

Bath and North East Somerset Council
Development

Draft Bathwick Character Appraisal Bath Conservation Area

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**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**



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1. Introduction and description of the Character Area

General description and form

This document is a character appraisal for the Bathwick Character Area of Bath Conservation Area.

The Character Area lies between the river and Great Western Railway and the gradually rising residential areas which surround Sydney Gardens and line the Warminster Road as far as the former Ministry of Defence boundary. The greater part is the incomplete Pulteney Estate at the south edge, together with the network of Victorian and later residential streets between Bathwick Street and the river. The River Avon forms the north and western boundaries, whilst the Recreation Ground forms the south boundary, which then continues east along Sydney Road to include the newer residential streets south of Warminster Road. Henrietta Park and Sydney Gardens are two significant open spaces at the centre of the area.

The strongest character is derived from the great 'set-piece' of Great Pulteney Street and its short tributary streets, a formal composition for which there are few parallels in the UK. The scale and ambition decrease further north as the later villas lining Henrietta Park give way to the less formal terraces lining Bathwick Street, and the scale decreases further still to the north with the extensive Victorian and later network of streets between it and the river. The north-east quarter of the area lacks definition, dominated by the now redundant site of the former MoD offices north of and below the Warminster Road, and the Post-War residential area above and to the south of it.

Bathwick Character Area and the World Heritage Site

Core values and significances of Bath:

- Bath is a World Heritage Site, the only entire city in Britain to be so designated
- It is not a museum but a living city
- It has a remarkable degree of visual homogeneity
- Authenticity of the Site is of the essence; its preservation and enhancement are key criteria for all development
- Its complex and delicate hierarchy of interrelated urban spaces, landscape and architecture could be easily disrupted by overbearing or misinformed development and by the accumulation of harm.

Bath was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 1987. The designation describes the city as "a masterpiece of human creative genius whose protection must be the concern of all".

The World Heritage Site designation was awarded for its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) with six cultural attributes:

1. *Roman archaeology*

Many of the City's Roman remains are centred around the Roman Baths. These include the archaeological remains of the Roman temple of the Goddess Sulis Minerva and the extensive bathing complex. The Roman town of Aquae Sulis was a walled settlement. Beyond the city wall are Roman and Iron Age remains including hill forts, field systems and villas, demonstrating the extent of the

settlement. The road system and Roman street plan influenced the Mediaeval and Georgian layout.

2. Hot springs

Bath's hot springs are the only ones in Britain, producing 250,000 gallons of water every day. There are three main springs - the King's Spring, the Hetling Spring and the Cross Bath Spring. They have been central role to every stage of the city's development, creating a unique social history and culture where the waters are central to healing and recreation.

3. 18th century architecture

Neo-classical architectural style dominates in Bath. Architects including John Wood the Elder, John Wood the Younger, Robert Adam, Thomas Baldwin, John Palmer, John Eveleigh and John Pinch followed Palladian principles to build houses, public buildings, bridges and churches. The Georgian arrangements of crescents, squares, the Circus and terraces form iconic, internationally recognisable structures. The widespread use of local limestone and the uniform scale and height of buildings contribute to Bath's beauty today.

4. 18th century town planning

In the 18th century Bath was re-invented as a fashionable health resort, expanding dramatically beyond its city walls. Mediaeval streets were transformed into a spacious and beautiful classical city, where architecture and the natural landscape complemented each other. Uniformity of design was enhanced with the universal use of honey-coloured Bath limestone. Innovative forms of town planning including squares, crescents and the circus were introduced. Attractive views and vistas were deliberately created. Bath's Georgian town planning influenced subsequent developments in the UK and beyond.

5. Green setting

The City of Bath lies within a hollow of the hills. There are green views in every direction from the city centre. The countryside stretches right to Bath's doorstep. The hilly, green landscape was exploited by Bath's 18th century architects and developers, who created elegant terraces and villas on the slopes. The hills to the south of the city provided the oolitic limestone from which the city was built. Trees and woodlands populate the skyline, and lend natural beauty to the river, canal, parks and gardens. Open agricultural land on the edge of Bath is still used for grazing animals, just as it was by the Georgians.

6. Social setting

Bath's Georgian architecture reflected 18th century social ambitions. The city was a destination for pilgrimage, and for playing out the social aspirations of fashionable spa culture. The social, economic and physical re-birth of the city as an internationally famous spa resort was largely due to three key characters: the architect John Wood the Elder, wealthy postmaster and stone entrepreneur Ralph Allen and Bath's famous Master of Ceremonies Richard 'Beau' Nash. Visitors flocked to Bath. The list of famous and influential people who visited, lived in or wrote about the city is extensive. Customs and practices associated with 'taking the waters' were practiced and developed here. The fashion for promenading influenced the design of Bath streets and gardens. The rules and etiquette governing polite society were embodied in buildings such as the Assembly Rooms and Pump Rooms.

How does this Character Area contribute to the World Heritage Site?

1. Contribution to Roman archaeology

Bathwick lay on a Roman route which probably aligned with a river crossing in the vicinity of the present Cleveland Bridge. Burials have been discovered along this route, and more substantial finds such as ditches and mosaics. Recent evidence suggests that a Roman barracks may have occupied part of the area and signs of a works compound strongly suggest Bathwick supported the workforce engaged in building the principal Roman civic buildings.

2. Contribution to hot springs

Bathwick lies outside the area where hot springs issue forth, but its development in the late 18th century results directly from the perceived popularity of 'taking the waters' and the need for temporary, and then permanent, accommodation for visitors to Bath for its therapeutic treatments. Consequently its failure to be completed can be attributed to the reduction in popularity of Bath as a spa after 1800.

3. Contribution to 18th century architecture

Bathwick and its 'new town' contains some of Bath's most striking examples of Georgian architecture of the later and more refined Palladian influence, more than a generation after John Wood the Elder. Baldwin's 'light touch' Georgian, continued by John Pinch the Elder, continues the approach begun by Robert Adam in his scheme for Pulteney Bridge, which linked the growing city to Pulteney's 'new town'.

4. Contribution to 18th century town planning

Great Pulteney Street, Laura Place and the unfinished streets joining them give a valuable indication of the scale and ambition of the geometrical layout that Baldwin intended to build for William Johnstone Pulteney, and the quality of architecture that was to be built. Consequently it remains an outstanding example of the beginning of a planned Georgian town, remaining a 'work in progress' that would have ultimately had much in common with Edinburgh New Town.

5. Contribution to green setting

The planned great squares and crescents never took shape, but the intended break in the route of the planned 'Upper Great Pulteney Street' at Sydney Gardens was built as intended, and became a nationally important example of a formal Georgian pleasure garden. It remains a delightful introduction to 18th century Bath when arriving from the south east. The more informal Henrietta Park provides a 'green lung' in a densely populated part of the estate. The only surviving parcel of open fields lies at the north-east corner of the Character Area, between the former Ministry of Defence Warminster Road site and the River Avon, a reminder of the pre-Georgian agricultural past.

6. Contribution to social setting

William Pulteney intended his new town as a place to observe and be seen by fashionable society. His success can be measured by the list of distinguished visitors who stayed in the larger houses of the planned town, and visually by the bronze plaques which

commemorate famous residents or guests of many houses in Great Pulteney Street, including Napoleon III. The Bathwick Estate remains a residential district of great desirability in the 21st century.



Bathwick Character Area Map



2. Summary of key characteristics

- The completed portion of the formal plan for the Bathwick Estate commissioned by William Johnstone Pulteney and then Henrietta Laura Pulteney. This contains grand Georgian houses along and adjoining Great Pulteney Street.
- The formal plan intended Great Pulteney Street to continue as a new turnpike road to Bathford with a break for the hexagonal Sydney Gardens. The Gardens survive and are of national importance as a Georgian pleasure garden.
- The eastern part remained undeveloped into the 20th century, and then the MoD covered a large area with offices, and the upper part was developed after 1958 with much detached quality housing. Bathwick St Mary Primary School followed later.
- The northern portion remained as gardens until 1900 when the network of streets, including Forester Road, was built as housing, with major expansion after The First World War. It now represents a cohesive residential community.
- The area surrounding Henrietta Park developed slowly, initially as pairs of tall Regency villas, then some inter-war residential streets filled the space around the Park itself, given to the Corporation in 1896.

