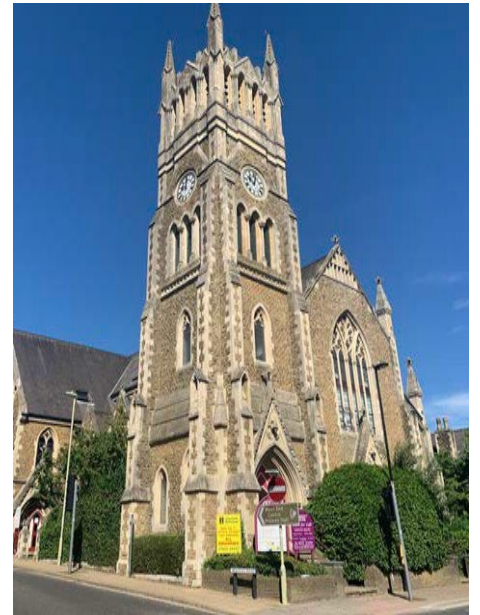




# Conservation Area

## appraisal and management plan



## Aldershot West





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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document should be read alongside the Council's [Conservation Areas Overview document](#) which sets out the context in which conservation areas in Rushmoor have been designated. This includes the legislative and planning policy framework, as well as the geographic and historic setting of the Borough.<sup>1</sup> The Overview document also explains what requires planning permission in a conservation area.
- 1.2 A conservation area is a place of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance. Building groups, walls, trees and hedges, open spaces, views and historic settlement patterns all combine to create a sense of place. It is this character, which is required, rather than simply individual buildings, that the designation of conservation area status seeks to protect. The location of the boundary for a conservation area is a qualitative decision relating to character. It is essential for the protection of conservation areas that only areas which are heritage assets are designated so that 'the concept of conservation is not devalued'.<sup>2</sup>

### **Appraisal and Management Plan**

- 1.3 This Appraisal document sets out the special architectural and historic interest of Aldershot West Conservation Area, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The Appraisal identifies the features of the conservation area that make a positive or negative contribution to its significance and is accompanied by a Management Plan which sets out how change can be managed to conserve and enhance the area.
- 1.4 Conservation area appraisals and management plans provide a framework and guide to enable planning decisions to be made on a site-specific basis, within the context of national planning policy and the adopted Local Plan. This Appraisal has also been prepared having regard to [Historic England Advice Note 1 \(Second Edition\)](#).<sup>3</sup>
- 1.5 Every effort has been made to include or analyse elements that are key to the special character of the conservation area. However, where buildings, structures or features have not been specifically highlighted, it does not necessarily follow that they are of no visual or historic value.

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<sup>1</sup> Available to view at <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation-and-heritage-assets/conservation-areas/>.

<sup>2</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (2024), para. 204.

<sup>3</sup> Available to view at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/>.



## 2. Overview of Aldershot West Conservation Area

### Designation History

- 2.1 Aldershot West Conservation Area was first designated in 1980 and has since been reviewed in 1982, 1989 and 2025. Following the 2025 review and the adoption of this document, the conservation area boundary was realigned and extended to include some additional areas, as set out in the Appendix.

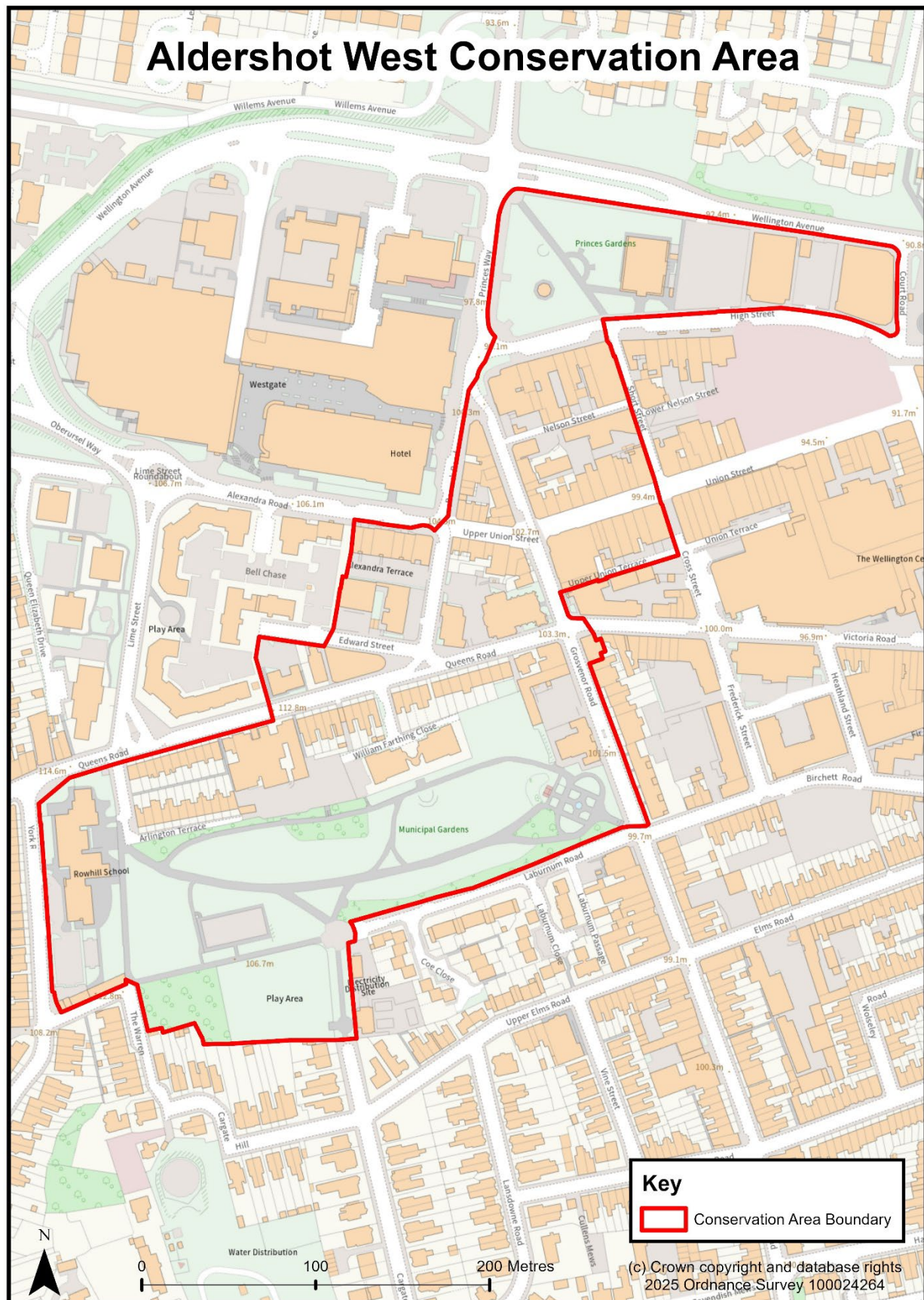
### Location

- 2.2 A coherent, if mixed, conservation area, Aldershot West lies partly within and to the south west of the current Aldershot Town Centre, as designated within the [Rushmoor Local Plan](#) (adopted in February 2019).<sup>4</sup> Reflecting the establishment and growth of a new civilian town in the mid- to late nineteenth century which accompanied the arrival of the army, and located to the south of the former camp boundary, the conservation area contains some high-quality terraced housing, distinctive Victorian and Edwardian civic and municipal buildings and commercial properties, and public gardens. Bounded to the north by Wellington Avenue and incorporating parts of Grosvenor Road, which runs north to south, Queens Road, which runs east to west, and surrounding streets, the conservation area adjoins Cargate Conservation Area to the north, which has a different, entirely residential character.

