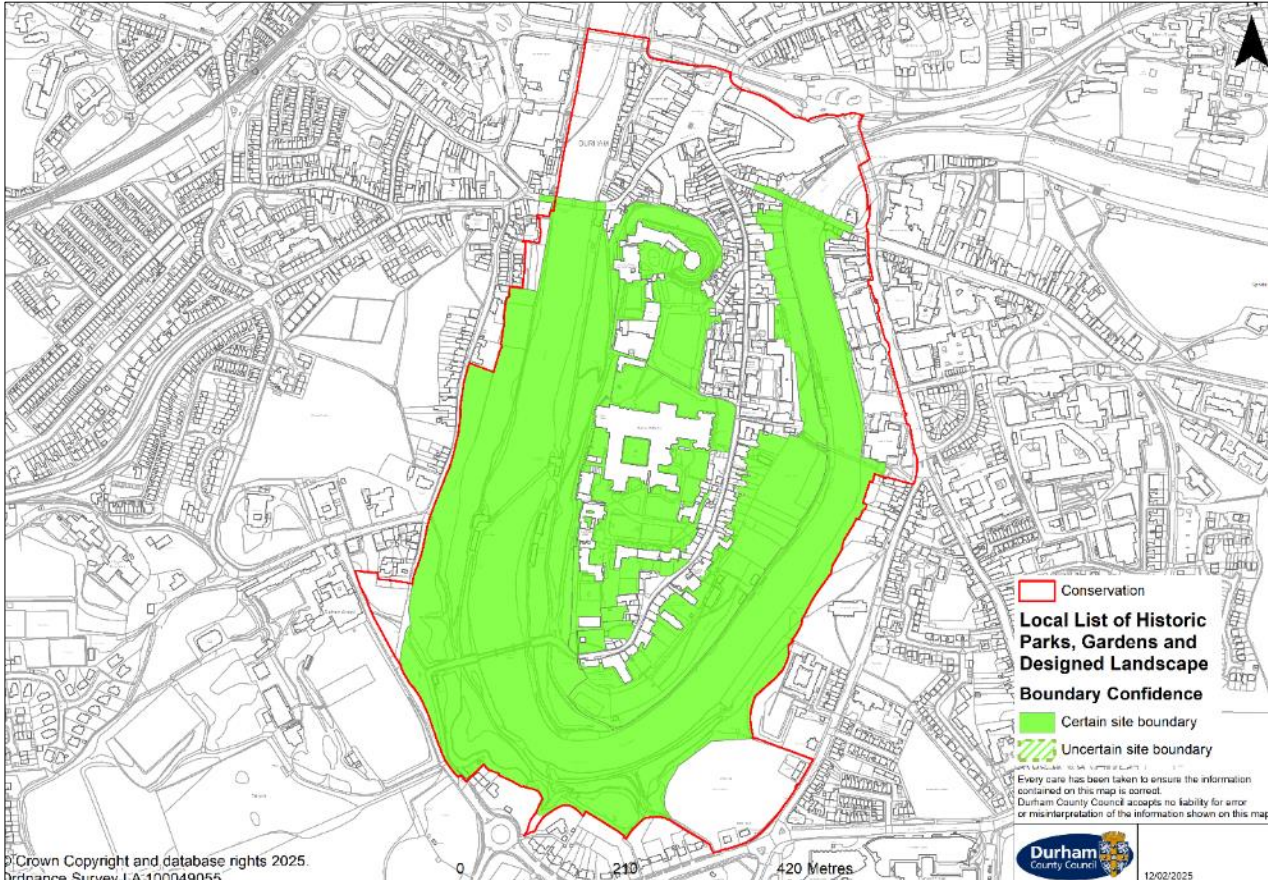
1 Durham Castle Precincts and Palace Green- this is the medieval and post medieval grounds and gardens at the castle and designed public open space on Palace Green. It includes the castle driveway, lined by an avenue of lime trees backed by castellated walls on either side, other features include the castle courtyard, levelled paths, and terraced gardens. The area has a historic association with Bishop Cosin, and designs by Joseph Spence (1699-1768) a garden designer of national importance.

2 Durham Cathedral Precincts - The area comprises the graveyard green spaces around the cathedral, and The College including the grounds to former Prebend's houses, private gardens associated with the Deanery, The Monk's Cemetery, Monk's Garden and Prebend's Walk, a 17th-century riverbanks walk.

3 Durham Peninsula Gardens – The area relates to the Bailey gardens below the city walls including four surviving icehouses and folly 'The Count's House' at the base of the riverbanks south of Prebends Bridge.

4 Durham Riverbanks – This comprises of the Durham Riverbanks including woodland walks, views, promenades, and terraced walks, which developed towards the end of the seventeenth century when Durham City was extensively modernised under Bishop Cosin. The area features Prebends Bridge which gave pedestrians the opportunity to stand and view the cathedral and wooded riverbanks, eulogized by many writers and artists who pursued the 'Picturesque' on tours around the country.

Further information can be found [4 Local Parks Gardens appendix 003.pdf](#)

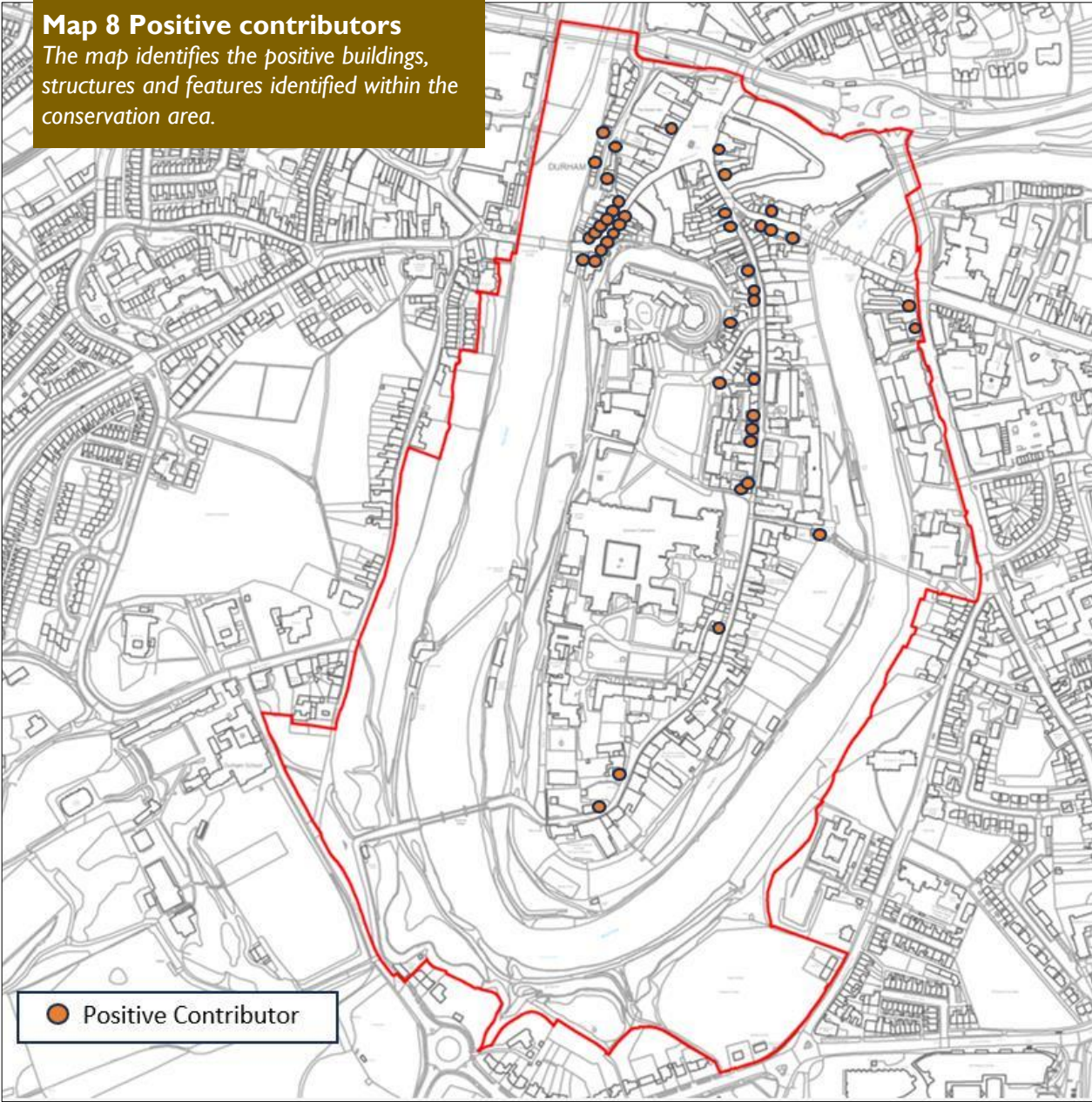


2.7 Townscape – positive contributors

There are other buildings of low to moderate significance which make a positive contribution to the area’s character and appearance but do not meet sufficient selection criteria to be classified as non-designated heritage assets. It is important that such positive contributors are identified separately, as such buildings still help to shape the area’s character, identity, and sense of place. It should be noted that this is not a definitive list, the omission of any particular building, structure, or feature, should not be automatically taken to imply that it is of no interest.

Positive contributors: No 8 and 26 Market Place. Nos 9, 10, 11, 13-15, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25,26, 27-28, 29, 30-31 Silver Street. Fowlers Cottage, Nos 1-7 Craft Workshops, No 1, and Greenwell Building, Fowlers Yard. No 2-3, 51, 52, 58-59, 67, 69 Saddler Street. Nos 13-15, 19, 22, 23 Elvet Bridge. Nos 81-83, 85 New Elvet. 3a, Moyners Garth, Owengate. No 1 Dunn Cow Lane. Nos 28a and attached outbuilding, 37, 41, 42, 43, 47 North Bailey. No 14, 15 South Bailey. Bow Cottage, Bow Lane.

Map 8 Positive contributors
The map identifies the positive buildings, structures and features identified within the conservation area.



2.8 Archaeology

Although not an obvious component of the conservation area, archaeological remains contribute to understanding how the city and its environs have developed resulting in their current character and appearance.

The character of the city has been heavily influenced by buried archaeology through the persistence down the centuries of street patterns, land divisions, property plots, and how buildings have evolved.

Excavations have been undertaken in Durham City from the post-war period onwards, with archaeological excavations in recent years discovering the existence of prehistoric settlements at various locations. These include a Bronze Age enclosed settlement at Mountjoy on the south side of the River Wear, Maiden Castle Iron Age hillfort and an Iron Age roundhouse on the site of 18-29 Claypath. The remains of Iron Age structures have also been found recently to the rear of 17 South Bailey. The existence of other sites is suggested by chance finds.

Given the spatial distribution of Late Iron Age sites in the central and eastern sectors of the county as revealed by discoveries during the last two decades, the existence of other, unknown, sites of this period within the boundaries of the Durham City Conservation Areas must be a strong possibility.

The peninsula is extremely sensitive with historic sites composed of many listed buildings and deposits of high archaeological potential. Many finds are recorded at different locations testifying to its archaeological importance. This includes at Moatside lane where deposits are noted below post medieval structures and the boundary wall, consisting of three hearths and a stone lined feature loosely dated to 13th-15th centuries. At Back Silver Street, along the western edge of the site was the City Wall, dating from the 14th century. Within the wall, the earliest structure was a circular kiln or oven dating from the late 13th century.

A significant excavation took place in Saddler Street in 1974 when a bow-sided building was found, along with evidence of leather workers and pottery, with a post-conquest date suggested that is highly significant for understanding the development of medieval Durham. Also within Saddler Street are the buildings that contain the below ground remains of the Great North Gate.

Extensive excavations at New Elvet Riverside found evidence of 13th century occupation including retaining walls, rubbish deposits, yard surfaces and vennels.

There is an important river archaeological assemblage with 40,000 items found mainly around Elvet Bridge. These include evidence of medieval trade (lead cloth seals) and pilgrimage (tokens).



Fig 21 above. Images showing archaeologists excavating at 5-8 South Bailey © Ecus Ltd.

The Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site Research Framework (being updated as the time of writing) identifies priorities for future study and informs specifications for archaeological survey and excavations. It contributes actively to improving the appreciation and understanding of the rich architectural, historical and archaeological record of the site.

There are a number of surviving medieval secular buildings where the present day external facades conceal retained features and fabric within and potentially beneath them relating to much earlier structural fabric. These are well documented in by Archaeological Services Durham University, The Durham City Medieval Secular Buildings Assessment Project, unpublished report, (2010).

No 16,17,18 Elvet Bridge houses of the 17th century, and 87,87a,87b Elvet Bridge with medieval roof trusses and timber framing beneath. No 16 Market Place is possibly 17th century with timber framing in the rear wing, with a number of examples of 17th century fabric, and possibly older, including timber framing found at different properties along the Baileys.

The peninsula has a wealth of remains, documents, artefacts and collections housed in the buildings around Palace Green. This material is important in the understanding of the social, political, religious, cultural, and economic context that has shaped its character.

The archaeological evidence, and potential, is of great interest and importance and adds to the conservation areas special historic interest and to that of the wider city centre. This could include underwater archaeological remains related to form river crossings, weirs, and mills.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, to be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

Fig 22 below. *Dun Cow Cottage, while externally it appears to be 18th century it is probable that it includes earlier possibly medieval fabric, and the tradition is that this site is that of the bishops' stables. Right: No 5 Owengate of the late medieval period and one of the few buildings in the city where the timber-framed construction is visible.*



2.9 Landscape, green and blue infrastructure assets

Green infrastructure is the term used to describe the network of natural and semi-natural (including the water environment) features within urban and rural areas. They are not limited to green spaces in the traditional sense such as public parks but can be a variety of types that thread nature into the built and urban environment. Such assets contribute significantly to the areas special character, visual quality and to the setting of its streets, spaces, and buildings. It enhances the area’s biodiversity, improves the quality of the environment, and helps with climate change mitigation.

There are two categories of green infrastructure assets identified as part of the CAMP. The first is the broad range that includes verges, roundabouts with soft landscaping, general green amenity spaces, street trees, play spaces and private gardens visible in the streetscene. The second category are the more significant local green spaces with added historic and comment interest, and those which are designated.

The Durham peninsula includes many designed landscapes of historic interest that can be divided into different compartments: Durham Castle Precincts and Palace Green, Durham Cathedral Precincts, the Bailey Gardens, and the Durham Riverbanks.

These include for example, the landscaping of the castle grounds that is a product of Bishop Cosins 17th century improvements with new courtyard spaces, gardens, and planted terraced walks. Palace Green is the main green asset in the public domain. It was originally the market place, cleared by Bishop Flambard in the 12th century to create open space to unite the castle and cathedral. Other green spaces of high importance include the cemeteries at the cathedral, and St Mary-The-Less, the fine enclosed private gardens at The Master’s House and The Deanery, and the allotment gardens on the west side of South Street. Further, The College landscape is of high significance comprising former communal gardens, smaller planned green spaces, the prebendal canons’ gardens and the external terraced areas that are improvements by such influential landscape designers as Joseph Spence.

Fig 23 below. A selection of images of different green assets within the conservation area, a typical riverbanks footpath, the gardens to a Prebendal House at The College, The College Green, and the allotment gardens at South Bailey.



The riverbanks is a richly wooded landscape that cloaks the river gorge around the peninsula forming the landscape setting to the WHS. It is a distinctive historic environment that is a locally and regionally important landscape and habitat green asset, of high historic, aesthetic, and cultural value, and accessible to the public.

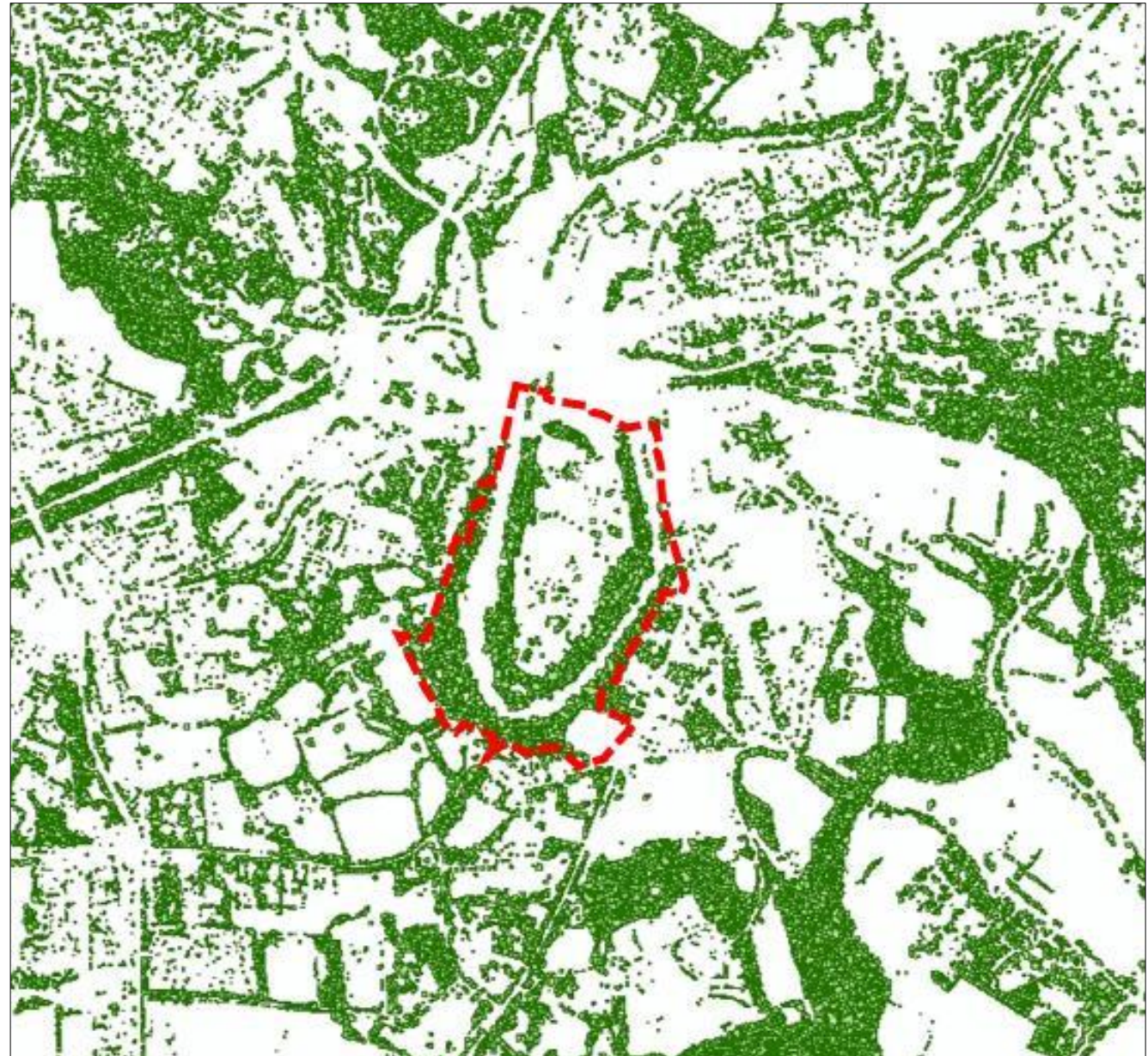
The riverbanks are also part of a spectacular series of linked designed historic parks and gardens within the city such as Old Durham Gardens, The College, Wharton Park, and Crook Hall, which reflect the complex historic phases of development and are of high significance. Together these form an important green corridor giving public access to nature.

Map 9 Trees

The graphic shows the tree canopy of the city and the conservation boundary in red.

Despite the density of urban form in places the combination of woodlands on steep slopes such as the peninsula gorge, Flass Vale, Pelaw Woods and Great and little High Woods and trees in farmland, parks and campuses gives the historic core of the city a very high urban tree canopy cover – in excess of 30% - which contributes significantly to the character and quality of views. The graphic demonstrates the high tree coverage within the conservation area that contributes significantly to its special character and appearance, and to the wider tree canopy of the city's historic core.

It is however important to recognise that after quarrying the river gorge slopes to provide the building materials for the constructions around Palace Green, the riverbanks were probably kept bare of trees and vegetation. This would be to keep the peninsula as a stronghold during onslaughts from the Danes and Scots. Trees are not evident on the inner riverbanks until well after the restoration in the 17th century.



The contribution of the River Wear to the conservation area cannot be overstated. During the 15th and 16th centuries the river and its riverbanks served as a castle moat, working quarry, and industrial power source, and it was treeless for defensive reasons. The Bishops of Durham quickly built bridges to avoid fords and ferries across the polluted waters, and by the 17th and 18th centuries the “greening” of the riverbanks began, completed in the early 19th century.

A river landscape was created, characterised as a place of calm, tranquillity, and great beauty in the best traditions of English garden design. This “Romantic” landscape is informed by the undeveloped stretch of river, the steep, forbidding, mature tree lined riverbanks, the remaining stretches of the castle walls and the way in which they have been partially covered by the vegetation and eroded by time, and by Prebends Bridge and the view it provides of this ensemble of nature and buildings.

The River Wear corridor is a special and unique part of the region’s natural environment and a significant natural component of the wider city that crosses and unites multiple conservation areas. It has high community, social and recreational value with the network of riverside paths, including a series of historic routes, is well-used for leisure activities, areas are used for events, and it provides an important wildlife corridor.



Fig 24 above. A winter view of the river, Durham Castle, Durham Cathedral and Framwellgate Bridge taken from riverwalk. Image © CBA.

2.10 Landmarks, views and vistas

Durham is a city of views, where the topography, historic development, and layout combine to generate a high number of important and evolving views¹ that contribute significantly to its special character and how this is experienced. Views can be static from a particular viewpoint, sequential, or dynamic, they may be short or long range, glimpses between or above buildings, or panoramas. The conservation area includes the castle and cathedral views at long, medium, and immediate ranges from outside of the conservation area boundary. Such views are important to the appreciation, understanding and visual experience of its special interest. Views display historical associations, for example the mills, and castle walls, the river, and bridges, the riverbanks and green spaces that form distinctive aesthetic elements, while the topography elevates the monuments' status and dominance. The wider landscape also plays a critical role in the background that is of high aesthetic quality.

Significant views include those from the surrounding area such as the riverbanks, and bridges, the historic townscape, and higher ground of the ridges that encircle the historic core of the city.²

¹ a view where the focal point draws in with movement and is not at first always apparent

The visual experiences within the conservation areas are strongly influenced by the topography, street, and development pattern of a dense and enclosed nature, obviously not planned to create distinctive views or architectural set pieces. Within Silver Street, Market Place, Saddler Street, and a large part of the Bailey the cathedral and castle are unseen. Such places provide significant streetscape views of high historic interest, architectural diversity, and richness, and by way of enclosure heighten the sense of drama and arrival when the cathedral is revealed.

Views are also seasonal for example during the Summer months the planned 18th century "romantic" landscape of the dramatic ancient buildings, water and woodland and the calm ambiance is strongest, but in the Winter, this gives way to the solidity and strength of the peninsula fortifications seen through the trees when out of leaf. The significance of some views is elevated when created by intentional design such as from Prebends Bridge, Court Lane, The Battery at Wharton Park, St Mary's College, and St Aidan's College.

Fig 25 below Examples of different views from within the conservation areas surrounding the peninsula and riverbanks. These are taken from Victoria Terrace, North Road, Framwellgate Peth, the train approaching into the city from the west, Grove Street, and the pedestrian footbridge over the A690 in Gilesgate,



A tiered approach to the identification of views has been adopted in terms of extent, quality, and contribution to the conservation area. Only views contained within the seven Durham City Conservation Area boundaries have been included. These views towards the Peninsula and Riverbanks Conservation Area are part of its significance that have an obvious focus on the castle and cathedral that have a wide visual reach within the historic townscape and far beyond. Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site provides several splendid views out, but these are excluded.

The views identified are mapped on page 41. The key views identified at a local level within the conservation area are included within the individual character area assessments I in Section 3.

Tier 1 – this can be a well-known, historic, or designed vantage point or view, and can be sequential along a historic route, or key approach, providing unfolding drama of the WHS. The view has high integrity, authenticity, and high aesthetic quality, demonstrating the visual drama and dominance of the WHS in its conservation area context. The WHS forms the historic focus in the view either out, through or across the conservation area to which it contributes very positively. The view may be experienced by a high number of people daily.

Tier 2 – the WHS may not completely form the full central focus of the view, but its significance is still well represented in its conservation area context. It may be a good view, or designed view retained in consideration of surrounding development. The view makes a positive contribution but is not exceptional nor the best place to view the WHS. Different elements of WHS may not be seen together. View may be reduced or obscured in extent and aesthetic quality, by intervening features and detractors in the foreground. May be a lesser known and lesser experienced view.

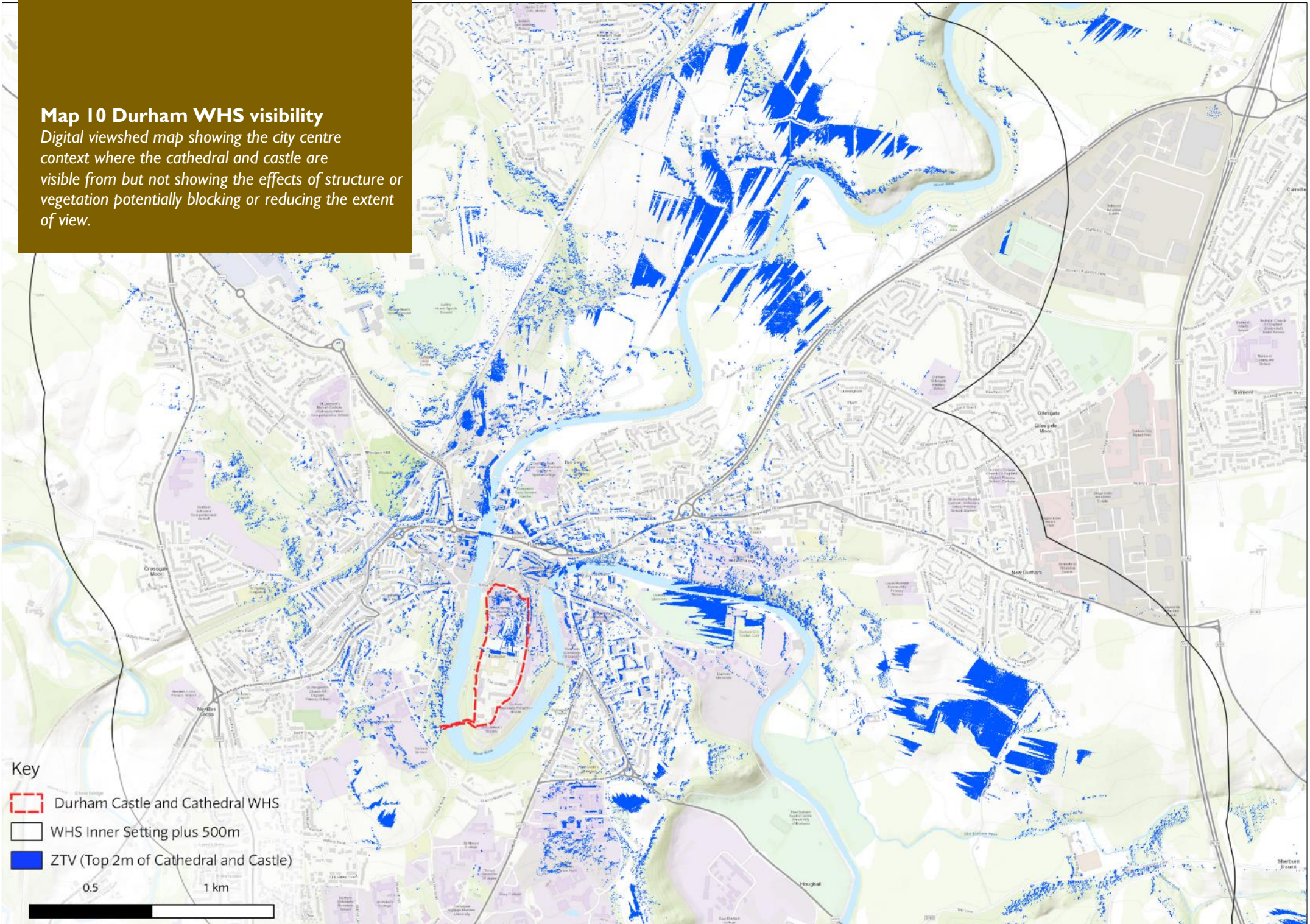
Tier 3 – the significance of the WHS is still appreciable in its conservation area context and the view still makes a positive contribution but at a lesser level. The view may be reduced to greater extent or its aesthetic quality more undermined by interventions. View of lesser quality overall compared to other views, and not the best viewing place to experience and appreciate the WHS to its fullest extent. May be a partial view, passing glimpses between, shielded, or intruded by built development to a greater degree.

While identified as a point of data many are not in fact fixed viewpoints from a specific location but are sequential vantage points with the castle and cathedral moving in and out of view to different degrees before often being revealed to different dramatic effects that enhance the experience within the historic city core.

Some of these view and vistas have elevated importance in terms of contributing to the outstanding universal value of the world heritage site. This is mainly in relation to visually providing an experience of the visual drama of the castle and cathedral on the peninsula, their romantic and historic townscape settings, massiveness, and uncontested dominance over the fragmented historic city core. It must be noted, there are likely to be many others that have not been mentioned, this should not be taken to mean that they do not contribute positively to the conservation area.

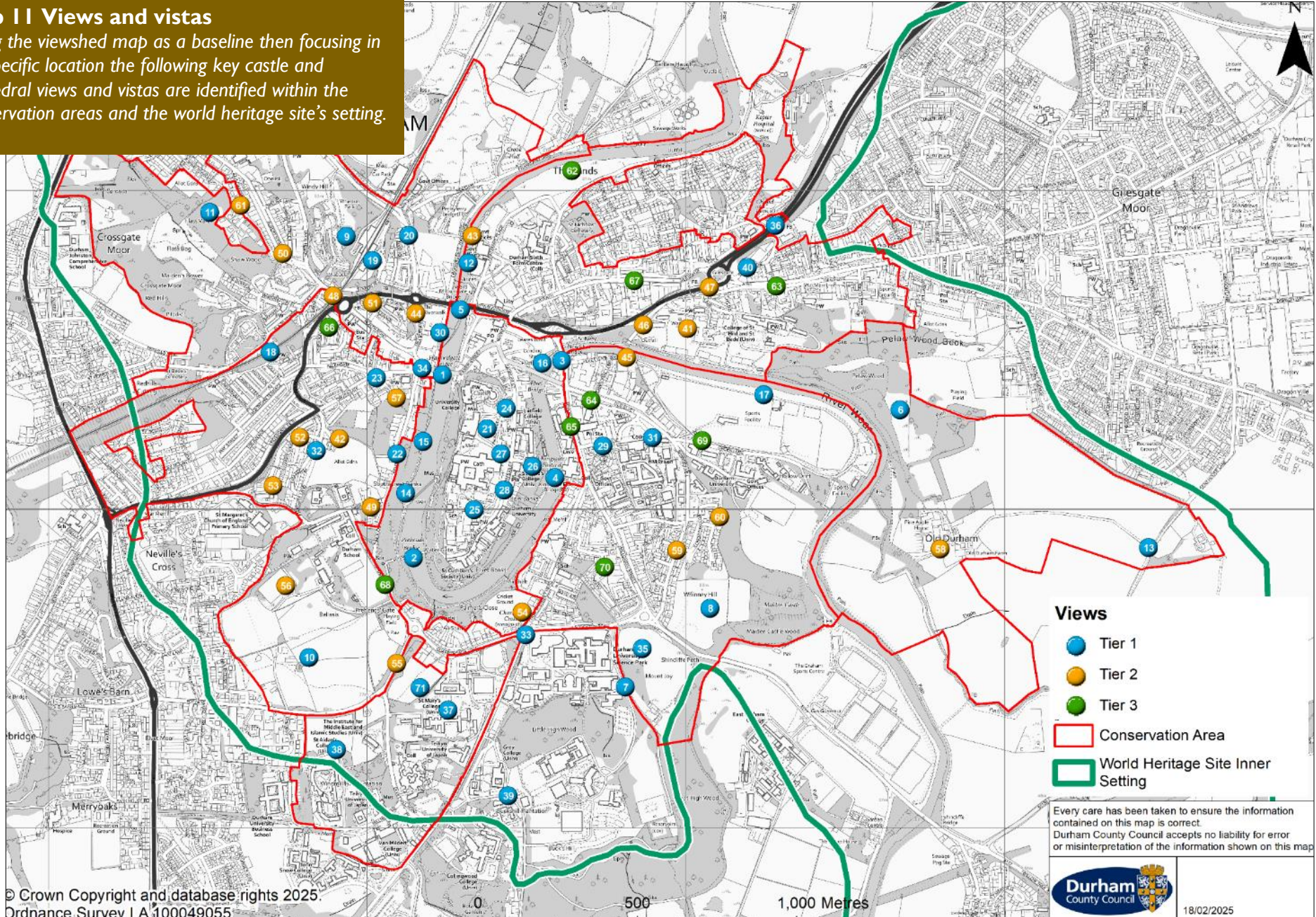
Map 10 Durham WHS visibility

Digital viewshed map showing the city centre context where the cathedral and castle are visible from but not showing the effects of structure or vegetation potentially blocking or reducing the extent of view.



Map 11 Views and vistas

Using the viewshed map as a baseline then focusing in on specific location the following key castle and cathedral views and vistas are identified within the conservation areas and the world heritage site's setting.



Map 12 Views and vistas (historic)

The views and vantage points laid over a 1st edition OS Map 1856 providing an indication of important historic view points, vistas and visual experiences.

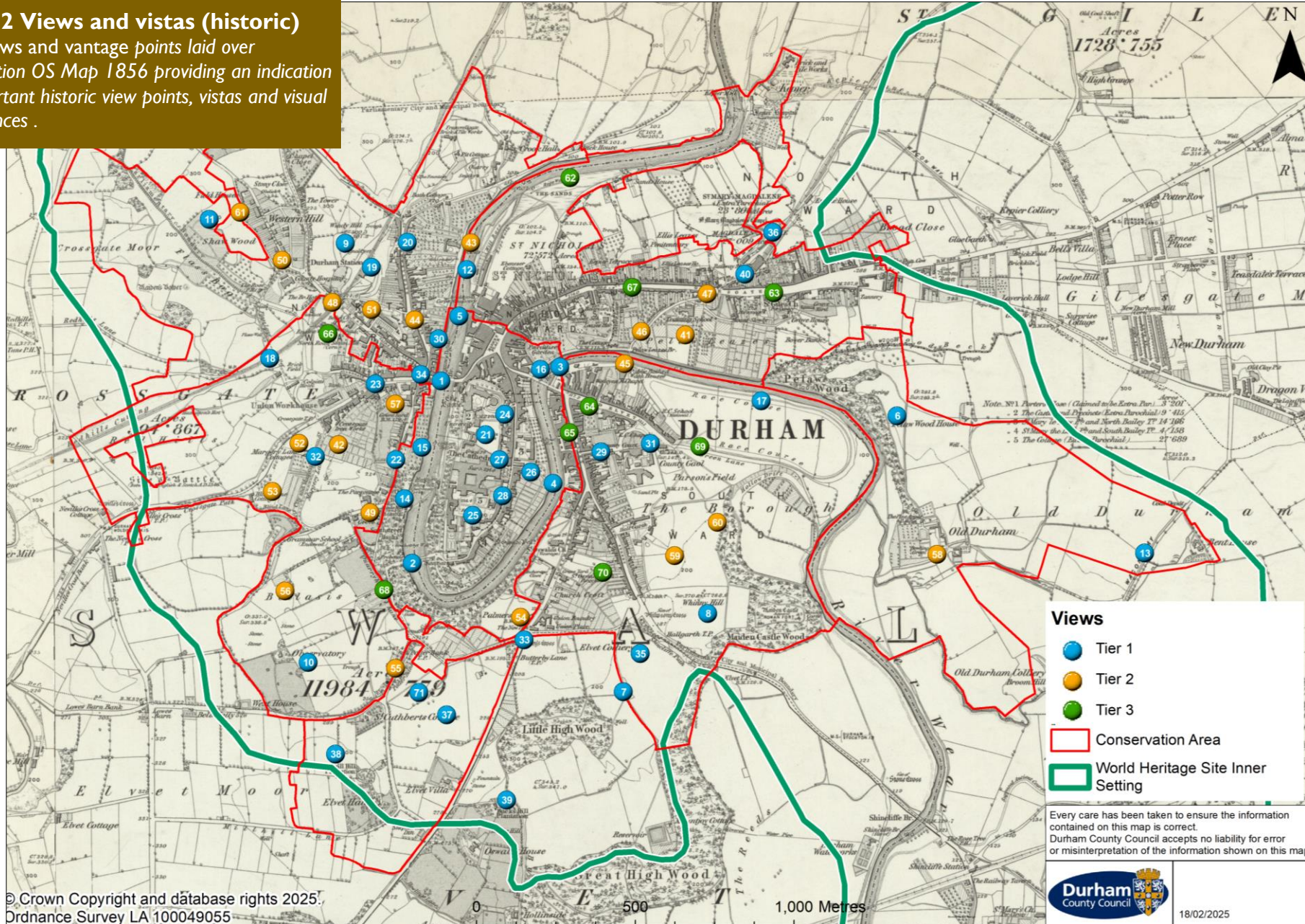


Fig 26 below. An example, Tier 1 view – location point 4, a sequential experience.