The southern portion of the character area is defined by the grand formal plan for the new suburb began by Sir William Johnstone Pulteney around 1782, which is dominated by Great Pulteney Street. Robert Adam's world famous Pulteney Bridge (1769-74) was the essential precursor to the plan for this new suburb, and forms the focal point at the Western end of the Great Pulteney Street axis. Only 'stub-streets' were built off Great Pulteney Street at the western end, giving a hint at what the fully developed scheme might have offered, had it been completed. The scale is heroic with a street width of 100 feet and a length of 1,100 feet, placing it in a small and special category with Edinburgh's George Street and Adam's Portland Place in London, both built a few years earlier. It continued the Bath technique of creating terraces which read as complete 'palaces', as had been done earlier by John Wood, and places accents such as pediments opposite side streets to complete vistas. The eastern view is closed by the axially placed Sydney House, now called the Holburne Museum, which occupies the western tip of the elongated hexagon which is Sydney Gardens.

Sydney Gardens was opened in 1795 with a fine collection of landscape features, most of which have now disappeared, but the central axis remains, running from the rear of what is now the Holburne Museum up the slope to the rear of what is now called Sydney House, flanked by fine trees and some later garden features such as Minerva's Temple of 1913. The cutting through of the Great Western Railway and before it the Kennet & Avon Canal has actually added interest to the gardens through the careful design of the bridges and tunnels which allow both to pass through, in particular the delicate ironwork of the canal bridge balustrades. The view south from the gardens to Cleveland House above the south canal tunnel remains the most frequently illustrated urban canal image. Pulteney's original vision was for the gardens to be surrounded by grand terraces benefitting from inward views, but in the event only the two terraces to the south and west were built, as Sydney Place, but are highly visible through being tall and placed beside a main through route. It was left to later generations to build around the exterior of the gardens, and the most notable large scale buildings are Cleveland House of 1817-20, originally Canal House, and 'Vellore', now the Bath Spa Hotel, of 1835 but with a matching north block of



1878. The former is unusual as a purpose-designed Regency office building of considerable sophistication by Pinch the Elder, whilst the latter was a grand Greek revival mansion, probably by Pinch the younger, now overwhelmed by later extensions on both sides, and set back in extensive grounds well behind Sydney Road. Thus today's townscape is very different from that envisaged in 1795, with individual villas punctuating the circuit around the Gardens rather than enclosing terraces.



The eastern part of the character area lacks a clearly defined identity, having remained undeveloped until the 20th century except for a small number of vernacular buildings close by the canal bank, and one Victorian villa. The greater part of the area was occupied until recently by the Ministry of Defence offices whose utilitarian brick and flat-roof blocks were widely spread over the sloping ground between the Warminster Road and fields adjoining the canal. The area is (at the time of writing) being redeveloped with new housing. To the north and east of the former MOD site is an open field with scrubby vegetation sloping down to the river, crossed at its lower boundary by both the main railway line to London and the Kennet and Avon canal. One large spreading Victorian villa and one later detached house abut the Warminster Road but otherwise the ground falls away steeply on the north side offering visitors arriving on the A36 their first panoramic view of Bath. A small closely-packed community exists around the short Darlington Road, gathered around the builder's yard beside the canal and the school of St Mary's Bathwick with some recent housing developments, including the short Bathwick Rise. These are all one- or two-storey buildings, domestic in scale, except for the rather brutalist Beckford Court and some of the older cottages which have an attic storey. The south verge of the Warminster Road slopes up steeply to the post-War housing forming Minster Way and St Christopher's Close, two wide streets typical of the 1950s residential planning standards, providing wide-ranging northerly views across the valley.



The northern third of the character area fills the space between the built portion of William Pulteney's intended new town and the river. This was intended to contain a further grand sequence of terraces behind Bathwick Street, but remained unbuilt upon until the 1904 Ordnance Survey map, which shows groups of houses along Forester Road. By 1932 the adjoining streets of Rockliffe Road and Rockliffe Avenue were largely complete, connecting the hitherto isolated development of Cleveland Baths (1815) and Hampton Row which Pinch had completed in 1819. The network of streets which also includes Forester Avenue and Powlett Road has a strong community atmosphere with well-tended front gardens and a sense of neighbourliness, in a few cases eroded by paving over for car-parking. Small areas are brick-built behind Bathwick Street but the Edwardian development and most of the inter-War semi-detached houses are of Bath stone with post-War houses usually of reconstituted stone. Clay pantiles, plain and 'double-Roman' tiles are the universal roofing material and variety is created in many of the Edwardian houses with strong gabled street fronts, often with 'Tudorbethan' half timbering. Two newer developments complete the residential area beside the river, close to Cleveland Bridge, as Forester Court and Rochfort Court; long three-storey reconstituted stone blocks of apartments with balconies to the river front and garage courts to the south in a cul-de-sac.



The character area is completed by the wedge-shaped area bounded by the rear of Great Pulteney Street, Bathwick Street and the river. The development of Bathwick became possible with the completion of Pulteney Bridge and begins with Argyle Street, a short but delightful link between it and the grand scale of Laura Place. The south side of Argyle Street sets the scene with a well-proportioned three-storey terrace framed between a pedimented tall pavilion at each end and 'break-forward' centre block. Several excellent shopfronts still



survive, notably the chemist 'A H Hale'. Laura Place is set on the diagonal to join the four streets in a spacious way, allowing a central fountain to be added by A.S.Goodridge in 1877 and creates a feeling of opulence, now tempered a little by the planting of trees on the four facets. Henrietta Street leaves to the north and is the only remnant of Baldwin's grand plan to have been completed to the north, here much plainer than the houses in Great Pulteney Street, but maintaining the scale and height and, like Johnstone Street opposite, using round heads to the ground floor windows. The grand urban scale suddenly diminishes as Henrietta Street becomes Henrietta Road and the park opens up on the east side. On the west side the tall terrace stops abruptly and gaps appear between late-Regency villas in semi-detached pairs with walled gardens. They face the now mature trees of Henrietta Park, given by Capt. Forester as a public park in 1896, whilst the inter-War Henrietta Gardens line the north-east side of the park with semi-detached houses typical of the period, filling the space behind Bathwick Street.



The corner of the park and the north end of Henrietta Mews links to Bathwick Street once more via Daniel Street, built in interrupted stages from 1792 to 1810 as more modest two-bay town houses, again using Baldwin's round-headed ground floor windows and doors. The scale is again generous although the upper floors contain blind windows above the door, limiting daylight to one front window. Daniel Mews, containing coach houses for 10-12 Sydney Place, is a fairly intact survival of an early 19th century mews. Bathwick Street has many good examples of Baldwin's work on the north side, often using tripartite first floor windows with pilaster strips and pediments, adding greatly to the urban feel of this principal route. Later houses to the west at Rochfort Place are on a larger scale, designed by Pinch, ending with the neo-Baroque archway known as Pinch's Folly. South of Bathwick Street the scale falls away to reveal the cemetery with Pinch's Gothick mortuary chapel, now a ruin. This creates an important oasis away from the heavy traffic of Bathwick Street, adjoining the great bulk of St John the Baptist, which turns the corner into St John's Road. The church was enlarged from its 1862 form only 9 years later to seat 600 and the octagonal upper storey and spire and the present nave were all added at this time, whilst the adjoining choir room and Sunday school were added in 1873-81 in an Elizabethan style. The former rectory, Brompton House, stands behind but is now an hotel. Opposite, on entering St John's Road, is Feilden Clegg's Bridgmead House nursing home of 1992, in a clean contemporary style in harmonious materials with metal brises solieils on the river elevation, which is raised above flood level. The scale remains small with the inter-War and post-War housing along the west side of the road, heading south, but there is much of interest as the road narrows to become Grove Street, approaching Argyle Street. Post-War blocks of flats are followed by the former Bathwick St Mary School of 1841 in Tudor style by Pinch, and opposite the 1970s neo-classical Bethel Chapel. The scale then becomes much more urban as Grove Street is reached with the early Feilden Clegg designed Northanger Court on the west side and then as the scale of the terraces grows, the wonderful former Prison by Thomas Attwood, (1772-3) a 'mini-palazzo' of its own, now apartments, turns the corner as the street rises to meet Argyle Street itself and the Pulteney Estate proper.



The prison is raised over a basement; now exposed but originally intended to be hidden by a basement 'area'. This and the ramp up from Grove Street to Argyle Street are reminders of the higher street level envisaged for the unbuilt northward extension of Pulteney's grand suburb.

3. Historic development

Physical influences - geology, landform and drainage pattern

The geology is mainly made up of foundered layers from the lower and middle Jurassic period. They comprise river terrace gravels and alluvium as well as Lias clay. The susceptibility to flooding resulted in the completed sections of the Pulteney Estate being raised up on two-layer basements to give a street level more than six metres above the river level.