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<sup>4</sup> Available to view at <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policies/the-rushmoor-local-plan/>.

Figure 1: Map of the Boundary of Aldershot West Conservation Area



## Area Development

- 2.3 The development of modern Aldershot can be traced to the government's decision in 1853 to establish a permanent military garrison on the extensive heathland to the north of the original village. Located on the edge of the vast and desolate expanse of Aldershot Heath, the rural settlement of 'Aldershott', as it was often spelt, had been agricultural in nature and was centred further to the south east around a village green (which can still be seen at the junction of Church Hill and High Street), the Grade II listed Church of St Michael the Archangel (which dates from the twelfth century), two inns (the Red Lion and the Beehive) and the Grade II listed Manor House (which was built in the late seventeenth century). Remembered fondly by the Victoria County History of Hampshire in 1911 'as one of the most pleasant and picturesque hamlets in Hampshire', the village had a population of only 875 people in 1851 and had remained largely untouched since it was first recorded in the will of King Alfred in the 880s, when it was bequeathed as part of the Hundred of Crondall, which comprised some 29,000 acres of land in north-east Hampshire. However, with the arrival of the Royal Engineers in 1853, who first camped on the site of the present-day Princes Gardens to lay out the scheme for the camp, the subsequent construction of the camp between 1854 and 1859, and the associated growth of the new town beyond the camp boundaries about a mile to the north-west of the original village, the area would change beyond all recognition in a relatively short period of time.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.4 The decision to establish a permanent military camp lay within the recognition that the army required a permanent home; up to that point, military barracks had been largely confined in the centre of towns and cities or in ancient forts and castles where there was little opportunity for the carrying out of large-scale military exercises, and the memory and threat of conflict persisted. On the recommendation of Lord Hardinge, the army's Commander in Chief, and Prince Albert, the Prince Consort, Aldershot was selected because it was equidistant between London and the naval base at Portsmouth, there were rail links nearby which facilitated the movement of troops and equipment, the land was heathland and unsuitable for farming and could therefore be purchased relatively cheaply, and there was an adequate supply of water. The government first purchased land in January 1854, paying landowners £12 an acre, and would spend nearly £150,000 over the next seven years to acquire nearly 8,000 acres of land. Work to build the camp commenced the following month, with the erection of around 1,200 wooden huts, and the first troops arrived from Windsor to take up residence in May 1854. The construction of permanent brick-built barracks started in September 1854, and the first phase was completed in 1859,

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<sup>5</sup> H.N. Cole (1980) *The Story of Aldershot*, Southern Books (Aldershot) Ltd; I. Maine and J. White (2000) *Aldershot*, Tempus Publishing Ltd; S. Phillips and G. Picken (2000) *Aldershot Past*, Phillimore & Co. Ltd; S. Phillips (2001) *Aldershot: A Photographic History of Your Town*, Black Horse Books; P.H. Vickers (2012) *Aldershot through Time*, Amberley Publishing.

by which time the camp was home to over 15,000 military personnel. By the late 1890s, the last of the ‘temporary’ huts had been replaced by brick barracks, and the camp had grown to be the largest British military garrison in the British Empire.<sup>6</sup>

2.5 As the camp developed and grew in size, a new town started to spring up on the outside of the camp. Along the boundaries, new businesses were set up in wooden makeshift buildings, which were rapidly constructed to take advantage of new commercial opportunities afforded by the camp and the large influx of soldiers and construction workers into the area. The one-sided nature of High Street, for example, derives from the desire of businesses to occupy a prominent position facing the camp to attract military personnel; this also occurred on Lynchford Road in South Farnborough opposite ‘the North Camp’. The centre of Aldershot subsequently shifted approximately a mile to the north-west of the old village. By 1861, the civilian population of Aldershot had grown to nearly 5,000 people, having increased from 875 inhabitants ten years earlier. As the barracks grew and started to acquire a more permanent character, replacing the wooden huts and gaining such facilities as the Prince Consort’s Library, several churches and a gymnasium, the new town on the outside also gained proper streets, brick buildings, and the facilities and municipal organisation of other mid-sized Victorian towns. For example, the Aldershot Board of Health held its first meeting in 1857; the Aldershot Burial Board first met in 1860, creating a cemetery at Redan Hill and erecting two chapels; the Aldershot Gas and Water Company was founded in 1866; and the town was connected by rail in 1870. A number of churches were also constructed in the 1860s and 1870s to cater for the area’s different religious congregations, including the Methodist Church on Grosvenor Road and the Roman Catholic Church on Queens Road, which was first built as a temporary iron structure in 1872 and replaced by the current building in 1912/13. Following the passing of the Education Act in 1870, the Aldershot School Board first convened in 1872 and opened several new schools, including West End School, now the West End Centre, in 1873. By the 1890s, Aldershot’s population had grown to some 25,000 people, and much of the area now included in the conservation area had been built.<sup>7</sup>

2.6 The Aldershot Board of Health became the Aldershot Urban District Council following the passing of the Local Government Act in 1894. In 1904, the Town Hall and Fire Station on Grosvenor Road were built, and the Urban District Council opened a public park, the Municipal Gardens, on former allotment land to the south. A tree-planting ceremony, named ‘Arbour Day’, took place in the park in December

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<sup>6</sup> J. Walters (1970) *Aldershot Review*, Jarrolds Publishers (London) Ltd; S. Phillips and G. Picken (2000) *Aldershot Past*, Phillimore & Co. Ltd; I. Maine (2002) *Aldershot: A Military Town*, Tempus Publishing Ltd; P.H. Vickers (2012) *Aldershot through Time*, Amberley Publishing.

<sup>7</sup> H.N. Cole (1980) *The Story of Aldershot*, Southern Books (Aldershot) Ltd; S. Phillips and G. Picken (2000) *Aldershot Past*, Phillimore & Co. Ltd; S. Phillips (2001) *Aldershot: A Photographic History of Your Town*, Black Horse Books; P.H. Vickers (2012) *Aldershot through Time*, Amberley Publishing.