The cathedral tower is seen above the riverbanks tree canopy approaching the peninsula over Kingsgate Bridge. The cathedral then disappears from view, shielded by the trees and buildings enclosing the narrow Bow Lane. It then reappears in channelled glimpse view of the western spire before a dramatic reveal at the top of the lane.



Kingsgate Bridge and Cathedral images © Krystal Tara, used with permission.

Night time views

With Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site at its centre and the historic urban core contained by hills and ridges, the city is a unique environment both with respect to its topography, architecture, landscape and riverscape setting. By day it provides a spectacular picture whether arriving at the railway station or walking by the river. By night it has not been dramatically over-lit. It is a lively city with its mixed population of students, tourists, shoppers, workers, and residents providing an always changing pattern of activity.

The visual presence of the cathedral and castle by night contrasts with the darkness of the woodland cloak, river, riverbanks, and sky. This combined with the low levels of illumination in the townscape below, in the loop of river around the peninsula, and at the base of the WHS, provides a dark cloak that emphasis the cathedral and castle at night while giving a different visual experience.

Nighttime views contribute significantly to the character, visual amenity and distinctiveness of the conservation area, and wider city centre. Within the conservation area the most notable night-time views generally align with important day time views of the castle and cathedral. However, the darker environments of the approaching streets contribute positively to the different arrival experience entering Palace Green for example.

Fig 27 below. A drone view across the city at night. The visual presence of the Cathedral and Castle by night contrasts with the darkness of the river, riverbanks and sky creating a unique visual spectacle that can be experienced from many public vantage points around the city.



Image, ©Graeme Hall, used with permission.

Map 13 View/vantage point map

The map identifies a selection of important views/vantage points. Exclusion should not be seen that others do not contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

1. View from Millburngate Road Bridge
2. View from Framwellgate Bridge.
3. View from riverside footpath (west side)
4. View from South Street Mill.
5. View from Prebends Bridge.
6. View from New Elvet Bridge.
7. View from riverside (Prince Bishops Shopping Centre)
8. View from Dunelm House/Kingsgate Bridge
9. View from Owengate.
10. Views around Palace Green
11. View from Bow Lane.
12. Views around The College
13. Views around The Market Place

Historic space/streetscape/route views

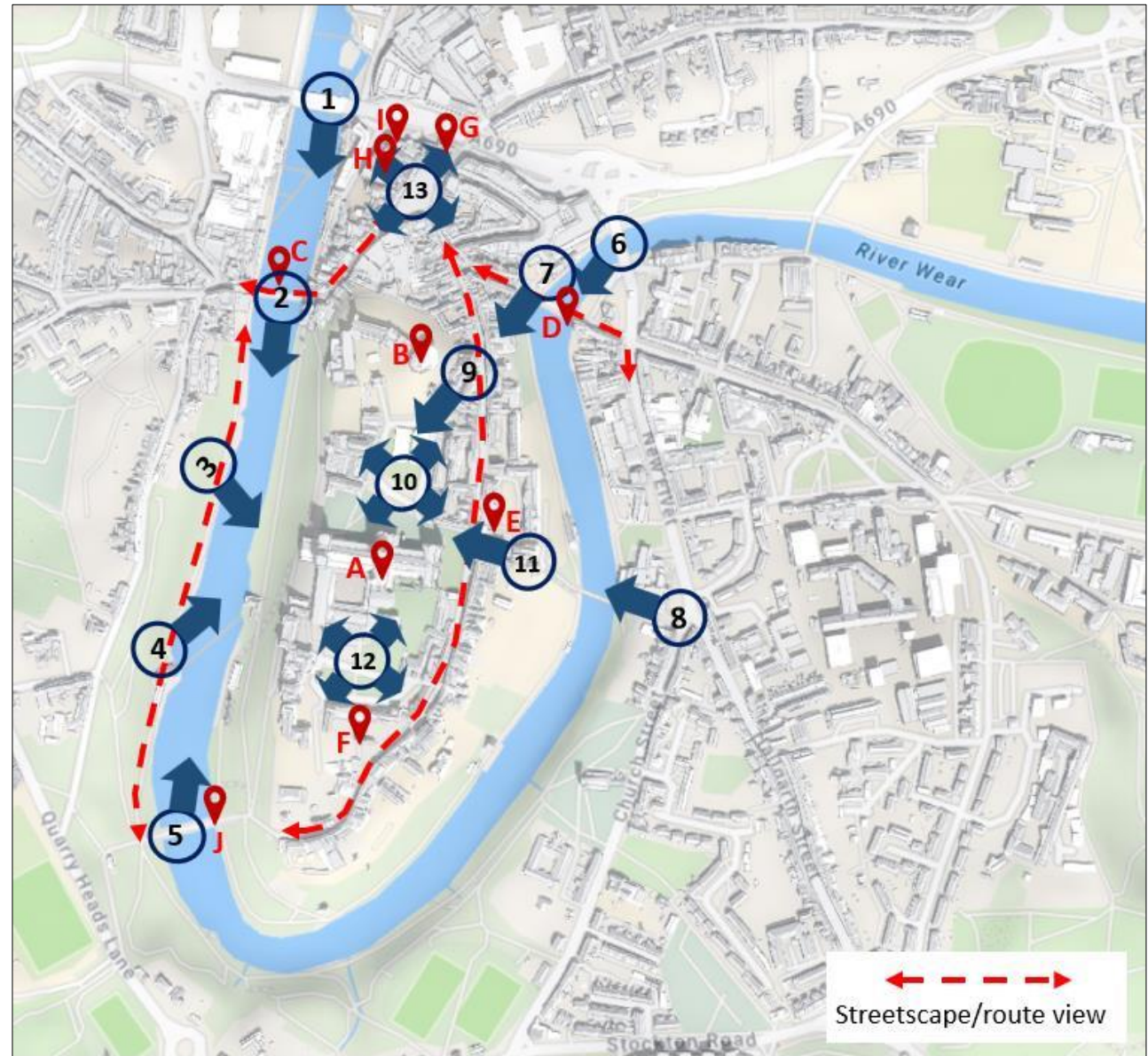
Silver Street, Saddler Street, North Bailey, South Bailey, The Riverbanks.

Key night-time views

Milburngate Road Bridge, Framwellgate Bridge, Prebends Bridge, New Elvet Bridge, Owengate.

Townscape landmark

A-Durham Cathedral B-Durham Castle, C-Framwellgate Bridge, D-Elvet Bridge, E-St Mary Le Bow F-St Mary the Less, G-St Nicholas Church, H-Town Hall and Guild Hall, I-Market Hall.



2.11 Movement, activity and atmosphere

The urban core of the conservation area provides the public, civic, educational, and commercial heart of the city centre. The Market Place, Saddler Street, Silver Street and Elvet Bridge have a high level of activity creating a bustling and vibrant atmosphere, which is fundamental to their character and sense of place. They receive high footfall being well used by workers, students, residents, and visitors. The streets are also the main pedestrian routes to the cathedral and castle, with the Market Place a natural focal point and a stopping and meeting place while also hosting outdoor markets, buskers, and public events. The use of this space and its draw for people walking up to the cathedral is reflective of the medieval period elevating its importance.

Within the conservation area movement patterns are dictated by the conserved, medieval plan form, the streets leading into the Market Place via the bridges, Saddler Street the gateway to Palace Green via Owengate, with the Bailey acting a spine route to the riverbanks. These main streets as supplemented by a series of narrow intimate historic vennels, lanes, and hidden courtyards that are generally quieter sub-environments.



Fig 28 above. The bustling and vibrant Market Place on market day and Elvet Bridge a popular place for outdoor eating and drinking.

In contrast, The College is more private with a quieter atmosphere, the Baileys largely collegiate and a university street, lively at its north end, and quieter in the south, while Palace Green has a similar academic air but is often busier with visitors and worshippers.

The College is often cluttered and detracted by a high number of parked vehicles, but traffic is the biggest weakness within the urban part of the conservation area impacting negatively on its historic character and the pedestrian experience. This is considered in more detail in section 3.

The riverbanks are not apparent from within the bustling urban environment but are accessible by the narrow routes between and within the building fabric such as at the west end of Silver Street, Windy Gap at Palace Green, the hidden Dark Entry within The College and by Bow Lane. These provide important experiences with a sudden transition from busy urban to quite natural and visual contrast of high value.

Movement along the riverbanks is ordered around an extensive network of public rights of way. These follow the course of the river at water level while others climb up the steep valley sides connecting to South Street, Quarry Heads Lane, and Church Street through St Oswald’s Church graveyard. Some paths provide short linear routes combining with others to form popular circular walks.

Most significant are the designed terraced walks of Broken Walls and Prebends Walk on the west side of the cathedral and college. The pedestrian routes offer different views and perspectives of the buildings on the peninsula, the bridges, wider river corridor and surrounding townscape achieving high aesthetic quality.

The riverbanks provide an invaluable quiet retreat from the hustle and bustle of the city, popular with walkers, joggers, dog-walkers, and cyclists. Anglers, rowers, and canoeists can often be seen on the river, and it is used by several local rowing clubs. The environment also provides a significant urban habitat for wildlife.

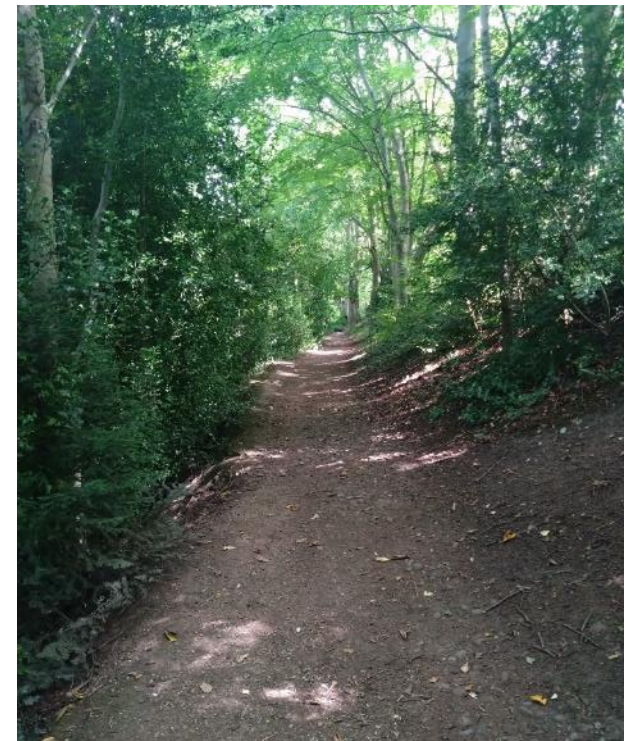


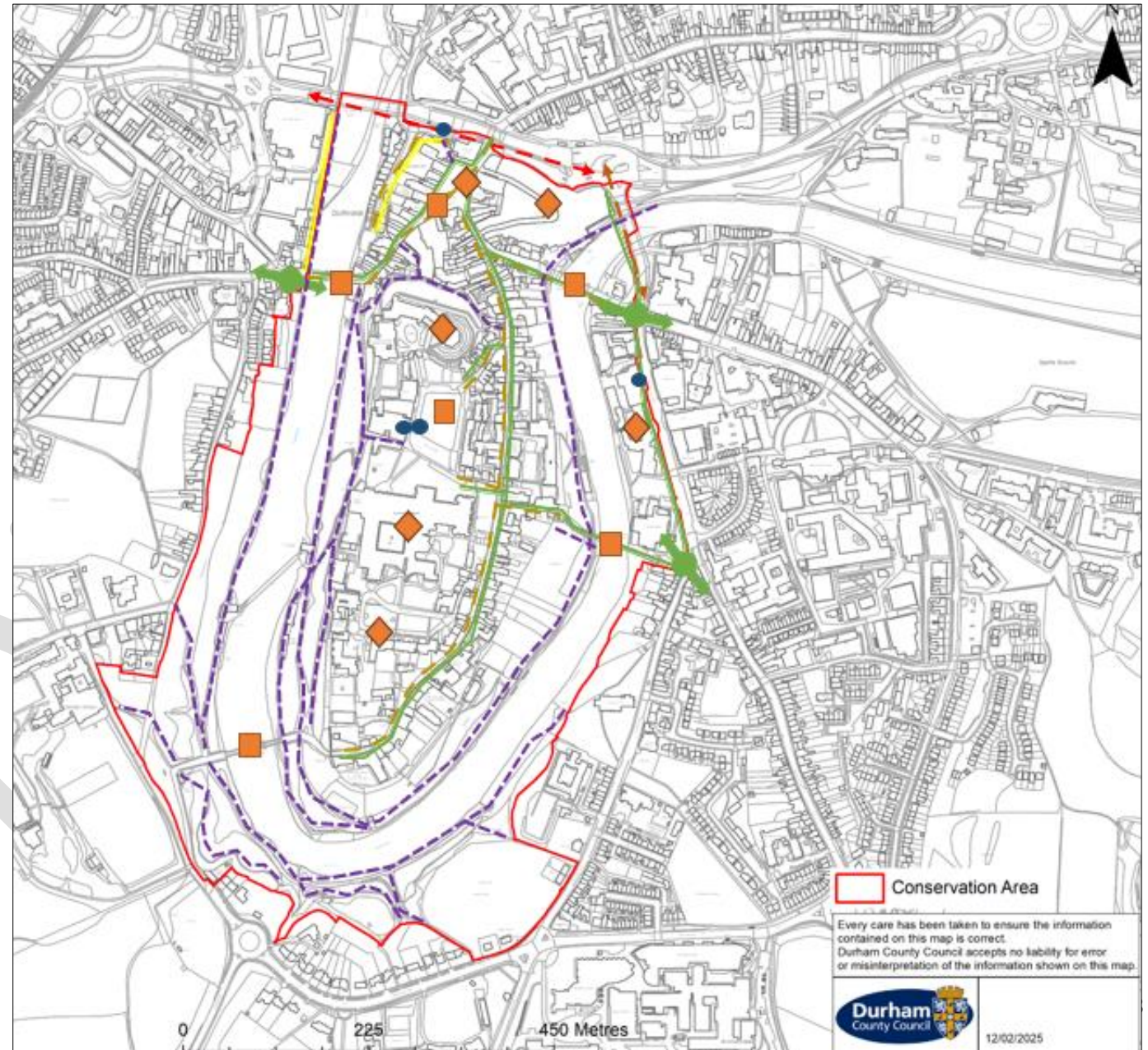
Fig 29 right. A selection of images showing the contrast between the busy commercial streets, the quieter academic air along the Bailey, and green lane route and tranquillity along the riverbanks.

Map I4 Movement map

The map identifies the main movement framework and key points within the conservation area and its surrounding environment.

Key to map

-  Gateway (thresholds where people pass between areas of different character, points of arrival or departure).
-  Major through route
-  Minor route
-  Unclassified road
-  Public Rights of Way
-  Bus stops
-  Primary walking route-high usage
-  Secondary walking route- medium usage
-  Walking linking route-low usage
-  Key destination (places of interest to both visitors and regular uses of the city)
-  Key node (meeting points where people naturally congregate or points of intersection and arrival).



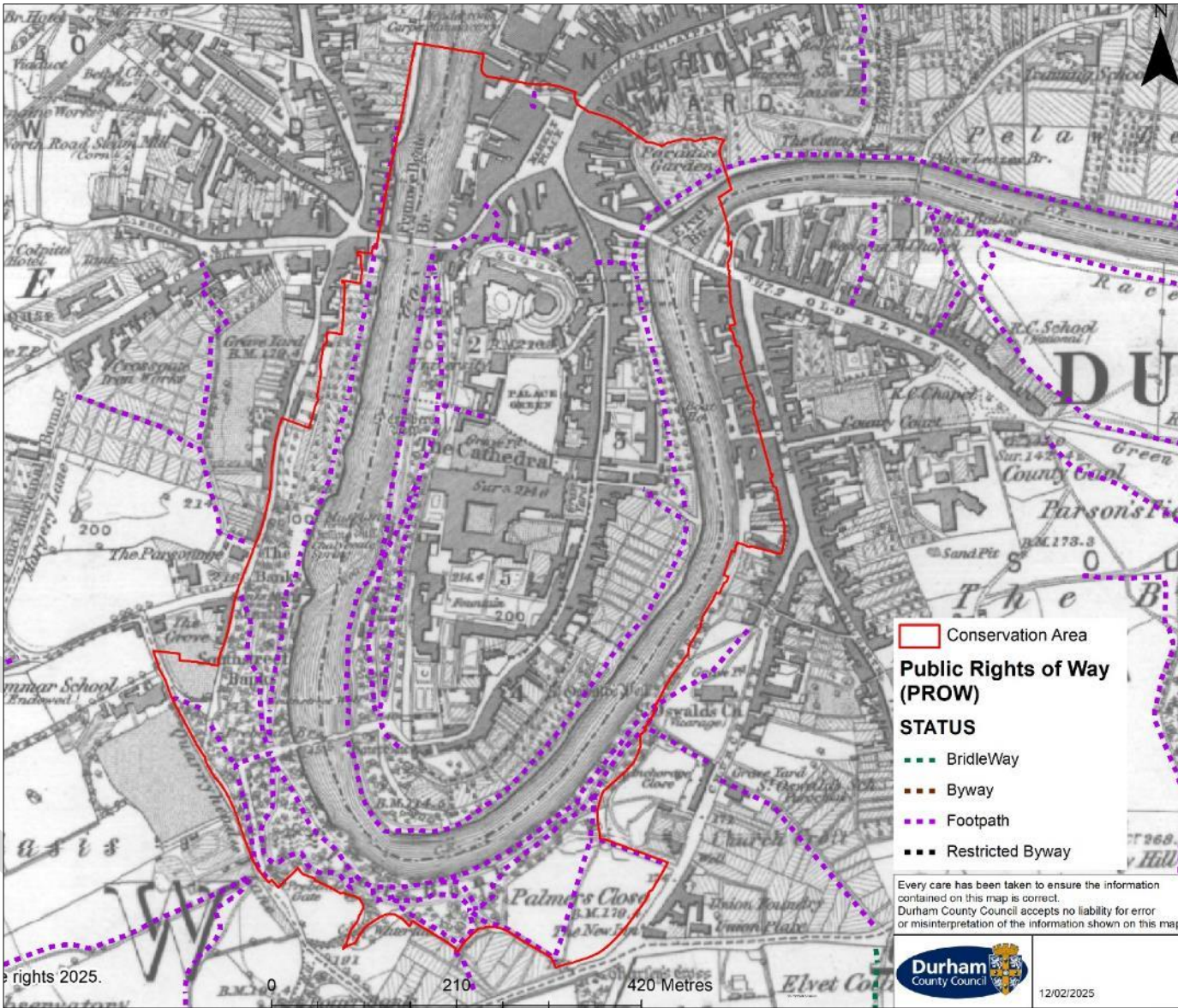
Map 15 Movement map (historic)

Movement map overlaid onto a 1st edition Ordnance Survey map c.1860 showing the pattern of historic routes many likely pre-dating the detailed recording.

The early layout of the road pattern combined with the historic lanes, paths and tracks have a formative impact on access and movement through the area and are characterful distinctive routes contributing positively to the significance of the conservation area. The historic routes are still legible and navigable, with obvious routes to the cathedral. Some of these are potentially part of the pilgrim trail, although this is conjectural, adding to the better known linkages to Finchale, Beaufrepaire, and Kepier, and the route of Cade's Road.

Cade's Road is an undefined Roman route believed to have been constructed between 138 and 161AD, a decade or so after Hadrian's Wall. It represented a north-south link between York and the Tyne, in County Durham passed Chester-le-Street, Kepier, Old Durham and Shincliffe. It is named after John Cade of Durham, an 18th century antiquarian who in 1785 proposed its existence and possible course.

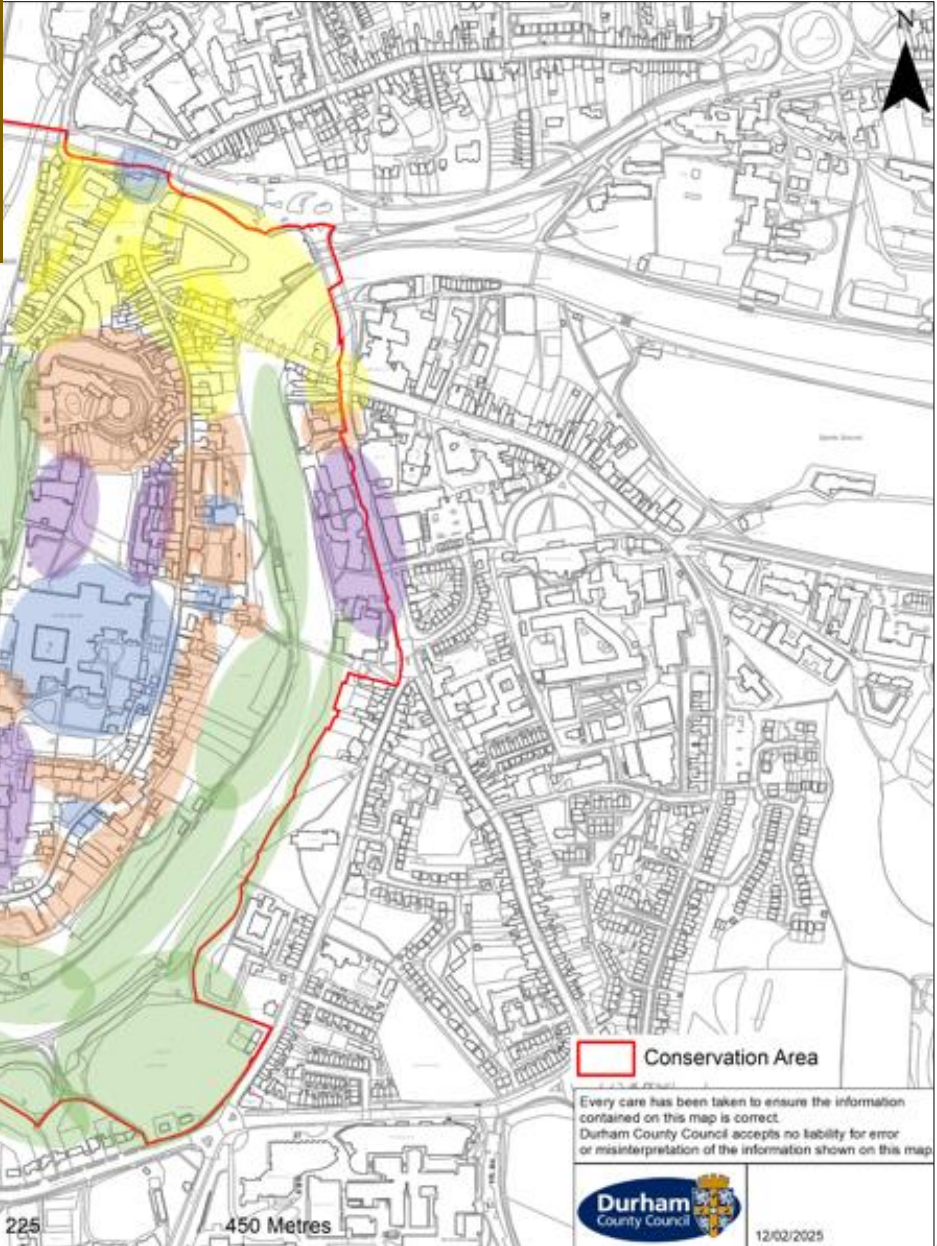
They are key to understanding the historic development of Durham and thread together all the historic assets, offering a tangible link back to Durham's past, some with elevated importance leading to the cathedral and providing dynamic and sequential visual experiences on approach.



2.12 Land use

Land use defines building types and character that changes from place to place, the plan illustrates broadly the ways in which buildings and land are used across the Durham City Peninsula and Riverbanks Conservation Area. It shows large concentrations of different uses with clear definition to the component parts. The neck of the peninsula in the north dominated by commercial, the cathedral obviously ecclesiastical with a continuity of use over the past 1000 years, the Bailey educational/residential, and the surrounding riverbanks recreation/leisure.

Map 16 Land use
Map broadly defining the different land use types within the conservation area. These shape its special character, ambiance, and the experience of the place.



2.13 Layout, pattern and grain

The Market Place is loosely rectangular in shape lined on all sides by tightly clustered buildings enclosing the public open space. In the southwest corner it drops steeply down to Framwellgate Bridge via the narrow Silver Street. In the southwest corner it leads into Saddler Street that then splits at Magdalene Steps, dropping down onto Old Elvet Bridge. The break between Saddler Street and North Bailey, is where the North Gate stood, which still provides a notable division by the hill in the road.

In the north the Market Place's historic connection to Claypath has been severed by the construction of the through road in the mid-20th century. In this area the Prince Bishops Shopping Centre goes against the historic layout and grain. But it at least provides narrow enclosed streets open to the sky seeking to emulate the adjacent medieval streets and punching into the street frontages within the Market Place and Saddler Street.

Beyond Saddler Steet the Bailey provides a direct north-south route to the riverbanks through the Watergate. This means that Palace Green and The College are hidden from view behind buildings creating their own sense of place and distinctive historic character.

The area is characterised by buildings packed tightly framing the carriageways and expressed through height. Creating a densely developed area, with mostly unbroken street frontages and a fine urban grain.

The survival of the vennels, down to the river (Drury Lane) or up to the base of the Castle mound (Moatside Lane) and the private Saddlers Yard, are an important part of the historic layout and physical fabric of the city. There are short, enclosed, and intimate routes with their own sense of historic character.

The east end of Elvet bridge turning the corner onto New Elvet retains its medieval cohesiveness and building line, but this disappears at Elvet Riverside Development that offers nothing positive to the plan form or character of the conservation area, the modern blocks being horizontally emphasised and set back from the street frontage.

At Palace Green, Durham Castle occupies the northern part, with the Keep perched high on its mound, and Durham Cathedral to the south, the two separated by the formal flat open green space. This is enclosed by buildings of a loose linear arrangement, of different footprints and varied buildings lines, unified by orientations facing the green. It is obvious that the plan form has been intentionally designed to frame the cathedral view, and buildings heights and positions do not intrude.

To the south of the cathedral is the Cathedral College, comprised of an exceptional group of buildings clustered around a large central lawn with a series of interlinked smaller green open spaces. The west range overlooks the steep riverbanks and was partially incorporated into the medieval defences. The layout includes private historic gardens, and a separate worker's yard within the north east corner. This is an important enclosed space of historic ancillary buildings and structures in a linear arrangement grouped around a small courtyard.

The castle walls are a major built component of the conservation area and critical to its special interest. They are no longer a complete fortification as intended, but what survives of the circuit has a clear plan form as outer defensive structures running across the ridge line of the upper river gorge extending from Moatside Lane to Kingsgate Bridge with some surviving elements to the rear of the properties lining North Bailey. Accesses, promenades, and terraces to the foot of the walls were formed as leisure use grew, these are relatively short straight and enclosed promenades of high significance.

Fig 30 below. A drawing showing the peninsula and the layout of the castle fortifications.



2.14 Character areas

The conservation area can be sub-divided into two “character areas” - smaller places which have their own identities. Identifying such areas is important in order to provide a detailed and practical analysis, identify the issues, problems and opportunities that vary from place to place, and to develop appropriate policies for future conservation and enhancement.

Three character areas are identified as broadly correlating in land use, historic development, and in townscape character terms. Each area is distinctive with its own ambiance but with a number of unifying characteristics.

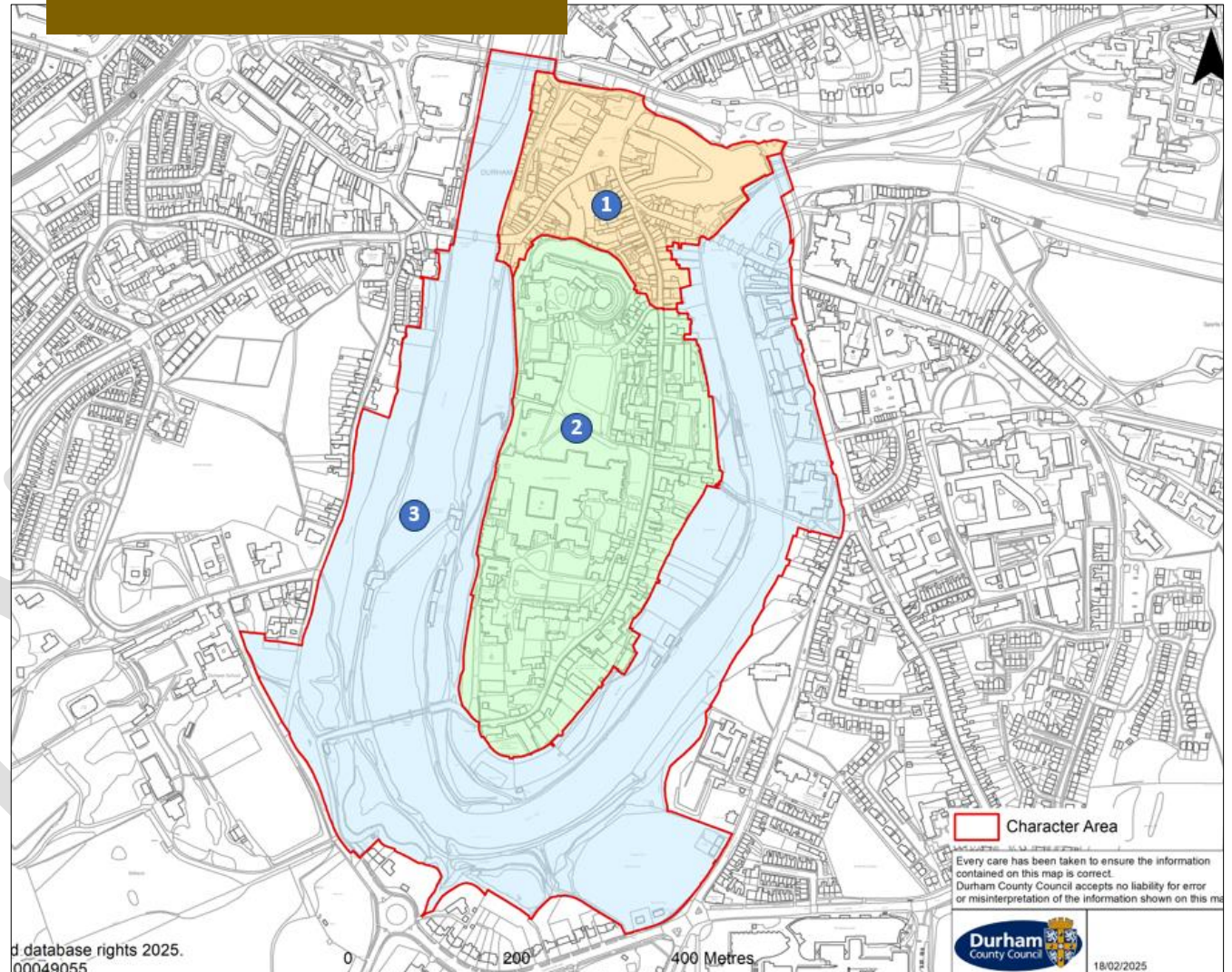
Character area 1 – Historic civic and commercial core, Market Place, Silver Street, Saddler Street and Elvet Bridge.

Character area 2- The castle and cathedral precinct that include Palace Green, The Baileys, and The College.

Character area 3- The River Wear corridor from Milburngate Road bridge to New Elvet road bridge that includes New Elvet riverside development.

Map 17 Character areas

Map highlighting the identified different character areas within the conservation area.

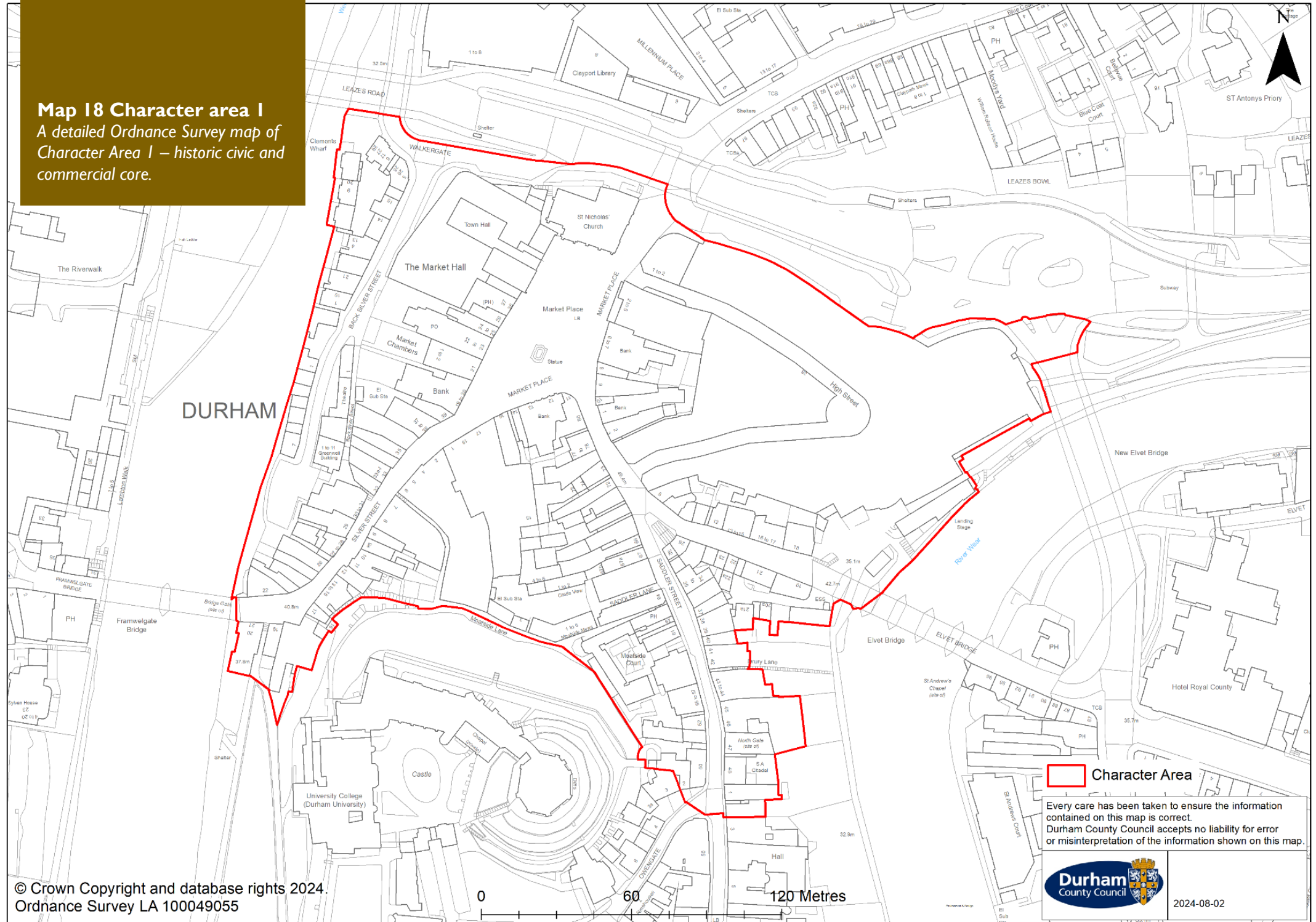


3. Street characterisation

3.1 Character area I (historic commercial core)



Map 18 Character area I
A detailed Ordnance Survey map of
Character Area I – historic civic and
commercial core.