The land form is predominantly the flat valley floor with a gentle north-west facing slope rising from Sydney Gardens to the canal and onward along the Warminster Road. The land drains to the river along its western and northern edge, and the Kennet & Avon Canal runs north/south along the eastern side. No other watercourses are now visible.

Historical influences

The present Bathwick Estate lies on 2nd and 3rd terrace gravel with alluvial floodplain deposits overlaying it in parts. A number of discoveries over the last 200 years indicate the existence of much pre-Roman activity in what is known as Archaeological Zone 14, but also Roman remains including columns and mosaics. Recent investigations have shown the promising survival of archaeological features cutting into the alluvium and gravel, and a large ditch and substantial finds suggest Bathwick was significant as a settlement in Roman times. Indications of a works compound and brewery suggest a long-standing settlement and the most recent excavations suggest the possibility of a Roman barracks in this location and the probability that Bathwick and Walcot served as living areas for the many construction workers who erected the Roman civic buildings in the city centre. The presence of burials suggests a road passed through the area, potentially leading to an important crossing of the river. The mediaeval village of Bathwick appears on the 1770 map at the convergence of several paths leading to a crossing point of the river, perhaps a ferry, and in 1781 it had a population of 150 distributed among 45 dwellings with Bathwick Mill and a broadcloth factory near the river.

Only parts of Bathwick House (mainly subsumed by Pinch's enlarged house of 1800) survive from the pre-Georgian period. By the 1801 plan the relationship with the first part of Baldwin's new development beyond Pulteney Bridge is evident. At this time the village still centred around the mediaeval church which stood at the centre of the cul-de-sac connected to the ferry which was now being developed as Bathwick Street (see map below). The small number of cottages may have been of some antiquity by the time the north side of Bathwick Street began to be built by Baldwin from 1788 to 1792. With Baldwin's bankruptcy shortly after this, the street continued under Pinch the Elder at least twenty years later, with the old church of St Mary Bathwick being demolished in 1818 to make way for the northward continuation of the street, including Rochfort Place, ultimately connecting to the new Cleveland Bridge which opened in 1827. It is likely the now ruined mortuary chapel which sits at the centre of the cemetery was built by Pinch using stone salvaged from old church of St Mary's. Pinch's building yard on Bathwick Street was marked in the early 19th century by the construction of an ambitious Neo-Baroque archway now known as Pinch's Folly.

South of Bathwick, the land upon which the new town was commenced by Sir William Pulteney consisted of an alluvial floodplain which no doubt flooded during most winters. Little excavation has been done in this area but the expectation is that there is likely to be much evidence of pre-historic and Roman activity. The land slopes gradually upward to the south east, but the flood risk meant that the construction of a fashionable suburb or new town in this location would require immense civil engineering work to lift it above the flood plain. The 600 acre estate, then a rural area, was inherited by Frances Pulteney in 1764 on the death of her cousin William Pulteney, Earl of Bath, but remained unconnected to the expanding city. Thus the key to its potential lay with the plan to construct a connecting bridge, for which her husband, William Johnstone Pulteney, obtained a private Act of Parliament in 1768, subject to Bath Corporation's agreement. The following year work began on a design by Robert Adam and Pulteney Bridge was completed in 1774. Adam had been commissioned by Pulteney to draw up plans for the laying out of the estate, and a drawing of 1780 shows his ideas for a formal crescent, but these were never proceeded with. Frances' daughter Henrietta Laura Pulteney then granted 99-year leases from 1787 to allow building to begin, and Baldwin planned a large square with a series of riverside crescents to the south and the central spine of Great Pulteney Street eventually to divide around the hexagon of Sydney Gardens before continuing towards Bathford. The 1818 map of the area gives an indication of what was planned, with Frances Square occupying what is now Henrietta Park, and a second broad street, Great Annandale Street, running parallel and south of Great Pulteney Street, creating a dramatic axis between Bath Abbey at one end and St Mary's Bathwick at the other. Had this plan been completed, the great geometrical layout of streets would have rivalled Edinburgh's New Town, but the ambition was thwarted by the dwindling popularity of Bath as a fashionable resort after 1800, as chronicled by Jane Austen, and the Bath Bank crash of 1793, anticipating the war with Napoleon. Despite this, the Bathwick estate remains one of Britain's greatest urban set-pieces from the period.

The chosen style for the development differed from John Wood's earlier Palladian work to the west and followed in the now more fashionable Neoclassical style of Robert Adam, with planning on a large scale and the use of axial layouts and views often terminated by key buildings. Baldwin's work runs generally from 1788 to 1820, with later work (from 1797 onwards) by John Pinch the Elder. Whereas earlier developments (e.g Camden Crescent, 1787) had followed the contours of the higher ground, the new town was here raised on a major engineering structure above the meadows on double-level vaults, reducing to single basements at the east end as the ground rises. Work began with Argyle Street and proceeded eastward, breaking half way to connect to Grove Street to the north, where Pulteney built a new prison in 1773 to replace the old one (housed in the tower of Old St. Mary's by the North Gate) which was demolished to build the western approach to Pulteney Bridge. Between Grove Street and the river lay John Eveleigh's yard where a wharf received building materials for the Bathwick estate construction, opposite which was a terrace of 1788, now containing the Rising Sun pub. This was only connected to the prison in 1887-9 with a terrace by Browne & Gill. The corner with Argyle Street originally housed a chapel by Baldwin (1788-9) set well back, but extended in 1804 and the front rebuilt in 1821 by H.E. Goodridge with an Ionic portico set forward on the street frontage.

The grand plan continued east in the 1790s with the novel open space that is Laura Place, set on the diagonal to connect to the side streets of Johnstone Street and Henrietta Street, which are of a plainer composition than Great Pulteney Street. Johnstone Street was begun in 1794 but left unfinished with the last part of the east side completed in 1805. Great Pulteney Street itself was then continued east with the long individual blocks conceived as palazzi as Wood had done before, but using the relief features more sparingly than

Wood, so that the occasional pediment or set of fluted pilasters is generally there to end a view from a side street. Neither Sunderland Street (north) nor William Street (south) proceeded beyond the return or flank wall of the Great Pulteney Street houses, and Edward Street remained unfinished until Pinch the Elder continued it south and turned it east into Vane Street in the 1820s. The central south range of Great Pulteney Street was set slightly higher than the ranges either side for accent, and now is the only one retaining its balustraded parapet. The interiors are of a high standard, and most houses have cantilevered stone staircases, other than the east end, where timber was used following the financial problems of 1793. Baldwin continued northwards with the construction of Sydney Place whose east face is again treated as a palatial composition, and intended to form the first of six terraces surrounding Sydney Gardens, and it then connects to Bathwick Street, described above. It was not until 1808 that the west terrace of Sydney Place was built by Pinch the Elder, and no further terraces were built around the Gardens.

Sydney Gardens, the hexagon intended to punctuate Great Pulteney Street on its eastward trajectory, was laid out by Harcourt Masters and opened in 1795. It is the only remaining Vauxhall (named after the London garden fashionable in the 17th century) of those built in Bath and originally contained many features such as waterfalls, pavilions, a sham castle, a labyrinth and grotto. It became an important place to be seen and hosted gala nights, evening promenades and illuminations, usually accompanied by music. Most of the garden structures seen today are of a later date, even, in the case of Minerva's Temple, re-erected in 1913 following service at the Empire Exhibition at Crystal Palace in 1911! The line of Great Pulteney Street can still be seen in a central pathway connecting the Holburne Museum with Sydney House on the east side, the latter ending the view with an exedra at the rear of (and rebuilt for) the later Sydney House of 1835-6, and rebuilt again in 1938. The Holburne Museum which so dramatically ends the eastward view along Great Pulteney Street, was built as Sydney House and a centrepiece of the Gardens. Its five-bay rusticated ground floor and Corinthian pedimented portico produce the air of a small country house, originally to a design by Baldwin but modified by Harcourt Masters. In 1796-7 it provided coffee, tea and card rooms and a ballroom above and a public house for coachmen in the basement. In 1836 Pinch added an attic storey when it became an hotel, and Sir Reginald Blomfield replaced the wings with colonnades and reduced the four stories to three before 1916 when it opened as the William Holburne Museum. Externally to the Park, the two most notable buildings to follow the completion of Sydney Gardens were Pinch the Elder's Cleveland House of 1817 (for the Kennet & Avon Canal Company) and Vellore, now the Bath Spa Hotel. The latter was built as a grand Greek Revival mansion for General Augustus Andrews. A matching north block and connecting colonnade were added in 1878 and after a series of institutional uses it was bought by Trusthouse Forte in 1989 when an enormous nine-bay wing was added for its function as an hotel.