1905 in which 32 young trees of several varieties were planted, some of which are still in place today. The Gardens later became home to the Aldershot Cenotaph, a distinctive granite war memorial which was unveiled on 18 March 1925 by Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, and dedicated by Frank Woods, the Bishop of Winchester, as a permanent monument to the sacrifice of the people of Aldershot who lost their lives during the First World War. Initially flanked by two captured German and Turkish field guns, the memorial had a further inscription added in 1950 to commemorate those who died in the Second World War and is today the focus for Remembrance Day events. The Urban District Council later became Aldershot Borough Council in 1922 and created further public parks, including at Princes Gardens, the site where the Royal Engineers first set up base in 1853 to survey the land for the military camp and which remained the Royal Engineers Yard until it was purchased in 1930 and laid out as formal gardens.<sup>8</sup>

### **Area Summary**

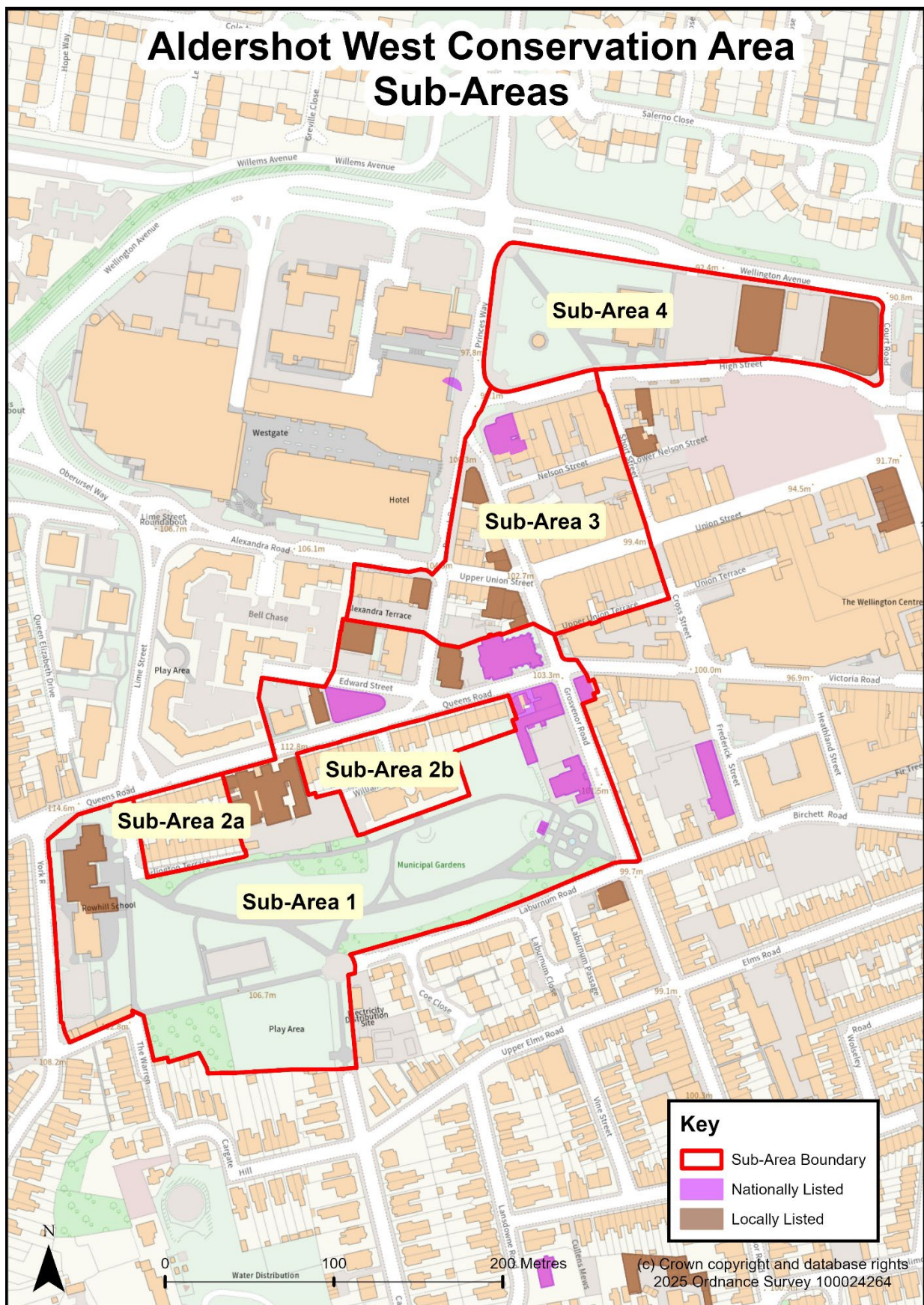
- 2.7 Much of the prevailing character of the conservation area has remained largely unchanged, although there has been some infill development (for example, the sheltered housing development at Highview Lodge, William Farthing Close) and redevelopment of plots on Grosvenor Road and Barrack Road.
- 2.8 The principal external building materials are orange/red and buff brick with shallow 'natural' slate roofs, although some of the grander municipal buildings have stucco. Some of the residential frontages (for example, Arlington Terrace) have been rendered and painted, and there are a number of buildings of sandstone construction. The Aldershot Cenotaph war memorial is of granite construction.
- 2.9 The conservation area has four areas of distinct character:
- Sub-Area 1: Civic and Municipal Quarter;
  - Sub-Area 2: Residential Area;
  - Sub-Area 3: Commercial Area; and
  - Sub-Area 4: Gardens and Cinemas.
- 2.10 Whilst the character of the conservation area is varied in its form and uses, it provides a typical example of Aldershot as it was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

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<sup>8</sup> S. Phillips and G. Picken (2000) *Aldershot Past*, Phillimore & Co. Ltd; P.H. Vickers (2012) *Aldershot through Time*, Amberley Publishing Historic England, 'Aldershot Cenotaph', available at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1464695?section=official-list-entry>.



Figure 2: Map of Sub-Areas



### **3. Sub-Area 1: Civic and Municipal Quarter**

#### **Area Summary**

- 3.1 This sub-area includes a cluster of municipal and commercial buildings, places of worship and a school, which date from the Victorian and Edwardian eras. The buildings front the main thoroughfares of Grosvenor Road, Queens Road and York Road, as well as properties fronting Edward Street, parts of Barrack Road and the Municipal Gardens.

#### **Building Form and Details**

- 3.2 This sub-area contains a number of listed buildings, the most striking of which is the former Methodist Church, a Grade II\* listed building which is now in office use and located at the junction between Grosvenor Road, Queens Road and Victoria Road. Mixed Gothic in character with Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular features, and constructed from local sandstone rubble with Bath stone dressings, the Church dates from 1875 and has important townscape value, for its distinctive four-stage corner clock tower is visible from a number of vantage points within and outside the conservation area.
- 3.3 To the west of the former Methodist Church on Queens Road on a tightly wedged site at the junction with Edward Street lies the Grade II listed Roman Catholic Church of St Joseph's. Designed by George Drysdale and constructed in 1912/13, the building replaced a temporary church of corrugated iron which had been constructed on the site in 1872. It has high flank walls, a rounded east end and doorways on both street frontages. The robust external form of brindle-banded red-brick work and its east-end bell turret are dominant features in Queens Road and Edward Street. The building's cliff-like quality is relieved by its colourful door friezes.
- 3.4 Grosvenor Road passes north to south through the sub-area and is an important route through Aldershot. It provides views through and beyond the conservation area and includes a number of prominent listed buildings on a tight urban grain.
- 3.5 For example, occupying a prominent corner position at the junction between Grosvenor Road, Queens Road and Victoria Road, the Grade II listed 26 and 28 Grosvenor Road are fine examples of late nineteenth-century classically styled shop buildings with accommodation above. Number 26 has a double frontage on Grosvenor Road and Queens Road, whilst number 28, which occupies a mid-terrace position between numbers 26 and 30, fronts on to Grosvenor Road. Both buildings have well-articulated façades and are of three storeys in height, although the second and third storeys at number 28 are recent additions constructed in 2019. Whilst the upper floors of number 28 are of white render,

the corresponding storeys of number 26 are of yellow brick, although both have stucco features, including second-floor moulded bands and architraves. Both properties have extensive stuccoing on the ground floor and wide-cambered openings which provide a continuous series of windows along the street frontage.