3.1.1 Location and summary of special interest

The character area occupies the northern part of the conservation area and comprises the Market Place, Silver Street, Saddler Street, Elvet Bridge, and Back Silver Street along with the Prince Bishops Shopping Centre.

The north boundary follows the outline of the Prince Bishops Shopping Centre, crossing the entrance point into the Market Place off Claypath and down along Walkergate. From here the boundary heads south following the riverbank at Back Silver Street to the rear of No 20 and 21 Silver Street on the south side of Framwellgate Bridge. In the south the boundary follows the route of Moadside Lane around the base of the castle keep mound. The east boundary consists of the rear plot lines of the buildings on the east side of Saddler Street passing underneath Elvet Bridge to the riverside where it follows the footway for a short distance back to the shopping centre.

The immediate setting to the area comprises the enveloping dense urban townscape that is a mixture of commercial, leisure, and residential uses of different ages and styles, and the River Wear, with the castle and cathedral high above in the south. Moving out there is a gradual decrease in the density of development in the north and east and a shift in character to the flatter open floodplain land and rural landscape on steep sided valley terraces.

What gives this area its special historic and architectural interest and character?

- Surviving medieval plan form with the focal point of the Market Place at the heart of city life over the centuries, and key civic space.
- Strong sense of historic identity drawn from buildings that vary in age, scale, architectural style, and detailing but with unifying characteristics.
- Architectural diversity and richness with high profile civic, religious, and commercial buildings.
- Distinctive enclosure and intimate historic character with comparatively little visual relationship with the castle, just above, and the river.
- The role the area plays in the experience of the cathedral and castle, the monuments being invisible moving through the area and then the sudden and dramatic unveiling at Owengate.
- The vennels and other routes that are part of the historic physical fabric, have their own character, and offer tangible links to the area’s past.

- Topography that has a dramatic and influential effect by organising the built form and allowing its evolution to be illustrated.
- The positive role the area plays in significant riverside views of the WHS and its setting, including the tumbling roofscape down to the riverside.
- The distinctive backwater area of Back Silver Street unique in the conservation area on account of its historic industrial character that is well preserved.
- Intangible significance as the main route and key gateway taken by ancient and modern day visitors to the cathedral.



Fig 31 above. The ancient western approach into the character area over Framwellgate Bridge, with the castle’s west range looming above.

3.1.2 Layout, streets, and spaces

The area is an intensive historic commercial and retail environment strongly conveying the Durham vernacular. It is characterised by the linear burgage plot pattern producing narrow facades with a vertical expression. Some plots have been amalgamated in modern times resulting in buildings wider horizontal blocks that are out of keeping. The historic layout has undergone a certain amount of change, most notably by the modern bypass road and by the introduction of the large-scaled shopping centre development. But the medieval layout of the central civic and social space, and the streets radiating out from it is well preserved and legible.

The Market Place has continuously built up frontages wrapping around and enclosing the square. This is interrupted by the detached grandeur of St Nicholas church, and the three gateway points leading to Claypath in the north, Saddler Street in the southeast, and Silver Street to the southwest and the narrow vennel within the northwest corner between the Market Hall and Church leading via steps down to Walkergate.

Fig 32 right. A selection of images showing the entrance into the Market Place from Claypath, and streetscene views within the Market Place, Silver Street, and the entrance into Saddler Street.



In Silver Street the building line in places is staggered with various properties projecting out, and they step down in response to the steep descent towards Framwellgate Bridge, adding interest and character.

Saddler Street has a consistent building line that curves gently, and is level at first, before rising steeply up to the junction of Owengate and North Bailey.

Significantly, the existing street level is misleading as Saddler Street has been levelled and filled up for a depth of many feet, and deep below its present surface are the remains of the older houses, and the subterranean remains of the North Gate that caused the notable incline.

The street frontage hides the fact that the rear is more complex and in places older built form, in particular on the western side; here various phases of historic expansion evident, intermingled within more modern developments. This has created numerous irregular small courtyards of varying and unique character.

On the east side of Saddler Street, Magdalen Steps provides an important and positive feature demarcating where the street splits and descends to Elvet Bridge. The street has the same form and character as both Saddler and Silver Street but is slightly wider. It provides a direct sight line over the bridge into Old Elvet visually affirming the sense of its historic continuation before the modern road was constructed that swept away the historic buildings.

Back Silver Street is also a distinctive historic area. It is accessed in the north from the Walkergate slip road, with the buildings lining the riverside facing inwards, and the backs of the buildings lining the west side of the Market Place opposite. It is a short dead-end street that rises in the south to a small open area. The linear space is enclosed by the buildings and walls, with steps and a narrow vennel leading up to Silver Street.

It differs significantly to the rest of the townscape in a positive way owing to its industrial riverside character.

Fig 33 below. *The view along Elvet Bridge close to its junction with Saddler Street at Magdalene Steps that visually merges into Old Elvet providing a visual hint of the once connected streets. Below Back Silver Street of a historic industrial character.*



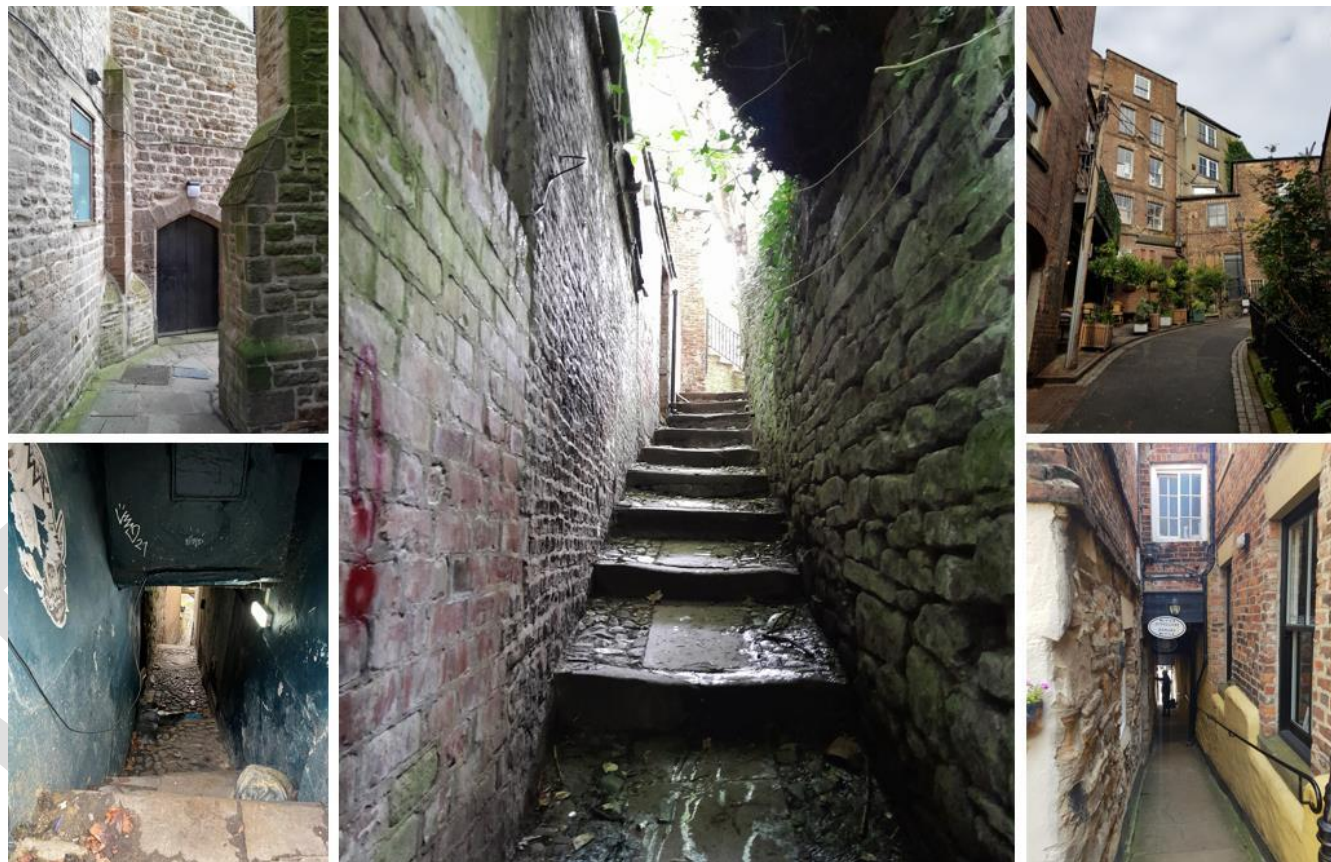
Part of the area's significance and character is the surviving maze of vennels and courtyards with the historic layout intact. Moatside Lane is very narrow, enclosed, and a steep route that skirts around the base of the castle keep mound and probably follows the route of the former castle moat.

Drury Lane drops down very steeply from Saddler Street to the riverside and is a 'hidden' cobbled vennel having been built over merging into the built up street frontage. Others include the vennel to Back Silver Street, again tightly enclosed, while Jailers Yard is an important historic route running below an archway of Elvet Bridge that opens out to the riverside.

Moatside Lane and Drury Lane are however unwelcoming and detracted by the poor condition of their surfacing, enclosing walls, and they suffer from anti-social behaviour issues.

The High Street goes against the traditional street pattern of the area introducing a modern block form. It comprises two curving streets, one from the Market Place, the other from Saddler Street, which meet at a wide circular point. It is a dense development and inwardly manages to recreate some of the intimacy of the surrounding medieval streets. From the outside looking towards the conservation area, it does not contribute positively due to its overbearing proportions, and failure of articulation, compounded by the riverside tower.

Fig 34 below. Views within the different vennels within the Market Place, Drury Lane, Moatside Lane, Elvet Bridge and Saddlers Yard.



There is very limited green space within this character area, restricted to self-seeded trees within some of the rear plots of the buildings on the west side of the Market Place, and the trees and vegetation along the river frontage at Fowlers Yard up to Framwellgate Bridge. They contribute positively in terms of softening the built form and have visual amenity value at an important point where the urban area begins to transition into the riverbank’s woodland in the south.

Fig 35 below left: the view from across the river showing the trees at Back Silver Street merging into riverbank’s broad leaf woodland below the castle and cathedral. Below centre: planters adding colour into the Market Place. Below right: the vegetation on the north side of St Nicholas’ Church that softens the buildings.

Other positive features that enhance the aesthetic of the place are the ornamental planters and hanging baskets that help soften the hard urban environment and inject colour into the streetscapes.

The rear gardens to the buildings lining the east side of Saddler Street, Nos 40-48, can be seen from Old Elvet Bridge and walking along the riverside, they contribute positively merging into the wider riverbank’s greenery, but the individual history plots are legible.

Within Moatside Lane the south boundary is informed by the mound of the castle keep where the trees and vegetation contribute positively to the lane’s character and sense of seclusion. Lastly, on the end of the character area just beyond St Nicholas’ Church there is a small area of shrubbery on a terrace level above the boundary wall that softens the edge of the Market Place.



Layout, streets, and spaces - positive characteristics & identity that contribute to the area's special interest.

- Tightly knit high density development representing the local vernacular with a fine urban grain.
- Retention of integrity and legibility of simple Medieval street pattern and layout.
- Buildings framing the carriageways and spaces with continuous building lines creating enclosure and an intimate inwards historic character.
- Buildings and spaces dictated by the topography creating stepped streetscapes adding to character.
- The long real plots of the medieval burgage plots are key to the character of the area.
- Surviving historic narrow vennels and courtyard spaces that are part of the medieval fabric providing sub-environments with their own distinct character.

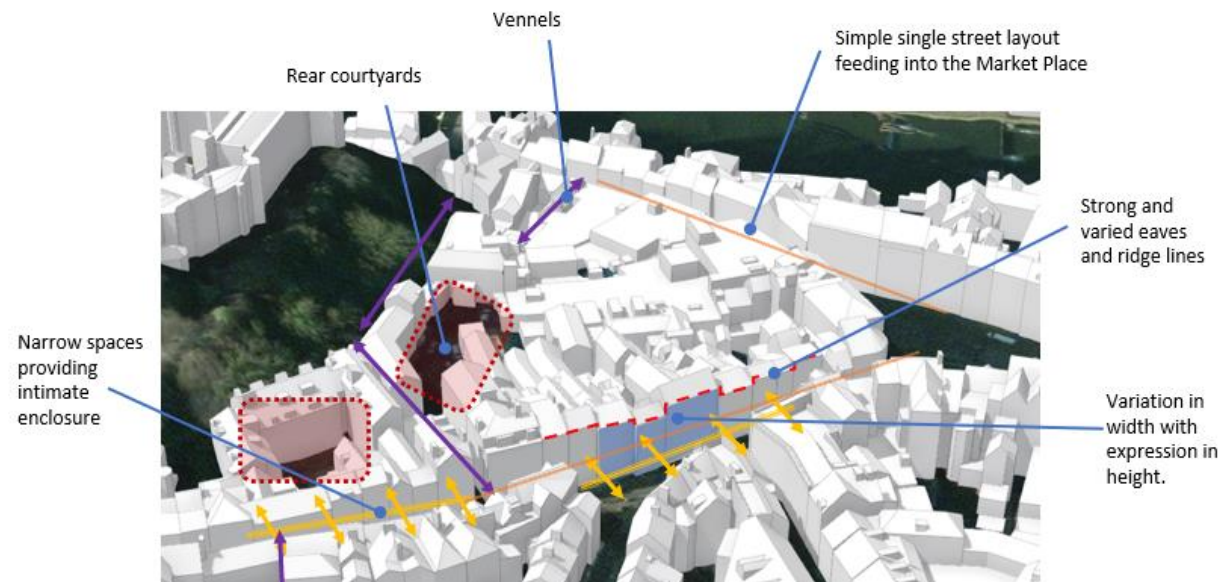
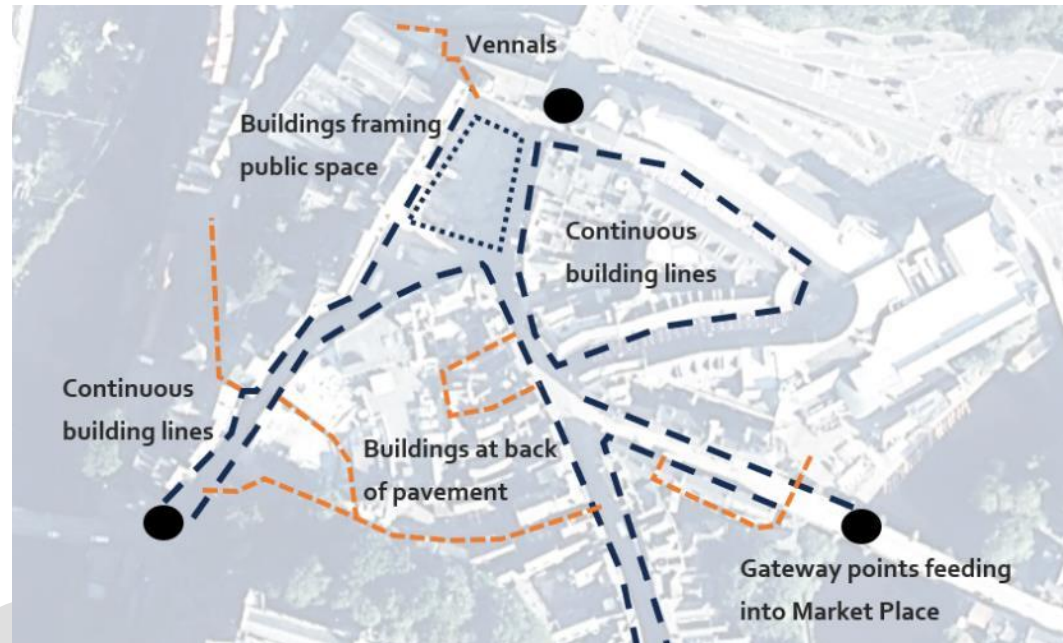


Fig 36 right. A plan and model showing key attributes of the area's layout that create its character.

3.1.3 Architectural styles, form, and detailing

The architectural character in this area is rich and varied, and of high quality, recognised by the high number of listed buildings. Added interest is created by the different uses; commercial, civic, places of worship, banks, and public houses, fundamental to the area's special interest. The buildings are experienced as a group but there are landmarks and buildings of more elaborate individual designs, which add architectural richness and break up the grain, contributing very positively to the townscape.

Buildings are predominantly three storey with variation in building widths, heights, and detailing. At the same time unifying characteristics can be found such as solid to void compositions, traditional forms and shapes, vertical emphasis, and balanced facades. The buildings generally have a Georgian and Victorian appearance, but some contain older medieval fabric.

Common features and detailing found include, floor bands, painted heads, sills and window surrounds, eaves corbels, quoins, timber painted sash windows with different glazing patterns, and the occasional bay window in different canted, oriel and half-round styles. Some buildings have added stone and brick dressings.



There are a number of buildings that stand out owing to their higher architectural quality and distinctiveness. The Church of St Nicholas is an 1857 rebuilding of an earlier church to the designs of architect James Pigott Pritchett Junior. It is in a decorated Gothic style built from sandstone with ashlar dressings. It has a Lakeland slate roof with stone gables, and prominent five stage tower. It features arms of City of Durham, an elaborate niche with a statue of St Nicholas, and fine stained glass windows.



Fig 37 left and above. Views of St Nicholas Church, Town Hall, and Guildhall.

The Town Hall and Guild Hall are part of the 1851 redevelopment of the north west corner of the Market Place, designed by prolific Victorian architect PC Hardwick, with their Gothic style following that of the Market Tavern. They are constructed from coursed squared sandstone below a Lakeland slate roof. The 17th century Guildhall to the left is a 3 bayed 2 storey building with Tudor-arched doorways in chamfered stone surrounds and features a mixture of 2 and 3-light windows with tracery and large stone brackets supporting a first floor balcony. The Town Hall roof is of note being very steeply pitched with a tall crooked spirelet and paired polygonal chimneys; it has a prominent set of wide steps leading to large double doors in a stone arched entrance.

The Market Hall is a substantial building and again is part of 1851 redevelopment, built for the Durham Markets Company. It is in the Tudor style of coursed squared sandstone with a large roof of Welsh slate and featuring stone mullioned windows.

Despite being a 20th century building Nos 2-5 Market Place (Boots) is a notable building. Despite the low-quality modern ground floor frontage, the floors above have a distinctive Art Deco style with geometrical style windows deeply set back between moulded mullions carried across both floors to give an elongated vertical rhythm with the upper floor and its flat roof set back. It creates an interesting juxtaposition with the surrounding historic buildings.

On the corner with Saddler Street No 79/70 and No 11 Market Place, (Bells Fish and Chip Shop), is a distinctive and complex building comprising of two houses of the 16th or early 17th century linked by a late 17th century staircase with jettied rear wing, and the buildings form incorporates a vennel. It is notable for its curved frontage created when the road was widened, and it features tripartite sash windows with flat lintels, and floor bands.

Down the bank into Silver Street No 32 is a very distinctive former house of the early 17th century. It consists of one bay and four storeys that is jettied at first and second floor levels a very rare survival in the city with its visible timber-framework .

Also, noteworthy is Albert House comprising of three storeys and two bays spanning Back Silver Street into the buildings backing onto Fowlers Yard. It dates from the 19th century constructed from brick with ashlar dressings and has sash windows in distinctive shaped surrounds, cornice, and end brick pilasters with crown plaques "Victoria A.D 1837".

Fig 38 below., View showing the different architectural styles of the buildings lining the west side of the Market Place.





Fig 39 above The buildings along the west side of Silver Street showing the timber framed No 32 and the adjoining Albert House.

Opposite, Nos 1-8 that are all mid-20th century developments, which appear to be generally neutral in contribution. But looking up, Nos 7-8, the upper floor over sails the shop frontage that was remodeled in an interesting Art-Deco style for the former "Burton" tailors. It includes a combination of brickwork with ashlar dressings and decoration.

Moving into Saddler Street there are many buildings that exhibit typical characteristics of their 18th and 19th century ages, but some stand out as being more distinctive. No 36 is notable for its aesthetically impressive gabled frontage that is highly decorative and with timber framing, which appears to be medieval.



Fig 40 above. The distinctive Art-deco upper floor of Nos 7-8 Silver Street.

No 47-48 comprises of 2 storeys and 3 wide bays featuring a Greek Doric door case and large 24-pane sash windows. Interestingly, it was built after the demolition of the Great North Gate in 1820 as an Assembly Rooms, becoming the Salvation Army Citadel in 1925.

On the corner of the street rising up back towards North Bailey is No. 50 which also incorporates No.1 Owengate. The building is 1820's again built on the site of the North Gate. It consists of a large 2 storey curved block of stone ashlar and is classically detailed. It features a corner bay, 6-panelled door and over lights in a Tuscan door case, a small early 19th century shop, and a mixture of narrow windows and larger sashes. Its roof is also notable as it is rounded over the corner and includes eaves cornice and ridge chimneys.



Fig 41 above. The streetscene along Saddler Street showing the local vernacular character and quality.

Perhaps the most impressive building typology in this character area are the five banks, all of which are prominent and striking buildings reflective of their historic use and status.

Barclays Bank dates from 1887 by A Waterhouse in the Perpendicular Gothic style, Lloyds Bank dates from c.1900 and is ashlar fronted in a distinctive Baroque style, Nat West has three storeys and five wide bays and an imposing presence in the Market Place, built from ashlar in 1876 in an eclectic classical style. No 9 Market Place, Nationwide Building Society, is smaller in size and scale in comparison to the latter but has a fine ashlar facade in a classical style. Finally, is HSBC, No 1 Saddler Street, dating from the 19th century with a distinctive and well detailed ashlar frontage.



Fig 42 above. The architecturally impressive Lloyds Bank standing prominently at the junction of the Market Place and Silver Street.

The Back Silver Street area has its own distinctive character that contributes very positively to the townscape. The buildings found here comprise of a mixture of large scaled red brick former warehouses and the simple characterful one storey workshops at Fowlers Yard that are well-preserved. These are important surviving examples of Victorian riverside industrial buildings.

Fig 43 below. The unique riverside industrial buildings at Fowlers Yard.



Other important architectural elements include the Statue of the Third Marquis of Londonderry, which has become, since its unveiling in December 1861, an integral part of Durham Market Place and the best-known piece of public art within the City. In addition, dating from 1729 the Neptune Statue is one of the oldest features of the Market Place. Commissioned to commemorate an intention to make the River Wear navigable to sea-bound ports, for most of its life it formed a surmounting piece to a series of water fountains. It was removed in the mid-20th century and re-erected in the Market Place in the early 1990s.

The most recent public art piece installed is the bronze life size statue of a single DLI soldier by Edinburgh artist Alan Herriot that symbolises the poignant moment after the infantry buglers sounded the ceasefire in Korea in 1953.



Fig 44 above. The statue of Lord Londonderry, and the DLI Soldier in the Market Place.

The palette of materials makes a valuable contribution to local distinctiveness and character of the area. There is great variation in the type, texture, colour, and tone, along with the mixture of locally sourced and imported materials that add aesthetic interest contributing positively. Materials are also important in creating a sense of history, and in reflecting changes in fashion and taste as well as reflecting building status.

The area is characterised by a rich traditional material palette comprising of a mixture of render in different, mainly light colour finishes, and with a smooth texture, and many examples of locally sourced buff sandstone, ashlar and brickwork are found. Brickwork is mainly warm red facing brick, with examples of older darker handmade brick, some richer reds, reds with pinkish hues, plus the occasional building of buff brick that adds aesthetic interest to the streetscene. Some changes in brickwork to the upper floors can be found, important in signifying how buildings have evolved. There are a limited number of properties with painted brickwork in cream, white, green, and grey colours, and while covering the original material they do enliven the streetscene.

Stone and brick are commonly used for detailing such as quoins, floor banding, door and window heads and cills, dressings and added decoration.

Almost all of the visible roofs have Welsh slate, the exceptions being some limited use of Lakeland slate, and one building on Elvet Bridge has traditional red pantiles.



Doors within the character area are highly varied in style; most are associated with shop fronts and as such tend to be timber glazed with lower panelled sections with some distinctive bespoke styles.

Aside from the modern High Street, traditional timber is the common door material and there are many examples of solid painted timber doors in different domestic 3, 4, 5 and 6 panel styles, some serving separate entrances accessing upper floors. They have a variety of paint colour finishes adding visual interest.

Of particular note are the distinctive doors at No 41 and 42 Sadler Street that are a mixture of double partly glazed doors with decoration, and end solid doors with carvings, all under arched fanlight, and the decorative 9 panel timber doors to Barclays Bank.

Traditional timber painted vertical sliding sash windows are the predominant window style within the character area. They are in typical Georgian and Victorian period styles comprising of different 1-over-1, 2-over-2, 3-over-3, 6-over-6, and 8-over-8 glazing configurations often with sash horns.

There are some examples of more distinctive windows including tripartite sashes, cross patterned leaded styles some with coloured glass, and mullioned windows in timber and stone. There are a limited number of bay windows in canted, oriel, and half-round styles that add interest to the upper floors of the buildings.



Roofscape

When walking along the narrow medieval streets, the roofs of the buildings are not always apparent. But for example, when looking across the Market Place and down into Silver Street, down Elvet Bridge from Magdalene Steps, or from the rise of the street at the North Baily-Owengate junction looking directly into Sadler Street, the distinctive roofscape can be visually experienced and appreciated.

Traditional gabled forms parallel to the street are prevalent, and experienced as a group, but there are some flat roofs and occasional hipped roof that add variation. The graceful tall spire of St Nicholas Church, the crow-stepped gable at Barclays Bank, and distinguishable small spire on the Town Hall are notable roofscape features.

The differences in roof spans, degrees of pitch, building widths and heights, with ridge lines punctured brick and stone chimneys, and other landmark features such as the church tower, creates a historic roofscape of significant interest and character.

Looking into the character area from vantage points such as Riverwalk, Old Elvet, Framwellgate Bridge and Millburngate Road Bridge, the tumbling of the building forms and roofs responding to the steep slopes of the peninsula is evident. This distinctive broad roofscape contributes significantly to the understanding of the historic development of the place and its character.

Fig 45 below. Images of general roofscape views at Elvet Bridge, Silver Street, and the Market Place showing the differences in roof pitches, ridge, and eaves levels, with rooflines punctured by gables and chimneys.



Shopfronts

The character area is dominated by retail activity that is its historic identity. As such shop fronts are a major and important part of the different streetscapes' moving between places. The surviving historic, and traditionally designed modern replacement shop fronts contribute greatly to the historic townscape. While they vary in appearance, they have unifying characteristics of traditional proportions, vertically emphasised shop window often with glazing bars, recessed entrance doorways, suitably scaled fascia's above, framing provided by pilasters often with decorative corbels, and grounding via stallrisers.

There are a number of standout examples such as at No 10 Market Place with fine moulded pilasters, and over hanging upper part that its highly decorative, incorporating City of Durham shields, and egg and dart moulded cornice.

Opposite is No 11 "Bells" with a shop front of c.1870 in a unique Venetian Gothic style on the curved corner. No 16 Market Place has a fine decorative late 19th century shop front with a curved shop window containing small multi-paned glazing in the upper part, a deeply recessed entrance door with patterned over-light and decorative curved aperture, pilasters, and cornice.

The adjoining shop front at No 4 has an early 20th century shopfront of a simpler elegant traditional design. Albert House, Silver Street, features a fine late 19th century shop front with distinctive flat arched glazing with mullions, slender pilasters with decoration, cornice, and stone plinth.

Moving into Saddler Street No 36 is notable for its black painted distinctive Mannerist-style shop front. In contrast, No 41-42 has a late 19th century shopfront, again in a Mannerist style, but of a more richly classical design with central doorways, tiled floors to the doorways, arched windows sub divided by timber glazing bars and overhanging cornice with egg-and-dart mouldings. No 43-44 features a distinctive pair of Greek Doric columns carrying segmental arches over three doorways with rare surviving Georgian shop windows either side. On Elvet Bridge No 21 "Woven" has a handsome traditional shopfront of c.1900.

There are some lower quality retail frontages that do not pay due regard to their high quality historic surroundings. For example, No 2-5 Market Place "Boots" has an inherently modern highly glazed full ground floor frontage that does not do justice to the quality of the floors above. The Tesco and former M&S store are modern development blocks with shopfronts of no discernible character that contribute nothing positive to the streetscene. No 10-11 Silver Street again has a low quality modern shop front in stark contrast to the upper floors.

Fascia signs tend to comprise of either individually applied lettering or flat panels with applied lettering and are generally sympathetic. There are some limited traditional hand painted signs, and more should be encouraged.

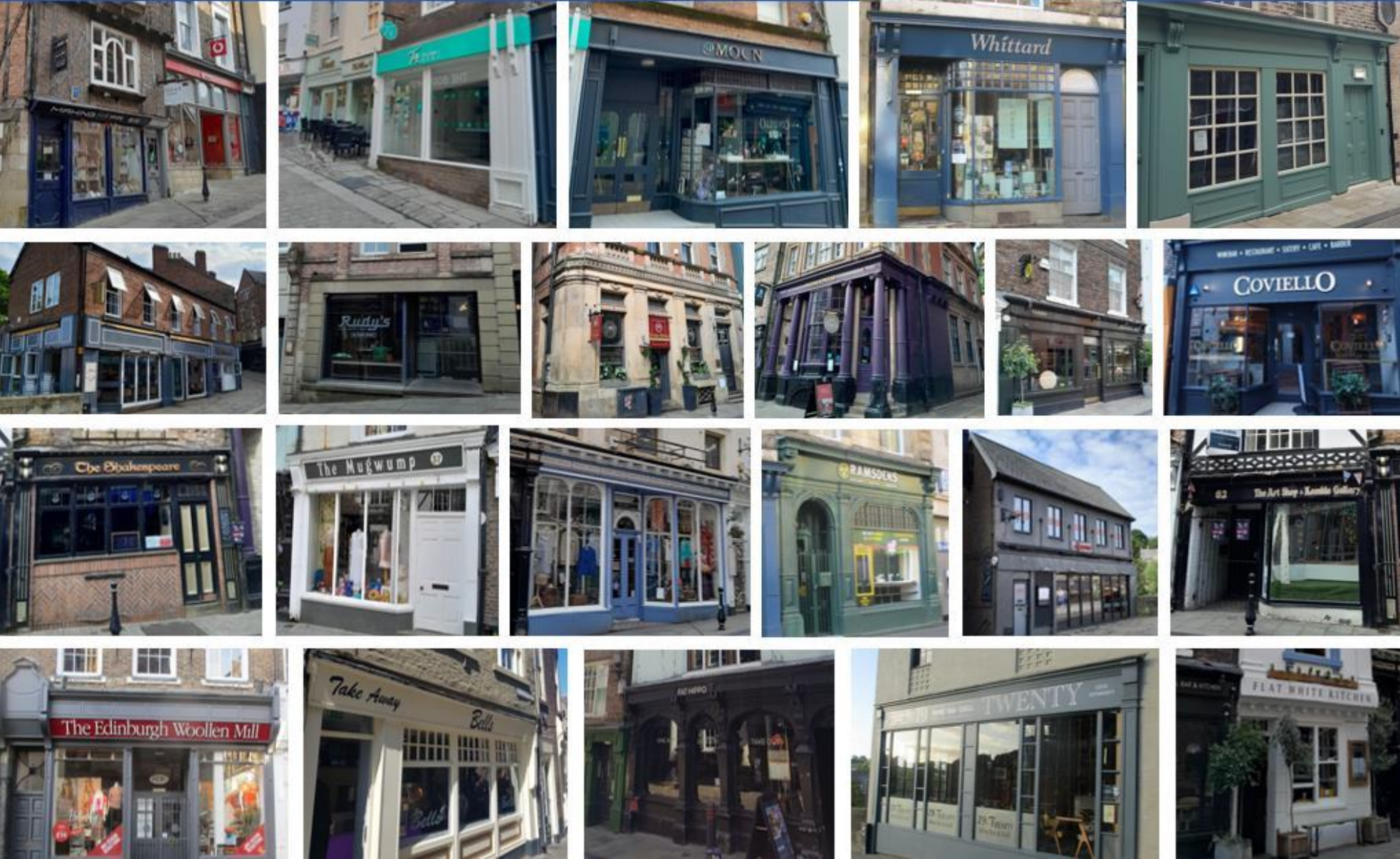
There are some examples of modern signs that are heavier and made from aluminium, with one plastic fascia sign found, that are of a lower aesthetic quality unbecoming of the quality of the host historic buildings.

Hanging signs are a common feature, most are traditionally designed, held in position by simple black metal brackets, some with scroll-top decoration that add visual interest into the streetscene. There are one or two modern projecting signs of less quality and of no positive contribution.

A number of signs are illuminated that is appropriate when the retail units have an active night use with subtle external illuminated sources appropriate.

The workshops at Fowlers Yard all have traditional hanging signs, the main entrance to the area has a hand painted wall mural and the corner café has individually applied horizontal lettering that works with the form of the buildings, all of these signs are sympathetic to the distinctive historic character of the place.

Shop front Palette



Architectural form, style, and detailing - positive contributors to the area's special interest and character.

- Historic buildings of different periods and architectural styles generating streetscapes of high quality and character.
- Rich townscape resulting from the architectural diversity of form, style, scale, and massing.
- Important public buildings and buildings of individual designs that add character.
- Buildings defined by traditional shapes, forms and proportions, frontages tend to be well ordered, and symmetrical, with a vertical emphasis.
- Architectural styles and detailing varied that testifies to different phases of development, use and building status.
- Predominance of traditional vertical sliding sash windows and timber moulded panelled doors, variation in style adds to overall quality and character.
- The commercial uses with many good quality traditional shop and public house frontages that enliven the area.

- The rich traditional and varied material palette.
- Distinctive roofscape and skyline with roofs traditional and typical of the era including prominent chimneys.

Negative elements (sites and buildings)

Within the character area, there are a number of sites and buildings identified as impacting negatively and detracting from its special character and visual appearance.

There is one gap site located on the east side of Back Silver Street. It previously hosted a series of buildings, of residential and small commercial uses, that were cleared in the 1970s/80s. It is a split level site that retains extensive buttressed retaining walls and comprises of numerous small parcels of land overgrown with scrub and self seeded trees, a disused garage block, and dilapidated refuse store. As a result the derelict site greatly detracts from the local historic industrial character. Further, the south turning area is a poor environment owing to the degrading surfacing

Nos 17-18 Market Place and Nos 1-8 Silver Street are of no historic interest being part of a 20th century redevelopment. This obliterated the historic burgage plot pattern in this area, introducing larger modern blocks of horizontal form that conflict with the fragmented vertically expressed built form that characterises this part of the city.

The upper elevation of the building to Silver Street is of a plain but ordered neo-Georgian style with elements of detailing and uses a parapet to manage its height and give a polite finish at roof level. But the ground floor is in stark contrast to the upper floors as it consists of a low-quality modern shop frontage

Nos 37-39 Silver Street are a 1960s redevelopment on the north side of the street near its junction with the Market Place. The building line and height respond to the street, the bland brown brickwork, large horizontal openings, and gabled element onto the street mark it out as being discordant within the local historic character. Nos 21-21 Silver Street are visually prominent at the end of Framwellgate Bridge under the shadow of Durham Castle. It is a mid to late 20th century building that is visually at odds within the historic character of the street in which it is viewed, this despite a contemporary make-over.

The modern development that has had the greatest impact within the character area is the Prince Bishops Shopping Centre that opened in 1998. It has a significant impact in the context of the riverside, and at the level of the Market Place and Sadler Street was grafted onto the historic street plan that provides some sense of continuity with narrow enclosed streets.

Despite some positive qualities, overall, it detracts from the historic environment owing to its substantial scale, bulk, and massing, most notably when seen rising from riverside to the street level of the Market Place. This, and its postmodern style, is very uncharacteristic of the surroundings defined by a finer grain and vernacular forms that underpin the special interest of the townscape.

Negative elements (alterations)

The buildings within this character area overall show a high level of intactness and authenticity in terms of the preservation of the use of historic/traditional materials, period architectural features and detailing. However, one modern building has uPVC windows that stand out, and some others have lower quality casement style windows.