North of Bathwick, the river meadows beyond the old village had remained undeveloped beyond the gardens attached to the Bathwick Street houses. An assortment of garden buildings appears in this area on the 1801 map, but by 1818 numerous cultivated plots were in existence. The Duke of Cleveland had granted a lease in 1809 to William Bourne to begin the plan for the Cleveland Baths on a riverside site to the north. Their opening in 1815 was followed by the building of Hampton Row in 1817-19 by John Pinch the Elder, just east of and below the newly completed Kennet & Avon Canal. The terrace was extended westwards as Cleveland Row in 1875, but the group remained isolated from the remainder of the Bathwick estate for some years.

In the 19th century a tavern and pleasure garden operated on a sliver of land sandwiched between the railway lines and canal.

Originally an 18th century market garden called the Folly, the owners presumably took the initiative to sell refreshments to walkers using the Grosvenor suspension bridge over the Avon, opened in 1830. Most of the market garden was bought up for the Great Western Railway embankment c. 1840, and the remainder was redeveloped as an inn and tea garden opened by c. 1847. The site was also known as Folly House, Folly Inn and Folly Tavern. It was accessed from Grosvenor Suspension Bridge to the north, and via a footbridge and footpath from Warminster Road to the south. A Pleasure Garden with dance floor, fountain and illumination was introduced in 1861 when it was renamed the Cremorne Pleasure Garden. This over-ambitious scheme ran until 1884 when it reverted to the Folly inn and brewery. In 1894 it became the Grosvenor Brewery. It was totally destroyed in the Bath Blitz in 1942.

The area between the river and Bathwick Street began to be developed steadily after 1900 with street names reflecting landowner Capt. Francis William Forester's connections, just as the south part had used names from the Pulteney family for inspiration. Thus we have Forester Road and Avenue, and reflecting his estate at Darlington we have Darlington Road, Rockcliffe Road and Avenue, and Powlett Road to refer to Sophia Powlett, wife of Henry Vane of Raby Castle, near Darlington. Pairs of semi-detached house were complete on Forester Road by 1904, in some cases sporting the Edwardian love of Tudor gables, but built generally of Bath stone, and the remaining streets filled with the now ubiquitous bay-fronted semi-detached houses of the post First World War period. These, too, continued the use of Bath stone, with the exception of the red brick terraces of Powlett Road, and some Arts and Crafts influence is visible in the earlier examples, with stone-mullioned windows and pebbledash render. Some later examples were of a single storey, dominated by a large spreading tiled roof, and gaps were gradually filled in the late 20th century with pairs of houses built in artificial stone. Finally the river front near Cleveland Bridge was filled with two large post-war apartment buildings of three storeys.

The grand plan never materialised to allow Upper Great Pulteney Street to be built, and so the intended road to Bathford instead hugged the south side of the Avon valley to become the Warminster Road with no significant development taking place at the 'town end' of the road until the 20th century. Of these, the most conspicuous for many years was the requisitioned land to the north where the War Department hastily built a complex of offices for administration purposes on the land sloping north-west down to the canal, which was consolidated and added to in the late 20th century before becoming redundant soon after 2010, and is awaiting redevelopment in 2016. A small settlement of cottages above the canal had been added to with a large apartment block (Beckford Court) and several new housing developments after the Second World War and then the new Bathwick St Mary School relocated here from St John's Road. South of the Warminster Road, the strip of land between it and King Edward's School became available for new housing from 1957 and over the succeeding years the north-eastern part was developed as a long loop of detached and semi-detached houses of generous size with front gardens and garages flanking a wide street. This part, Minster Way, and the adjoining cul-de-sac St Christopher's Close, used reconstituted stone as the facing material, and the elevated position offered excellent views north-west across the valley.

The curtailment of the development of the Bathwick estate left a large piece of vacant land hemmed in by the triangle bounded by Great Pulteney Street, Bathwick Street and the river. The short stubs of Grove Street and Henrietta Street projected some way into it from the south west and Daniel Street and its mews had filled the eastern edge in 1810. Gradually Henrietta Road extended the grand terrace of Henrietta Street northward as distinguished Regency-style pairs of villas around 1840, now with walled gardens. Behind it, the church

of St John the Baptist was begun on the corner of Bathwick Street and St John Street in 1861 as a Victorian gothic church by C E Giles, only to be substantially enlarged by Blomfield in 1869-71, including adding the landmark spire. From the church, and its adjoining Sunday school and choir room of 1873, St John's Road connected back to Grove Street with groups of small houses along the river side, and the original school of Bathwick St Mary of 1841 near the south end in the younger Pinch's Tudor style. Inter-war and later houses gradually filled the gaps and the small Bethel Chapel filled one of the last riverside sites in 1972, whilst a series of apartment blocks lined the east side in the later 20th century. The west side of Grove Street became a desirable residential area with the conversion of Thomas Atwood's prison to residential in 1971, with Northanger Court built with a river view and the old brewery south of it converted to flats as Caxton Court in the 1980s. The remaining space, east of Henrietta Road, was finally offered as a public park in 1896 by Capt. Forester, owner of the Bathwick Estate, to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, albeit a little cut into during the inter-war period on the north side by the building of Henrietta Gardens as a crescent of semi-detached houses.

The history of the Bathwick Estate would be incomplete without reference to the two main transport arteries: the railway and canal. John Rennie's ambitious plan to link the Thames with the Avon involved numerous negotiations with landowners to obtain agreement to build lengths of canal through sensitive landscapes, often in exchange for decorative features such as classically inspired bridges being provided. By the time the final obstacle allowed completion in December 1810 (the 29 locks at Devizes), the course of the canal through Bath was well established, with the need to build seven locks to reach the Avon from the level which had been maintained from Bradford-on-Avon. The course through the character area had little effect on the later Forester Road suburb below, but was to have significant impact upon Sydney Gardens, then ten years old. The solution was to tunnel under both Beckford Road to the north and Sydney Road to the south, then introducing decorative bridges over the cutting containing the canal, thus allowing separation between towing horses and boatmen and the promenaders in the Gardens above. Rennie carried this off most convincingly with delightful filigree iron balustrades (one 'Chinese Chippendale') to the bridges and vermiculated and rusticated tunnel portals with panels over containing swags and masks of Old Father Thames and Sabrina, goddess of the Severn, indicating the canal's destinations. Thirty years later the Great Western Railway followed the same path, slicing off the east end of Hampton Row and built so tight to the canal that a gigantic retaining wall needed to be built immediately west of it with the railway in a deep cutting. Brunel took a more robust approach to the passage through Sydney Gardens, with shorter tunnels under the roads and a single stone bridge with pierced balustrade to maintain Baldwin's axial pathway through the landscape. Being further west than the canal, a further tunnel was needed under Raby Place which had been completed in 1825.

4. Cultural influences

Leisure

The growth of the Georgian Spa in the second half of the 18th century provided a strong incentive for Henrietta Pulteney to promote the building of a fashionable new town once Pulteney Bridge had been built in 1774. The placing of Sydney Gardens at the eastern end of the new development greatly increased the incentive for visitors to the city centre to pass over the bridge after 1795 and discover the delights of the now rapidly expanding residential area to the east. This was particularly alluring since the old pleasure ground of Spring Gardens, on the river beside Bathwick Mill, had closed three years earlier. The elevated level of the development provided a level walk from the city centre, high above the formerly flooded Ham down by the Bathwick ferry, referred to by John Wood in 1747. A brief echo of the Georgian pleasure gardens may be seen in the attempted revival after 1847 at The Folly (also called Cremorne Gardens), unpromisingly sited between canal and railway lines.

Sports

The Recreation Ground was inherited by Capt. Forester in 1891 and three years later The Bath and County Recreation Ground Company leased it from him to begin the long history associated with Bath Rugby, now one of the UK's most successful clubs. The entrance from William Street was furnished with twin ogee-roofed kiosks and a new cricket pavilion. This is described in detail in the Pulteney Road Character Area Appraisal. Further recreation facilities grew up in the north east corner, still supporting a bowls and croquet club today. Since 1956 it has been the property of Bath Corporation, now Bath & North East Somerset Council, and is seen as a venue for 'sport for everyone' and a significant part of Bath's reputation for sport, good food and healthy activities.