- 3.6 Immediately to the south, and forming a terrace with numbers 26 and 28, lies 30 Grosvenor Road, which is also Grade II listed. Similarly built in the late nineteenth century and of three storeys, and previously in use as Aldershot Registry Office, the building has a richly detailed neo-classical front façade and shares common features with the adjacent 26 and 28 Grosvenor Road. The integrity in its form means that these buildings contribute to a visually rich and interesting streetscape.
- 3.7 On the opposite side of Grosvenor Road, also occupying a prominent corner position at the junction of Grosvenor Road, Queens Road and Victoria Road, lies 27 Grosvenor Road, a two-storey Grade II listed Italianate commercial building of the late nineteenth century. Its two main facades on Grosvenor Road and Victoria Road define the double aspect and prominent position of the corner site. The building's upper walling is of yellow brick, and the ground floor is in rusticated stucco. These details and the shallow-pitched slate roof with wide eaves on brackets give the building a stylistic cohesion with 26, 28 and 30 Grosvenor Road, which face the building on the other side of the road.
- 3.8 To the south of 26, 28 and 30 Grosvenor Road lies Aldershot Town Hall, a Grade II listed building designed by C.E. Hutchinson and constructed in 1904. Featuring a central block of three storeys and two wings of two storeys, the building has a symmetrical façade built in a mix of brick, stone and render. The roofscape is also distinctive, with hipped slate roofs with bell-cast and wide eaves, a central slatted wooden turret and prominent rendered chimneys. Because the front façade is situated directly on to Grosvenor Road, the side elevations of the building are more prominent in views along the road. The building's carefully articulated forms and stepped quality make a positive contribution to the streetscape, particularly as the building is spatially separated by a car park to the north and the Municipal Gardens to the south.
- 3.9 In addition to the statutory listed buildings described above, the sub-area contains several locally listed buildings associated with the civic and religious history of Aldershot, including the West End Centre on Queens Road, Rowhill School on York Road, St Joseph's Rectory on Queens Road, Wesley Hall on Barrack Road and Queens Road, and the Masonic Hall on Edward Street.
- 3.10 Constructed in the early 1870s following the passing of the Education Act in 1870, the West End Centre on Queens Road, the former West End Junior School, is an impressive red-brick one- and two-storey building with a clay-tile roof. Currently an arts centre, the building is distinguished by its gables that

front the road and by the very large casement windows to each gable. It is an attractive building in the townscape and contributes strongly to the character of the conservation area as a local community facility.

- 3.11 Further west along Queens Road, Rowhill School, the former West End Infant School, is an attractive Victorian building and is locally listed. Built in 1898 by the Aldershot School Board, but with later additions, it is constructed in red brick, with a steeply pitched clay-tile roof, and retains its original decorative features and windows. It is a building of distinction and has a large two-storey modern extension to the south. Although it was constructed a few years later, it relates in style and materials to the nearby West End Centre. Rowhill School contributes positively to the wider conservation area, sharing a common palette of materials, style and form. It is of historic interest as a school built in response to the 1870 Education Act and is still in its original use.
- 3.12 Located on the opposite side of Queens Road to the northeast and built in 1874, St Joseph's Rectory is immediately adjacent to the Grade II listed St Joseph's Church and is a striking red-brick building with a natural slate roof. It comprises two double-height square-brick bays with chamfers to corners and parapets which face Queens Road, with brick gables above and windows in a tripartite arrangement. The Church Hall, a relatively modern single-storey red-brick building, lies to the west.
- 3.13 Wesley Hall lies further to the east at the junction of Queens Road and Barrack Road. Built in around the 1870s, the building was formerly the hall for the Methodist Church but is now in office use. Constructed from local sandstone rubble and featuring Bath stone dressings, the building has a late twentieth-century extension to the north and a semi-circular turret on its south-eastern corner, as well as a large geometric tracery window on its south elevation. The building provides a focal point and an interesting counterpoint between the former Methodist Church to the east and St Joseph's Church to the west.
- 3.14 To the northwest of Wesley Hall and to the north of St Joseph's Church and St Joseph's Rectory lies the Masonic Hall on Edward Street. Built in 1863, the building was formerly a lecture hall for soldiers and was originally attached to a much-larger building which housed the Miss Daniell's Soldiers' Home and Institute. Constructed from rubblestone with Bath stone dressings, and with a natural slate roof with stone copings to gable, the building is a simple single-cell chapel-type building, with Y-tracery windows separated into five bays by buttresses.

### **Open Spaces, Parks and Gardens, and Trees**

- 3.15 Occupying much of the sub-area to the south, the Municipal Gardens has a combination of formal trees and walking routes, with an equipped play area to the south, parterres and a fountain in the south-

east corner. Many of the park's well-established avenues of trees were planted when it first opened to the public in 1904. As open space, it provides important views from the public highway towards the Aldershot Cenotaph, a Grade II listed granite war memorial which was erected within the gardens in 1925. It also provides views of the former Methodist Church to the north, as well as views of an established terrace of Victorian housing at Arlington Terrace to the north west (Sub-Area 2a). Its spear-topped railings, painted in a gilded colour, of later period, consciously contribute to the heritage value of the park. Perimeter trees soften and blur the boundaries of the gardens and create attractive and informal glimpses of surrounding buildings.

### **Views**

- 3.16 The predominant views within the sub-area are of the former Methodist Church tower, both from the south and the north, and the distinctive St Joseph's Church, which is visible at close distance on Edward Street, Barrack Road and Queens Road, but also from further along Queens Road and Victoria Road closer to the core of the town centre.



## Sub-Area 1: Civic and Municipal Quarter



Former Methodist Church, Queens Road



Aldershot Town Hall, Grosvenor Road



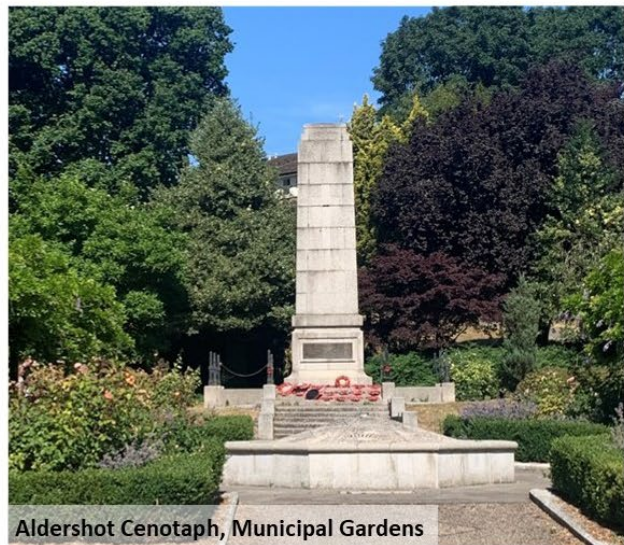
St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Queens Road



Aldershot Masonic Centre, Edward Street



26, 28 and 30 Grosvenor Road



Aldershot Cenotaph, Municipal Gardens



## Sub-Area 1: Civic and Municipal Quarter



West End Centre, Queens Road



View of Former Methodist Church from the South



View of Municipal Gardens from Grosvenor Road



Rowhill School

## **4. Sub-Area 2: Residential Area**

### **Area Summary**

- 4.1 This sub-area includes Victorian terraced housing situated to the west of the West End Centre on Queens Road and Arlington Terrace (Sub-Area 2a), as well as William Farthing Close (built in the 1980s) and Victorian terraced housing on Queens Road to the east of the West End Centre (Sub-Area 2b).