The main negative issues to the visual quality of the streetscene derives from the installation of lower quality modern shopfronts, and some advertisements. Some buildings, and the vennel on Sadder Street, have added security measure in the form of gates to the entrances. They are traditional in design that do not greatly detract from the character and appearance of the streetscene, but this is unlike the examples of solid roller security shutters that deaden the visual appearance of the building and street impacting negatively.

Fig 46 below. Examples of the negative elements identified, the disused site at Back Silver Street, Nos 17-18 Market Place “Tesco”, the riverside elevation of Prince Bishops Shopping Centre, and poor security shutter to a long term vacant retail unit.



3.1.4 Ambiance and pedestrian experience

This character area is the commercial, civic, and social heart of the city and main pedestrian approach to the cathedral. The Market Place provides a through vehicular and pedestrian route to Palace Green and The Bailey and is a key space for tourists making the journey to the cathedral. It provides a popular meeting place for the city's residents and tourists alike. Additionally, it provides a focus for cultural and civic events, together with hosting regular outdoor markets. It is therefore a busy and lively place that is a fundamental part of its character.

On account of the different restaurants and bars, and others within a short walking distance, the area can be very busy with revellers at nighttime, particularly on weekends. This creates a different atmosphere that could be off-putting from some people but adds to the city's nighttime economy.

The area's biggest weakness is traffic intruding into the narrow medieval streets. This can often cause conflict between pedestrians and moving vehicles taking way from the experience with pedestrian often inadvertently wandering into the highway. Traffic is detrimental to the aesthetic of the place by visually cluttering the market square, with congestion at the entrances, and creates noise and pollution.

Despite this, the area maintains the feel of being pedestrian focused and the identity of a historic market place, with the tradition continued with outdoor market days, buskers and events enhancing the ambiance and experience.



Fig 47 above. An example of traffic impacts within the narrow medieval streets.

While the area still has a number of independent shops there has been a shift to more of a hospitality offer, with a strong outdoor café culture that is positive by adding activity and vibrancy into the streets. This is most notable along Elvet Bridge and at the west end of Silver Street where cafes and eateries have maximised

the opportunity to provide outdoor eating and drinking places. Despite a decrease in vacancy rates over previous years there are still noticeable empty ground floor units and upper floors that detract from the impression of the place.



Fig 48 above. Activity at Elvet Bridge in the summer that contributes positively to the areas vibrancy and character.

In contrast to the lively city streets are the historic vennels and courtyard spaces offering quieter more intimate experiences of Durhams' past. While they are characterful and an important part of the historic fabric and layout out of the city, at the same time their values are weakened.

They tend to be unkempt, poor environments, which are unwelcoming, deteriorated, and suffer from anti-social behaviour issues. They also tend to be steep routes with steps so not accessibility friendly.

The exception to the trend is the “hidden” vennel and courtyard spaces on the west side of Saddler Street that are well-cared for and utilised by the surrounding businesses, offering a positive experience of Durham’s ancient past.

The area provides valuable pedestrian connections down to the riverside by the steps at Elvet Bridge and the vennel between 19 and 20 Silver Street but again these are poor quality spaces.

The riverside area next to Old Elvet Bridge is positive with access for all via Back Elvet Lane and has good accessibility to the wider riverbanks footpath network and cycling route. It has a pleasant atmosphere with activity created by the outdoor spaces associated with the Boat House public house, people using the rowing boats, and enjoying riverside walks. The general condition of the environment does however detract from the character of the place and the overall experience. It is marred by intrusive parked cars, collections of refuse bins, broken and uneven paving, and insensitive surface material replacement.

Fowlers Yard often goes unnoticed and does not fulfil its potential. It is a quiet accessible backwater area of distinctive character, with activity generated by the coffee shop, city theatre and craft workshops. There has been positive improvement and the creation of a unique artist’s/creative quarter with repurposing of the large industrial buildings. But the overall environment is detracted by the poor quality space of the turning head dominated by a commercial refuse bins, is detracted by litter, and the gap site that gives near the entrance from Walkergate give a poor first impression.

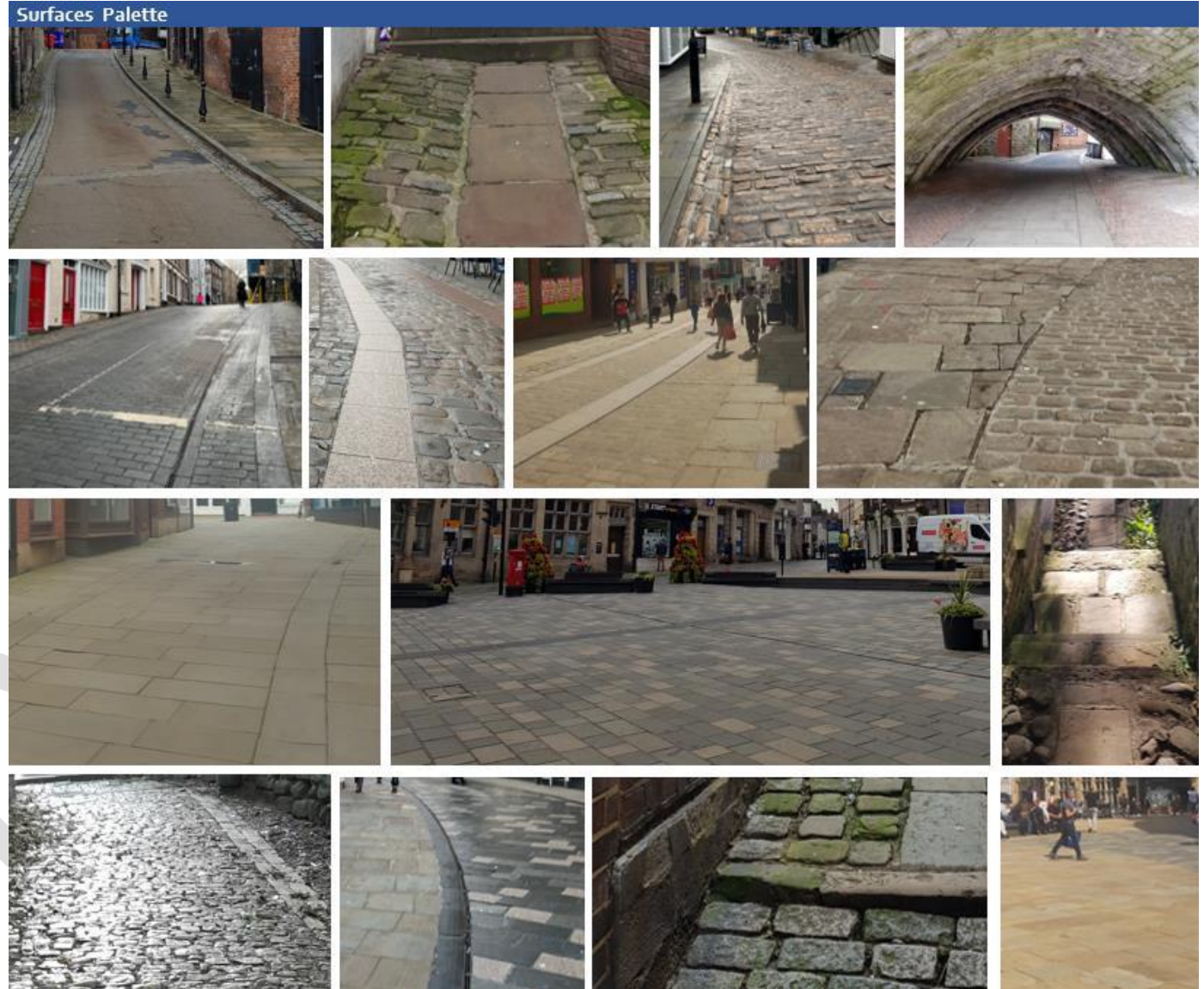


Fig 49 below. The characterful industrial area at Fowlers Yard detracted by the low quality public realm. Below the route down to the riverside through an archway of Old Elvet Bridge, which opens to a low quality public realm detracted by the poor floorscape and clutter.

The Market Place and part of Saddler Street were refurbished in 2009 as part of Durham City Vision's Heart of the City Project. It intended to create a more legible and pedestrian-friendly high quality environment responding to and reinforcing the area's distinctive historic character. But the re-paving works have resulted in the use of grey granite that is uncharacteristic compared to the warm colour of the sandstone reflective of many of the buildings around the Market Place.

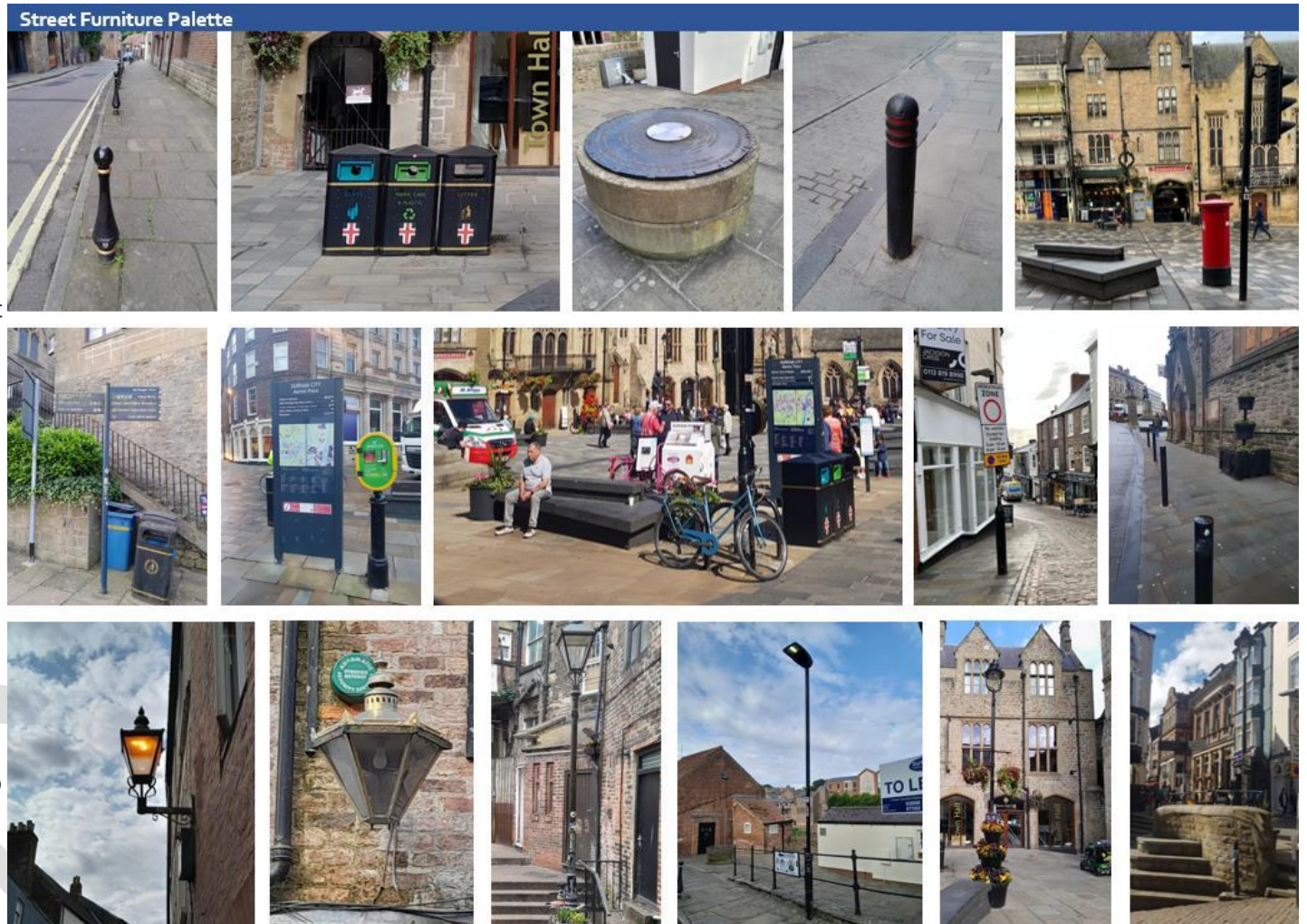
The public realm does have some positive qualities such as the variety in the form of a series of bands of varying widths and intervals running in an east-west direction, setts of contrasting colours, and the inclusion of an artistic timeline forming the central north-south axis within the space. The 21st century stone benches however appear out of place in terms of material and design.

Silver Street and Elvet Bridge have traditional floorscapes that contribute positively, comprising a simple layout of stone setts and wheelers in granite flags, with pavements in places of Yorkstone flags. The traditional theme continues in some of the vennels. In Fowlers Yard there are traditional stone flags and areas of cobbles, intermingled with modern surface materials, the aesthetic quality reduced due to the poor condition.



Within this character area the street furniture is modern and mixed. There are contemporary seats, refuse bins, bollards in different styles include cast Durham bollards and contemporary designs, planters, cycle racks, traffic and bus stop signs, way finding signs both post and wall mounted of different ages and designs. The overall impression is that Silver Street, Saddler Street and Elvet Bridge are not detracted by excessive items of street furniture, but the Market Place appears too cluttered and un-coordinated. The use of seasonal planters and hanging baskets injects colours into the urban spaces during the Summer months that is positive.

In terms of lighting, within the Market Place, the public space is illuminated by contemporary style black metal lighting columns, with the same style present at Magdalene steps, this style appearing out of place. Elsewhere there are no lighting columns with illumination provided in Saddler Street and Elvet Bridge by the occasional traditional Victorian style wall lanterns, sympathetic to the character and appearance of the streets. There are Victorian style lampposts to the alleyway behind Elvet Bridge and along the riverside on top of the wall in front of the Prince Bishops Shopping Centre.



3.1.5 Visual experiences

This character area forms part of the immediate townscape setting to the castle and cathedral with an indivisible historic relationship. But due to the buildings and narrow thoroughfares views of the castle and cathedral are restricted despite proximity. The visual experience the area provides is one of intimacy and enclosure of the different historic streetscapes of great character contrasting with open river corridor views at the east and west ends. Further positive experiences are drawn from the change in character approaching the area. For example, from the Victorian North Road, the openness of Framwellgate Bridge, into the narrow medieval Silver Street, and then the public space of the Market Place, the significance interest and aesthetic quality of the streetscape, and landmark features. Such visual experiences are fundamental to the special interest of the character area.

In summary the key views identified within this character zone are:

- View 1** – Views in both directions within Silver Street.
- View 2**– 360 degrees views within the Market Place.
- View 3** – Views in both directions along Saddler Street
- View 4** - Views in both directions along Elvet Bridge.

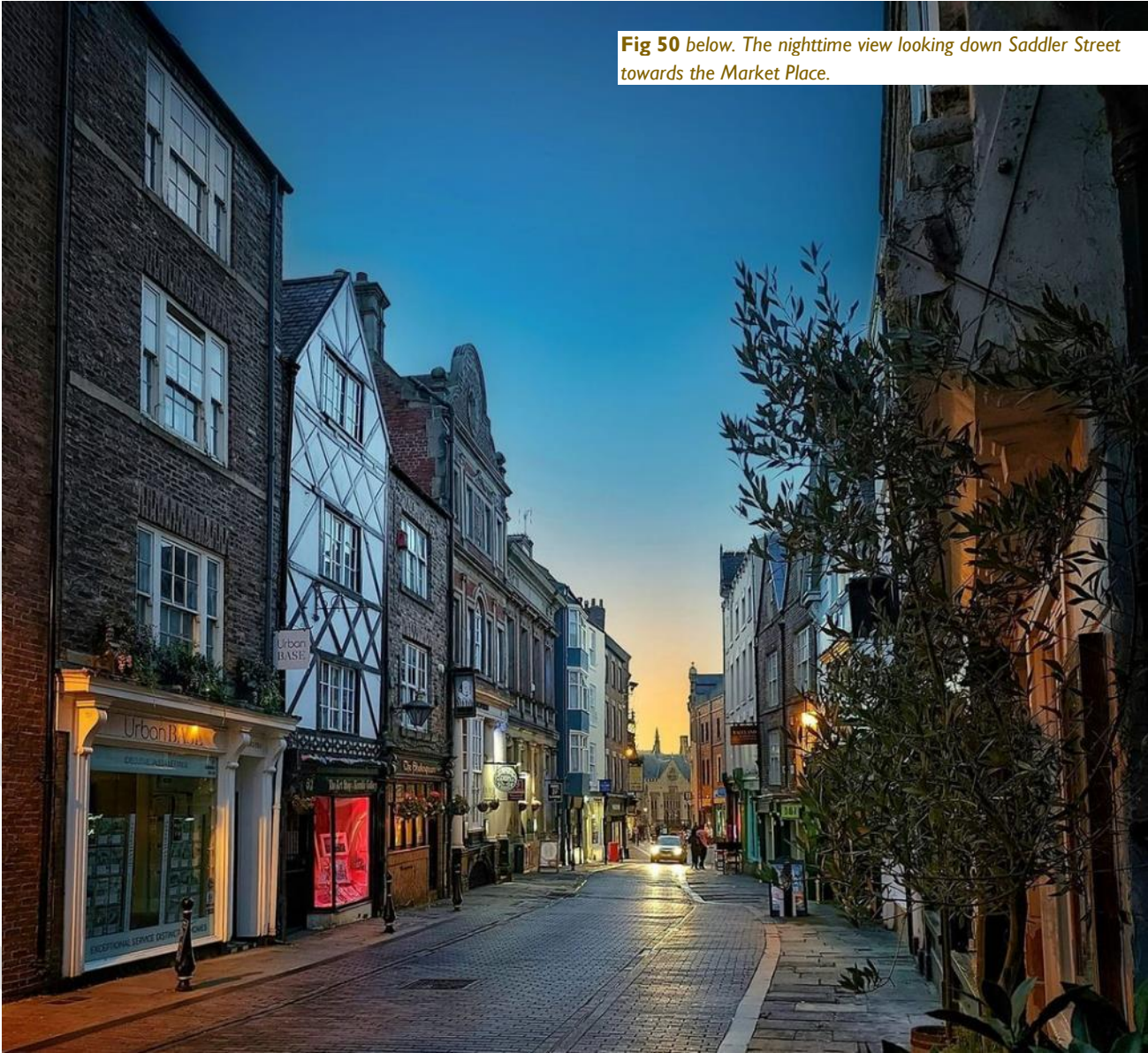


Fig 50 below. The nighttime view looking down Saddler Street towards the Market Place.

Image, © Graeme Hall, used with permission.

Key Views
Location



Image



Description

Views in both directions north east and south west along Silver Street.

Enclosed kinetic and channelled views of the historic streetscape comprising buildings ranging from the medieval period to the 20th century. At the crest of the hill the view opens up to the Market Place.



Views in all directions around the Market Place.

Enclosed views around the public open space of the fine collection of historic buildings giving an important insight into the civic, commercial and social history and traditions at the heart of the city.

Key Views
Location



Image



Description

Views in both directions north and south west along Saddler Street.

Enclosed channelled views of the historic streetscape characterised by its medieval planning elegant Georgian and Victorian architecture, and commercial activity.



Views in both directions' northwest and south east along Elvet Bridge.

Channelled enclosed views leading to the openness and river corridor views upon reaching the medieval bridge. A fine diverse range of medieval, Georgian, and Victorian buildings frame the space; the experience enhanced by the street's vibrancy.

Ambiance, pedestrian experience, and public realm - positive contributors to the area's special interest and character.

- The area's activity, vibrancy, hustle, and bustle forming the civic and commercial heart of the city since medieval times.
- The increased activity and experiences through different events such as Market Day, and the area's participation in annual events such as Lumiere.
- The contrasting ambiance between the main streets and Market Place and quieter vennels, courtyards and riverside spaces.
- Positive sense of intimacy and enclosure within the area.
- The visual experiences of the different buildings and historic landmarks that change with movement.
- The cathedral and castle being unseen from within most of the area that heightens the value of the approach and sense of arrival at Palace Green.

Negative elements

There are a series of important historic spaces and routes that impact adversely owing to the poor quality of the general environment in terms of degradation and unevenness of surface materials, refuse bin storage including larger commercial units, litter and often graffiti. These include the turning head area forming the south part of Fowlers Yard, part of Moatside Lane, Drury Lane and Saddlers Yard. The riverside area around the Boathouse Pub is particularly noteworthy as it is detracted further by low quality items in the public domain associated with the commercial units and damage caused by delivery and service vehicles.

The entrance into the Market Place from Claypath is detracted by cluttering of items of street furniture, the high number of lighting columns in the footways, traffic signs and poor surfacing. Moving into the Market Place the impression is that this historic space is too cluttered by the abundance of street furniture items. As stated previously the impact of traffic is the area's greatest weakness.



Fig 51 right. Images of poor environments at Moatside Lane, Drury Lane and Back Silver Street detracting from the visual amenity and character of the place.

3.1.6 Appraisal summary – condition, negatives, issues, threats, and problems that affect the character and appearance of the area.

Built form

- There are a number of buildings that show a decline in condition and general lack of ongoing maintenance works.
- Vacancy remains a noticeable problem within the area despite some improvement in recent years.
- Examples of low quality modern development which do not respect the historic layout, character, and appearance.
- There is one gap site providing a poor environment in its historic context.
- Examples of low quality modern shops fronts, advertisements, and security shutters that are visually detrimental.

Urban spaces

- Some types of materials do not fit the historic context.
- Examples of surfacing repairs in different materials resulting in a poor mismatched appearance.
- Some areas of surfacing are in a poor condition with materials dislodged and uneven and paving flags fractured.
- Moatside Lane, Drury Lane, Back Silver Street, and the riverside area around Old Elvet Bridge are poor quality environments blighted by different issues.
 - Narrow streets and public space can be car dominated and cluttered while traffic conflicts with pedestrian movement.
 - Due to the steep inclines and steps accessibility can be difficult along some routes.
 - In some locations the footway is impeded by pavement signs, which also add visual clutter.
 - Anti-social behaviour issues spoils people’s impression and experience of the place.

Green spaces

- Limited green space within the character area with no issues identified.

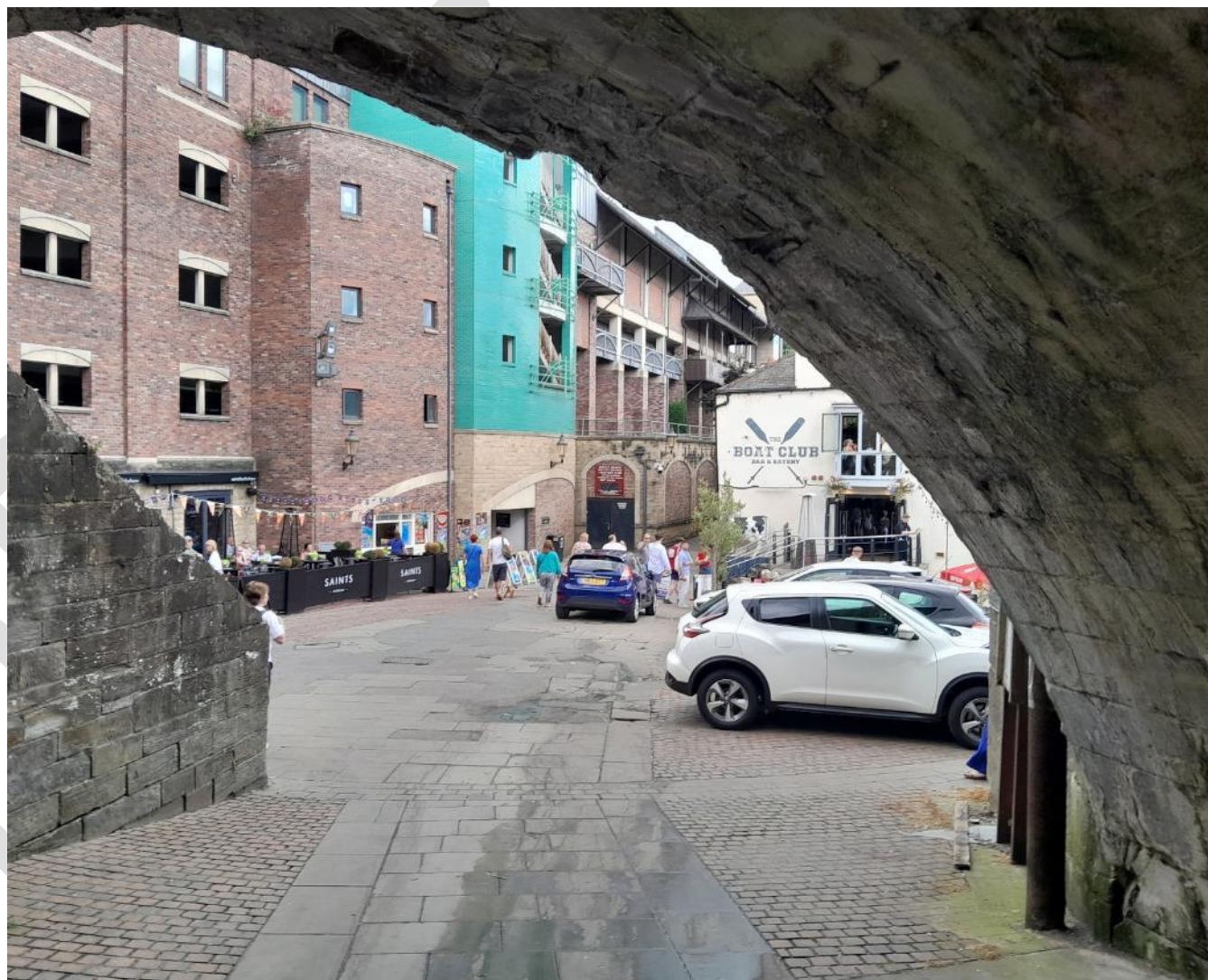
Street furniture

- The Market Place is cluttered with excessive items that are also uncoordinated.
- Contemporary styles do not fit in with the historic character of the place.
- There is a proliferation of items associated with car parking and traffic movement.
- Modern street lighting columns and head units are out of context.
- Magdalene Steps are blighted by items of street furniture which are out of keeping with the area.
- There is some outdated, poorly located, and un-coordinated pedestrian wayfinding signage.

Threats

- Continuation of vacant ground floor retail units and upper floors and the threat of the rate increasing.
- Potential loss and insensitive works to traditional street surfacing materials, and ongoing decline of fabric.
- Works by utility companies to floorscape with inappropriate reinstatement.
- Continuation of decline in building fabric, ongoing lack of general maintenance works, and unkempt appearance of certain buildings.
- Ongoing negative impacts of parked vehicles and traffic, with potential for impacts to be increased.
- Potential for unsympathetic alterations and loss of architectural features to unlisted historic buildings.
- General physical works that cannot be controlled degrading quality and character of the historic environment.
- Ongoing anti-social behaviour issues.

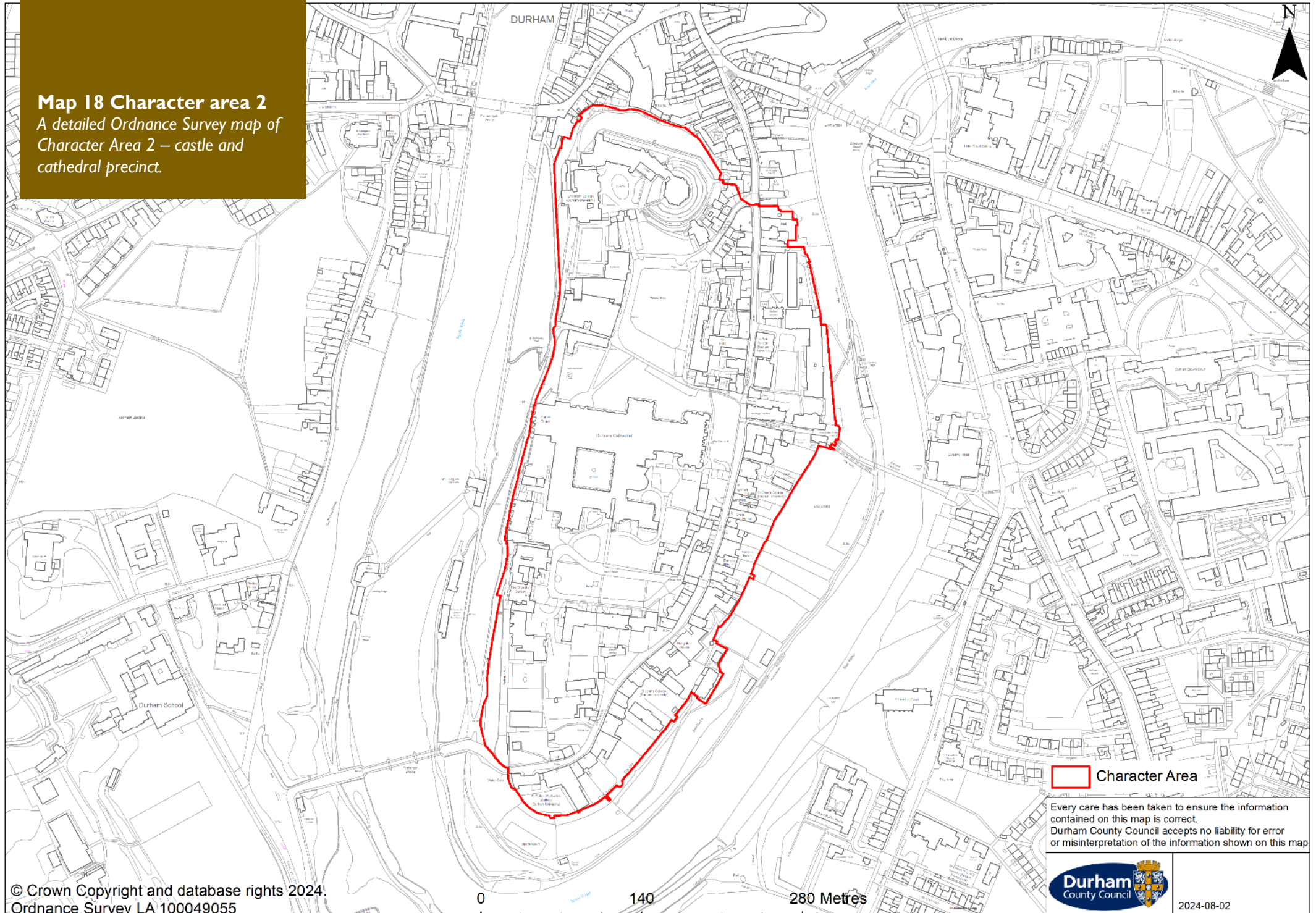
Fig 52 below. The riverside area adjacent Old Elvet Bridge blighted by poor quality and degraded floorscape, often damaged by vehicles that clutter the space.



3.2 Character area 2
(castle and cathedral precinct)



Map 18 Character area 2
A detailed Ordnance Survey map of
Character Area 2 – castle and
cathedral precinct.



3.2.1 Location and summary of special interest

This character area comprises the castle and cathedral, the buildings between them lining both sides of the central lawn, the short side streets of Owengate, Dun Cow Lane and Bow Lane, and the main spine route of The Baileys that lead into The College. This area forms the medieval precinct behind the defensive fortifications overlooking the river and townscape. The significance of the place cannot be overstated representing millennia of historic importance and activity and embodying the strength and authority of the Norman conquerors and the religious and secular powers of the Prince Bishops. Its special interest is internationally recognised by most of the character area being inscribed on the World Heritage Site list in 1986.

The character area boundary in the north is provided by the route of Moatside Lane around the base of the castle mound. In the west it follows the route of the footpath up from Silver Street to Windy Gap continuing along Broken Walls to the Water Gate. The boundary then follows the line of the castle walls and rear garden plots of the buildings lining the east side of the Bailey on the upper edge of the river gorge up to Owengate.

The setting of the area is broad and diverse, the peninsula lies at the centre of the city separated by the river enabling full views of the steep side gorge and open views along the river corridor. It is surrounded by a mixed townscape of narrow intimate medieval streets in the immediate vicinity that radiate outwards to later Victorian domestic development and large scaled mixed use 21st century riverside development.

The urban area is encompassed by landscape of high scenic quality laid across the varying topography from the flat flood plain land and rising up to steep sided valley sides to form high ridges and hills that provide the backdrop in many views.

Different parts of the city provide different experiences, from the loud hustle-and-bustle of modern Durham to the tranquillity of the riverbanks, united by the scale, dominance and architectural richness of the castle and cathedral designed as an eye catching skyline feature having an almost universal presence within the surrounding townscape. The combination of the varied topography, the city's historic layout and evolution, and the form of the surrounding landscape creates experiential castle and cathedral views including many dramatic and sudden reveals of great importance.

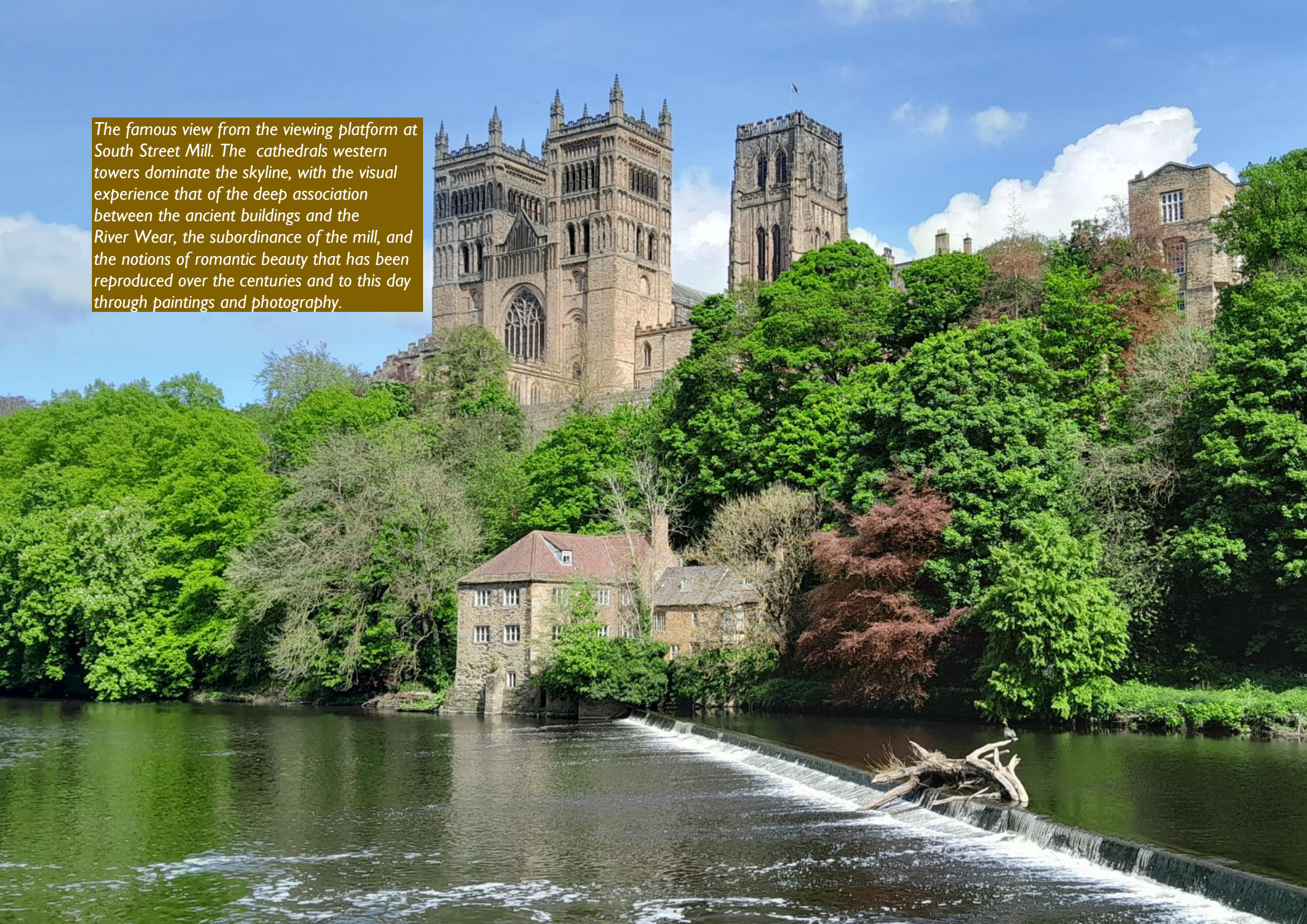


Fig 53 above. The view along the Bailey from the junction with Bow Lane where the former church of St Mary Le Bow is a notable historic landmark.