Music and performing arts

Sydney Gardens replaced Spring Gardens as the fashionable place for entertainment, and music was provided to accompany public breakfasts, evening promenades, gala nights and illuminations, whilst the first floor of what is now the Holburne Museum contained a ballroom. However, more serious entertainment was to be found over Pulteney Bridge, where much was happening in the world of music and theatre. William Herschel and his sister Caroline had come from Hanover in 1766 hoping to forge a career as a musician, and indeed soon Caroline was regularly performing as a soprano, at the octagon chapel, but William's career soon changed to one in astronomy, but his visitors included Joseph Haydn allegedly gaining inspiration through looking through Herschel's telescope when writing *The Creation*. The Theatre Royal had received a Royal Licence in 1767 and staged regular performances of the highest order often featuring well-known actors, including Sarah Siddons. The Bathwick Estate provided the ideal accommodation from which to enjoy a culturally rich life, and this is confirmed by the list of important political, literary and cultural figures who lived in or visited houses in Great Pulteney Street during and after the final years of the 18th century.

Industry and transport

It is now hard to visualise the quiet turnpike roads of the 18th century with the domination of the eastern part of the character area by

today's road traffic. However, the broad spine of Great Pulteney Street was designed to cater for the anticipated expansion of coach traffic with the building of the remainder of the new town, without the cramped feeling then becoming common in Britain's larger cities and embryonic industrial towns. The canal would have been far from picturesque in its early days, merely a heavily used transport artery with endless horse-drawn boats joining and leaving the Avon en route to Bristol. Therefore the care taken to delight the viewer with its treatment through Sydney Gardens is all the more remarkable, and almost unique in England. The railway's path is more matter-of-fact but even here Brunel took great care in the design of the footbridge, retaining walls and tunnels visible from the Gardens.

5. Archaeology

The majority of the area comprises 2nd and 3rd terrace gravel with alluvial floodplain deposits partially overlying. Immediately opposite Cleveland Bridge was the medieval village of Bathwick now completely masked by later development. The church lies on the site of a medieval church. There have been a number of discoveries relating to Roman activity in the area over the past 200 years or so including evidence of extensive sub-urban occupation. A large ditch and quantities of finds all support the assertion that Bathwick was a significant Roman settlement. Burials are also common in the zone and have long been assumed to indicate the existence of a road through the area, possibly a major crossing of the Avon, which was located in 2013.

6. Landmarks and views

See map, Annex 1.

Landmarks

Laura Place, Great Pulteney Street and the vista to the Holburne Museum are some of Bath's most memorable and internationally recognised landmarks and views. The view of Pulteney Bridge, Grand Parade and the Guildhall from the east bank by the weir are also highly memorable. Many complete early shopfronts on Argyle Street are significant.

The Holburne Museum and its setting in the pleasure garden of Sydney Gardens is highly significant as a building for public recreation originally associated with the gardens. Since the Edwardian period its function as an art gallery has given it an equal, though different, public significance.

The individual blocks of Great Pulteney Street are some of the country's best and largest examples of 'palace-fronted' urban compositions and the viewpoints created by the location of the tributary streets is an essential part of this effect. The opening out into Laura Place is one of Bath's great civic spaces, and the sudden ending of Johnstone Street helps to tell the story of the incomplete nature of the great speculation that was the Bathwick Estate.

The juxtaposition of Cleveland House over the south canal tunnel is highly memorable and frequently illustrated in publications tracing the history of canal building.

Views

As an example of late-18th century formal planning and the use of axial positioning of key buildings, this Character Area is defined by its views. Of these, the views along Great Pulteney Street in both directions are the most important, followed by the contrived views of the accents in each block from William Street,



View north from Warminster Road

Edward Street and Sunderland Street. The unintentional view south across the Recreation Ground to the distant hills from Johnstone Street remains one of the surprises of the formal plan, through its sudden truncation, and affords a view of rugby matches below on match days. Equally, the view back from the Recreation Ground indicates the enormity of the construction required to build the new town as the street end is seen from below.

The curvature dictated by the river provides interest to the northward view along both Grove Street and Henrietta Street, the latter similar to a crescent and providing a surprise as it opens into Henrietta Park. Similarly, the northerly change in scale along Bathwick Street as the road bends and opens on the west side to the heavy tree canopy surrounding the old cemetery and St John's Church is one of the great changes as the Greek pavilions at the south end of Cleveland Bridge are approached. They, in turn, give way to a glimpse down to the river far below before a second pair of 'temples' heralds the entry into the Cleveland Place district and the view ahead of a veritable 'cliff' of Georgian terraces rising steeply ahead.

One of the most remarkable views out of the Character Area can be obtained from the canal embankment, west across the valley to the lengthy rear elevations of the Grosvenor terraces and the post-war redevelopment of Snow Hill high above. An even broader perspective is obtained from the Warminster Road, on descending, shortly before the former Ministry of Defence compound. Conversely, few panoramic views into the Character Area are possible, except for a brief view from Camden Crescent on leaving Lansdown Road, and above it from Mount Beacon in winter, when tree cover is minimal.

Internal views within Sydney Gardens deserve special attention since the landscape was designed to obtain maximum benefit from the placing of specific trees and garden buildings, and many of the trees in the south east part still perform dramatic enclosing effects. However, the cutting through of the canal and railway has added new perspectives not envisaged at the start, which are now of equal value, in particular the curving canal cutting with its filigree bridges and dramatic tunnel portals. The bridges over the rail lines create an unusual sense of theatricality with opportunities to view the passing trains from many points. The rear view of the Holburne Museum, divorced from the Gardens from 1836 when it became a hotel, has been reunited with them again with Eric Parry's 2011 extension which responds to the green of the huge trees which surround it on the east side.

The above views are highly sensitive to small scale changes in their composition, consequently seemingly minor changes can have a surprisingly destabilising effect on important views which define the 'new town' of the Bathwick Estate and its constituent parts.



The Forester Road and Warminster Road areas from Camden Crescent

7. Land uses and their influence

The Character Area is predominantly residential and the greater part is still in use today for the purposes for which it was built. Housing uses here range from whole houses in single hands to social rented accommodation, in some cases all within Grade I listed buildings. The Argyle Street shops were built for this purpose and remain in commercial use, some retaining parts of or entire Georgian shopfronts. Several of the Great Pulteney Street houses have been brought into professional use with a doctors' surgery near the east end and accountants' offices around Laura Place, and a number of houses are now hotels, notably Duke's Hotel on the corner with Edward Street. These changes of use in most cases have been handled carefully and have had little effect on the homogeneity of the street scene. A number of large houses in Henrietta Street and Road have also been converted into hotel use.

Only Grove Street has seen substantial changes of use, where former industrial buildings such as the brewery and opposite it the old prison, have been converted to residential uses, but again with limited changes to their appearance. Several inns serve the area, in Bathwick Street and Sutton Street and the area is well served by restaurants in Argyle Street. The main ambulance and Fire Station is situated just south of Cleveland Bridge, and a number of ground floors at the south-east end of Bathwick Street are in commercial use, generally serving the community, such as a launderette, estate agent and hairdresser.



8. Buildings, architectural quality and townscape

Building age

It is not now possible to find pre-Georgian remnants of the mediaeval village of Bathwick without forensic examination, and Roman finds uncovered through excavation are not generally on public display. Consequently the Bathwick Estate should be regarded as a good example of a homogeneous late-18th century new town, completed after the Napoleonic Wars in the first two decades of the 19th century. The most conspicuous parts were built between 1788 and 1810, following the opening of Pulteney Bridge in 1774, and finishing with the opening of Cleveland Bridge in 1827. Cleveland Villas followed in the 1840s, and behind them the School of St Mary Bathwick in 1841, then the corner with Bathwick Street changed dramatically with the building of St John the Baptist in 1861. The 20th century began with the development of the Forester Road area as a residential suburb, with work halted either side of the First World War and additional plots being filled into the 21st century. A more major piece of recent Neo-Georgian residential design is seen in the Holburne Park development replacing the former Warminster Road MOD site in 2017.



Building form

The character area is dominated by the completed parts of the Bathwick Estate and so is best defined by the formality of the Georgian terrace. Great Pulteney Street is the most complete example of the grand planned principal street, and has few rivals in England. Its essential form is derived from the ratio of building height versus the street width of 100 feet, and the generosity of the pavements which allowed for promenading in style, walking six abreast. Even the basement areas are of considerable depth, allowing in copious daylight to the rooms at this level. The houses are of three full storeys and basement, with invisible sub-basements at the west end, and the later visible attic storey dormers, where once the parapet would have been balustraded. The upper floor ashlar is relatively plain with just a fine string course integral with the second floor window cills and a shallow cornice over the window lintels before the plain frieze and a dentilled cornice terminate the parapet. However, the ground floor is rusticated and carries a broad string course designed as a pedestal or dado between it and the first floor window cills. Where emphasis is required, such as the central bay of the south side of the street, fluted pilasters of small projection pass through the dado and end in capitals supporting the architrave over the second floor windows. In this case, ten pilasters are arranged under a five-bay dentilled pediment with arms in the tympanum, and the Bath 'wave form' string course, beloved of Pinch the Elder, passes through between the first- and second-floor windows, interrupted by the pilasters. The central five first floor window cills were also lowered to allow access on to a balcony matching the pediment width. A balustraded parapet completes the composition in this case.