### **Building Form and Details**

- 4.2 Arlington Terrace comprises a group of Victorian two-storey terraced houses, the front elevations of which face southwards on to the Municipal Gardens. A narrow alley separates the rear gardens of the dwellings from those of a terrace of houses which front on to Queens Road to the north. The street has a cottage-like character derived from the unelaborated façades and informal leafy setting. It has a simple ordered rhythm created by the repeated pattern of door and bay windows at ground-floor level and paired sash windows at the first floor, with the façades linked by a continuous ridge line and eaves.
- 4.3 To the north and northwest, the Victorian housing on the southern side of Queens Road is articulated by a series of three- and four-storey buildings which form short terraces. These rows gradually step downwards towards Aldershot Town Centre, and the change in levels is accommodated by a gradual increase in storey height on the lower sections approaching the junction with Grosvenor Road and Victoria Road. Although the scale of the various rows differs, they exhibit the same ordered patterns of fenestration, strong eave lines and dominant chimneys. Halfway up the hill slope, the projecting brick gables of the West End Centre offer a subtle interruption to the two-storey rows, although the well-proportioned massing of the building skilfully maintains the rhythm and continuity of the street frontage.
- 4.4 The front gardens of the properties on Arlington Terrace and Queens Road are generally characterised by boundary walls, rendered or otherwise, although some appear to have been demolished over time. Some of the dwellings on Queens Road have railings and piers, although a number of these have been removed.
- 4.5 Many of the original features of the terraced housing, including wooden sash windows, timber doors and slate tile roofs, have been lost over time. Whilst the original fenestration pattern has also been altered in places, the overall terrace form remains intact, as does the row of solid brick chimney stacks which are silhouetted against the sky.

- 4.6 To the south and accessed from between the dwellings at numbers 24 and 30 Queens Road, William Farthing Close comprises the three-storey Highview Lodge sheltered flat development. Constructed in the 1980s, the building respects its exposed position relative to the Municipal Gardens to the south and the Victorian housing on Queens Road to the north through its use of brickwork, banding, render and slate-style roof.

#### **Views**

- 4.7 The terraced housing on Arlington Terrace and on Queens Road is visible from the public highway. In addition, Arlington Terrace and Highview Lodge are visible from the Municipal Gardens.



## Sub-Area 2: Residential Area



Arlington Terrace



View of Arlington Terrace from the Municipal Gardens



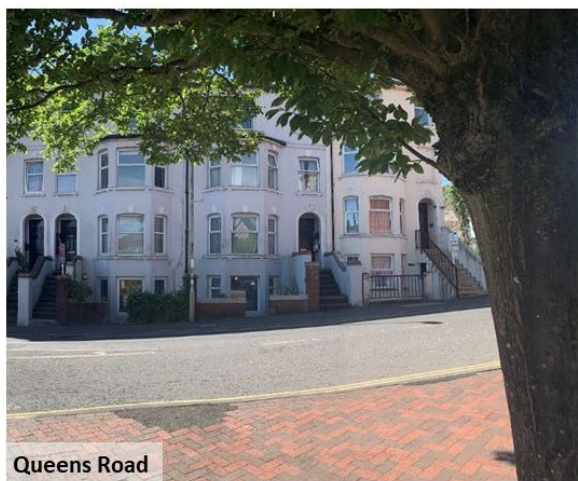
Queens Road



Queens Road



View of Highview Lodge from the Municipal Gardens



Queens Road



## **5. Sub-Area 3: Commercial Area**

### **Area Development**

- 5.1 This sub-area covers the northern part of the conservation area and comprises several commercial frontages, including shops, public houses, and some residential conversions/redevelopment.

### **Building Form and Details**

- 5.2 Two landmark late-Victorian public houses, The Queen Hotel and The Alexandra, are visible from the northern edges of the conservation area. Located on the western end of High Street, on the corner where the road merges into Grosvenor Road and Barrack Road, The Queen Hotel is a late nineteenth-century Grade II listed three-storey building with a stucco finish and a hipped slate roof. The Alexandra is a locally listed building which also dates from the late nineteenth century. A three-storey corner building at the junction between Alexandra Road and Barrack Road, and adjacent to the pedestrianised Upper Union Street to the east, the building is of painted stucco with a natural slate hipped roof.
- 5.3 To the north of the sub-area, Nelson Street runs behind commercial properties on High Street, including The Queen Hotel, and connects Grosvenor Road with Short Street, which forms the eastern boundary of the conservation area. It is of visual interest because of its intimate lane quality and use of granite paving. On the southern side of the narrow street lies Nelson House, a building of two and three storeys with an imposing red-brick façade and traditional green fenestration. A fine example of an industrial building of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it was converted to residential use in the 1990s.
- 5.4 To the west of High Street and Nelson Street are two landmark locally listed 'corner shop' buildings on the western side of Grosvenor Road (Imperial House, 2 Grosvenor Road; and 14, 16 and 16a Grosvenor Road). Both buildings date from the mid- to late nineteenth century and feature traditional shop front details. Between the locally listed buildings on this side of the road, the shop buildings which front on to Grosvenor Road, as well as those located on the north side of Upper Union Street, retain traditional Victorian frontage features, including timber-framed shop fronts and stall risers.
- 5.5 The southern side of Upper Union Street also retains a Victorian appearance but is residential in nature. The former Wesley House, a two-storey gabled Gothic-style locally listed former soldiers' home which was built in around the 1870s, occupies a prominent corner site with frontage on Upper Union Street and the western side of Grosvenor Road. The eastern side of Grosvenor Road is also largely Victorian in appearance. Whilst some redevelopment has taken place that respects the bulk and massing of the

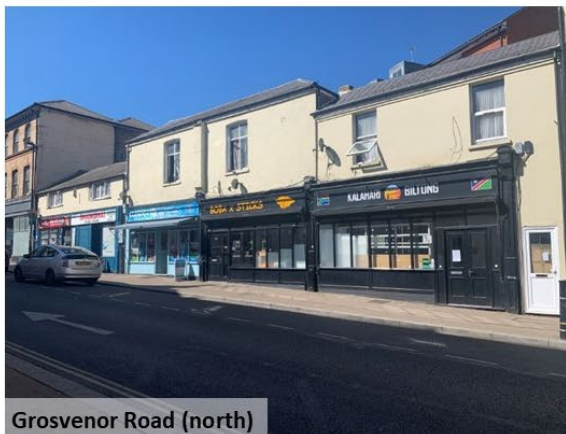
frontage on this side of the road, it has generally been less successful in its implementation in terms of the choice of brick, the use of uPVC windows and doors, and the introduction of balconies.