What gives the area its special historic and architectural interest and character?

- The historic interest of the area in terms of representing the foundation stone of the city.
- The indivisible relationship between the cathedral and city as it was St Cuthbert and associated pilgrimage that stimulated the development of the Saxon and Medieval communities.
- The surviving medieval layout including its high level of authenticity, and integrity.
- The castle's high significance relating to its status not only as a border castle but also as the Bishop's palace.
- The exceptional architectural significance displaying architectural innovation with Durham Cathedral, one of the most important and striking Romanesque buildings in Europe.
- The high significance of the surviving complex of castle walls together with various terraced promenades, and access ways and Baileys' garden development.
- The high significance of the College Buildings representing one of the most complete collections of monastic buildings in England to have survived from the medieval period.
- The high value of the overall townscape recognised by the vast majority of buildings being listed.
- The important surviving collection of service buildings at The College with a different character and being testament to the workings and operation of the cathedral priory.
- The historic and intangible importance of the historic and modern day routes to the cathedral and the experiences they provide.
- The archaeological value and potential with a wealth of archaeological remains adding to the understanding of the history and development of the area.
- The interest deriving from the continuation of different historic uses.
- The distinctive natural topography resulting in the site's original selection and shaping subsequent development.
- The landscape juxtaposing with medieval built form having outstanding aesthetic value.
- The landscape significance of the area for example the castle comprising of a series of regionally important 17th century gardens created out of military earthworks, and The College grounds by influential landscape designers.
- The unparalleled visual experience and drama resulting from the integration of medieval architecture and natural form, dominance over the townscape and far reaching visual impact the wider landscape beyond the city limits.
- The area's special interest as a place of spirituality, remembrance, hospitality, learning and discovery.

The famous view from the viewing platform at South Street Mill. The cathedral's western towers dominate the skyline, with the visual experience that of the deep association between the ancient buildings and the River Wear, the subordination of the mill, and the notions of romantic beauty that has been reproduced over the centuries and to this day through paintings and photography.



3.2.2 Local layout, streets, and spaces

The plan form and layout of the character area is simple and fully representative of its historic recording as far back as c.1610. The area begins in the north at the junction point of Saddler Street, North Baily and Owengate that rises steeply up to the Palace Green. It is a short very characterful historic route tightly enclosed by a variety of buildings that enhances the anticipation and sense of arrival onto Palace Green.

Here the buildings enclose a sizeable open space with the castle in the north directly facing the cathedral to the south. On the east and west sides of the green the buildings follow a loose linear form, the building line broken by the narrow enclosed route of Windy Gap leading steeply down to the riverbanks.

The buildings around the green vary in scale and form, and the plot sizes are far greater and more irregular than the domestic buildings in the nearby streets. It appears that they have been deliberately positioned to frame and avoid impeding the view of the cathedral.

From the Owengate junction The Bailey travels southwards forming a continuous route down to the Watergate. The street follows a gentle curve with tall continuous terraced frontages at the back of the pavement creating an enclosed intimate character.

Fig 54 below and right. The short narrow street of Owengate climbs steeply from Saddler Street revealing the cathedral at the crest of the hill. At Palace Green, the layout is open with building framing the green space image of Cosins Hall. Below, the continuous historic building line along the Bailey.



While characterised by the “Bailey Wall” of continuous frontages there are openings of significance. These are the short historic streets, gaps creating landmarks, gateway, and carriageway entrances. For example, Hatfield Private Chapel’s presence is increased by its set back position and the open space around the building within the street frontage. The chapel of St-Mary-the Less is again set back, elevated, and orientated differently, giving it the presence it deserves. Dun Cow Lane, rising uphill to Palace Green, and Bow Lane descend to Kingsgate Bridge are part of the ancient layout.

To the rear of the Bailey there is some detached back land development with no apparent pattern, and some positive courtyard spaces. Notable examples are Bailey Court, and Hatfield College. Bailey Court is a 20th century development sandwiched between Cosins Hall and the Almshouses facing Palace Green, and North Bailey. It provides a rectangular enclosed courtyard with narrow vennel-like entrances and different stepped terraced levels providing an interesting flow through the space.

At Hatfield College, the courtyard layout remains today as recorded in detail on the 1st edition OS map c.1860. It comprises of the L-plan group in the centre of the college complex built directly over the Bailey Wall. The north enclosure is completed by the private chapel, and the west onto North Bailey, by the modern accommodation block, boundary wall and boiler

house on lower ground behind. This gives the illusion from the Bailey of a lack of backland development and important breathing space to the college buildings with a setting to the castle wall as opposed to the medieval street. This provides a site of a contrasting yet positive layout to the Bailey. On the Bailey is the lifeless 20th century Jevons building, but behind survives the large garden of the former house on the site, that now forms a second courtyard of the college.

A major attribute of the area’s plan form, layout and character is the contrast between the solidity of the built frontage marking the confines of the east side of the outer castle and the arrangement of the soft garden spaces behind.



Fig 55 below. Examples of positive courtyards at Hatfield College Bailey Court and The College.

Fig 56 below. The short characterful street of Dun Cow Lane enclosed by historic buildings on one side and the cathedral graveyard on the other. Below a streetscene view of the gently curving South Bailey.



Within the city’s medieval streets historic tenement/burgage plots were the chief determinant of house plans. They comprise of long, narrow plots with the buildings on-street, and this plan form survives on the Baileys. While not visible from the main street, the Bailey gardens signify the evolution of the peninsula from its release from its defensive role to one of leisure, with a pattern of ornamental leisure gardens behind the houses as they became more gentrified, they expanded down onto the riverbanks as formal terraces.

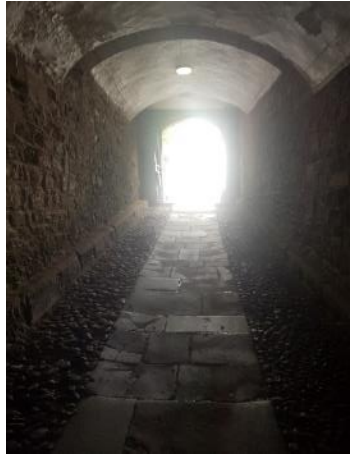
The gardens are complemented by early features such as Prebends Walk and Bishops Walk, laid out in the 17th century; these provided areas for recreation outside the city walls, and places from which to view the river. The symmetrical layout of these gardens supplemented by linear terraced walks is fundamental to the historic plan form and special interest of the area.

On the west side of the street where North and South Bailey meet, stands the great gatehouse leading into The College. This is the former outer court of the cathedral priory comprising of twelve prebendal houses, Chorister School, and former service buildings.

The buildings are an exceptional group arranged as an interlinked sequence in courtyard format around a central open lawn with a narrow tunnel, known as Dark Entry, leading down to the riverbanks on the west side.

In the north west corner, the works yard is a narrow enclosed historic space that is easy to miss, comprising of a variety of buildings that continue to support the priory with a small courtyard area at its north end.

Fig 57 below. The entrance to The College is by the Gatehouse that evolved from a defensive structure to a ceremonial entrance. Right, Dark Entry was a gated passageway in the defensive walls providing direct access from The College to the river.



The character area has a strong urban focus but includes areas of important green assets that contribute positively to its character, distinctiveness, and visual appearance, and to the setting of the historic buildings.

The most obvious green asset of high value is Palace Green, an area of green open space that visually unites castle and cathedral. Within the castle complex is the keep mound today a series of terraced garden-like spaces and including the large private garden to the Master’s House, the north terrace, Bishop’s Garden, the tree lined green avenue up to the castle gatehouse, and the oval shaped green space within the castle courtyard. Some of these elements are part of Bishop Cosin’s landscape design improvements creating more grandeur to his palace elevating their importance. They have high aesthetic value and are significant in displaying an ingenuity of design and symbolising the transition of the peninsula from a border fortress to a quieter existence.

Around the cathedral is its graveyard containing many ancient stone tombs and some unusual grave markers. The green space enhances its setting and provides a defined soft natural buffer.

The College is characterised by a designed landscape of high historic interest comprising of open central lawn area supplemented with trees, with smaller garden areas to the individual buildings, and larger landscaped grounds surrounding the Chorister School.

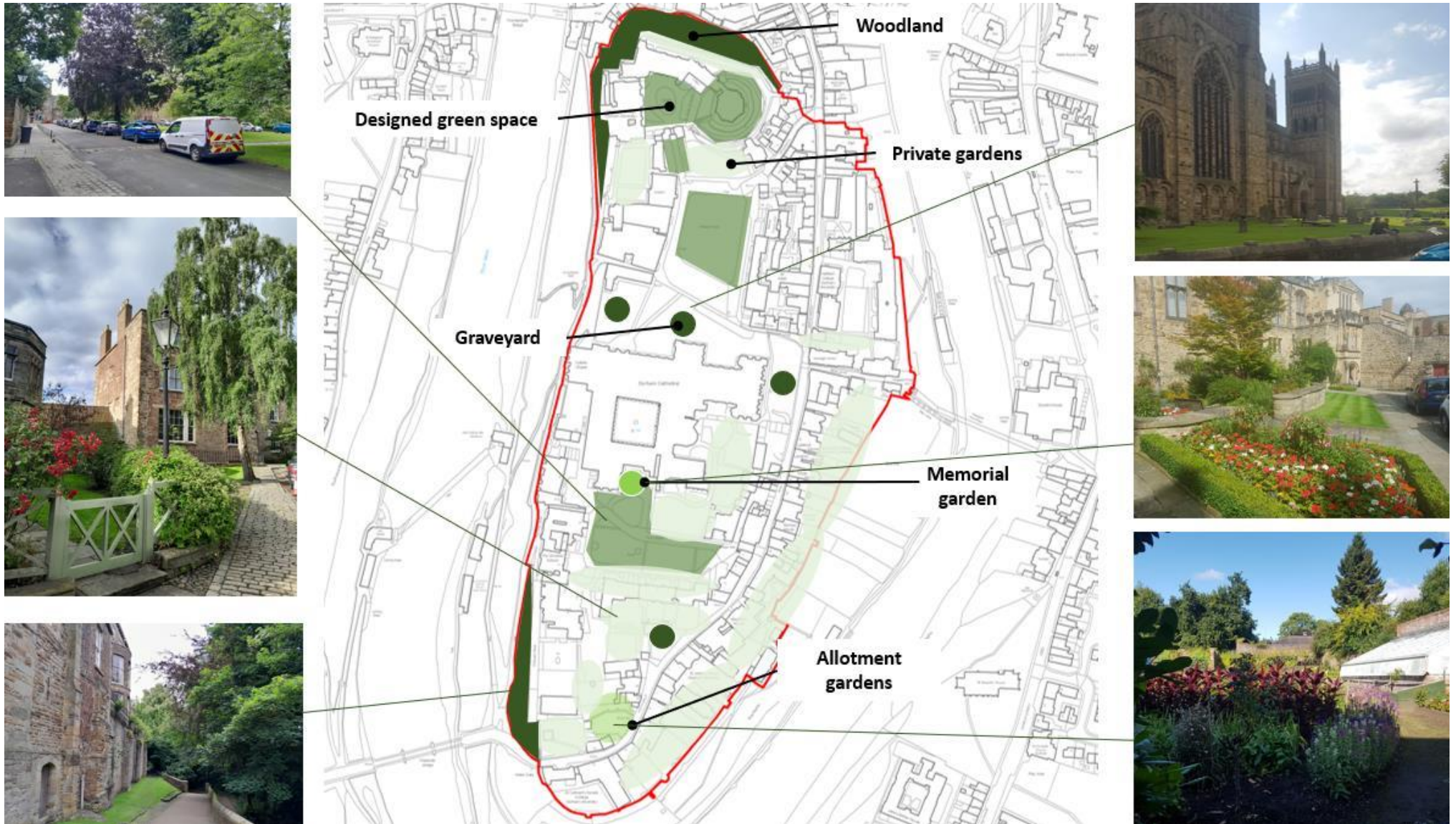
Also within this area is the Monk’s Garden between the city wall and cloistral buildings, the DLI memorial garden, and Prebend’s Walk a 17th-century walk on the western extremity of the Cathedral precinct laid out during Bishop Cosin’s time.

Fig 58 below. *Front gardens at The College, the quiet garden space at the Church of St Mary-le-Bow, and street trees in South Bailey.*

Along the Baileys the well-manicured churchyard with mature trees at St Mary-the-Less churchyard, the trees and vegetation overhanging the adjacent college walls, the private allotment gardens, and riverbanks trees visible above the Watergate introduce positive green elements into the streetscene that contribute positively to its character and aesthetic quality.



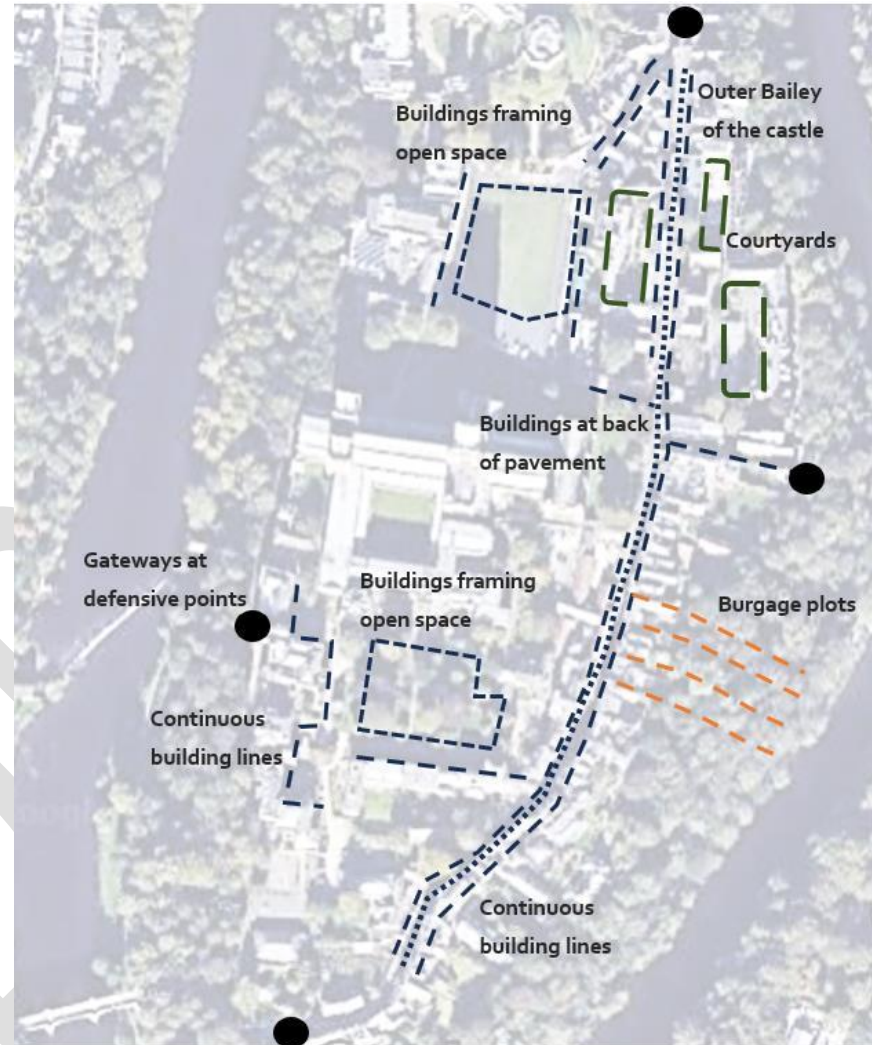
Fig 59 below. A plan and images identifying key green assets within the character area.



Layout, streets, and spaces - positive characteristics & identity that contribute to special interest.

- Surviving and legible Medieval plan including Bailey representing part of the enclosure of the Norman castle.
- Key open spaces framed by important historic buildings with Palace Green visually unifying castle and cathedral. Spaces of intentional medieval design.
- High density, compact terraced blocks at the back of pavements frame carriageway creating an enclosed intimate character.
- Continuous and active built up frontages running through to Sadler Street and into the Market Place.
- Important historic gaps in the street frontage and positive back land courtyards.
- Variation in building widths, heights, and footprints with wider plots tending to be concentrated at the end of South Bailey.
- The designed historic arrangement of Palace Green and The College with buildings framing open green space.

Fig 60 below. A plan showing key attributes of the area's layout that create its character.



3.2.3 Architectural style, form, and detailing.

The character area is one of exceptional architectural quality, North and South Bailey being the best streets in the city, where the buildings display different architectural styles and changing fashions over 1000 years.

Along The Baileys the buildings range from one to four storeys, unified by their traditional shapes, forms, and proportions. They mostly have gabled roofs running parallel to the street disrupted by the occasional gable, flat roof, and church tower. The variation in building heights, widths, and the introduction of individually designed buildings, breaks up the historic urban grain, but creates a strong identity and sense of place.

The buildings present 17th-18th century facades but these have often been re-fronted masking older fabric. They mostly exhibit classic Georgian characteristics with symmetrical, carefully proportioned, and well-balanced elevation treatments. Openings have a vertical alignment that often reduce in size moving up through the building facade.

Common features include plinths, quoins, and floor bands, vertical sliding sash windows with different glazing patterns and some examples of Yorkshire sliding sashes. Domestic style timber panel doors are prevalent, set in appealing doorcases, some being very elaborate.

Fig 61 below. Views along North and South Bailey showing the Durham Vernacular style.



There are some buildings that stand out owing to their individual designs and more distinctive architectural style. Noteworthy are 50 North Bailey with a wedge shaped footprint in the angle of North Bailey and Owengate built in the Victorian Gothic style.

Close by, The Assembly Rooms has 18th century features but appearing to be 19th century to the upper facade and 20th century below re-using old bricks, its style associated with its use as a theatre make is stand out positively in the streetscene. Houghton House is proudly set back from the street and has arguably the most impressive 18th century facade in the Bailey. Within Owengate No 5 is a significant building dating from the 15th or 16th century and is the best preserved timber framed and jettied medieval house in the city.

Fig 62 below. The architectural distinct Houghton House and No 5 Owengate, a unique well-preserved medieval timber framed house, and the best example recognisable in the townscape.



The buildings around Palace Green formed the Bishop’s administrative centre then later the University. They range in date from the 15th to the 20th century and exhibit a wide variety of architectural styles that testify to their historic use and status. The group of buildings are not only significant architecturally but also for the way in which they provide an understanding of the responsibilities and privileges of the prince bishops, and others in their role in the life of the university.

Standing prominently at the entrance to Palace Green from Owengate is the Master’s House, a lofty four storey rendered building with irregular fenestration. It is an enigmatic private house of the 18th century. Close by, Cosin’s Hall stands out as being architecturally and visually impressive, a former inn of the 18th century with a typical Georgian façade, the most notable feature is the spectacular entrance doorway with a very elaborately carved doorcase. Adjacent are the Almshouses of a simpler stone construction built in 1666 by Bishop Cosin. The Georgian theme continues at Abbey House in the south east corner of Palace Green, with fine ashlar façade of the late 17th or early 18th century. Adjoining, the Pemberton Building is also notable, designed by W.D Caroe, and built in 1929, in a distinctive Tudor style.

On the west side of the green is The Exchequer building of a sandstone construction with small twin lancets, relieved by later traceried windows.

As well as its architectural merit it is important in being the only one of the Prince-Bishops administrative buildings to have survived from Medieval times. Adjacent stands Bishop Cosin's Library, an important building of 1667-70. It consists of 2 storeys and 1 wide bay including a fine central door in a stone architrave containing a coat of arms and 3-light stone mullioned windows and transomed windows.

Fig 63 below. The buildings around the east side of Palace Green, Cosins Hall, Pemberton Building and Abbey House, and below on the west side, Palace Green Library, University Library and the former Exchequer Building.



There is one modern building of architectural importance that almost goes unnoticed, The Pace Building of 1968 as an extension to Palace Green Library. It was designed by architect George Pace, with stone and solidity used to assimilate the modern building within its surroundings echoing the character of the castle walls.

Fig 64 below. *The architecturally distinct and visually impressive 20th century Pace Building viewed from the riverbanks with the cathedral towers in the background.*



The north side of Palace Green is dominated by Durham Castle; defined by its original Norman “motte and bailey” plan. The primary features are the Castle Keep, the Gatehouse, and the ranges set around the semi-trapezoid shaped courtyard. It was built a border fortress to be dominant and imposing, acting as a deterrent to would-be attackers, and it still exhibits the power of both the Norman conquerors and the Prince Bishops.

The castle is accessed by the Gatehouse that comprising of three storeys flanked by two smaller battlemented projections with stone walls either side of the long driveway. It dates from the medieval period with alterations in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Around the inner castle courtyard, a range of architectural styles can be found. The north and west ranges of the castle are of outstanding national importance that illustrate the scale and development of the castle from its early 11th century beginnings through to its high point in the 14th century.

The castle’s most observed element in the wider townscape and landscape is the Keep. It dates from the 14th century by Bishop Hatfield replacing the original Norman structure and was again rebuilt from a ruin by Anthony Salvin in the 1830s as student accommodation. It comprises of an irregular octagonal plan with battlements, angled buttresses and irregular openings that importantly resemble the pattern of the original. The keep is as much a symbol of power as it was a utilitarian feature of a castle.

On the south side of Palace Green is Durham Cathedral Church of Christ and St Mary The Virgin, constructed between 1093 and 1133 begun by Bishop William of St Calais. The cathedral was at the time of its construction, and remains today, one of the most important Romanesque buildings in Europe, and a pre-eminent example of the Anglo-Norman style. The scale of Durham Cathedral was unparalleled in Norman Britain and the massiveness of its construction was matched by its pioneering technical developments. It is constructed from locally quarried dressed sandstone with slate roofs and like many churches has a cruciform footprint.

Since its original construction it has been altered at different times, that has added to its significance. The Galilee Chapel at the west end is a major monument of the late Norman period and represents an important transition between the Romanesque and Gothic architectural styles.

The major addition of the 13th century is the innovative Chapel of the Nine Altars that has a delicacy and grace contrasting strongly with the massive Norman work in the nave. The visually commanding western towers date from the 12th and 13th centuries and are distinctive for their four tiers of arcading. The majestic central tower is a 15th century replacement that displays perpendicular Gothic detailing. The main entrance is the north door of the Nave, which is elaborately moulded around the Medieval doors and features a replica of the famous sanctuary knocker.

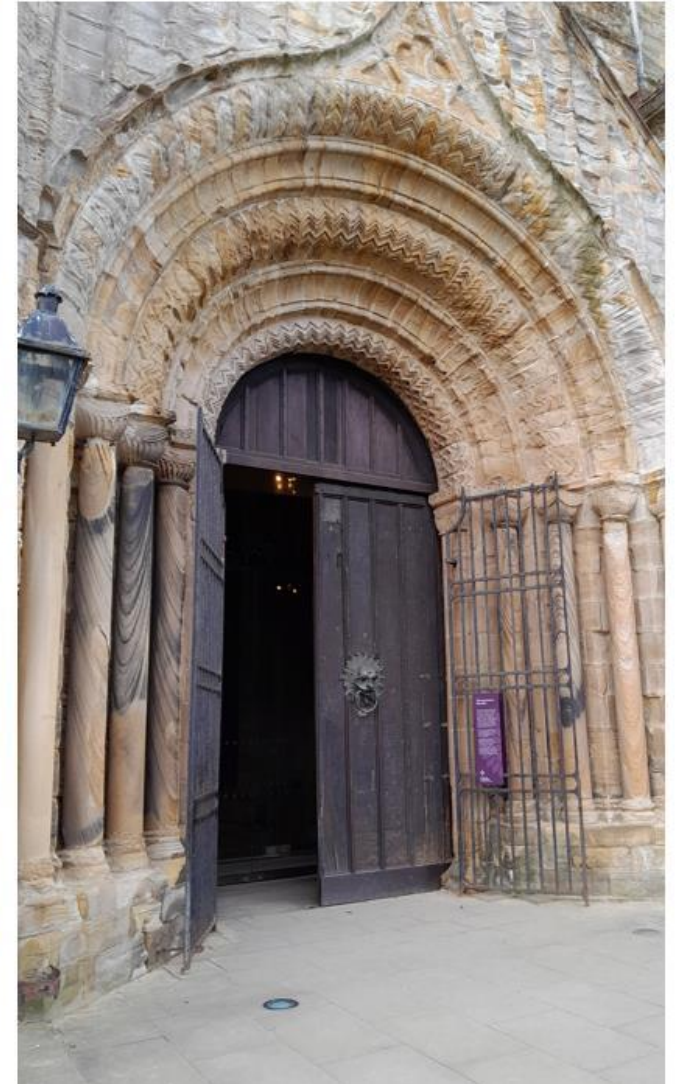
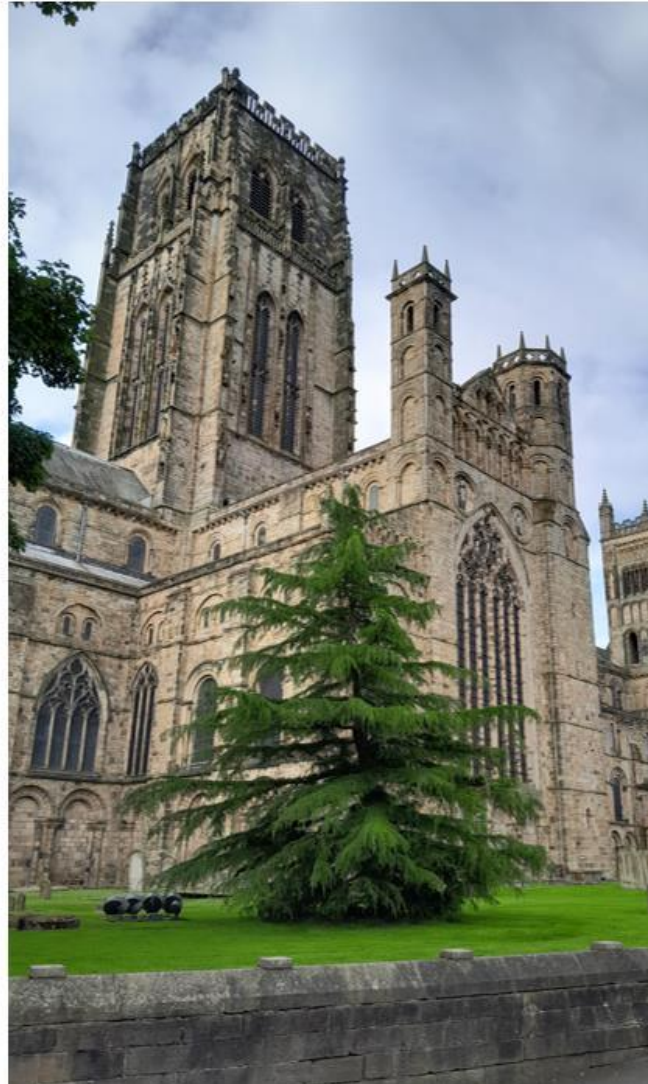


Fig 65 above. Durham Castle begun in 1072 on the orders of King William and is a monumental symbol of the Norman conquest in England. “Durham Castle is without doubt, although overlaid by much from many periods, one of the most completely preserved and most easily appreciated Norman strongholds in the country,” *The Buildings of England, County Durham* “ by M Roberts, N Pevsner and E Williamson (2021).

Durham Castle keep images © Purcell, gatehouse and main entrance © Krystal Tara, used with permission.



Fig 66 above. Durham Cathedral is an exemplar of Romanesque architecture and one of the world's greatest cathedrals, described as of "aesthetic perfection," and "one of the most perfect and also historically most interesting buildings in Europe" - , "The Buildings of England, County Durham " by M Roberts, N Pevsner and E Williamson (2021).



To the south the buildings within The College are exceptional individually and as a group. The entrance is the Gatehouse that has a unique form marking it out as a very significant architectural feature in the Bailey. It comprises of two-storeys with a low pitched gable parapet roof, built from coursed squared sandstone in c.1500, and features a wide Tudor-arched gateway within which is ribbed.

The College is characterised by prebendal houses with elegant 18th facades that mask earlier medieval buildings. In the southwest corner stands the Choristers' School (now Durham Cathedral Schools' Foundation) notable for its grandness and Gothic Revival style. Nos 12-15 is a very distinctive group of four early houses incorporating the priory's medieval guest hall. No12 is the most notable owing to its castle style with projecting corner turrets battlemented roof and porch. This has a positive aesthetic contrast with the Gothic style of Nos 14 and 15.

There are two notable and rare structures within The College grounds, the Conduit Tower of an octagonal form built from sandstone in the Gothic Revival style dating from c. 1750 and the Water Pump dating from the 18th/early 19th century. It consists of a stone base with wood boarding forming a tall square column and enclosing the pump mechanism with an iron handle, bucket stand and lamp etc. These structures are significant in giving a unique insight into past daily life within the cathedral precinct.

Fig 67 below. A selection of images showing different buildings at The Colleges, the conduit house, Chorister School main building, No's 13-15, No 10, and No 3.



The castle walls are a significant built feature relating to all three-character areas but included here due to their inseparable historic relationship with the castle and cathedral and mostly predating the evolved landscape of the inner riverbanks. They are part of the defensive composition of the defended castle complex replacing early timber fortifications. They are of a sandstone construction with areas of rubble patching, and parts rebuilt later in brickwork, and include important features such as medieval bastions and buttresses.

The castle walls architectural significance lies in the ancient defensive function symbolising and illustrating the changing nature of the peninsula and riverbanks from defence to part of a landscape dominated by fashionable 18th and 19th century garden designs, orchards, and the Durham elite lifestyles.

The castle walls are best experienced, and their significance understood in views from outside of the character area within the riverbanks environment in particular during the Winter months, but there are two notable exceptions. The Watergate scheduled monument at the end of South Bailey is the only ancient city gateway still standing, it was rebuilt in 1787 to allow carriages to enter the city over the new Prebends Bridge and comprises of a coursed squared sandstone arch with ashlar dressings, close by are some of the best-preserved examples of the castle walls.

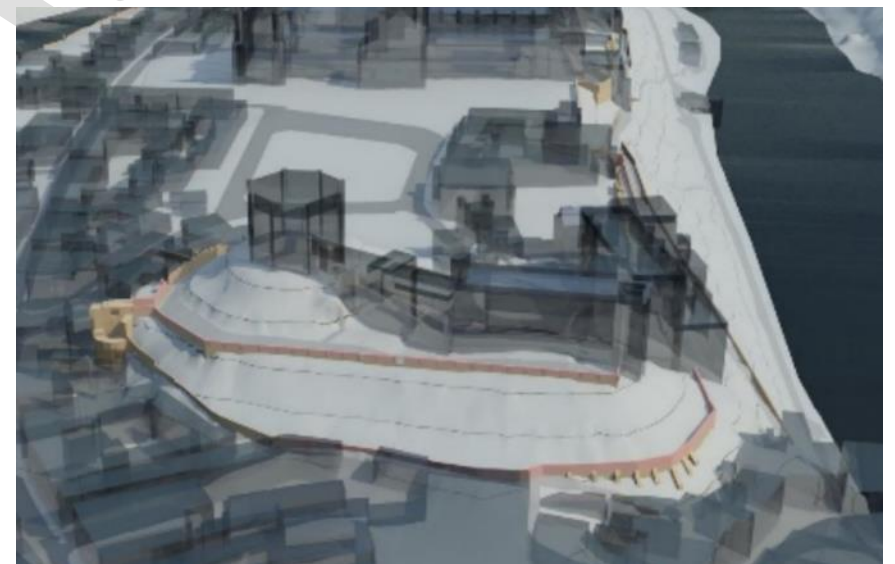
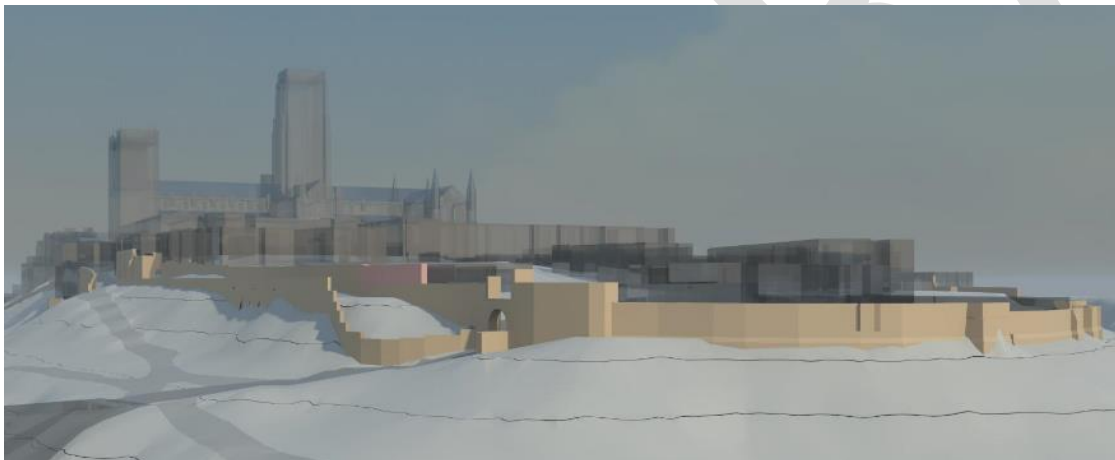
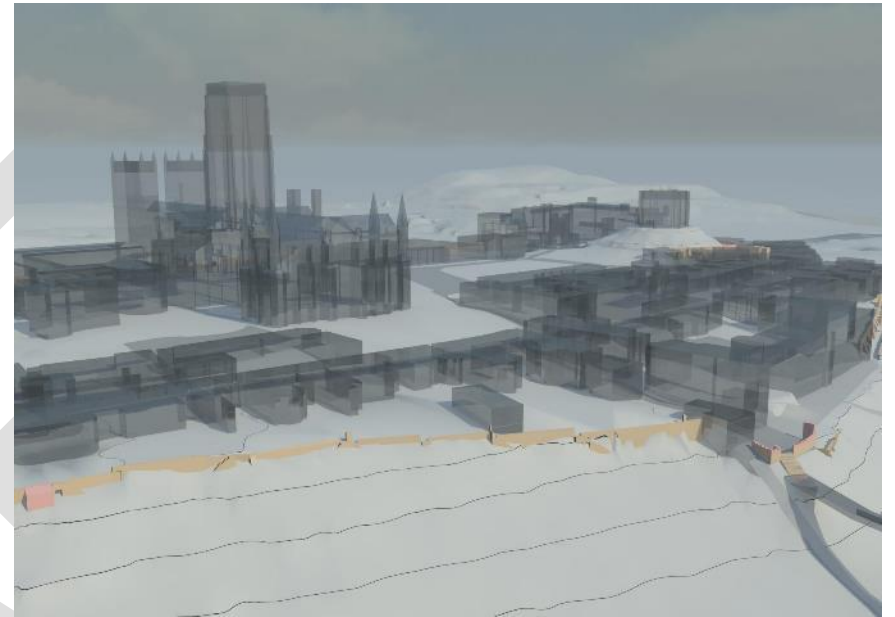
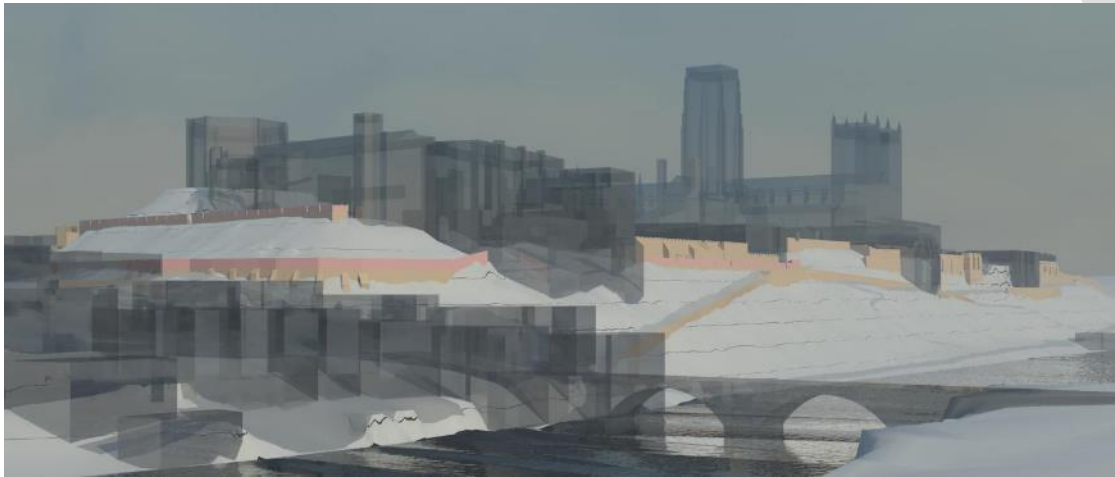
There is a long stretch of wall visible at the east end of Bow Lane know as Hatfield Terrace comprising of masonry and brick, with several large buttresses, and the remains of Kingsgate postern (*a secondary gate in a fortification such as a castle curtain wall*).