The homogeneity of the palatial composition of each block of Great Pulteney Street is emphasized by the absence of rainwater pipes creating vertical divisions, although several have more recently appeared. This feature, almost unique to Bath, required complicated rainwater disposal arrangements consisting of internal troughs through the attic to divert water from the front parapet gutters to the rear walls, where pipes were deemed acceptable. The rear walls, as elsewhere in Bath, are of rubble stone in most cases, although these may have been rendered to represent ashlar in many instances.



A good indication of construction can be seen in cross section at the south end of Edward Street where a house has been lost and the gable wall exposed. The considerable depth of the houses was enclosed in a double or 'M' shaped roof of twin slate pitches parallel with the street and with a central lead valley. Each party wall passes through the roof, and as in London, provides a fire division, and the clusters of chimneys centred on the front and rear ridges on each party wall are a very important element of the skyline, often with a mix of pots of varying styles.



The essential characteristics described above are common to most buildings of the completed portion of the Bathwick Estate. The only examples of partially built side streets, Henrietta Street and Johnstone Street, are similar but of a plainer design with no rusticated ground floor, round-headed ground floor windows and fine string courses at lower levels and no dentils to the cornice. Both these and the later Daniel Street (1792-1810) retain true urban scale through being of similar height to the grander streets but of a lesser width. A further challenge was presented at the later portion of Sydney Place (1804-8) as the ground rises up the incline and Pinch wished to retain a palatial composition with three-bay pedimented pavilions in the centre and both ends. This is deftly handled by ramping the string courses, cornices and parapets upward every three bays with no loss of completeness in the overall composition; no mean achievement in a thirty-three bay terrace! This emphasis on the horizontal elements of the composition is different from earlier Bath terraces where the primary emphasis is on the vertical unit of three bays dictated by plot widths. A further variation used in the earliest houses of Bathwick Street is use of tripartite windows at each level, often with a shallow entablature over the first floor window supported on console brackets, the front door placed off-centre seemingly unrelated to the window pattern. A series of additional terraces has been added in recent years on the south side taking some care in matching the essential features of the early 19th century houses.



Although there is a selection of vernacular buildings along the west side of St John Street the next most prominent building form is the Regency villa, as seen in Henrietta Road. There are several variants, but all have a vertical emphasis with projecting quoin stones at the corners and a vertical band of rusticated stones on the front party wall line, with a deeply overhanging eaves in place of a parapet. The fronts are either of one wide bay with set-back side wing containing the entrance, or two-bay with entrance set in the side wall. Accent is achieved with bracketed hoods over windows, at least at first floor level, and one or two even have an early projecting square bay at ground level.



The later 19th century is mainly represented by the large scale extension of what is now the Bath Spa Hotel in a classical style, the extension of the small-scale Hampton Row to become Cleveland Row and the church of St John the Baptist, the latter beginning as Early English revival but with overwhelming additions by Blomfield in a 'high' gothic style, but leaving some of C E Giles' vaguely Italianate hints, such as the north porch tower. The spire is of considerable height and is a landmark visible above the tree line from some distance around, including the opposite side of the river. Moving into the Forester Road estate, which is predominantly an Edwardian garden suburb, the scale reduces to the two-storey domestic character which saw the unprecedented expansion of most English towns between the wars.

The urban nature of the area means many houses abut the pavement directly, so that only a flight of steps to the entrance indicates the boundary. By the Regency era, the villas had front gardens with low front walls or merely a kerb carrying similar railings to those of their predecessors. By the Edwardian period many styles are in use, most commonly low ashlar walls with railings between stubby stone gate piers, full-height stone walls or low walls with hedges planted behind.



Boundaries to 20th century developments frequently use walls of reconstituted stone.

The gates to the Holburne Museum are flanked by a pair of watchman's boxes of 1830 which are a rare survivor in Bath, with Tuscan pilasters and coved recesses.

Buildings of merit

All buildings and features cited here are examples only, not a definitive list of all buildings of merit. They are cited to give guidance as to the sort of features significant to the Character Area. Almost every street may have isolated buildings of merit, whether listed or not, and many streets are listed in their entirety.



Anchor buildings

- Taken as single blocks, the five ranges of Great Pulteney Street are outstanding in their completeness and expression of Pulteney's vision.
- Owing to its focal position, full-face from Great Pulteney Street and obliquely from Sydney Place and Darlington Street, the Holburne Museum is a key building.
- Argyle Street and Laura Place retain the essential character that together makes them an outstanding civic space indicating the essence of 18th century lifestyle.
- Sydney Gardens, though much altered, retains the essence of the Vauxhall of 1795 through the surviving layout and key garden buildings introduced since.
- The two terraces of Sydney Place remain excellent examples of the more economical palatial style that might have continued around all sides of Sydney Gardens.
- Cleveland House and the Bath Spa Hotel respectively represent a rare 18th century office building and a Greek-revival villa, albeit extended substantially.
- The former prison in Grove Street (1772-3) is an outstanding early example of a prison of Palladian inspired composition, without undue expression of security.
- Henrietta Street and Johnstone Street are examples of secondary grade formal town houses of high quality which are seen as part of the Laura Place composition.



Other listed buildings of historical/townscape significance

- Daniel Street represents a well-scaled and complete example of a more economical (two-bay) terrace, begun by Baldwin and finished by Pinch. The Pulteney Arms, on the corner with Sutton Street, is by Baldwin and has been used as an inn since 1796.
- The eastern end of Bathwick Street, although dominated by traffic and adapted for some commercial uses, represents a complete example of Baldwin's late 18th century expansion of the Bathwick Estate from 1788-92.
- Rochfort Place is a terrace of four high quality houses by Pinch the Elder in Bathwick Street, and Bathwick House may well incorporate remnants of Bathwick Manor.
- Pinch's Folly, the neo-Baroque archway on the north side of Bathwick Street is a landmark and rare 19th century example, once leading to Pinch's builder's yard.
- The elevation of St John the Baptist church to St John's Road and the tall spire have become a major townscape element at this junction of the two roads.
- The pairs of Regency villas in Henrietta Road are the only





example of this genre in the Bathwick Estate and are good examples of the style.

- The pavilions to Cleveland Bridge.

Unlisted buildings of merit

- The earlier buildings of the Forester Road Estate represent exemplary manifestations of good quality domestic architecture and some display Arts and Crafts influences such as stone mullioned windows and asymmetrical elevations in a mix of stone and roughcast.
- Hazelwood, Warminster Road (north side, west of the former MOD site) is a handsome villa of 1879 in a simplified Classically inspired style. It was built for himself by Sir Isaac Pitman, inventor of Pitman shorthand. He chose the site for its fine views across the Avon to Grosvenor, Camden and Lansdown. It was named after the school run by Pitman's father near Birmingham; one of the hazel trees planted by Pitman as a nod to the name seems to survive near the gates. (Ref: A Baker, The Life of Sir Isaac Pitman, 1919.)



Townscape features of merit

- Great Pulteney Street and Laura Place, together with the tributary streets.
- Argyle Street and the Pulteney Bridge approach.
- The Holburne Museum and the meeting of Sydney Place, Darlington Street, Sutton Street and Great Pulteney Street.
- The Old Prison and the meeting of Grove Street and Spring Gardens Road.
- Sydney House and the meeting of Warminster Road, Beckford Road and Sydney Road, and the view of Cleveland House from Sydney Road.
- The south range of Sydney Place viewed from east or west.
- The mature trees of Henrietta Park flanked by Henrietta Villas.
- The winding course of the canal through Sydney Gardens.
- The southern approach to Cleveland Bridge.



Buildings at Risk

- The east end of Hampton Row, propped for many years and near to collapse, is the first view of Bath for those arriving by train from London and gives a poor impression of the care of smaller artisans' dwellings
- The derelict Cleveland Baths have been the subject of applications for grant aid over several years and a Trust has been formed to oversee a full restoration, which has now attracted Heritage Lottery Fund grant aid. It is expected that restoration will be achieved over the next few years.



Negative buildings and townscape features

- Return elevations of the new development on the corner of Henrietta Road and Bathwick Street introduce large areas of parking visible from the former which are an alien feature in the area. Beckford Court, at the start of Darlington Road, is a singularly featureless apartment building in a conspicuous position on entering Bath, whose west elevation is made up entirely of steel garage doors at ground floor level, again a totally alien feature. An arid block of post-war flats in Bathwick Street seems even less acceptable by contrast with Pinch's Folly which stands in front of it.