- 5.6 In contrast, Barrack Road to the west and the pedestrianised shopping street of Union Street to the east have largely retained their Victorian character. The main character of Barrack Road derives from the combination of buildings which, because of the topography and road arrangement, are attractively juxtaposed in views. Most notable are views across the rear courtyard of the Wesleyan buildings and, in particular, the towering complex roofscapes and traceried windows of the Methodist Church to the south, which is probably the most revealing view of the whole mass and form of the building in all its constituent parts.
- 5.7 The eastern side of Barrack Road comprises a perimeter block of residential and commercial premises which continue along the northern side of Upper Union Street to create a perimeter frontage and a triangular block of development which encloses inner service yards. The locally listed Alexandra public house dominates the western side of Barrack Road; sited at a prominent corner location, it arrests the long views up the road. Built in the 1980s on the former site of the Alexandra Road cinema, Alexandra Terrace, which faces on to Alexandra Road and adjoins the public house, is a formal three-storey series of offices, with columned porches, small balconies and decorative ironwork. Similar to Queens Road, these buildings once formed part of the close-knit development of the town but now mark the transition between modern apartment buildings and the older commercial area.

### **Views**

- 5.8 As identified above, there are a number of prominent landmark buildings within the sub-area that underline and define its commercial character and which relate to the core of Aldershot Town Centre located to the south and east.

### Sub-Area 3: Commercial Area



Grosvenor Road (north)



Former Wesley House, Upper Union Street



Upper Union Street



The Alexandra, Alexandra Road



The Queen Hotel (from Grosvenor Road)



Paving on Nelson Street



Nelson Street

## **6. Sub-Area 4: Gardens and Cinemas**

### **Area Development**

- 6.1 This sub-area covers an area of land to the north east of the conservation area. Located adjacent to the commercial sub-area (Sub-Area 3), it comprises Princes Gardens and two large 1930s buildings, both of which were formerly in cinema use (the Empire and the Ritz) and are locally listed. The area has historically marked the meeting point of the civilian and army parts of Aldershot and was a gateway between the military and civilian populations. The area represents a transitional point where army personnel and civilians would meet from the 1930s, when the cinema was a principal form of entertainment.

### **Building Form and Details**

- 6.2 A good example of 1930s picture palaces, the Empire Theatre opened its doors on 1 August 1930. Characterised by its beige and white plasterwork and of a neo-classical style, the façade of the building is adorned by prominent decorative pilasters on each elevation, which rise from the first floor and have large ornate capitals and scroll-like volutes. Constructed for the Empire (Aldershot) Ltd, the building was designed on two levels, with stalls and a horseshoe-shaped balcony, and a stage and seating for 1,599 people. The Theatre became an Odeon cinema in 1964 but closed its doors in 1981. A Christian organisation took over the building and rebranded it as 'The King's Centre' until 2015, after which it was sold and is now in use as an entertainment venue. The architect, Harold S. Scott (1883-1945), was a noted architect of cinemas throughout the 1920s and 1930s. The building was locally listed in 2020.
- 6.3 A fine example of cinema architecture from the interwar years, the Ritz Cinema was built adjacent to the Empire Theatre and opened on 15 May 1937. Also locally listed, this distinctive brick-built building was designed in an Art Deco style, with its use of geometric forms and shapes, and alternating bands of brick and plasterwork, and had an auditorium featuring two levels, with stalls and a balcony. It closed in 1977 and was converted into a bingo hall with a triple cinema. The architects of the building, Verity and Beverley (established in 1871) are a notable firm, most renowned for their theatres, such as the Criterion Theatre (Grade II\* listed) at Piccadilly Circus in London, and a large number of other cinema buildings across London. From 1920 to 1939, they designed primarily for Paramount and are still in business today.

### **Open Spaces, Parks and Gardens, and Trees**

- 6.4 Princes Gardens was created in 1930 by Aldershot Borough Council on the site of the former Royal Engineers Yard; the site is also where the Royal Engineers first set up camp in 1853 to survey land for

the military camp, which is commemorated on a modest plaque in the ground. An ornamental fountain was unveiled in the gardens in 1954 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the army in Aldershot, but this is no longer in situ. The space has continued to be used to commemorate the military and its presence in Aldershot, with a number of sculptures having been erected over the years. For example, a sculpture of a charging horse on a section of a Bailey bridge was unveiled in 1994 to commemorate the link between Aldershot and the Royal Engineers and cavalry regiments. A statue of an airborne soldier mounted on a stone block from the Falkland Islands was unveiled in 2019 in recognition of the special relationship between Aldershot and the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces between 1946 and 2000, and a sculpture celebrating the bravery and tenacity of the first Gurkha Victoria Cross recipient, Kulbir Thapa, was unveiled in 2021. A refurbished cast-iron wheel on a blue-pearl granite plinth was also unveiled in February 2008 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Rotary movement, and a bandstand was opened in June 2012 to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

## **Views**

- 6.5 As identified above, there are two prominent landmark buildings within the sub-area that are visible from High Street and Wellington Avenue, which underline and define its character. The predominant views into the sub-area from the north west, along Wellington Avenue and from Hospital Hill, are of and through Princes Gardens.