Fig 68 below. A select of images showing different sections of the city defensive walls and terraced walls around the riverbanks, showing separate phases of construction and large buttress features.

The castle walls are known to be in a variable condition through historic survey work, with some sections suffering from significant deterioration with tree and vegetation roots affecting integrity and included on Historic England’s “Heritage at Risk” register.



Fig 69 below. 3D modelling showing the circuit of walls spanning from Framwellgate Bridge to Kingsgate Bridge, and those around the Castle Keep. The peninsula was highly suited as a natural fortress and the castle walls provided a defensive circuit guarded by a series of gates that functioned as a formidable physical and visual barrier.



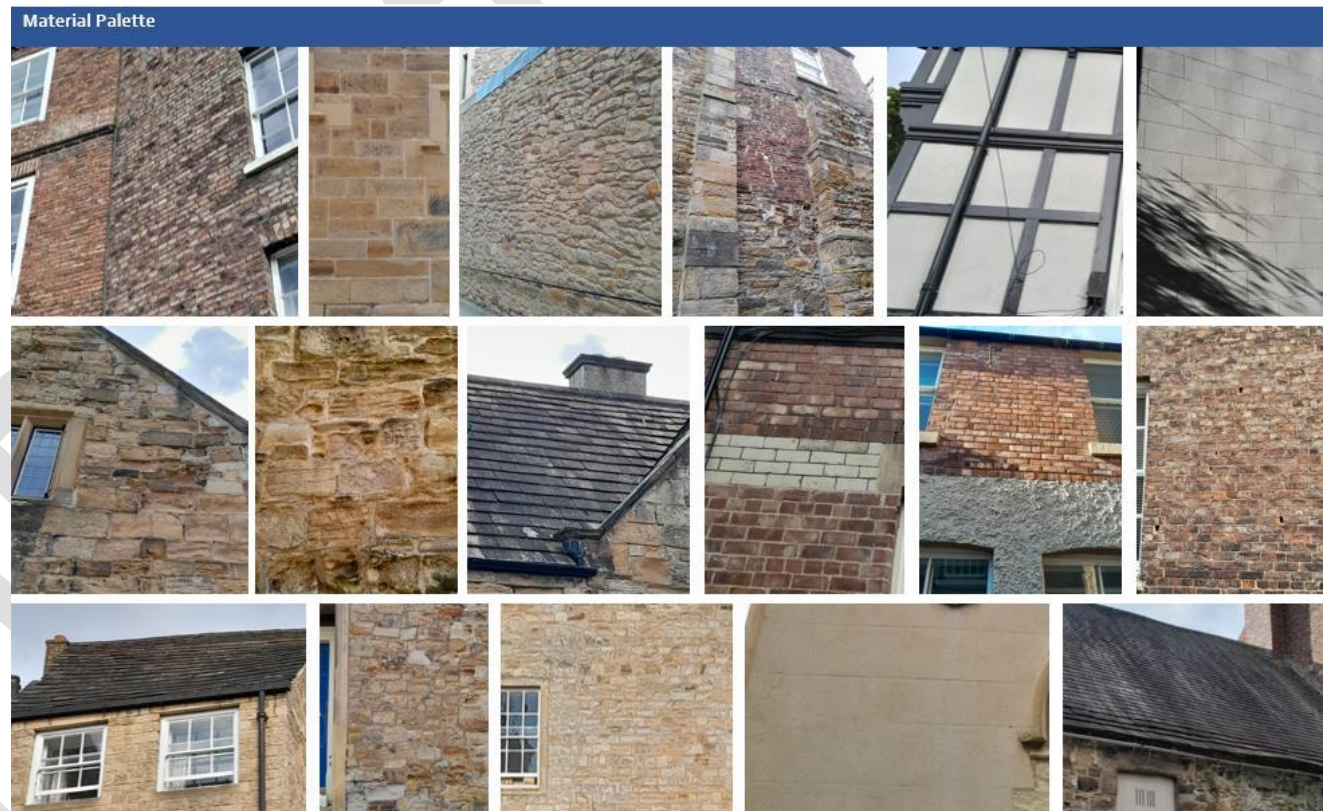
The type of materials utilised within the buildings make a key contribution to the local distinctiveness of the area. It adds a high level of aesthetic interest and a strong sense of the area's history, reflecting changes in fashion and building status.

The area includes a wide spread use of buff sandstone, including the medieval and particularly prominent buildings. Red facing brick has been used from the 18th century onwards with different brick types visible providing different tones and rich textures including many examples of older darker red/brown handmade brick. There are examples of brick being used in a more dramatic way when combined with stone dressings. Render is a common finish in different smooth, incised, and roughcast textures and with variation in colours that enhances the streetscene. It is found on several earlier buildings most likely to conceal later alterations or to hide lower quality materials as fashions dictated.

Less common, but effective, is the use of decorative timber framing and buff brick for detailing that adds aesthetic interest to the streetscene. At Palace Green and The College there is a high amount of stone renewal that stands out visually from the historic masonry, but this follows the periodic restoration of the ancient buildings through the centuries to the present day.

Stone is commonly used for detailing such as dressings, quoins, floor banding, heads, and sills, opening surrounds, water tabling and mouldings, for added decoration. Red brick is used for detailing in the form of simpler dressings, string courses, lintels, and chimneys.

Most of the visible roofs have Welsh slate coverings, the exceptions are the limited examples of Lakeland slate, stone slate and red tiles that enrich the roof covering palette contributing positively.

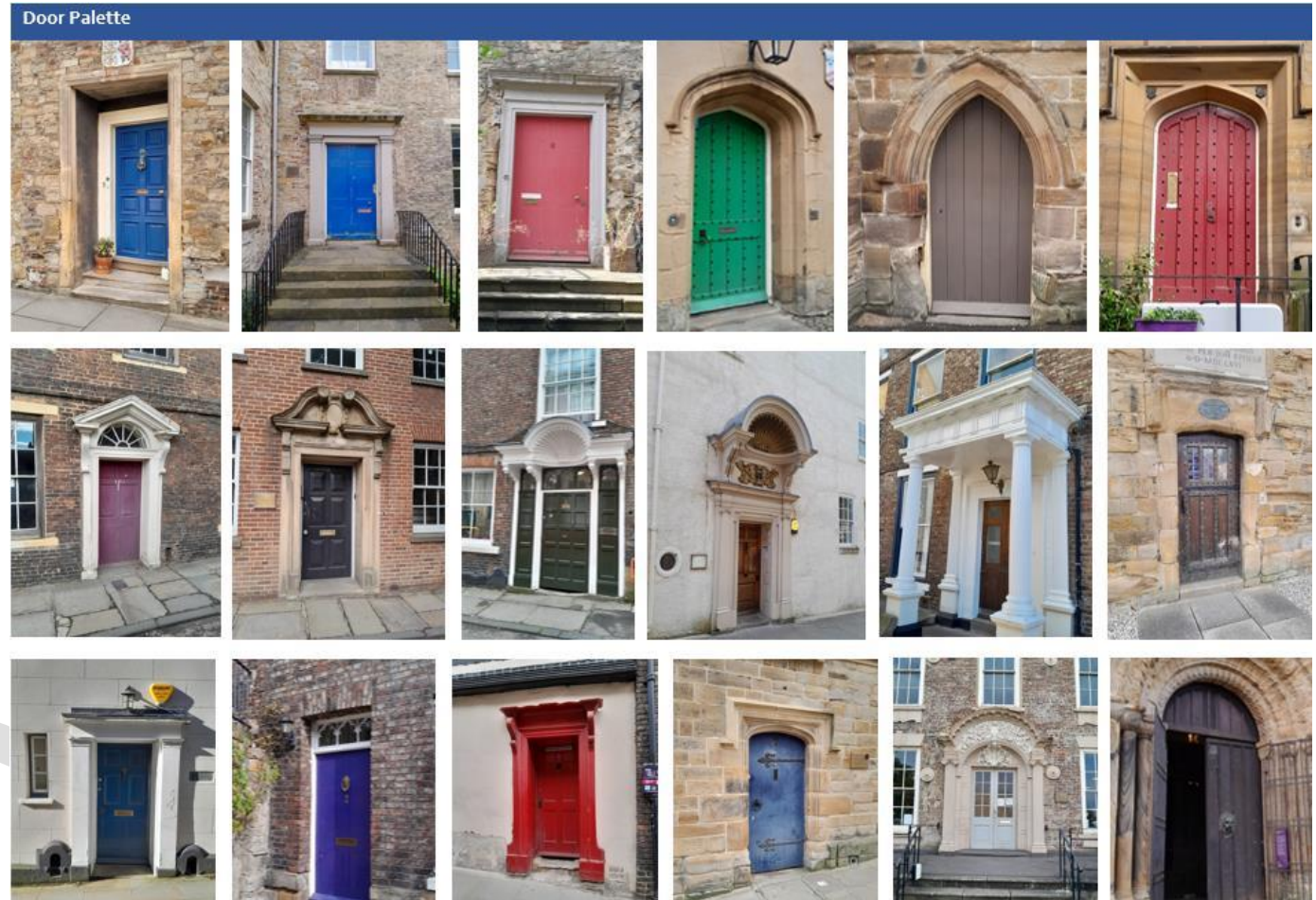


Building entrance doorways and associated features such as access steps, surrounds, and ironmongery are very important elements contributing to the buildings character and to the visual appearance of the streetscene.

The vast majority of the doors found are made from traditional timber, but they are very diverse in style ranging from solid robust stud and ledged and braced vertically boarded doors, domestic styled doors in 4, 5, 6 and 8 panelled designs, and cart door style openings. Many are enhanced by timber doorcases, architraves, and hoods, as well as glazed over-lights with different patterns.

There are some stand out examples such as those found at No 5 North Bailey featuring a central door with large highly decorative shell hood. Nos 41-4,2 a college accommodation block of 1971, but including two identical stone doorways reused from the previous 18th century house on the site, and No 12 South Bailey with an elaborate moulded doorcase under large, bracketed shell hood.

The most significant are the doors at the cathedral that are medieval, the main north door with a replica of the sanctuary knocker. At the castle, the gatehouse arch dates from the medieval period but the substantial timber gates are thought to date to the 16th century when it was widened, and the large ledged and boarded gates to the College Gatehouse.



Roofscape

The roofscape has great variation on account of the different ages, historic uses, status, heights, and architectural styles of the buildings. The most significant elements are obviously the battlemented roofs of the castle, and the east and west towers of the cathedral with pinnacles and spires, and the battlements on the central cross-tower that are skyline features of the wider townscape and, in the case of the cathedral, well beyond providing a dramatic ancient roofscape in their own right. This is important in illustrating Norman dominance and the specific role of the cathedral as a place of pilgrimage and the castles defensive duties to ensure the buildings stood out boldly within the skyline.

The roofs within Owengate and Bow Lane are difficult to view from street level. Those along the Bailey and Dun Cow Lane are pitched with variation in the building heights and the degree of the pitches. This along with roof lines broken by chimneys that vary in size, scale and form including the very square, to narrow rectangular, and often featuring band detailing with round, octagonal pots and crown pots, and roof slopes punctured by dormers, combine to create distinctive roofscapes that contribute very positively.

Shopfronts and commercial signage

There are two commercial buildings within North Bailey. No 47 is a distinctive late 19th century building of red brick with stone dressings and rich detailing. It is in use as a restaurant but does not have a shopfront in the traditional sense and its modern signage and advertisement clutter detract from its contribution to the streetscene. No 48 has a late 19th century timber shop front that contributes positively to the character and appearance of the streetscene but is visually marred by the modern fascia and first floor projecting sign that is out of keeping. In contrast, the Assembly Rooms Theatre has well considered contemporary signage in the form of tasteful individually applied lettering and a traditional hanging sign at first floor level.

Architectural form, style, and detailing - positive contributors to the area's special interest and character.

- The area's exceptional architecture displaying different uses, trends and fashions that has shaped its character.
- High quality historic streetscapes of different architectural styles but with unifying groupings and characteristics.
- Buildings defined by traditional shapes, forms, and proportions, with well ordered, and symmetrical frontages, and a vertical emphasis.
- Architectural styles and detailing varied that testifies to different phases of development, use and building status.
- Predominance of traditional vertical sliding sash windows and timber moulded panelled doors, variation in style adds to overall quality and character.
- The traditional and varied material palette.
- Distinctive roofscape and skyline with roofs traditional and typical of the era including prominent chimneys.

3.2.4 Ambiance and pedestrian experience

The approach up to Palace Green is busy, and vibrant, and of high townscape quality where movement is dictated and constrained by the single street medieval layout. The narrowness of the street combined with the heights of the buildings creates an intimate inwards character. As Palace Green is approached the townscape experience becomes richer in history and complexity. There is also a positive and steady change in atmosphere leaving the noisy commercial streets behind moving into the calmer Owengate and the Bailey.

There is high pedestrian footfall, and a moderate amount of traffic that can have a detrimental impact in terms of vehicle and pedestrian conflicts, and visual amenity, but is difficult to avoid.

The cathedral, castle and university buildings dominate the open space of Palace Green having a very commanding presence. There is a distinctive mixture of a quieter spiritual and collegiate air, but this can be disrupted by noise from tourists, students, and vehicles when busy, while parked cars directly in front of the cathedral can greatly detract from the view.

There can be significant change to the atmosphere of the place when hosting events. However, activity and the different uses are fundamental to the area’s significance.

Palace Green a long standing public area that is an important part of its community identity, the cathedral is still used for daily worship, with the castle and other buildings around the green used for study and lived in. There is noise from the cathedral’s bells that ring out loudly across the space, a familiar sound since medieval times. The large numbers of local people and visitors drawn regionally, nationally, and internationally are testament to the importance of the cathedral with visitors coming to enjoy a religious and cultural experience. The quality of the space is however detracted by overuse of the main grassed area, and clutter in the form of traffic calming measures that do not reflect the exceptional historic character of the place.



Fig 70 above. The busy approach to the cathedral along Saddler Street, events and activity at Palace Green, and cars cluttering The College.

Palace Green contrasts with the relatively private environment of The College. It has a tranquil atmosphere and unique sense of historic place that contributes to the area’s exceptional significance. Again, it is detracted by parked vehicles cluttering around the central lawn. The DLI garden of remembrance in the north west corner next to the cathedral is a very positive space providing a quiet place of reflection.

The Bailey developed as a wealthy, quiet residential neighbourhood away from the bustle of the town. The area is dominated by the University colleges and associated accommodation within the historic buildings that creates an academic air, yet it still retains a residential character forming a very distinctive and positive blend. Bow Lane and Dun Cow Lane are characterful historic routes popular with pedestrians. At the end of Bow Lane are steep steps down to Kingsgate Bridge and the riverside that may be difficult for some people. Both lanes fall in the shadow of the cathedral providing splendid distinct experiences.

The peninsula provides multiple points of public access, including to the riverbanks by different routes, which enables occasionally spectacular, and frequent glimpsed views of the cathedral, castle, and castle walls. The main streets and spaces, and lesser-used routes such as Windy Gap and Dark Entry, provide a fascinating connection to, and experience of, the history and story of Durham City.

This character area has a distinct night-time character that reinforces its atmosphere and adds a different dimension to its experience. The relative darkness of the approaching streets of Bow Lane, Dun Cow Lane and Owengate and the open Palace Green, plays an important role in the way in which the cathedral is perceived, helping to create a contrast to the illuminated mass of the building, highlighting its architectural form and detailing that provides a memorable composition.

As referenced above events are an important part of the area in terms of generating positive activity, people's experience and impression of the place while influencing character at specific times. The cathedral stands at the heart of many such events including Lumiere, Gaia, the Miners' Gala and banner exhibitions, and Remembrance Sunday that attract a large number of visitors adding to Durham cultural life.

Fig 71 below. Events at Durham Cathedral, miners' banners exhibition © Durham Cathedral, Gaia © Luke Jerram, and a light show Luxmuralis Space © Peter Walker.

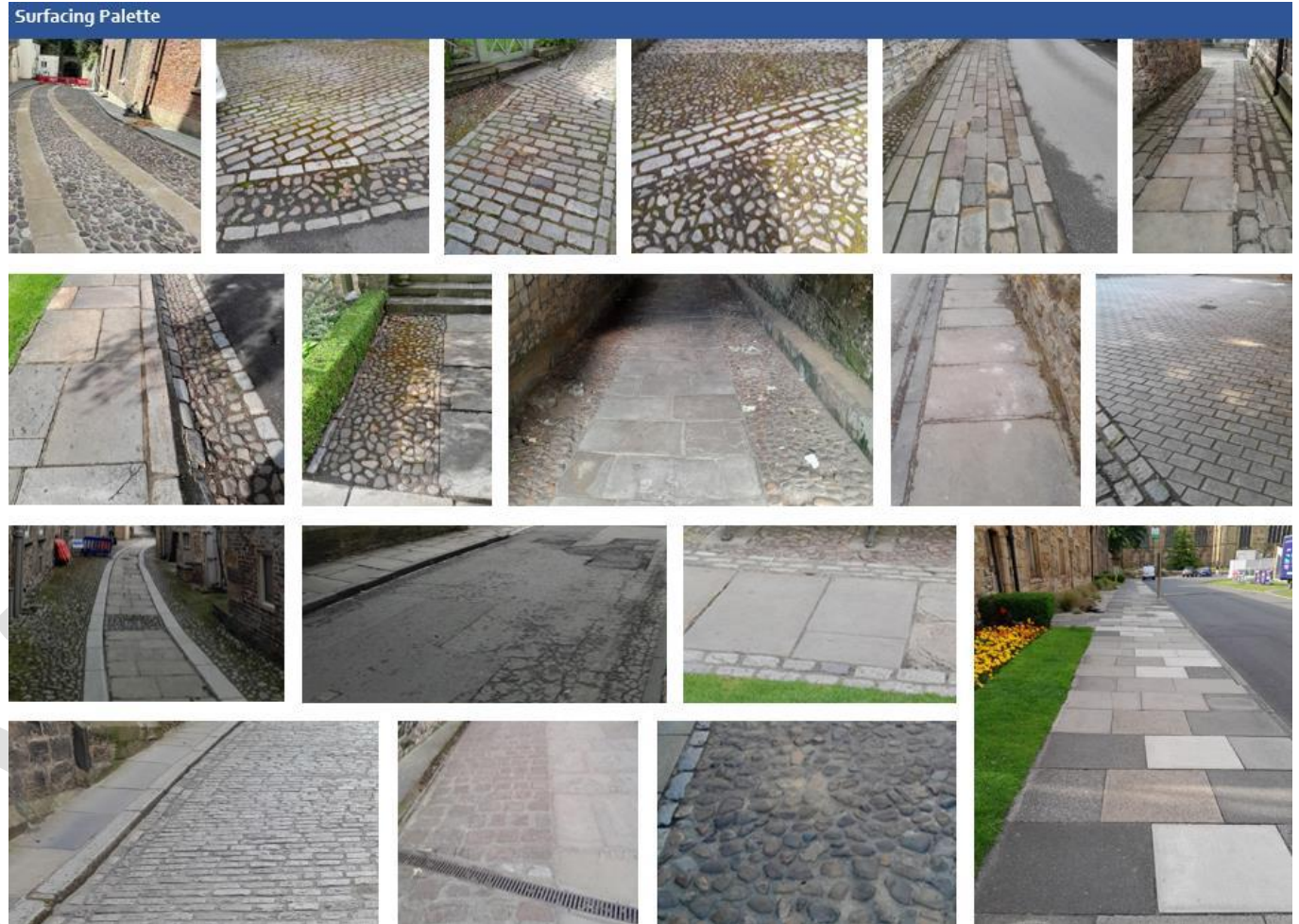


Palace Green has recently been resurfaced in matching tarmacadam that has refreshed its visual appearance. There is however archaeological evidence that the older cobbled surface survives beneath. The mismatched footway paving is not of a quality that reflects its ancient context. In South Bailey areas of traditional river cobbles with stone wheelers have been reinstated that has impacted very positively on the character and aesthetic of the street.

At Owengate, Bow Lane, Dun Cow Lane, and the workers yard to The College high quality traditional floorscape is found in a good condition. They comprise of river cobbles with stone and granite sets. Within The College there are large areas of river cobbled surfacing used for parking that is causing damage.

Footways are generally traditionally paved with stone that is very positive, with some use of neutral concrete flags. But the visual appearance is detracted to different degrees by paving being cracked, broken, and uneven, and replaced in different insensitive materials including tarmacadam. Other materials found include stone kerbs, stone and granite setts used as an interface at junction points and between different materials.

The overall impression is one of sympathetic floorscape treatments that adds positively to the character and appearance of the area.



Within Palace Green there are timber seats, different styles of bollards, refuse bins, a red telephone and post box. While these items are generally not harmful the traffic management measures introduce excessive modern clutter that detracts from the aesthetic quality of the place.

Within The College there are many bollards in different styles used to prevent parking on the pavement, but they create excessive and adverse visual clutter. The appearance of The College is further detracted by the collections of commercial and domestic refuse bins. Scattered around the courtyard are different styles of seats allowing people to stop and enjoy the place, with seating provided at the DLI memorial garden.

The Bailey is generally uncluttered with only traditional "Durham" cast iron bollards found, and the remains of a Victorian cast iron gas outlet pipe that is an important historic feature within the streetscene.

Street lighting within this character area is very well considered with the occasional traditional Victorian street lighting supplemented by Victorian style wall mounted units all in keeping with historic character of the place.

Street Furniture Palette

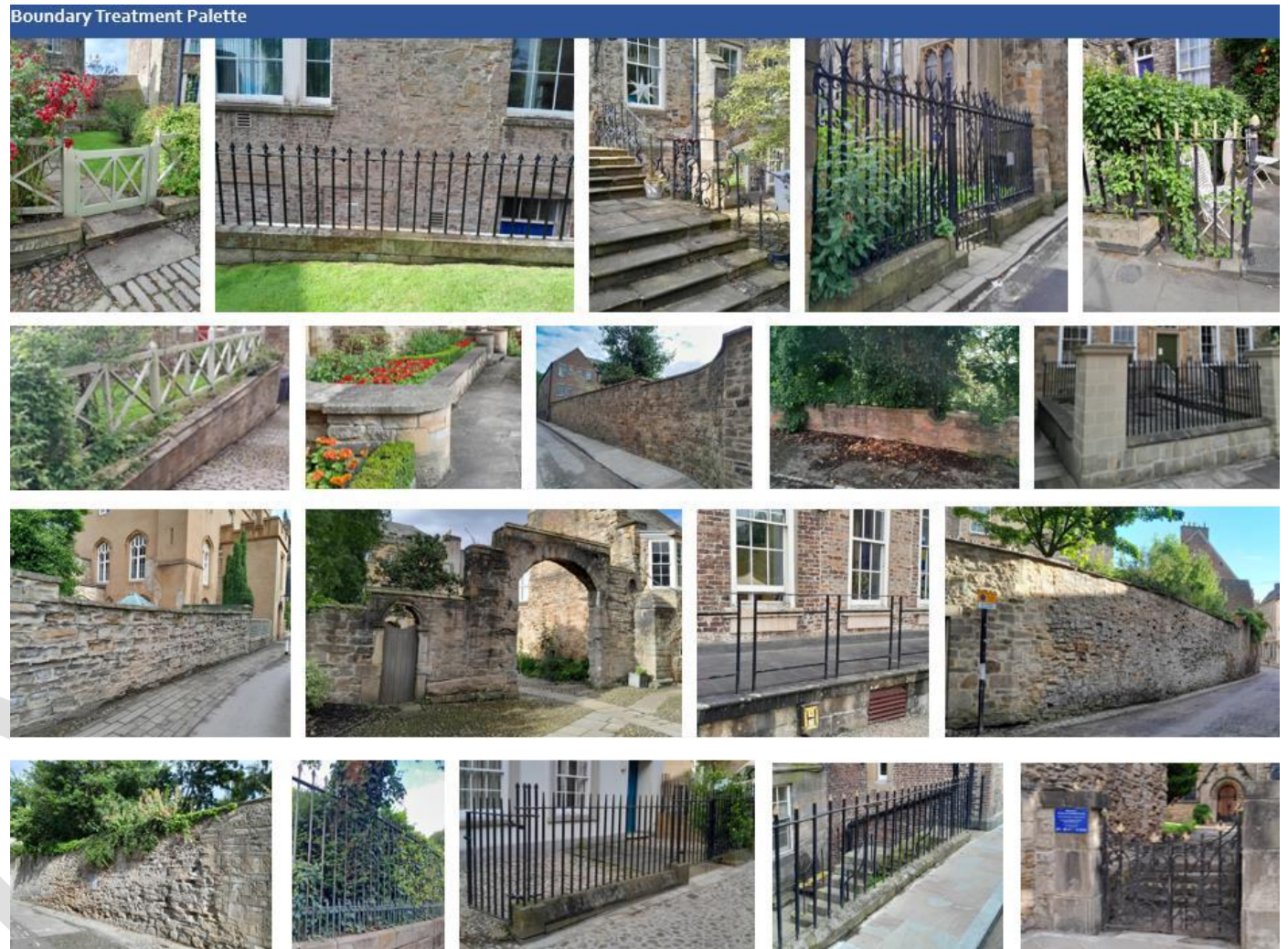


Boundary treatments are an important characteristic of the area contributing greatly to its special interest. They delineate individual plots, reinforce enclosure, and provide an understanding of the area's medieval defensive function.

There are many different boundary types including historic sandstone and a few red brick walls. Notable boundary treatments include St John's College with metal spear headed railings on top of stone walling and gated access to one side. The St Mary-the-Less Church is enclosed by sandstone walls with flat coping, the stone dwarf walls with spear headed railings enclosing South Bailey allotments, and there is a long section of high stone walling bounding the road leading up to the Watergate. This is of particular importance dating from the 1700s with a medieval base.

At Hatfield College there is a mixture of stone walls with chamfered coping and spike metal railings, with tall brick pillars and metal gates at the entrance. Tall decorative metal railings and gates on dwarf stone walls are found next to St Mary-le-Bow, and there is a low stone retaining wall to the grounds and cemetery around the cathedral.

Around The College there is a mixture of low stone walls with chamfered copings with timber painted fencing on top, dwarf walls with black metal railings, low hedgerow boundaries, timber fencing and metal railings that are in keeping.



3.2.5 Visual experiences

One of the area’s key attributes is how the streetscapes change in character and the sequential repeated revealing of the peninsula buildings as they move in and out of view within the dense urban townscape. Approaching the character area from the Market Place and Saddler Street the buildings on Palace Green are unseen despite proximity. Moving to the bottom of Owengate, there is at first a tantalising glimpse of the cathedral towers framed by the historic buildings either side. The cathedral’s visual presence increases approaching up the steep incline, before the sudden and dramatic reveal arriving onto Palace Green, one of the best visual experiences within the city.

There are other revealing, yet different, experiences approaching up Bow Lane and Dun Cow Lane cumulating at the magnificent Rose Window, and a closer perspective of the cathedral’s north elevation.

From Palace Green 360-degree views can be experienced of the historic buildings forming the political and military functions. These are unique and engaging, the spiritual power of the cathedral to the south, the Norman strength of the castle on its high mound to the north.

Along the Bailey views are strongly influenced by a formal street pattern, dense nature and enclosed character that was not planned to create distinctive formal vistas or architectural set pieces.

Yet the views in both directions along the street are of great variation and character giving an insight into how people lived within the defend complex. Such view contrasts with outward views to the riverbanks through the Watergate, and the dramatic and unfolding views out over the river and towards Elvet from the end of Bow Lane.

Along the Bailey there are places where the cathedral reappears with the towers dominating over the rooftops, and the terraced streetscape is positively interrupted by historic landmarks such as the churches and college gatehouse.

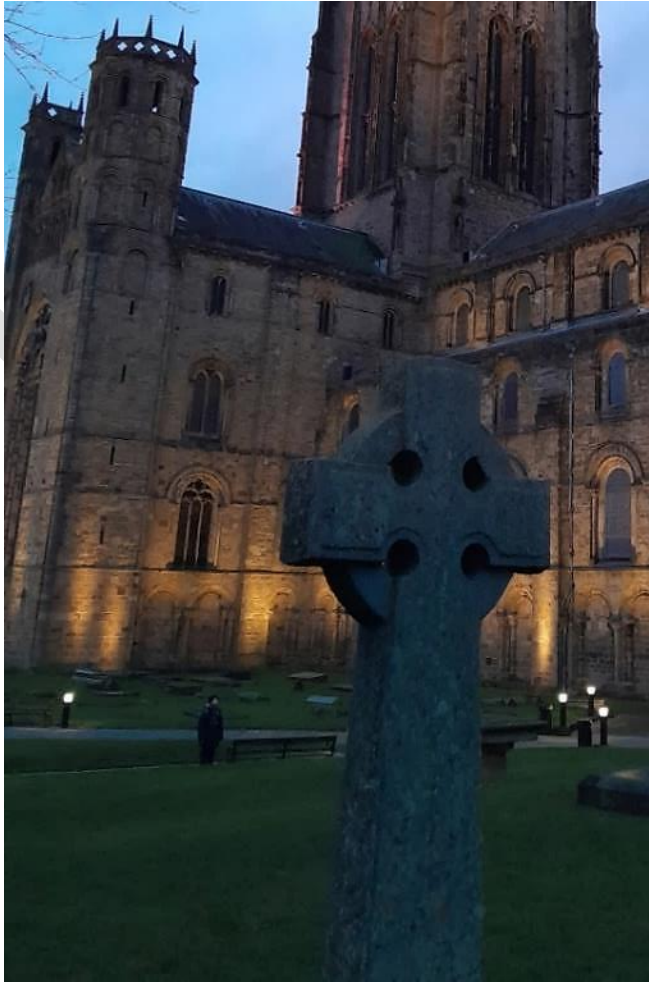
From within the centre of the college courtyard there are splendid views, including of special note the view to the north where the cathedral central tower can be seen visually dominating above the historic castellated rooftop of the cloisters.

In summary the key views within this character area are:

- View 1** – View up Owengate
- View 2** – 360 degree views around Palace Green
- View 3**- Street scape views in both directions along North and South Bailey
- View 4** - View along Bow Lane

Locations and details of these views are provided on the following pages.

Fig 72 below. A view of Durham Cathedral with the war memorial cross in the foreground taken at night.



Key Views
Location



Image



Description

View south west at Owengate.

Sequential view south west along Owengate, at the bottom of the short street the buildings on Palace Green are unseen, moving up the bank there are tantalising glimpses of the cathedral towers framed by the buildings. The view then opens to a dramatic reveal of the cathedral in full glory.



360 degree views around Palace Green.

Views of the buildings around the green space form different periods forming the political and military functions that are unique and engaging as a group. The power of the cathedral to the south with the castle on its mound in the north.

Key Views
Location



Image



Description

Views in both directions along the Bailey.

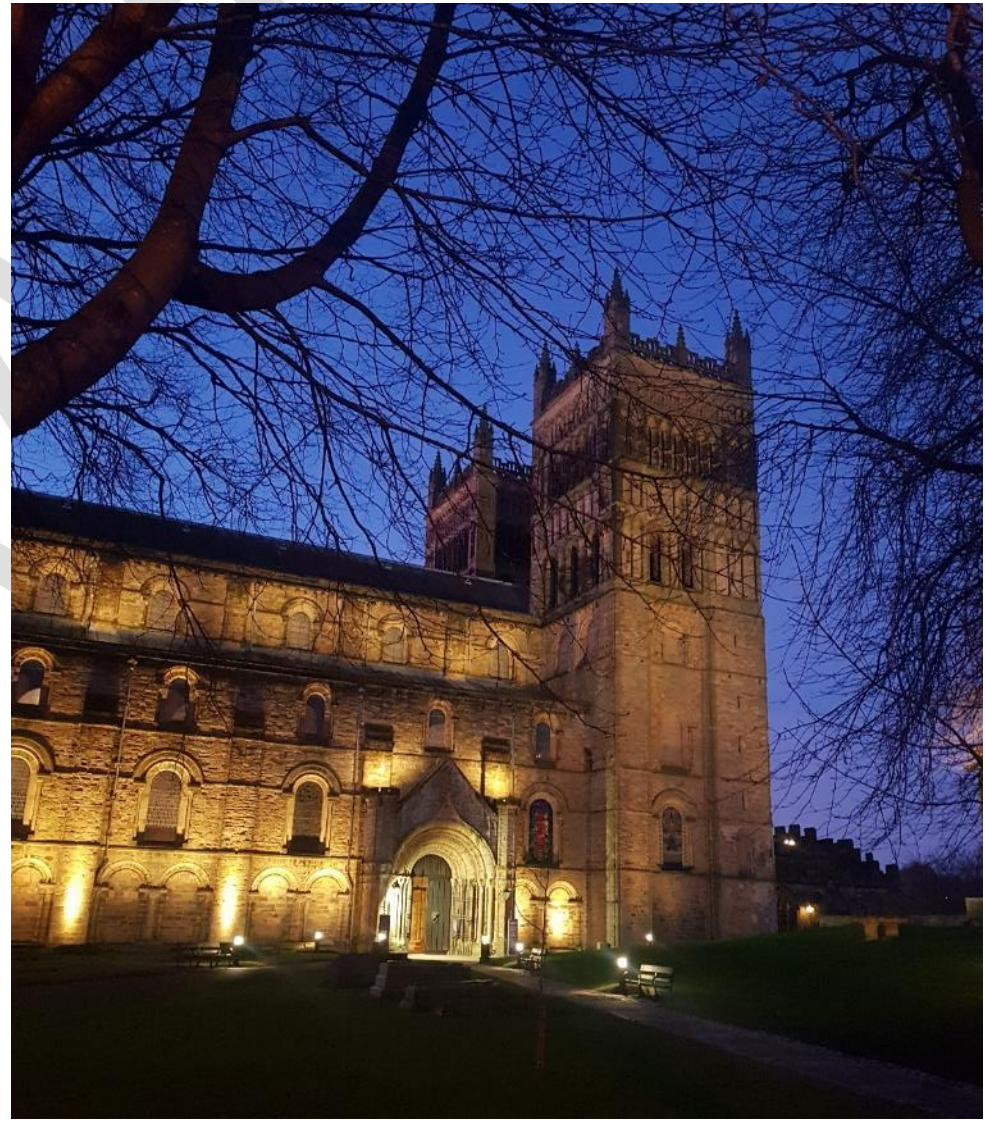
Intimate channelled views along the cobble street of the diverse architecture with notable historic landmarks dramatically enhancing the visual experience. The street retains an ancient and academic feel.



View west along Bow Lane.

Part of an important sequential experience approaching the peninsula by Kingsgate Bridge. The cathedral disappears from view, giving way to an atmospheric cobble street where the historic buildings tightly enclosing the space directing the eye to the cathedrals north east spire before a dramatic reveal emerging onto the Bailey.

Nighttime views – the cathedral from Owengate and Palace Green that provide different visual spectacles adding positively to the character and experience of the area.



Seasonal views – an example showing the seasonal contrast of an important view. In the summer views of the castles west range are heavily filtered by the trees, but when out of leaf greater extents of the castle wall are revealed enhancing the understanding of its significance.



Ambiance, pedestrian experience, and public realm - positive contributors to the area's special interest and character.