9. Materials and detailing

The vast majority of buildings in the Character Area are constructed in Bath stone, and the formal fronts are always of finely-jointed ashlar. Masons were able to reduce the lime putty joints to little over one millimetre in the best ashlar examples. Projections, such as string courses, cornices, pilasters, corbels and hood moulds are cut out of the solid by using a facing stone of greater depth, built well into the wall. Rear elevations and return walls which were not intended to be seen were usually built in rubble stone, in many cases lime-rendered to represent ashlar, without the cost. One of the streets in the Edwardian suburb, Powlett Road, uses red brick, and several Arts & Crafts inspired houses in the area use roughcast render or pebbledash for areas of contrast between stone features such as projecting bays, and applied timber strips in the gables to simulate timber framing.

The universal window in the Georgian developments is the vertically sliding sash window, typically of six panes in each sash, although this might be varied, for example where a lower sash needs to be taller to allow access on to a balcony. Unlike other cities, the sash window detail developed in Bath aims to render the sash box invisible as if it is somehow shameful! The outer sash beads are set behind the stone reveals so that no more than half an inch is visible, and there are no timber sub-cills: the lower sash closes on to the stone cill directly. Sashes were purely rectangular with no 'horns' and glazing bar sections became remarkably thin as the 18th century drew to a close. With the introduction of plate glass in the mid-19th century, the heavier glass required correspondingly heavier weights and 'horns' to strengthen the rail/stile joint on each sash to deal with the additional stress. At the same time many window openings were cut back to form a splayed reveal, and cills dropped to increase the light level within.

In Bath, several programmes of reintroducing lost glazing bars in sashes altered in the 20th century have been instigated. Most houses utilised shutters internally, folded within the window reveal when not in use, and a valuable barrier to noise and cold. A number of houses also have balconies, usually carried on cast iron brackets and supporting thin stone or slate floors, and wrought iron 'balconettes' are also common beneath individual windows.

Even in the Edwardian and later houses north of Bathwick Street the sash window reigns supreme, in some cases varied with leaded lights in stone-mullioned windows adjacent, or even with leaded lights within a sash! Regrettably several have been replaced by uPVC windows on friction stays, which changes the elevation significantly.

Only the late 20th century apartment blocks have significantly different window designs, generally opting for standard timber casement window frames with hopper lights for ventilation.

Front doors of earlier Bathwick Estate houses tend to be simple and sober, unlike the varied geometrical panels of the Regency era, which often included centre circular panels. Raised and fielded panels would usually be arranged in fives (four portrait and a top landscape) or as six or eight vertical panels, often with two small panels at the top and bottom and the larger four rectangular panels at the centre. Surviving ancillary features occasionally exist, such as iron footscrapers or candle snuffs. Most of the streets, and Great Pulteney Street in particular, retain a full complement of iron railings protecting the drop into the basement areas, returning across the 'bridge' to the front door. In some cases the wrought iron lamp overthrow remains (or has been restored) sweeping across to connect the railings either side of the front door approach, though few contain a lamp. The large number of distinguished residents or guests of the Great Pulteney Street houses has also generated a number of bronze plaques, ranging from Napoleon III to William Pitt and Admiral Howe. They were the idea of Alderman Thomas Cotterell and the first was erected in 1898 in New King Street to commemorate William Herschel.

Most houses in the character area were built with basements, and vaults continuing under the pavement, which was, after all, an artificially raised level. There was consequently a need to protect the drop into the basement area adjoining the pavement which was usually achieved with square railings let into mortices in a stone kerb, connected at the top with an iron strap. High status houses might punctuate the runs of railings with an urn finial at a support point or direction change. Sections of railing would be cleverly cut to provide a concealed wicket gate on to a flight of steps to the lower level in some cases. The very largest houses might have an ornate lamp overthrow above the railings at the entrance.



10. Streets and movement

Density and degree of enclosure

Owing to the height and 20th century subdivision of the larger houses in the Bathwick Estate, the density of occupancy is typically urban and quite high. Relatively few of the large houses are in single occupancy and new developments, such as those in Bathwick Street, which have followed the aesthetic precedent of the Georgian terrace, have been built with multiple occupancy intended from the start. This density reduces and the street scene opens up as the northern Forester Road district is reached, with a more typically inter-war street layout and consequent density.



Street pattern

The southern margin of the area is the only part to retain a fragment of the 'gridiron' plan intended by Pulteney. The hexagonal form of Sydney Gardens carries the geometric form eastward but only the first 100m of the Warminster Road follows the intended route of Upper Great Pulteney Street. The greater part of the character area street plan is defined by the routes connecting to bridges over the river, which are now the main arteries. Closure of Pulteney Bridge to traffic and the central Bath 'bus gate' have placed a huge concentration of traffic on Bathwick Street which now has to funnel most Bristol traffic to the A46 and on to the M4. Consequently, for much of the day northbound traffic is stationary or slow moving.



The two triangles of residential development bordering the river follow a street pattern dictated by the river itself and a logical subdivision of the land within to provide comfortable plots and gardens. This allows easy vehicular circulation for residents and safe pedestrian movement away from the main traffic concentration.



The beginning of the Recreation Ground as a base for Bath Rugby in the late 19th century and the location of the entrance turnstiles at the end of William Street, has placed a heavy pedestrian traffic load on the surrounding streets on match days. There are obvious 'desire lines' from coach drop-off positions and car parks and from the railway station which create a concentration of fans arriving over Pulteney Bridge and Pulteney Mews just before matches begin. However, the good natured behaviour of most rugby fans tends to add vitality to the street scene rather than detract from it, although it can place a sudden pressure on retail and refreshment businesses just after each match ends.

Public realm

The most conspicuous public open space in the Character Area is Laura Place, a civic space of almost Haussmann-like proportions acting as the focus of four formal streets and now enriched by a central fountain. Traffic restrictions on the use of Pulteney Bridge have enhanced the appreciation of the space since traffic is now light.



Great Pulteney Street displays the grandest concept of a street for promenading, and yet the wide pavements have steadily become paved in concrete slabs, a considerable anticlimax in relation to the houses they serve. Throughout the Character Area, tributary streets usually retain pennant flag paving, as in Johnstone Street, Henrietta

Street and Edward Street, and also Daniel Street. In the Forester Road area, however, tarmac pavements feature throughout the area.

Vitality and tranquility

Bathwick is an area of contrasts. Throughout the day, a constant hum of traffic is evident along the arterial route from Pulteney Road to Bathwick Street, even making it a challenge to cross the street at peak times. The high quality buildings which line the route are rarely seen without the foreground of cars and heavy goods vehicles, and traffic noise is significant enough to require raised voices. Atmospheric pollution, in particular nitrous oxide levels, remain a major concern in neighbouring areas. Traffic entering from the A36 Warminster Road is held at peak times prior to joining Bathwick Street, reducing the quality of the enjoyment of Sydney Gardens and that of the bowling green and children's playground in particular, both located adjacent to Beckford Road.

Elsewhere, these concerns are distant references and there are no through routes bisecting the Forester Road district, save for visitors to the boating station on sunny days. Henrietta Park retains its tranquillity despite the connecting route along the western edge which is used as a cut-through during periods of congestion on Bathwick Street; a feature also of the St John Street/ Grove Street route. Generally this area retains a quiet calm atmosphere throughout the day.

Sydney Gardens has retained its tranquillity despite the traffic surrounding it, particularly at the centre where furthest from the roads, and the canal cutting embraces a different world. This sense of timelessness is empathised by the passing of occasional steam trains on the mainline.

Plans to revivify Cleveland baths will, if successful, heighten the leisurely ambience of the area.

11. Trees, open space, parks and gardens



Trees and vegetation

The only surviving agricultural land in the area lies around the former MOD site at Warminster Road, in the north-east of the Character Area; its slopes are mainly pasture with shrubs and small trees shielding views to the river. Otherwise the urban nature of the Character Area has concentrated all the green space predominantly into two areas: Henrietta Park and Sydney Gardens. Informal planting of shrubs and hedges now forms many street frontages and property boundaries in the streets around Forester Road, but is by its nature varied according to owners' preferences. This generally has a softening effect on the street scene which is welcome, heightening the atmosphere of a strong community.