## Sub-Area 4: Gardens and Cinemas



Princes Gardens and Bandstand



Plaque



Former Empire Theatre



Charging Horse Sculpture

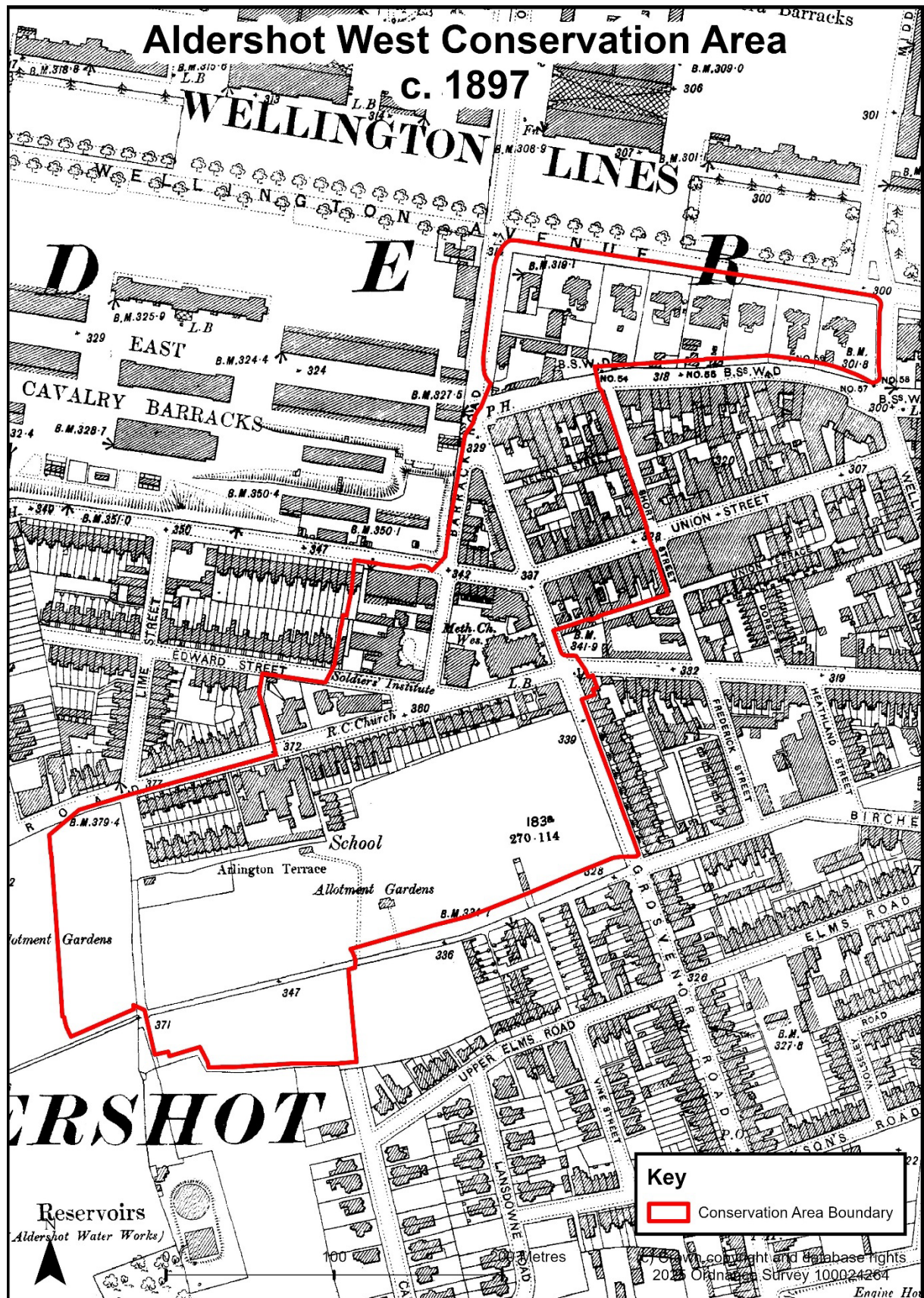


Former Ritz Cinema

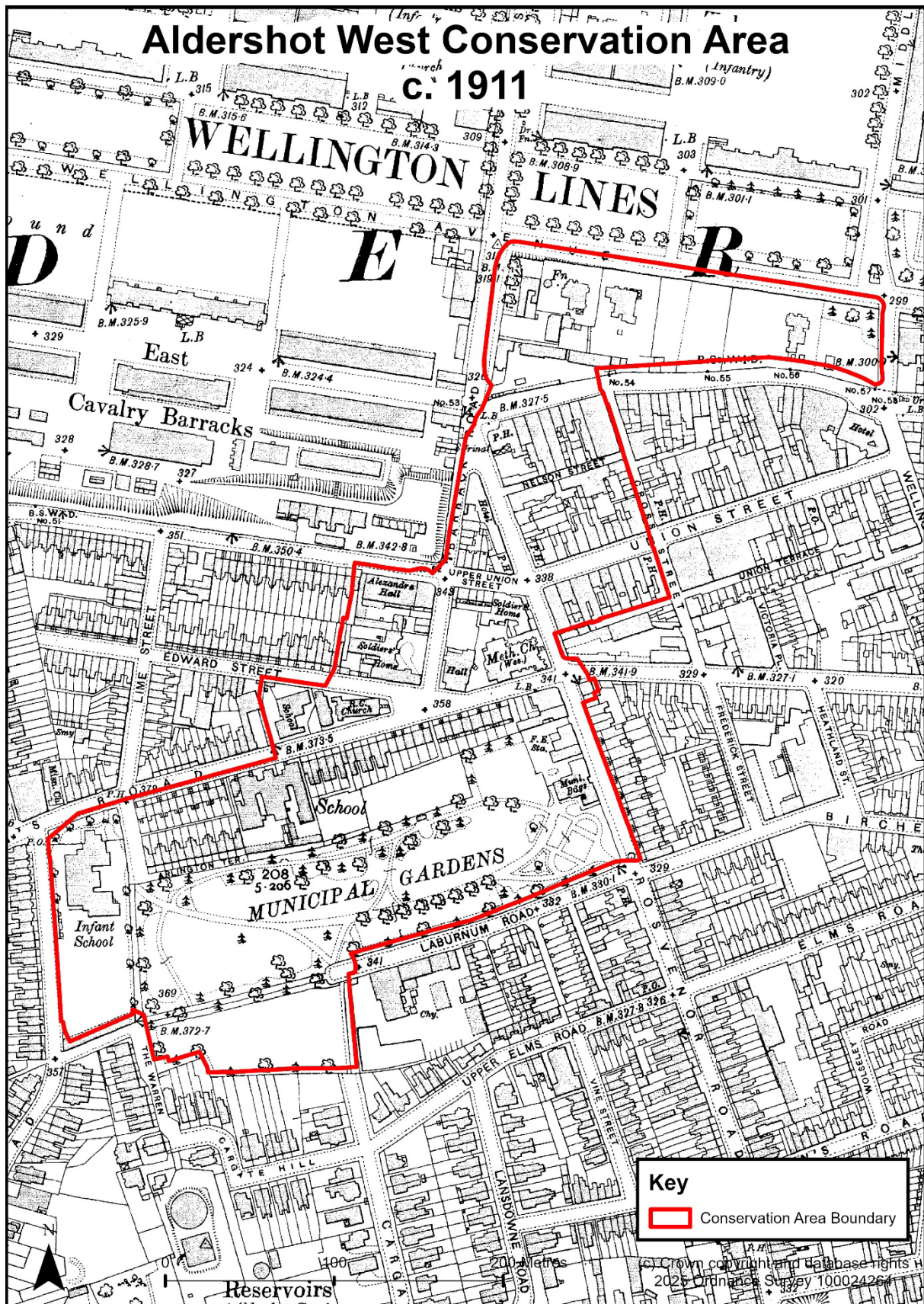








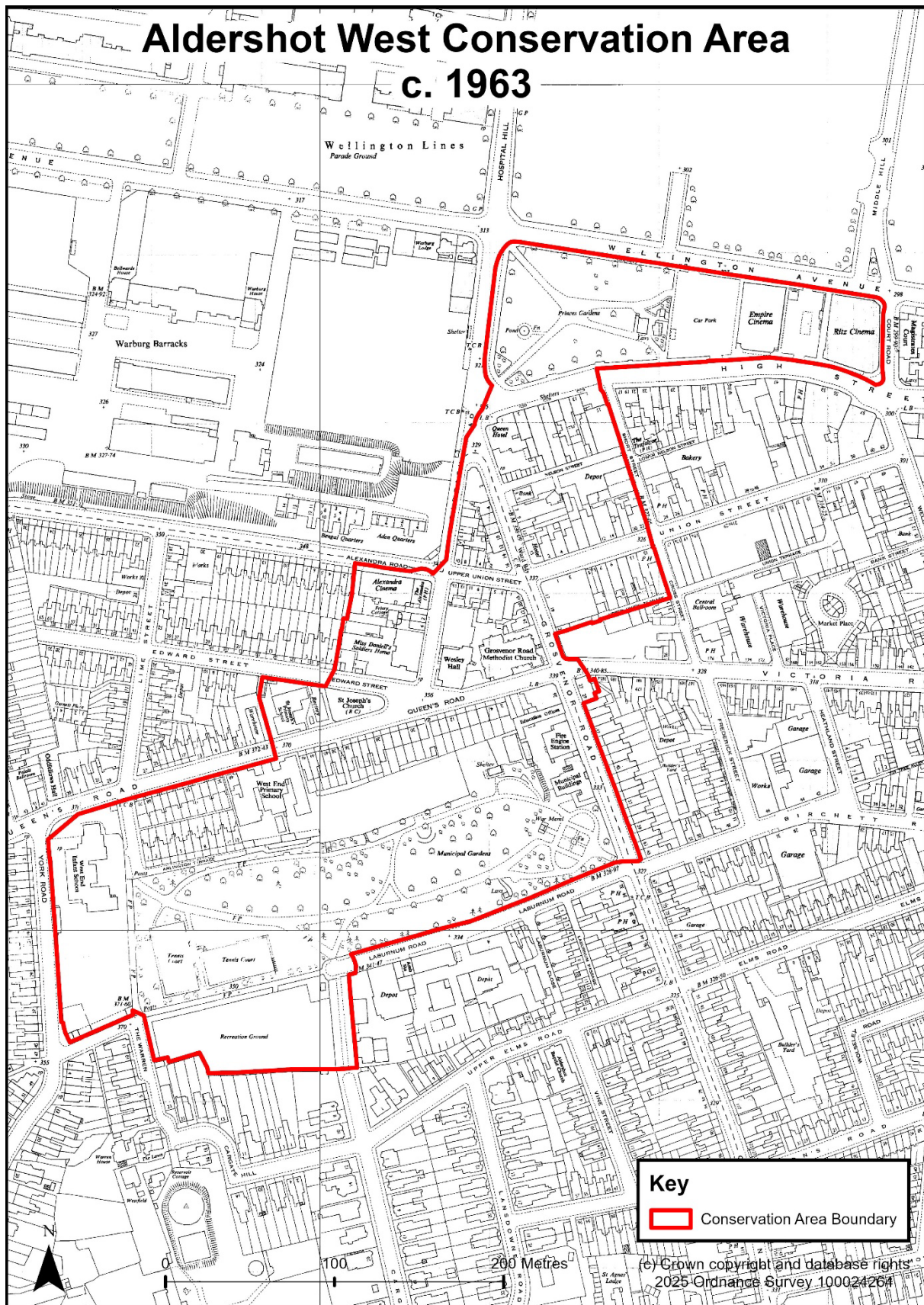












## 8. Listed Buildings and Structures

Name	Grade	Link to Historic England
Former Aldershot Methodist Church, Grosvenor Road	II*	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1155955">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1155955</a>
26 and 28 Grosvenor Road	II	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1092637">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1092637</a>
27 Grosvenor Road	II	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1092636">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1092636</a>
30 Grosvenor Road	II	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1155971">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1155971</a>
Aldershot Cenotaph, Municipal Gardens, Grosvenor Road	II	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1464695">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1464695</a>
Aldershot Town Hall, Grosvenor Road	II	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1092638">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1092638</a>
Church of St Joseph's, Queens Road	II	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1092607">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1092607</a>
Queen Hotel Public House, 1 High Street	II	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1339673">https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1339673</a>

### Locally Listed Heritage Assets<sup>9</sup>

Name	Reference
Alexandra Public House, Barrack Road	LL5003
Imperial House, 2 Grosvenor Road	LL5008
Wesley Hall, Barrack Road	LL5009
Masonic Hall, Edward Street	LL5025
St Joseph's Rectory, Queens Road	LL5075
West End Centre, Queens Road	LL5076
Former Wesley House, Upper Union Street	LL5081

<sup>9</sup> Locally Listed Heritage Assets are available to view on the Council's website at <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/locallylistedbuildings>.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Rowhill School, York Road	LL5180
14, 16 and 16a Grosvenor Road	LL5182
Former Empire Cinema, High Street	LL5189
Former Ritz Cinema, High Street	LL5190

## 9. Management Plan

### Introduction

- 9.1 The Management Plan outlines a positive strategy to deal with the threats and opportunities identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 9.2 The effect of incremental small-scale change within a conservation area can be cumulatively negative, particularly when involving the loss of key features, such as chimneys, boundary walls, and traditional windows and doors. Incremental change is particularly difficult to manage because it is not within the usual remit of the planning system without the imposition of special controls. Proactive and positive encouragement to good stewardship by residents and property owners can play a significant part in the preservation and enhancement of local character.

### Good Stewardship

- 9.3 The active management of small-scale change within a conservation area is the responsibility of the people who live and work in the area. Community-led conservation involves guiding positive change and positive regular maintenance. The owners of properties within conservation areas are caretakers of local heritage for future generations, and commitment to good conservation practices is vital for preserving and enhancing the character and appearance.
- 9.4 Living in a well-maintained conservation area often increases property values and appreciation, as well as the general desirability of the area and its community value.