- The contrasting experiences and ambiances for example moving from the bustling surrounding commercial streets to the quieter spiritual air at Palace Green.
- The intangible experience of treading in the footsteps of pilgrims over the millennium.
- The positive sense of ancientness, separation and different feel from the wider city centre environment.
- The different and high quality framed, fixed, dynamic, and sequential views of changing historic streetscapes, and historic landmarks including the cathedral, castle and church buildings.
- The contrast between the day and night time ambiances, experiences including through events, and views, including seasonal differences.
- The intangible qualities and soundscape such as the ringing of the cathedral bells, sense of spiritualism, academic feel, and different atmosphere generated by events.

Fig 73 below. The unique visual spectacle across the city from the cathedral central tower.



3.2.6 Appraisal summary – condition, negatives, issues, threats, and problems that affect the character and appearance of the area.

Built form

- There has been some positive recent investment, repairs and refurbishment of some buildings.
- Some buildings stand out owing to their unkempt appearance and apparent lack of general maintenance.
- Some historic masonry is heavily eroded due to age and natural weathering over time.
- Some buildings have recently been repaired and refurbished impacting positively on significance.
- There are no buildings or sites identified as detracting from the special interest and character of the place.
- Positively the majority of buildings appear to have a use and therefore vacancy is not a noticeable problem within the area.
- The overall level of intactness and authenticity is high that is very positive.

Urban spaces

- Some buildings are visually marred by modern fixtures and surface mounted cabling to external facades.
- The quality of the public realm is mixed the carriageway surfacing is low quality in places and not befitting the significance and character of the place.
- Traditional floorscape enhancement works have been undertaken in South Bailey that is very positive.
- Fragmentary patch repairs to surface materials are very evident and detrimental. This includes reinstatement works by utility companies.
- Footway surfacing is positive in terms of the material palette but is detracted in places by poor condition.
- The impact of traffic and parked vehicles is the area’s biggest weakness.
- Traffic calming measures at Palace Green impact negatively on aesthetic quality and detract from views.

- Sections of the castle walls are known to be in a very deteriorated condition following previous surveys and condition reports.
- The section of historic wall to the rear of St Mary-the- Less has been demolished.
- The College is detracted by collections of refuse bins being openly visible.
- The College is often negatively impacted and cluttered by a high number of parked vehicles around the main green space.
- Some cobbled spaces at The College have been damaged by parked vehicles.

Green spaces

- The main central lawn at Palace Green is in a poor condition, often damaged by large events, and vehicles.
- There are places where unmanaged trees and vegetation are seen to be damaging the historic walls.

Street furniture

- The majority of the area is uncluttered and not detracted by items of street furniture.
- The exception to the above is The College where the overuse of bollards visually clutters the space.
- The traffic management items on Palace Green detract from its character and appearance.

Threats

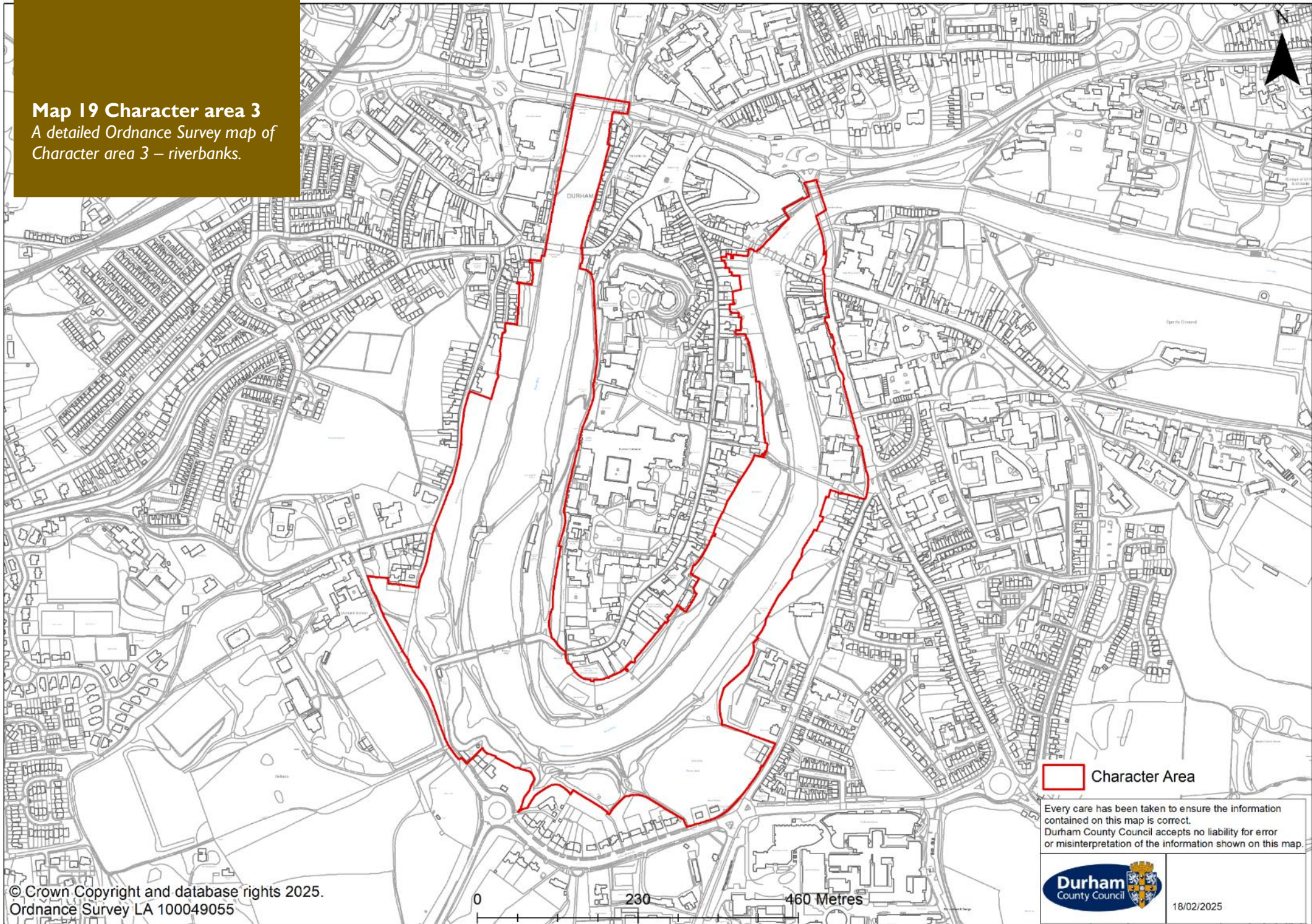
- Ongoing decline of those buildings which already appear to suffer from a lack of regular general maintenance works.
- Continued erosion of already deteriorated historic masonry.
- Continued deterioration of the castle walls.
- Continued negative impact from traffic parked vehicles, and traffic calming measures.
- Continuation of inappropriate alterations to street surfacing and deterioration of materials.


- Potential for inappropriate alterations to unlisted historic buildings eroding character.
- On going degrading of the green space at Palace Green and need for investment to improve the green space to meet usage.

3.3 Character area 3 (Riverbanks)



Map 19 Character area 3
A detailed Ordnance Survey map of
Character area 3 – riverbanks.



 Character Area

Every care has been taken to ensure the information contained on this map is correct. Durham County Council accepts no liability for error or misinterpretation of the information shown on this map.

3.3.1 Location and summary of special interest

Durham Castle and Cathedral majestically crown the peninsula that is surrounded in the south, east and west by the River Wear acting as a moat and sub-dividing it from the rest of the city. The river loop between Milburngate Road Bridge in the northwest to New Elvet Road Bridge in the northeast informs the boundary of this character area.

The inner riverbank boundary follows the Back of Silver Street then the route of the footpath up to Broken Walls turning south to follow Prebends Walk. The boundary rounds the Watergate to follow the rear plots of the buildings lining the Bailey. The outer boundary follows the riverside path of Lambton Walk down along the west edge of South Street Banks to Quarryheads Lane. It then follows the edge of Elvet Banks up to Dunelm House continuing north along the street of New Elvet up to the modern road bridge.

The riverbanks are a distinctive historic environment, part derived from the change of uses from Norman quarry to defensive barrier, water powered industry, to planned 18th century romantic landscape (*the combination of water, greenery, calm, tranquillity, and picturesque views in the bustling heart of the city centre*). The area is an exceptional green space and important resource within the heart of the city centre that informs the landscape setting to the castle and cathedral and is an area deeply cherished by local

people and is enjoyed by visitors from all over the world.

What gives the area its special historic and architectural interest and character?

- The natural topographical and geographical feature of the River Wear gorge that created a naturally defensible position laying the foundation for the development of the entire city.
- The changes in landscape use reflecting wider significant changes in historic, society, ownership, and the city's political structure.
- The high natural aesthetic value of the area and its juxtaposition with the dense urban townscape.
- The high value as an accessible public space within the heart of the city centre as a unique place of tranquillity and retreat.
- The high significance of the area's built heritage and surviving historic landscape features such as the abutments of the bridge that preceded Prebends Bridge, the Bailey garden walls and steps.
- The indivisible historic, spatial and landscape relationship with the castle and cathedral monuments on the peninsula.

- The significant views, some designed and world renowned, that the area provides inspiring artists over the centuries to present day.
- The high recreation, leisure and community value as a landscape deeply cherished by local people and enjoyed by visitors from all of the world.

Fig 74 below. The famillure sight of the Prince Bishops River Cruiser approaching Prebends Bridge. Image © Krystal Tara used with permission.



3.3.2 Layout, streets, and spaces

The character area comprises the incised meander of the River Wear incorporating the gorge slopes that rise steeply up from water level to the crest of the escarpment. The river flows south to north with a tight bend around the peninsula punctuated by a weir at a halfway point. The weir is bounded on either side by two former mills on the riverbanks which act as strong focal points.

The form of the riverbanks as seen today is a direct result of the area's changing functions and evolution over time. The area has a solid geology of sandstone that has been quarried at various times for building materials for the castle walls, castle, cathedral, and nearby houses and evidence of this activity still survives in the landscape. This has shaped the riverbanks, and they are now less steep than they once were, but the slopes have been instrumental in largely keeping the area free from built development protecting its natural open character.

The landscape is dominated by steep banks that contain mature woodlands with ground flora, with a mature tree lined avenue that formalises the riverside footpath of the inner riverbanks below the castle and cathedral. In splendid contrast the sandstone ramparts, buttresses and towers of the castle and cathedral dominate the higher ground along the footpath.

It is a very distinctive place of changing character; at river level it is open and spacious yet still tightly constrained by the steep valley sides rising high above, where the woodland provides an intimate green backdrop. Elsewhere the density of the tree canopy creates enclosure that enhances the sense of separation from the rest of the city centre, with the occasional break providing river views.

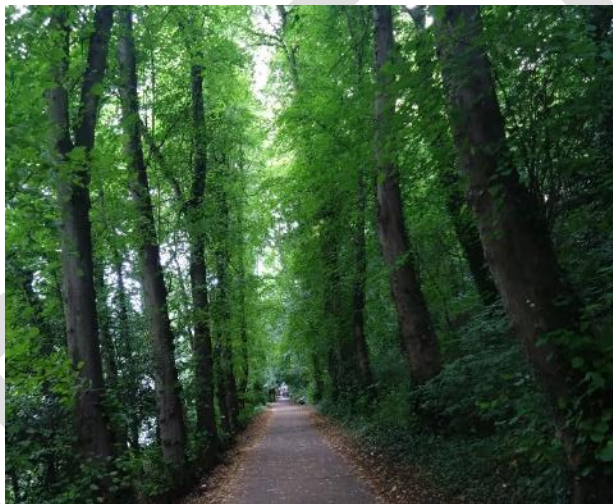


Fig 75 above. The tree lined footpath on the lower inner riverbank between Silver Street and the Old Fulling Mill, the dense mature woodland creating an intimate inwards natural character.

The natural form was altered further through the historic creation of gardens, formal walks, promenades, informal woodland walks cutting into the banks and the public walk along the riverside. These developed following the release of Durham peninsula from being a military stronghold.

There is a complex network of routes with single direct paths following the water line but with others leading off in different directions up through the woodland connecting to different parts of the city that encourage exploration.

Fig 76 below. Different routes along the riverside at "Fearon Walk" and between Prebends Bridge and St Leonard's School boat house, the openness contrasting positively with the enclosed character elsewhere.



Palmers Close is a notable green space that retains its historic open character. It is important in providing a historic experience as part of the route to the cathedral.

A significant historic built component of the area's layout are the bridges, the earliest needed to cross the river to reach the settlements that grew up on the opposite banks. These replaced earlier fords or wooden bridges. Framwellgate is Durham's oldest located in the west connecting the peninsula with Crossgate, in the east Elvet Bridge provides the historic link to Old Elvet and beyond. In the south Prebends Bridge connects the riverbanks, the Bailey and Quarryheads Lane. Also, in the east the 20th century Kingsgate Bridge connects Bow Lane and the riverbanks to New Elvet. The bridges are important landmarks and as points of departure and arrival.

The castle walls were built with gardens outside the walls, first recorded in the 14th century, developing to their fullest extent in the 18th century, they varied in size, but all had similar symmetrical layouts. They grew both from the formal terraces and from the desire of Durham's wealthy elite for larger plots beyond the crowded Baileys but fell into disuse.

While some of these garden's merge into the natural overgrown landscape, others are still recognisable from the riverside footpaths with distinguishable plot shapes, stone retaining walls, and steps are visible amongst the trees and

vegetation giving an important insight into the past.

Also of note are the south side walks linking to St Oswald's Church at Church Street, that is likely the original site of St Cuthberts Community in the 10th century before moving onto the peninsula.

The riverbanks are characterised by a "romantic landscape" that is one of formal historic design of picturesque scenery comprising of wild, dramatic scenery with contrast between texture of landform, water and foliage and a place of calm tranquillity in the heart of the bustling urban city centre.

The north east part of the character area is informed by development at New Elvet riverside and the buildings lining the east end of Old Elvet Bridge. The mid-20th century developments of Dunelm House, and Durham University Elvet Riverside 1 and 2 have wiped away the medieval plan form and are individually designed buildings facing the river and set back from the main street building line. However, in the case of Dunelm House this is positive owing the architectural distinctiveness and quality of the building.

In the north at Old Elvet Bridge on the south side there is a short run of historic buildings hard-pressed against the pavement and stepping downwards in height following the gradient of the bridge. They form a continuous straight building line re-establishing the medieval form and character.

Fig 77 below. "Prebends Walk, an early feature of c.1680 that provides space for recreation outside the city walls and a place from which to view the river, and a typical stepped route through the woodland.



Layout, streets, and spaces - positive characteristics and identity that contribute to special interest.

- Characterised by high quality scenic landscape and the River Wear environs with limited but positive dispersed built development.
- A distinctive historic environment with an integral relationship to the buildings on the peninsula forming a unified historic landscape of considerable character.
- The shaping of the landscape and its character by human hand as early source of power, a quarry, and riverbank gardens that is still legible in parts.
- The contrast between dense areas of broad-leafed woodland and openness from some riverside paths and the bridges.
- The topography reflecting the hilly character of the city.
- The surviving rough definition of the riverbank gardens plots and surviving terraced walks.



*The riverbanks provided a magnificent setting to the castle and cathedral and was a renowned attraction. A romantic landscape was created that included Prebends Bridge, perfectly positioned to frame the classic cathedral view.
Image, ©Graeme Hall, used with permission.*

3.3.3 Architectural style, form, and detailing

Despite the area's landscape character, the riverbanks have undergone dramatically contrasting changes in function and appearance throughout the history of the city. As a result, the area has an interesting chronology of built development that enhances its special interest and character with important built heritage spanning the medieval period to the 20th centuries.

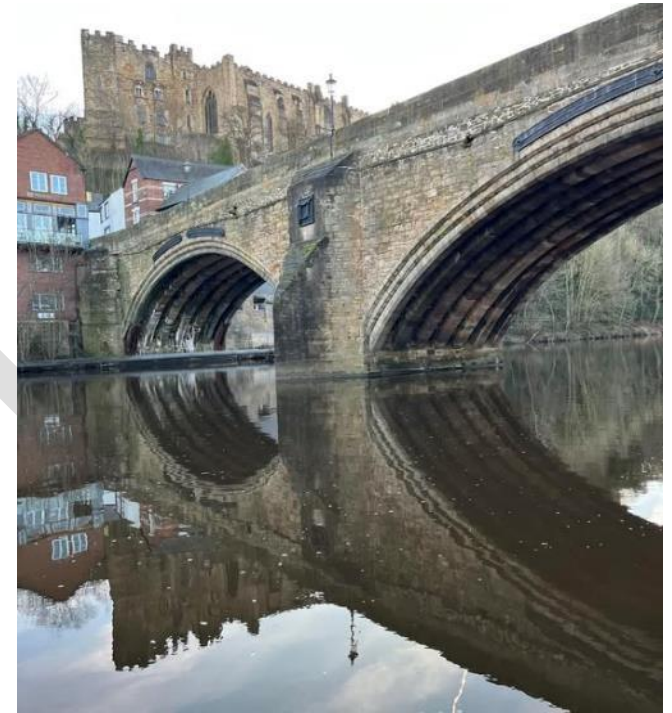
The area includes six bridges. Framwellgate Bridge was the first of the Durham bridges to be built. It dates from the 15th century replacing an early flood damaged bridge built by Bishop Flambard in 1128. It stands at a strategic entry point well defended by the castle to prevent it becoming a military weak point. It is constructed from coursed squared sandstone with ashlar dressings and comprises of two wide elliptical arches with renewed parapet and coping. Important features are the three cast iron lamps that date from the 20th century with founders' marks Bromford Tube Co.

In the west is Elvet Bridge originally built in 1170 to link the peninsula to the bishop's new borough of Elvet at Old, (then New) Elvet. It is built from coursed squared sandstone with ashlar dressings and comprises of seven river arches and two land arches, the easternmost of them adapted to form the house of correction in 1632.

The bridge was guarded by turrets and had two chapels St James (west side), and St Andrews (east side) and there is surviving medieval fabric of the latter in the present-day buildings.

In the south Prebends Bridge replaced an earlier timber bridge of 1574 that replaced the ferry used by the medieval monks. This bridge was swept away in the 1771 flood with the new Prebends Bridge completed in 1777, to the designs of George Nicholson. It is built from coursed squared sandstone and ashlar and comprises of three round arches with a low-chamfered coping to the parapets and is of an elegant classical design. Of note are the remains of the old footings of the original timber bridge which can still be seen slightly upstream on the opposite riverbank.

Fig 78 below and right. Durhams ancient bridges, Old Elvet Bridge, Framwellgate Bridge and Prebends Bridge.



At the west end of Prebends Bridge are Prebends Cottage and Prebends Gate Lodge. The cottage has a special charm, dating from c.1771 of one storey and three bays constructed from sandstone rubble with a red pantile roof with lower courses of stone slates. It features a six panelled timber double door, 16-pane sash windows with timber shutters. The Gate Lodge dates back to the late 18th/early 19th century constructed from course squared sandstone with ashlar dressings, Welsh slate roof, in the Tudor style with striking very tall central chimney with conjoined square flues, and it is a local landmark with its white gates. Both of these buildings served as tollkeepers lodgings to collect fees from people wishing to cross Prebends Bridge.

Fig 79 below. *Prebends Gate Lodge and Cottage.*



Of the three-20th century bridges the most significant architecturally is Kingsgate Bridge constructed in 1963 to the designs of Ove Arup with an unequivocal simple modern design. It is constructed from reinforced concrete and consists of two trough shaped lengths of deck supported by V-shaped legs on a single support at the base. It was built as two halves on the banks rotated to meet over the middle of the river then connected by bronze expansions joints in the parapets. Its significance is recognised by its Grade I listed status.

Fig 80 below. *Kingsgate Bridge, symbolic of the high architectural quality for the period responding to the unique location and setting.*



Medieval Durham boasted eight mills built to harness waterpower of which two survive. Mill House on the outer west bank, and the Fulling Mill on the inner east bank, are significant historic landmarks.

South Street Mill is a former water mill dating from the 18th century but incorporating earlier buildings. It comprises of two and three storeys of an L-plan form constructed from sandstone rubble with quoins below a slate and tiled roof. It has a variety of openings in assorted sizes and a wide stone wall the enclosed the mill race (the current of water that turned the wheel).

On the opposite bank is the Fulling Mill that was originally two separate mills and house dating from the 17th and 18th century but incorporating earlier fabric. It comprises of three storeys and four bays, constructed from squared sandstone below a hipped roof of pantiles with four rows of stone slates, and has two and three light casement windows. The mill race is under a segmental ashlar arch in the third bays.

Also of significance are the two weirs that pond the river to form a constant stretch of water, and the southernmost one adjacent to the mills is essential to the visual setting of the castle and cathedral.

Standing on the river side at the loop in the river is the intriguing classic summerhouse building, The Count's House. It dates from 1810 comprising of one storey and one bay with a simple rectangular plan form. It is constructed from coursed squared sandstone with ashlar portico and is in the Greek Doric architectural style, reputedly by the architect Ignatius Bonomi.

To the rear of the building is a "hidden" icehouse of c1800 comprising of an earth mound with rubble walls and ashlar entrance. It is one of a four know icehouses on the peninsula.

Another interesting hidden structure is St Cuthbert's Well, a sandstone structure with stone platform and retaining walls. It is date 1690 in its listing but there is no early record, and it first appears on the 1861 OS map. It is probable that that the site was developed as a spa/spring taking the saint's name as a local association.

Scattered around the inner riverbanks are a series of boathouses that date from the 20th century although some reuse earlier fabric. The College boathouse is a brick structure with a slate roof that has stone foundations indicative of an earlier building, whereas St Chad's and St John's College are two modern timber boathouses with corrugated roofs.

Fig 81 below. Historic buildings and structures around the riverbanks including mills, boat houses, the Counts House, Ice House and St Cuthberts Well.



Durham University's Elvet Riverside development dating from the mid-1960s designed by Architects Co-Partnersy with Over Arup and Partners consulting engineers. It comprises of two linear flat roofed blocks connected by a bridge link with an inner courtyard. It has ignored the historic grain and a fairly plain New Elvet street frontage; instead, it was designed to face the river where the elevation has slightly more interest built on stilts with a rhythm to the windows broken by continuous horizontal bands.

Fig 82 below. *The 20th century Elvet Riverside development, showing the more considered riverside elevation.*



Adjacent to the University site is St Andrew's Court a modern residential apartment development to the rear of Nos 81-83 New Elvet. The buildings massing to the riverside is broken-down by a series of staggered gables with different material finishes, the elevations have a vertical balance through the sizing and ordering of the sash windows, with the angled lead covered bays to the rear providing contemporary features. Visually the building assimilates well in both its riverside setting, and wider townscape context when seen from Old Elvet Bridge.

Dunelm House stands detached to the south, an iconic building that divides opinion. Architecturally it is unlike anything else in the city centre owing to its bold Brutalist style testifying to concrete modernism that is a showpiece of the 1960s. It is by Ove Arup and Partners comprising of the purpose-built Students Union Buildings, steps, attached walls and landing stage.

The building is of an exceptional design quality with an emphasis on the balance of horizontal plane with vertical accents, and a stacked plan responding to the riverbank's topography, which achieves a striking impact. It has significant group value with Kingsgate Bridge acting as a visual counterpoint to the medieval townscape and landscape on the opposite side of the river. It was designated Grade II listed status in 2021 in recognition of these qualities.

Fig 83 below. *The distinct 20th century architectural styles of Dunelm House viewed from New Elvet and the riverside from Kingsgate Bridge.*



The east end of Old Elvet Bridge reaffirms the medieval urban character being lined by historic buildings of two and three storeys in simple yet different and interesting styles. They are of painted brickwork with some examples of painted incised stucco and render, almost all of the roofs are of Welsh slate, the exception being Nos. 96-97 which has a French tiled roof. All of the ridgelines are punctured by an interesting assortment of chimneys and pots. Many of the properties have timber sliding sash windows in different glazing patterns ranging from 2 to 16-panes; canted bays and oriel windows are also commonplace.

The ground floors comprise of shop frontages of various ages, the most noteworthy being that of No. 87 which is in the Jacobean style with pilasters and a bracketed fascia with prominent cornice and No. 90-91 dates from the late 19th century and is highly decorative. The remainder of the shop fronts are traditionally designed yet much plainer.

Opposite this group the Swan and Three Cygnets Public House, is an interesting, detached building. It is a 20th century conversion of a former garage building, of an irregular plan, partly brick, partly rendered with Gothic detailing, and a traditional-style public house frontage.

Turning the corner onto New Elvet are found the City Hotel, and The Half Moon Public House. They are similar in form both being three storeys with wide frontages. The City Hotel is older dating back to c.1700 whereas the Half Moon is mainly 18th and 19th century.

The City is traditional but plainer in style and appearance but has fine tripartite sashes and bays that add interest to the front elevation. In contrast The Half Moon has an elaborately decorated pub front with panelled ionic pilasters, wider panelled doors with over-lights all in rich colours, above which is a central sash window flanked by fine oriel windows with pilasters and brackets.

The next group of historic buildings are detracted by modern shop fronts that have replaced the original ground floor frontages, but above their historic style and character is preserved. The upper floors are built from rich red brick with stepped and moulded floor band, 12-panes sashes and with ashlar dressings and 2-light windows with segmental arches are evidence of its late 17th or early 18th century construction and the north part is an obvious 19th century addition.

Fig 84 below. A late 18th / early 19th century building with replaced ground floor and the characterful City and Half Moon public houses.



Architectural form, style, and detailing - positive contributors to the area’s special interest and character.

- Historic buildings and structures of different ages and architectural styles based upon specific location focused uses.
- Buildings of architectural and historic interest recognised by their listed status.
- Importance of the area’s architecture in terms of the understanding of the riverbank’s evolution from a power source to military requirements to public recreation.
- Buildings and structures constructed so that others can be appreciated as “objects in the landscape” enhancing character.
- Landmark historic buildings with a dramatic presence in the landscape.

Negative elements

The two mill buildings have been redundant for a long period of time. They are suffering from fabric deterioration to different degrees, and regularly attract anti-social behaviour. This is a common occurrence around the riverbanks in particular vandalism and graffiti. These factors detract from their individual special interest, character, and visual appearance and the important views in which they feature. They also give a poor impression of the place.

Prebends Bridge has visible issues under the archway where fabric is noticeably decayed with significant dampness, and it is on Historic England’s national Heritage at Risk Register.

The Count’s House follows a similar situation, and while it is evident that some fabric restoration works have been carried out it remains disused, and the roof is in a poor condition.

St Cuthbert’s Well is heavily vandalised and is a hidden spot that attracts anti-social behaviour. Graffiti is also found at the Mills, Prebends Bridge, and various sections of walling. All these buildings are identified as being at risk.

Some of the late 18th and early 19th century buildings fronting New Elvet are harmed by 20th century ground floor frontages.

Fig 85 below. Examples of graffiti to buildings and structure around the riverbanks that detracts from the area’s character and appearance.



3.3.4 Ambiance and pedestrian experience

As referenced previously, a fundamental part of the special interest of this character area is that it offers a tranquil retreat away from all the noise, hustle, and bustle of the busy city centre environment just a short walk away. This calm and reflective environment also supports the spiritual role of the cathedral enabling people to access the spirit of the past without disturbance from the present. Further, the riverbanks are important as part of the spectacular series of linked designed historic parks and gardens within the city such as Old Durham Gardens, The College, Wharton Park, and Crook Hall, which reflect the complex historic phases of development and are of high significance.

There is a hierarchy of connecting formal paths, unmade tracks, bridges and vernal access points laid out across the hilly topography that not only dictates pedestrian movement, but in combination with the dense tree canopy, creates sudden surprising vistas and concealment of the castle, cathedral, castle walls, and bridges, and sometimes frequent glimpsed views adding to the air of mystery and anticipation.

This comprehensive network is incredibly positive for residents, workers, students, and visitors to either enjoy long walks, and as scenic short cuts to various parts of the city.

Within the character there are many different pedestrian experiences enhancing the distinctiveness and quality of the place.

For example, approaching into the area along Lambton Walk via the formalised footpath at water level there is major noise disturbance from the modern city above and from the roar of the river over the weir, the route provides a visual avenue with the river and Framwellgate Bridge the main elements, followed by the urban townscape with the castle and cathedral the backdrop. This then gives way to a calmness passing below Framwellgate Bridge where the riverside environment is open, light, and airy the view dominated by the castle, cathedral, weir, and mill. This experience contrasts with the dark intimate character approaching from the peninsula by historic routes such as Dark Entry, and Windy Gap, with only glimpsed views of the river through the trees.

This experience is then distinct from the pedestrian routes along the designed historic formal terraces and promenades on the higher ridge line. These again have an enclosed intimate character but are dominated by the sheer scale and massing of the castle, walls, and cathedral towering above, giving a close-up experience of the statement of Norman authority. All these experiences increase the sense of surprise and appreciation of the more sudden open river corridor views either when standing on the bridges or at closer river level.

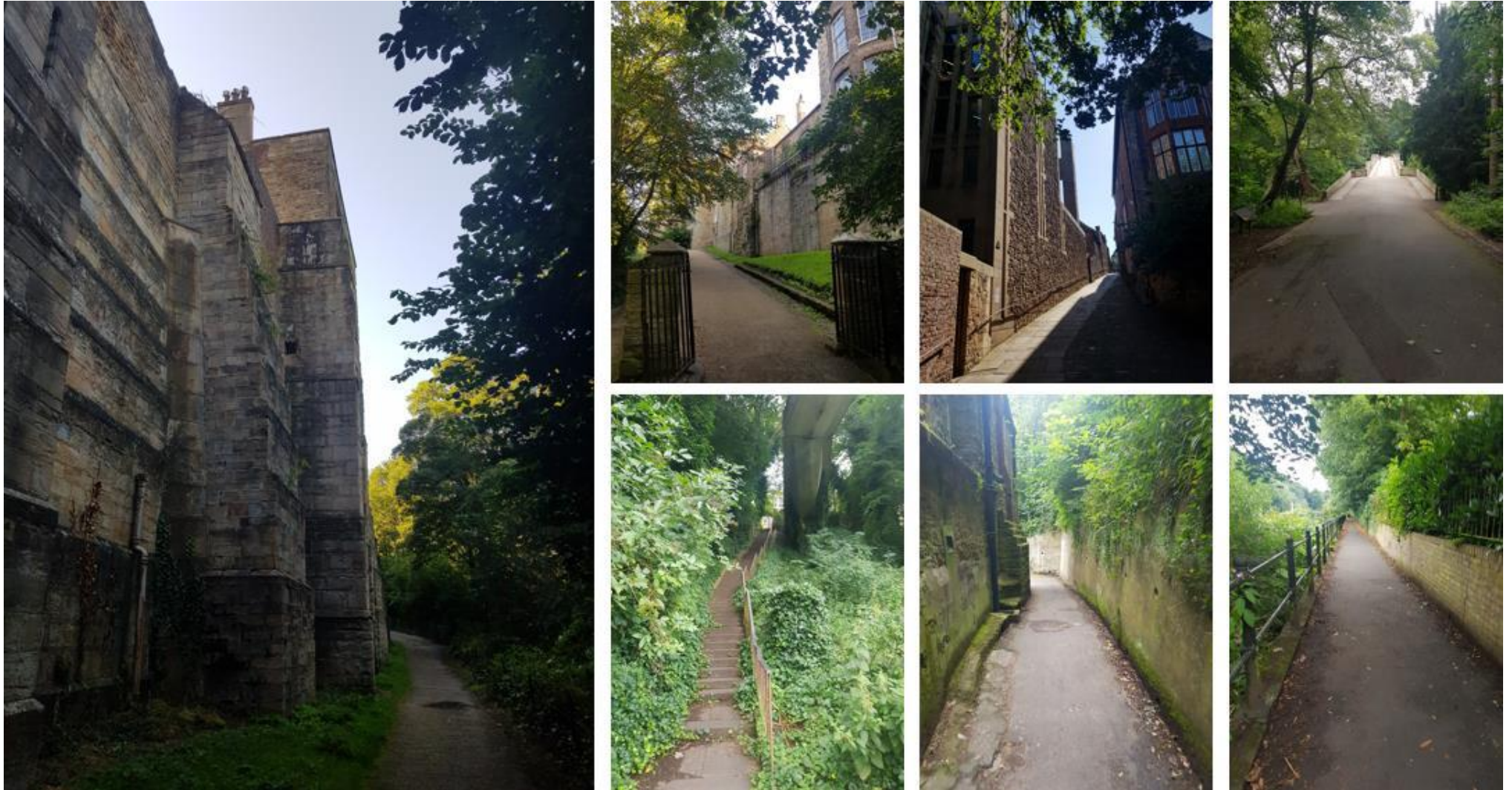
The area provides an invaluable recreation and leisure resource allowing people to enjoy the special character of the peninsula. It is frequented by walkers, dog-walkers, joggers, cyclists, and people sitting enjoying the views peace and quiet.

Despite the extensive footpath network with accessibility a strength in this regard, it is also a weakness as there are physical challenges due general steepness of the terrain, steps, and areas with poor surfacing and drainage to footpaths that will take away from the experience for some people. The section of riverside footpath, known as Fearon's Walk, contains a steep section which renders this main path unsuitable for wheelchair users.

The layout of the riverbanks can create wayfinding difficulties for visitors that can be compounded by its woodland character. More adequate and appropriate signage would allow greater enjoyment, while well considered interpretation, currently lacking, would improve the understanding of the area's special interest enhancing the experience.

Part of the positive experience includes the soundscape of the area. For example, the cathedral bells heard louder than in other parts of the city and accentuated by the topography, the noise from wildlife, and recreational activity on the river and its banks.

Fig 86 below. A selection of images showing different routes around the riverbanks notably the upper footpath that is dominated by the sheer scale and dramatic presence of the castle walls, contrasting positively with the airy natural character at the lower riverside.



The pedestrian experience is enhanced by public art pieces adding interest and encouraging interaction. There is the stone gargoyle chair, or more locally known as the storyteller's chair as it is used as a place for teachers to sit when giving lectures to children. The artist Colin Wilbourn named it "Kathedra," and it represents the idea of sanctuary referencing the Bishop's throne of judgement.

On the opposite side of the bank approaching Prebends Bridge is the freestanding sculpture consisting of a conical column made from stone reclaimed from one of the Cathedral's former turrets, its form representing the stones former use. It was commissioned by the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral and unveiled on the 15 July 1997, designed by Richard Cole.

Other positive elements include the abutment remains of the bridge that preceded Prebends Bridge, which has been turned into a viewing platform, with a second viewing platform at South Street Mill that provides the classic cathedral view with the Fulling Mill and weir below.

Fig 87 below. Public art at the riverbanks that encourage interaction, and the stone abutments of the original bridge washed away by the great flood of 1771 with a viewing platform above.