Henrietta Park is dominated by some outstanding veteran trees which create a strong urban park identity and provide an interesting foil to the great mass of the rear elevations of Great Pulteney Street, seen over the mews. They also set the scene for the views from the houses in Henrietta Gardens and the villas on Henrietta Road. On gloomy days in summer the dense canopy is now very dense and can restrict light on the north side. A further oasis is the small enclosed garden of remembrance on the west side, bordered by shrubs and a pergola ambulatory surrounding a long pool. This is a valuable contemplation space accessible to city workers and residents alike.

Sydney Gardens was conceived as the major park envisaged as an important component of the new town and was the last of the Georgian formal gardens to be completed, and now the only survivor. Most of the features described earlier have now gone, and the exedra at the summit of the central path has been reconstructed, whilst the temple half way up is an Edwardian addition. However, the impact of the larger trees, particularly in the south east part, remains undiminished and highly atmospheric. Several 19th century garden features are of interest, including Edward Davis' Italianate gardeners' lodge of 1835 and the Edwardian cast-iron gentlemen's public lavatories near the north-west entrance. The bridges required to reunite the gardens, first when the canal cut its way through and then the railway, are of considerable interest in their own right and excellent examples respectively of Rennie's and Brunel's designs. The canal tunnel portals, described above, have become part of the landscape through the towpath being accessible from the gardens. The completion of the extension to the Holburne Museum has once more reunited the Museum with the gardens in a similar way to the original intention.

Open space and parks

Examples of open space in this Character Area are the two shaded burial grounds adjoining Bathwick Street, serving St John the Baptist and the ruined mortuary chapel (the site of the old parish church); quiet contemplative spaces surrounded by overhanging trees.

There are two public parks in the Character Area:

- Henrietta Park with its Garden of Remembrance and mature trees.
- Sydney Gardens, its landscape, garden buildings and decorative bridges.

Private gardens

Private rear gardens form a significant contribution to the open green space in the Character Area, especially where they may be glimpsed from the street. At the ends of terraces and at street corners glimpses of vegetation and tranquil garden spaces often punctuate the streetscape.

12. Night-time character

The Character Area is predominantly residential and this contributes to a generally calm and quiet ambience at night. However there are nodes of community activity which are either predominantly of local significance, such as the east end of Bathwick Street, Grove Street and the Pulteney Arms in Daniel Street, or of universal significance, in particular the range of restaurants in Argyle Street which serve the wide range of tastes from visitors in addition to locals. This supports a busy pedestrian traffic from the 'town' side of Pulteney Bridge making its way from the various car parks west of the river. Pubs such as the Boater, with multiple levels connecting Argyle Street to river level, are particularly busy on summer evenings. The Bathwick Boatman, although mainly offering boat hire and lunches also offers dinner menus up to 9.00 pm, adding a little evening activity to this quiet residential area.

Great Pulteney Street and Henrietta Street contain a number of hotels, and these add to footfall and vitality in the southern part of the Character Area in evenings, as guests explore the city and make their way to restaurants, adding to the lively feel of Pulteney Bridge at night. Evening events are also frequent at the Holburne Museum. These activities are a welcome contrast to the continuous traffic generating a background rumble all along the through route from Darlington Street to Cleveland Bridge.

13. Issues affecting the Character Area

What are the assets of the Character Area?

- The grand intentions of a new town envisaged by William Pulteney of which the completed sections are of national significance, and the unrealised portions remain of great historical interest in the history of planning.
- The association with notable figures in the fields of politics, literature and the arts who either lived in or stayed at the various houses in Great Pulteney Street and the surrounding area. Examples include Napoleon III, Admiral Howe and William Pitt.
- The outstanding quality of the individual houses and in particular the concept of the palatial composition, in which an entire block is designed as if it were the façade of a single building. The contribution of groups is often greater than that of the individual buildings within them.
- The World Heritage Site is ascribed as possessing Outstanding Universal Value whose attributes can be seen to be applied to a great many features of this Character Area.
- The network of streets surrounding Forester Road has a delightfully neighbourly atmosphere, assisted by its location avoiding significant through traffic.
- The two river crossings which allowed the development of the Bathwick Estate are of special quality: Cleveland Bridge as a splendid example of the neo-classical and Pulteney Bridge as Bath's own Ponte Vecchio on the Avon.
- Sydney Gardens, though altered, remains a rare survivor of the 18th century 'Vauxhall' and retains many of the features which allow public appreciation of the nature of Georgian leisure activities.
- The formal plan centred on Great Pulteney Street has become a 'cultural magnet' with activities drawing visitors to the wide pavements as in the 18th century, from Bath Festival concerts, to Holburne Museum events, the Bath Half Marathon and Rugby matches. The route over Pulteney Bridge functions as a processional way to cultural activities.



Laura Place

- The extent of the survival of the late 18th century townscape is remarkable, drawing tourists and offering an authentic backdrop for film-making.

What are the weaknesses of the Character Area?

- The area is effectively cut in half by the busy thoroughfare that is the A36, causing pollution, noise and safety issues surrounding crossing the road to some of the more important cultural attractions.
- Traffic load is now at such a level that erosion of the fabric is inevitable, with pollutants likely to cause surface damage and high levels of airborne chemicals such as nitrous oxide posing threats to health.

What opportunities exist to improve the area?

- Traffic management to limit the damage currently caused by traffic on the A36.
- A plan to restore the Cleveland Baths is now under way and should allow this historic facility to reopen for the first time in 40 years, in a few years' time, offering a valuable community facility.
- New development in Bathwick Street, for example filling the site of a redundant petrol station on the south side, has shown how townscape and materials can be respected without slavishly copying all the details.
- A few sites for residential development remain in the Forester Road area, and with sensitive design, may allow the essential atmosphere to remain unimpaired.
- The departure of the Ministry of Defence from its Warminster Road site now offers a rare opportunity to design a high-quality living environment with a balanced mix of market and affordable housing to restore life to this deserted area.
- Identification and recognition of undesignated heritage assets of architectural and historic interest.




What factors might be seen as threats?

- The fine balance of historic features which defines the quality of the less well-known parts of the area, as well as the well-known ones, is easily eroded by minor alterations.
- Traffic levels in this area may lead to erosion of the historic fabric with pollutants likely to cause surface damage particularly to Bath stone.
- Proposals for the future of the Recreation Ground are likely to involve enlargement of the seating capacity and this may affect the setting of the Character Area, potentially the impact of floodlighting for evening matches and the volume of spectators arriving for matches, overloading the capacity of adjoining streets.
- Gentrification may encourage a tendency to add formal Georgian architectural treatments and features to conversions of mews buildings or other relatively low-status buildings; such features are historically inappropriate to such building types and erode their specific meanings and visual qualities.
- Unsympathetic alterations to unlisted buildings are a threat to the character of the Conservation Area as a whole and specifically to this Character Area.
- Building height of new development exceeding the traditional limits of Baths historic core and disrupting the hierarchy of public and private buildings.
- The increasing prevalence of uPVC glazing and doors erodes the character of pre-1950 unlisted buildings. The visually heavy white plastic frames are inappropriate against Bath stone, Pennant rubble and brick walls.
- Widespread use of reconstituted Bath stone, especially for commercial buildings. It provides a generally appropriate colour match but this advantage is eroded by wider mortar joints and a dull, lifeless character which (unlike Bath stone) does not improve with weathering.
- The impact of the Great Western Railway line electrification on the appearance of the line and its historic structures, including the bridges in Sydney Gardens.

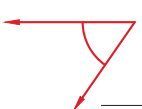
Annex 1 - Maps



Key:

 : Landmarks

 : View

 : Panoramic view

Landmarks and views





- Key:
- : Grade I
 - : Grade II*
 - : Grade II


Listed buildings




Key:


 : Unlisted building of merit

 : Negative building

 : Positive townscape feature

 : Negative townscape feature

 : Building at risk





 : Anchor building

 : group/included

Townscape features



Key:

-  : Open space
-  : Parks
-  : Private/Semi-private gardens (where significant)
-  : Trees

Trees, open space,
parks and gardens

Annex 2 - Context

A conservation area is designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and is defined as ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. The quality and interest of the area as a whole, rather than individual buildings, is the main consideration when designating such areas.

Section 71 of the Act requires the local planning authority to periodically formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas within the district. Section 72 requires that in considering applications for development in a conservation area, attention shall be paid to the desirability of conserving or enhancing the character of that area.

Conservation area appraisals are considered by Historic England to be vital to the conservation of these special areas.

More detailed policies are to be found in the Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy and draft Placemaking Plan.

Annex 3 - References

From B&NES, Archaeology in the City of Bath: Supplementary Planning Guidance; http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/website_spg_bath.pdf

Michael Forsyth, Bath (Pevsner Architectural Guides), 2003.

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