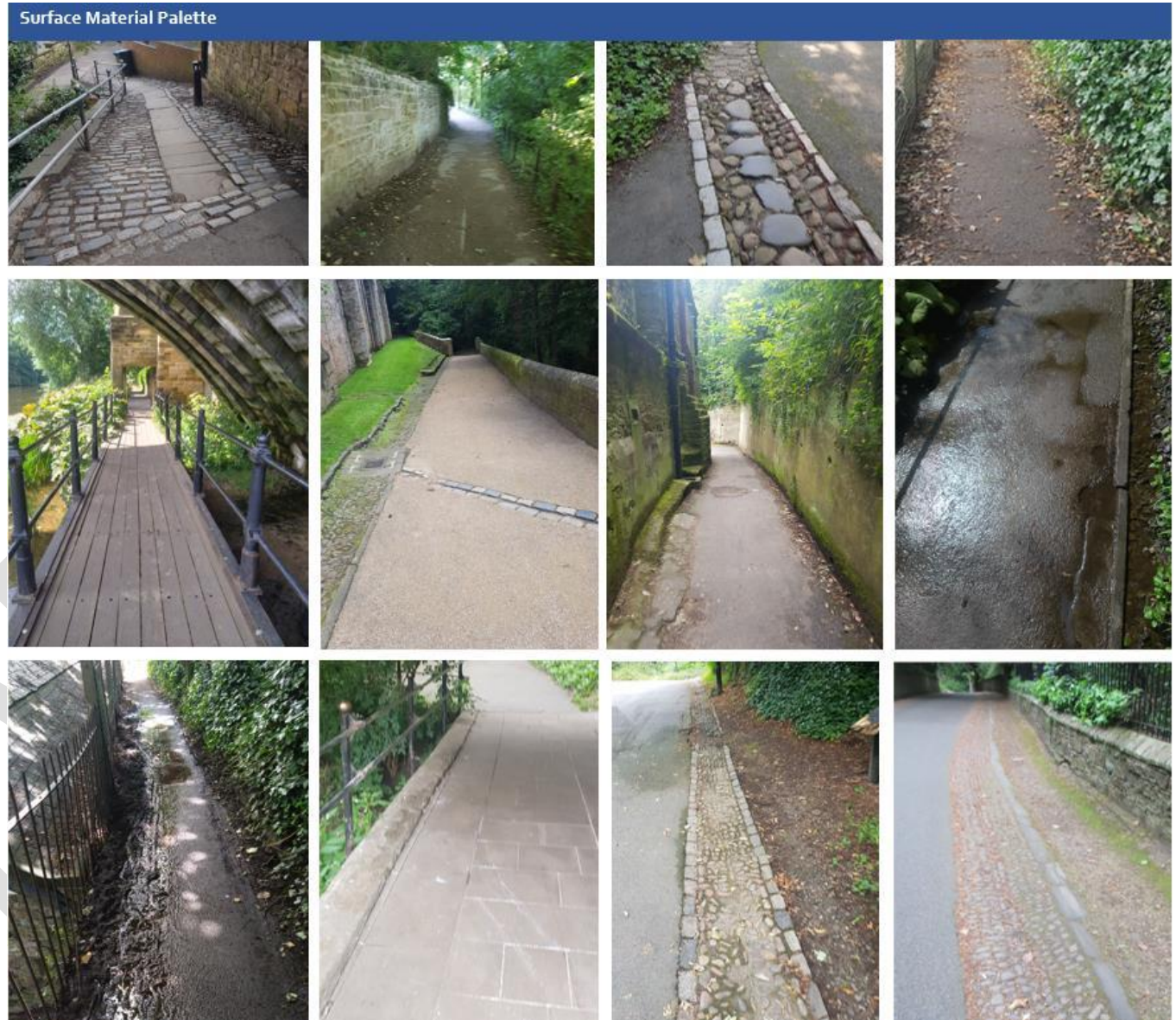


There are some areas of positive traditional floorscape that contribute very positively. They comprise of linear sections and small areas of river cobbles and cobbled channels with stone edging. These were once common place within the city many have been lost to modern surface alternatives. The wide footpath leading down from The College has a resin bounded gravel surface that is in keeping with the riverside character.

The majority of the footways are a mixture of tarmacadam, concrete and unmade dirt paths, which are neutral contributors at best, with the path under Framwellgate Bridge of timber boarding. The Silver Street vennel has stone flags as a central wheeler with granite setts, giving a short section of positive traditional floorscape.

Some surface materials are notably deteriorated and in a poor condition due to degrading over time, overgrowth, and insensitive patch repairs. Further, there are general footpath maintenance issues, include drainage, found across the character area.

Overall, the quality of the footway materials is not befitting of the special interest and aesthetic quality of the riverbank's environment.

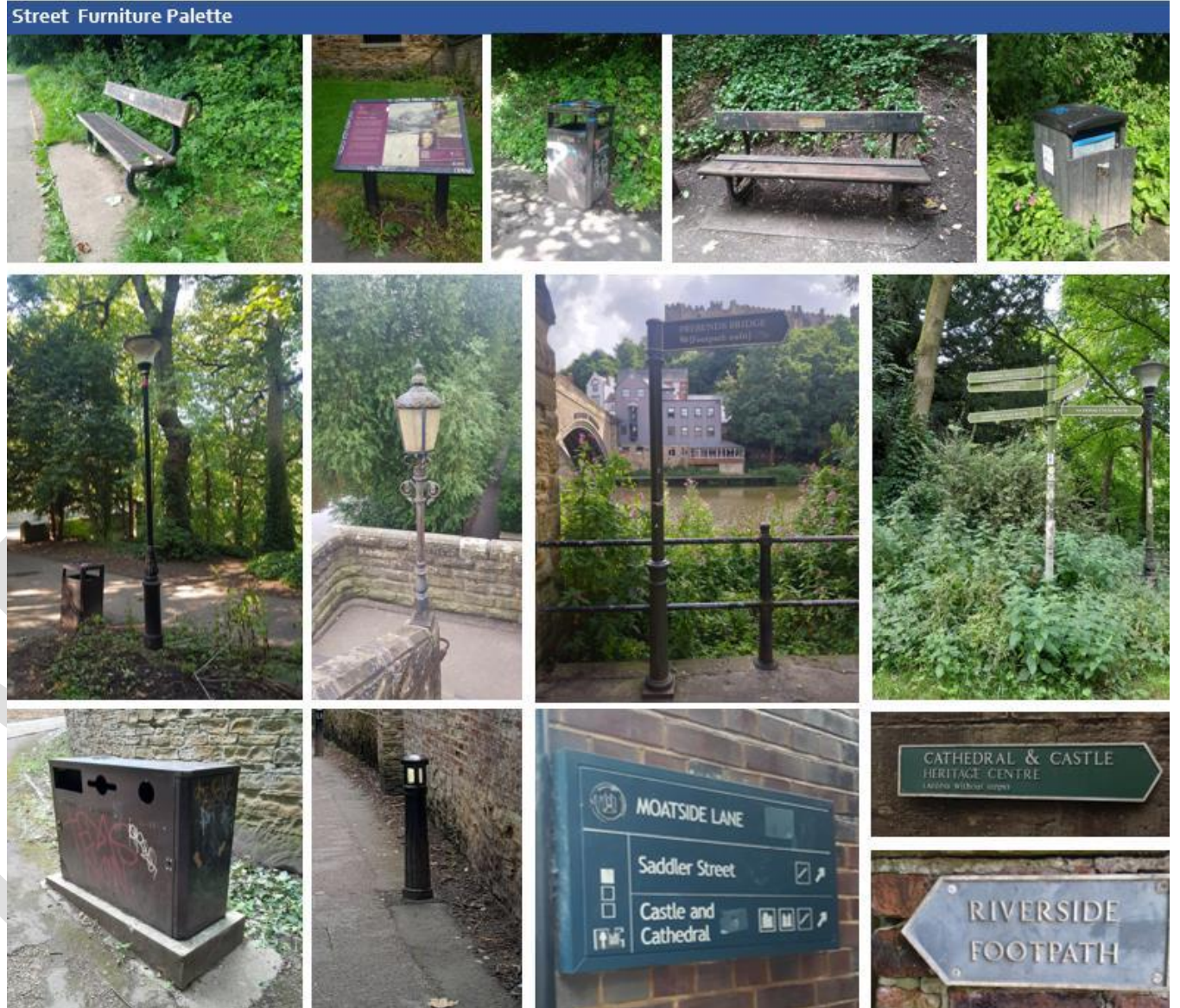


There is a mixture of litter bins, bollards, wayfinding signs including finger post columns, wall mounted styles, and two interpretation boards, the one at the viewing terrace outside the mill is heavily graffitied.

Positively, the area is not excessively cluttered by items of street furniture, but they appear ad-hoc, and outdated, that does detract from the aesthetic quality of the place. Where not affected by vandalism the seats in the area are an asset encouraging people to stop. Many seats are in a bespoke "serpent" style with commemorative plaques, holding memories for the sponsors.

There is limited lighting in the area that is integral to its character. The illuminated routes are positively restricted to the footpath leading up from the Silver Street vennel to Windy Gap, the area immediately surrounding Prebends Bridge and below Framwellgate Bridge. This provides an unwelcoming environment at night and attracts anti-social behaviour. But it means that this unique landscape at the heart of the city is not harmfully urbanised sustaining a dark cloak of the river and woodland below the castle and cathedral.

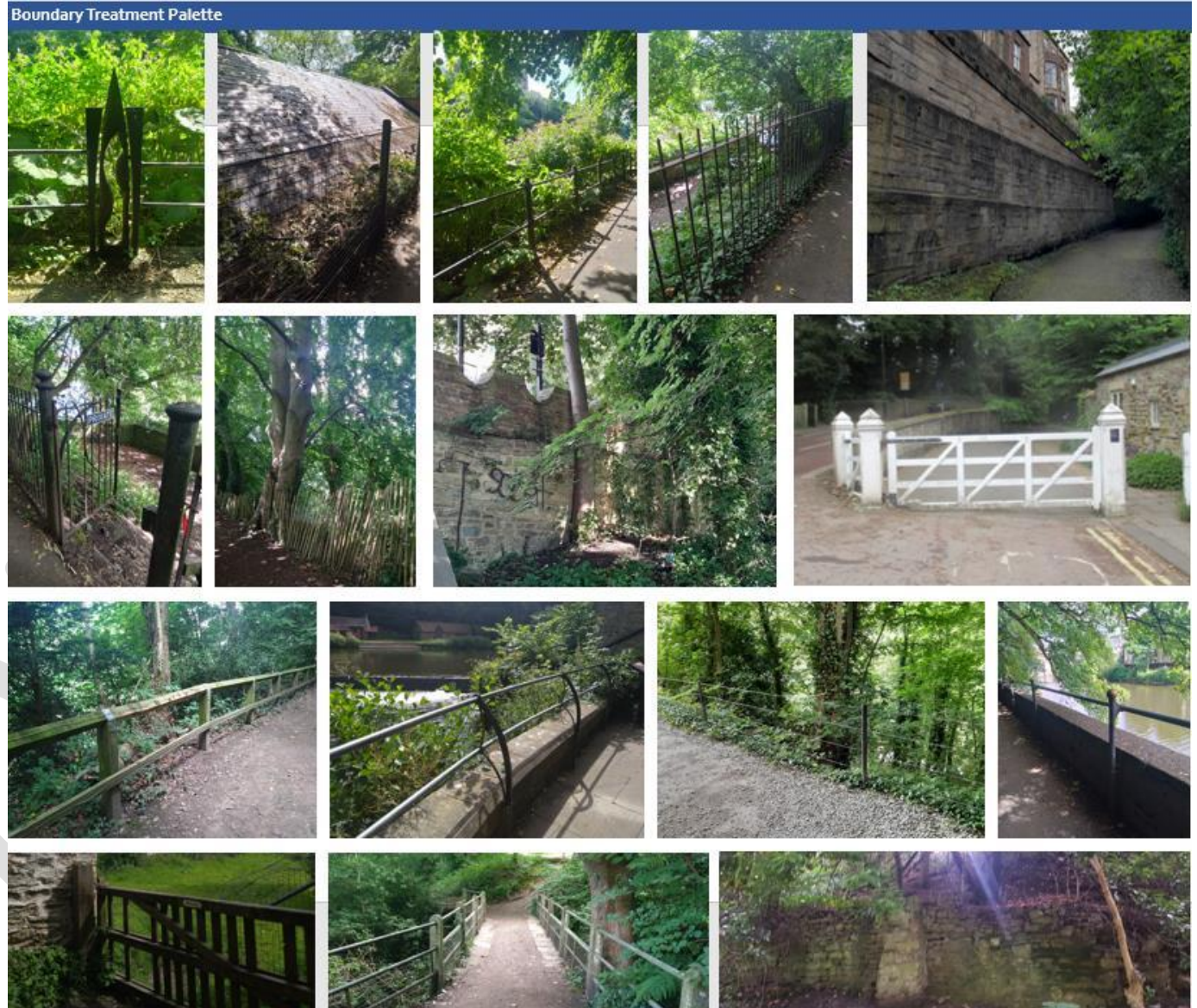
The light columns and bollard lights are modern in style, while signage is a mixture of traditional and contemporary styles. This demonstrates different city wayfinding schemes over the years and giving rise to a poorly considered un-coordinate appearance.



Boundary treatments are an important feature of the character area. They are very mixed in style some sympathetic others less so and including bespoke art-based metal railings adding visual interest, spear-top metal railings and decorative metal gates.

Many sections of historic stone walling are found associated with the city walls, different terraced walks, and promenades. Notably, there are historically important low stone retaining wall structures and stone steps that are part of the designs of the Bailey gardens, these are more visible in the winter months.

There are different sections of timber post and timber-wire post fencing bounding the footpaths and steps, and the landmark white painted fencing and gates at Prebends Gate Lodge. These are positive features, but there are some visible boundaries that detract from the character and appearance of the place including the chain link fencing to the visible tennis court that is a visually intrusive element, and the poor chain link and concrete post fencing along Fearon's Walk.



3.3.5 Visual experiences

This character area provides some of the finest views within the city dominated by the majestic castle and cathedral in their landscape, river corridor and townscape setting. They capture other ancient buildings such as the bridges and mills in both the foreground and background depending on the vantage point. Further, the views give a significant experience and understanding of how the river acted as a natural moat, how it separates the city, and the transformation from the peninsula's medieval fortification to a romantic landscape. This is partially owing to seasonal variation when the solid robustness of the mighty city walls and towers become clearer during the Winter months.

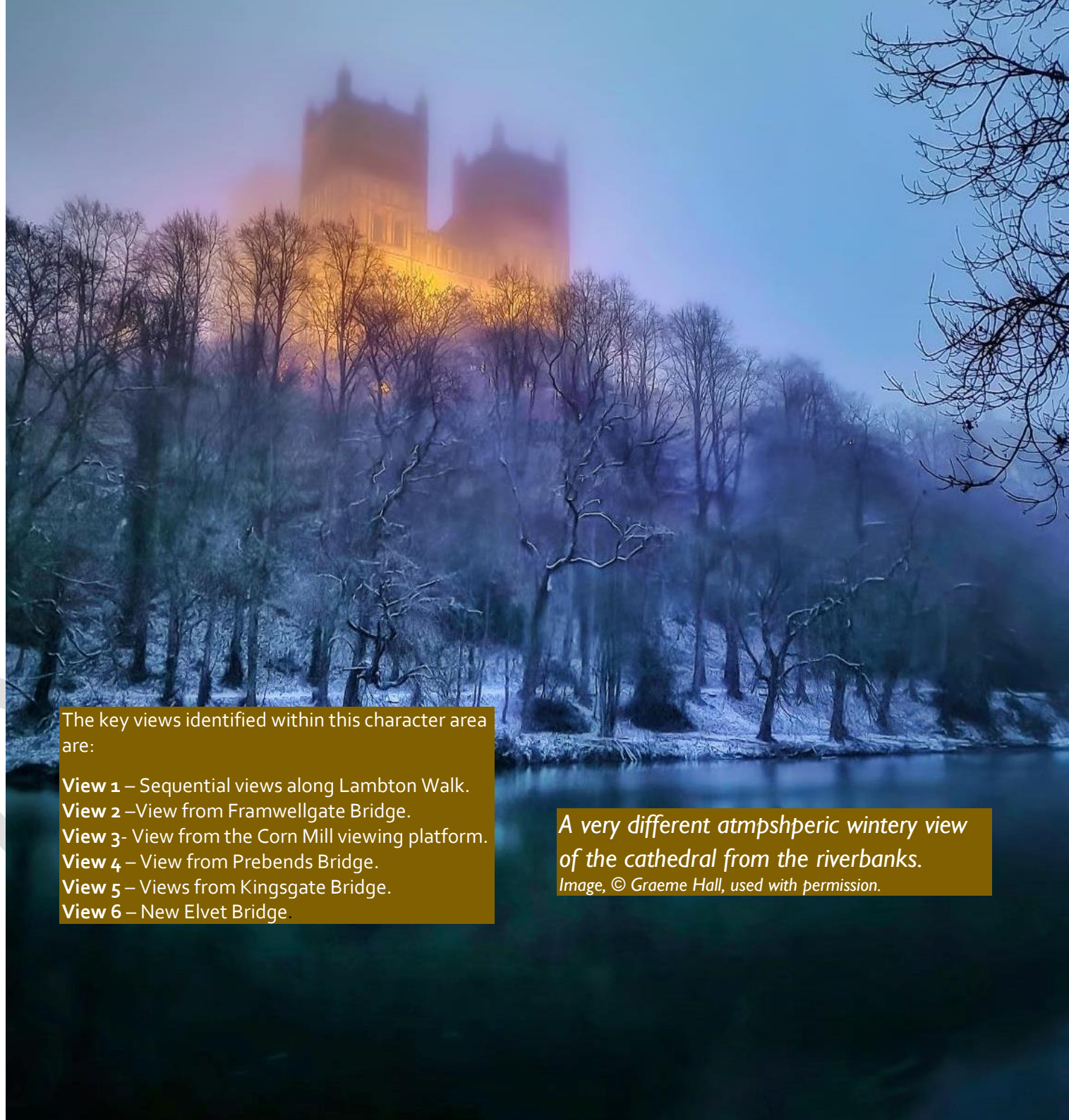
The views in the area range from static vantage points from the bridges, designed historic views for example from Prebends Bridge as part of the 18th century landscape design, while others are sequential evolving with movement. Some views are iconic and world renowned that have inspired artists and writers over the centuries to the present day captivated by the area's picturesque beauty and drama. These views make a considerable contribution to the special character of the place.

The key views identified within this character area are:

- View 1** – Sequential views along Lambton Walk.
- View 2** – View from Framwellgate Bridge.
- View 3** – View from the Corn Mill viewing platform.
- View 4** – View from Prebends Bridge.
- View 5** – Views from Kingsgate Bridge.
- View 6** – New Elvet Bridge.

A very different atmospheric wintery view of the cathedral from the riverbanks.

Image, © Graeme Hall, used with permission.



Key Views
Location



Image



Description

Views south along the riverside path at Lambton Walk

Part of sequential low level perspectives along the open riverside route from the north with the castle and cathedral at first hidden from view, then glimpses of the monuments in the background of the contemporary riverside development moving south before a skyline reveal in their river corridor and townscape setting.



View south from Framwellgate Bridge

A static panoramic view providing a fine broad perspective of the castle and cathedral skyline with Prebends Bridge in the backdrop, which displays the castle and cathedral's dominance and relationship with the river and landscape.

Key Views
Location



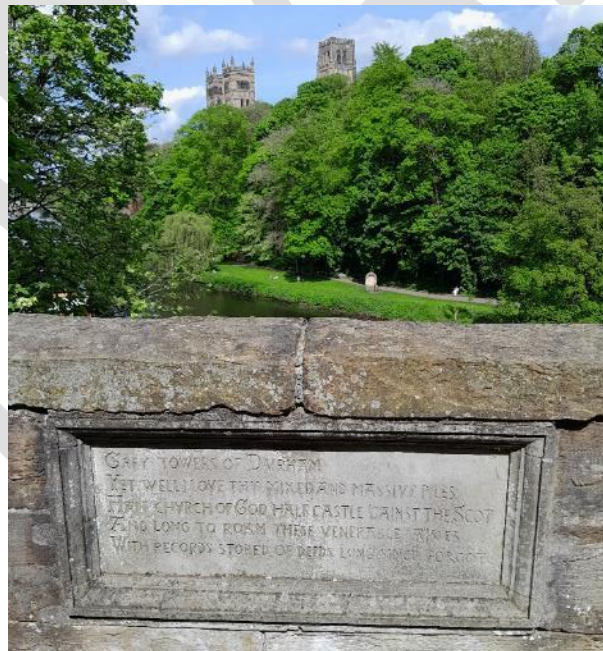
Image



Description

View east from South Street Mill

The riverside viewing platform provides a static close up perspective of the cathedral towers with the castle glimpsed in the background. The importance of the view relates to the juxtaposition of the buildings with the landscape and river character.



View north from Prebends Bridge

A static view from Prebends Bridge demonstrating the drama and romantic landscape setting to the cathedral, the importance of the view is elevated as it is one of intentional historic design to guide the eye towards the peninsula.

Key Views
Location



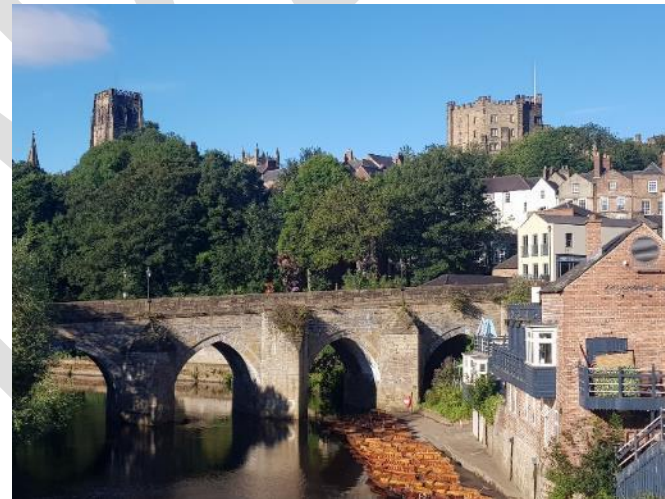
Image



Description

View west from Kingsgate Bridge

A static bold view of the cathedral's east-end and central tower rising above the tree canopy. The route of the bridge leads the eye to the cathedral from New Elvet and provides a transition experience in character from the busy main street to riverbanks and peninsula.



View southwest from New Elvet Bridge

A static view from New Elvet Bridge that dramatically captures the combination of cathedral, castle, Old Elvet Bridge, river, landscape, and townscape. The view emphasizes the separation of the city by the river and the dominance of the world heritage site.

Ambiance, pedestrian experience, and public realm - positive contributors to the area's special interest and character.

- Strong sense of place, separation, and isolation from the city centre.
- The area's tranquillity as a quiet retreat from the town.
- The constantly shifting views, compositions and panoramas achieving high visual quality that enhances the area's character and the experiences within it.
- The strong visual richness between natural and urban elements and environments.
- The comprehensive footpath network that is of immense importance to the city allowing the riverbanks to be experienced.
- Some paths are of significance in providing an experience of how historic approaches to the cathedral may have been.

Negative elements

The riverbanks are a unique environment within the historic city core and of exceptional significance. However, there are a number of negative elements that detract from the character, appearance, and experience of the place.

The entry point off Silver Street is low quality with a bland elevation and wall clutter including a large flue that does not fit provide a very fitting or inviting entrance to the riverbanks.

The over maturity of the riverbanks woodland not only reduces the extent and quality of views of iconic buildings and structures in the summer months such as the castle, cathedral, and castle walls, but results in the loss of context of the historic riverbanks gardens and historic features.

There are visible concrete foundation remains of removed structures on the lower riverbanks adjacent to the public footpaths that are inherently out of keeping. While the sports court close to Prebends Bridge, enclosed by low quality mesh fencing is openly visible and completely out of context. Like the buildings, items of street furniture and boundary walls suffer from graffiti.

Fig 89 right. A selection of images showing negative elements identified, the sports court, clutter at the Silver Street entrance, and foundations of a removed boathouse.



3.3.6 Appraisal summary – condition, negatives, issues, threats, and problems that affect the character and appearance of the area.

Built form

- The buildings are visibly suffering from various fabric defects and deterioration at different rates.
- There are a number of historic buildings and structure that have long term vacancy and are identified as being at risk.
- The buildings and structures regularly suffer from anti-social behaviour issues with smashed windows and graffiti common place.
- The hard standing concrete foundations of removed structures impacts negatively.

Urban spaces

- There are areas of preserved traditional floorscape, but condition is variable.
- There is the use of lower quality surface materials in places that is not befitting of the significance and character of the area.
- Inconsistent and deteriorated surfacing in places, and some poor patch repairs impacting negatively.

- Some footpaths have visible drainage issues.
- The steepness of the terrain, and steps limits accessibility to some areas, with accessible routes not always legible.
- The entrance from the vennel leading from Silver Street is a poor environment setting a negative impression.
- The entrance under the arch of Old Elvet Bridge is a negative space blighted by refuse bins that could be improved.
- Some boundary treatments are damaged, deteriorated and others unsympathetic to the character of the area.
- The riverbanks are eroding in some sections close to the footpaths.
- The modern sports court is an out of keeping intervention that detracts from the area’s character.

Green and blue spaces

- The unmanaged and over maturity of the woodland and vegetation reduces the extent and quality of views.
- The same over maturity results in the loss of context of the riverbanks gardens and historic features.
- In places the overgrown wilderness quality of the riverbanks has a positive impact on character.
- There are some hot spots in the greenery and river where litter collects.
- Litter, especially plastics in the river is a consistent problem.

Street furniture

- There is a limited amount of street furniture which is positive, but what exists is un-coordinated and outdated.
- There is a distinct absence of interpretation and two of the existing interpretation boards are vandalised.
- Many items of street furniture are vandalised.
- Wayfinding signs are outdated and un-coordinated for example pointing people to buildings no longer in use.

Threats

- Continued decline and vulnerability of buildings and structures that are unused with potential loss of historic fabric and features.
- On going decline of those buildings and boundary walls that are deteriorated.
- Continued deterioration of street surfacing materials and insensitive repairs.
- Continuation and increase of issues caused by anti-social behaviour.
- Continuation of poor and limited access in places.
- Continued lack of active management of trees and vegetation.
- Continued and increasing river pollution from refuse.

4. Condition of place and analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats



4.1 Condition of place

The methodology for assessing the condition of place is set out in the strategic context document. Right, is a table showing the condition score for each street.

A summary of the findings of the condition of place surveys and resulting opportunities for deliverable actions are set out within the individual character area sections.

The tabulated summary show the majority of the conservation areas scores as "Fair" – summarized as, **"the condition of the area is good, but there have been the loss of some historic features of architectural detailing such as changes to windows and doors. Public realm may require improvement or repair, but the overall area is clearly forming a positive contribution to the conservation area."**

| Street Name | Overall Condition Score |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| BACK SILVER STREET | Poor |
| BOW LANE | Optimal |
| DUN COW LANE | Optimal |
| ELVET BRIDGE | Fair |
| HIGH STREET | Fair |
| MARKET PLACE | Fair |
| MOATSIDE LANE | Poor |
| NORTH BAILEY | Fair |
| OWENGATE | Optimal |
| PALACE GREEN | Fair |
| SADDLER STREET | Fair |
| SILVER STREET | Poor |
| SOUTH BAILEY | Fair |
| THE COLLEGE | Fair |
| THE RIVERBANKS | Poor |

4.2 S.W.O.T analysis

Strengths

- High significance recognised internationally by its world heritage site designation.
- Provides the principal identity and image of Durham City.
- Unique topography of the peninsula and river gorge.
- Exceptional historic evidential, architectural, aesthetic value.
- Iconic and landmark buildings.
- Preserved and legible medieval plan form and layout.
- Variation of architectural style, some buildings of exceptional quality, creating diverse historic streetscapes.
- Prevalence of traditional architectural features and materials giving high level of authenticity and intactness.
- Range of views of Durham WHS some exceptional and world renowned.
- Commercial and civic heart of the city with a vibrant atmosphere contrasting with the academic air, and tranquillity in other places.
- Place of exceptional spiritual, community, social, learning, recreation and leisure, landscape, and biodiversity value.
- High archaeological significance and potential.

Weaknesses

- Historic buildings redundant, deteriorated and identified as being at risk.
- Some low quality modern development that offers nothing positive.
- Some buildings stand out as being unkempt and unmaintained, with deteriorated fabric weakening the impression of the place.
- Poor quality gap site at Back Silver Street.
- Poor quality riverside entrance via vennel at bottom Silver Street.
- Some facades detracted by clutter of modern fixtures and cabling.
- Unmanaged tree canopy reducing extent and quality of views.
- Overgrowing of trees and vegetation reducing legibility of historic gardens.
- Excessive street clutter in places such as the Market Place, Magdalene Steps and Palace Green.
- Poor condition of the central lawn at Palace Green.
- Some empty ground floor retail units.
- Low quality, damaged, and deteriorated street surfacing in places.
- Negative impact of traffic and parked cars, including conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles in the narrow spaces.
- Poor outdated and uncoordinated street furniture and wayfinding signage.

- Poor condition of Back Silver Street, Drury Lane, Moatside Lane and riverside area around The Boathouse PH.
- Back Silver Street dominated by large collection of refuse bins with spilled litter.
- Some low-quality advertisements.
- Lack of heritage interpretation.
- Anti-social behaviour issue including buildings, walls and interpretation boards vandalised with graffiti.
- Some noticeable litter hot spots.
- Accessibility issues around the riverside owing to the topography.
- Remains of removed buildings on the riverbanks that are visually poor.
- Sports court on the riverbanks completely out of place and visually incongruous.
- Litter in the river.

Opportunities

- Sympathetic redevelopment of gap site.
- Repurposing and restoration of vacant and deteriorated historic buildings removing them from the at risk category.
- Positive collaborative working with relevant landowners to address problem sites and buildings.
- Secure the reuse of empty ground floor retail units and vacant upper floors.
- Secure fabric restoration, refurbishment and redecoration works to buildings, as necessary.
- Cycle of active landscape/woodland management and appropriate improvement works in co-ordination with all interested parties and relevant land owners.
- Public realm improvement works to key spaces and routes including resurfacing, and de-cluttering, as necessary.
- Provide co-ordinated high quality street furniture in carefully considered locations and appropriate in design.
- Specific/targeted public realm improvement schemes for the vennals and Back Silver Street.
- Potential at Fowlers Yard to enhance and promote as a new "arts court"
- Explore ways to reduce the impact of refuse bins on street and collections of industrial bins in specific locations.

- Provide appropriate wayfinding signage improvement scheme.
- Sympathetic interpretation scheme to better reveal significance.
- Explore ways to reduce impact of traffic, parked vehicles, and associated items.
- Explore accessibility improvement options to the riverbanks.
- Potential to explore funding opportunities such as National Trust Green Corridor to connect green spaces across the city.

Threats

- Continued decay and deterioration of historic buildings, castle, and walls.
- The need to ensure the implementation of Durham University's Durham Castle Conservation Area Management Plan.
- Continuation of deterioration and insensitive repair of floorscape.
- Potential for loss of surviving traditional floorscape.
- Ongoing status of redundant buildings/gap sites the fabric of which will continue to deteriorate.
- Ongoing issues associated with anti-social behaviour.
- Continued vacancy of retail units and threat from an increase in vacancy rate.
- Continuation of unmanaged tree cover reducing important views further.

- Continuation of negative elements and issues in the public realm giving an ongoing poor impression of the place.
- Ongoing negative effects of traffic and parked vehicles.

Summary

The Peninsula and Riverbank Conservation Area has higher significance than the other Durham City Conservation Areas, owing to being the reason the city exists, and a major part of having world heritage site status. It is in fair material condition overall. Despite this and the various issues and negative elements identified, it is an area of exceptional/high architectural and historic interest. Nevertheless, there are opportunities identified that could help the area play its fullest role in terms of preservation and enhancement of its special interest and character for this and the future generations. In succession improving people's impressions of the place, their experiences and in the overall future economic and social prosperity of the city.

The above can be achieved by implementing the principles, policies and guidance set out in the CAMP overarching management strategy in the future when opportunities arise. Either through the planning process, regeneration schemes or other projects.

4.3 Opportunities and options appraisal

The appraisal has identified five sites that offer opportunities for improvement with the following pages providing an individual options appraisal for resolving the sites in the future.

Back Silver Street

The site previously hosted a series of buildings of residential and small commercial uses, cleared in the 1970s/80s. It is a split level site with extensive buttressed, retaining walls and small parcels of land overgrown with scrub and self seeded trees, a disused garage block, and dilapidated refuse store. The derelict site detracts from the historic industrial character and areas visual appearance.

Key design paramaters

- Up to 5 storeys in height.
- Layout and arrangement to respond positively to the historic urban grain.
- Provide a strong active frontage to Fowlers Yard.
- Composition influenced by simple traditional shapes and forms.
- Present a positive response to the local vernacular that could be a high quality contemporary intepretation.
- Roofscape a significant aspect in surrounding views that must respect the "tumbling" roofscape from the back of the Market Place down to the riverside.
- Limited high quality palette of materials.



Site location plan



Site highlighted in local context



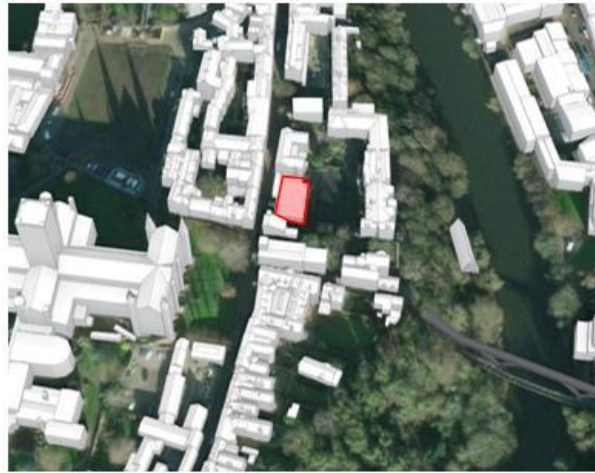
Site image

Hatfield College Boiler House, North Bailey

The boiler house is set within the grounds of Hatfield College, on lower ground on the east side of North Bailey behind the stone boundary wall. It would appear that the site was developed in the 1960s. It comprises of one storey of a rectangular plan with a flat roof. The building is hidden from view along the Bailey making a neutral contribution but it is negative in the context of the college courtyard and setting of the grade II listed dining room block.

Options appraisal

- Redevelopment potential with different use options .
- Site is extremely sensitive on the Bailey in immediate proximity of the Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site with several listed buildings in the sites vicinity.
- Given the topography and restrained height the existing building is not visible from the Bailey and increase in height would potentially be harmful.
- There are trees in proximity to the site with the building covered in ivy therefore ecological surveys would be required.
- Development would need to be in a sensitive cohesive manner informed by a understanding of (historic and present) context, significance, setting, views and streetscape.
- Appropriate and sympathetic development could be positive in the context of the college courtyard and surrounding college buildings.
- Should explore opportunities to resolve the negative effects of the sports court.



Site location plan



Site images



Riverbanks, South Street Mill (grade II listed)

The building is located on the west bank of the River Wear at the head of the weir. It dates from the late 18th century following a flood that destroyed its 15th century predecessor. The earlier medieval building was a fulling mill converted to a corn mill, believed to be one of six mills in the city owned by the priory. It was previously in commercial use including a boat building workshop then operating as an informal club house and boat store since the 1950s. The Mill House was previously in residential use but has been vacant for a long time. The building fabric has continued to deteriorate and it is prone to vandalism.



Site location plan



Site highlighted in local context

Options appraisal

- Commercial / Leisure use potential, Mill House residential/office/tourist accommodation potential.
- Isolated location outside the main commercial streets of the city may be offputting.
- Accessibility and flooding issues given riverside location.
- Full surveys required to establish true condition and to inform appropriate repair/restoration scheme.
- Very limited opportunities for external changes given historic use and conserved character.
- Feasibility study beneficial to explore options.
- Ecologically sensitive area.



Site images

Riverbanks, Fulling Mill (grade II listed)

The building is located on the inner east bank of the River Wear at the north head of the weir opposite South Street Mill. Again it dates from the medieval period and is the other surviving priory mill. However the building that stands today is mostly 17th and 18th century incorporating early fragments. The building became the first Durham University museum of archaeology and natural history (second such university museum in England at the time) opening in 1833. From 1956 it housed the university's archaeology department becoming a museum again in the 1970s up until 2014 when it became vacant and it remains disused. The building fabric has continued to deteriorate over a prolonged period and it is prone to vandalism.

Options appraisal

- Different use options and potential.
- Isolated location may be problematic
- Accessibility and flooding issues given riverside location.
- Full surveys required to establish true condition and to inform appropriate repair/restoration scheme.
- Very limited opportunities for external changes given historic use and conserved character.
- Feasibility study beneficial to explore options.
- Ecological sensitive area.



Site location plan



Site highlighted in local context



Site image



Riverbanks, The Count's House (grade II listed)

The building is located on the riverbanks at the south end of the peninsula. It was built c.1810 as a summer house for No.12 South Bailey, when the Bailey gardens stretched down to the riverside. The building has been considered "at risk" for a long period of time due to being disused, its deteriorated condition, and has suffered from vandalism. Various options for its re-use have been appraised in the past but none have materialised these include a café, visitor centre, catering and education centre.

Options appraisal

- Mixed use potential possible visitor or interpretation centre, café.
- Isolated location may be offputting.
- Difficult accessibility due to location.
- Works to make usable such as providing new heating ventilation, power supply and distribution would need to be carefully considered.
- Full survey required to establish true condition and to inform appropriate repair/restoration scheme.
- Building is within the flooplain.
- Ecological sensitive area.



Site location plan



Site images



5. Sources

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