- 9.5 Historic England, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and other heritage bodies publish specialist guidance on the suitable maintenance and repair methods for different historic buildings and buildings affecting conservation areas.

### Development Management

- 9.6 Some planning controls over development within conservation areas restrict changes to the external appearance and prevent buildings from being demolished without planning permission. Further information is available within the Council's [Conservation Areas Overview document](#) and on the Council's conservation areas webpage.<sup>10</sup> However, some permitted development rights allow for certain types of development and alterations without the need for planning permission. Many of these alterations, including the introduction of uPVC windows and doors and alterations to front boundary

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<sup>10</sup> Available at <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/conservationareas>.

walls, can have an unintended impact and gradually erode the character or appearance of a conservation area through the loss of original building features. For example, the residential areas of the conservation area, particularly Queens Road, have lost a number of original building features over the years.

- 9.7 Further protection of key features within a conservation area can be accomplished by introducing Article 4 directions which restrict the exercise of permitted development rights. Directions are already in place in some of Rushmoor's other conservation areas to prevent the inappropriate replacement of windows and doors and the loss of chimneys and boundary walls, amongst other things. Consideration will be given to introducing a similar Article 4 direction within the Aldershot West Conservation Area if expedient.<sup>11</sup>
- 9.8 The commercial parts of the conservation area are largely unaltered, but there are some unauthorised advertisement signs and shutters in places. The Council will resist any further changes of this nature and will investigate the possibility of taking enforcement action if expedient.
- 9.9 It is not the intention of conservation area designation to prevent new development or adaptation and alteration to suit the needs of property owners. Instead, it puts in place a process whereby proposals are more-thoroughly studied to ensure that the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area is protected and opportunities to improve its character are identified. New development can range from entire new buildings to the introduction of new features, however small, on existing buildings. Development within the setting of the conservation area (within, views into and out of) should also be carefully managed, as it has the potential to detract from its character and appearance.
- 9.10 In summary, any development within the conservation area should seek to:
- Preserve its historic features;
  - Enhance, where possible, its special interest;
  - Contribute positively to its established character; and
  - Be of high quality.

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<sup>11</sup> Further information on the Council's Article 4 directions is available at <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-permission-and-applications/article-4-directions-and-planning-permission/>.



### **Implementation and Monitoring**

- 9.11 Progress on the implementation of the Management Plan and the extent to which planning policies in the Local Plan are complied with or effective in protecting the character and appearance of the conservation area will be monitored through the Council's annual Authority Monitoring Report.
- 9.12 Such assessments can be used to review and, if necessary, modify the planning policies as part of the five-year review of the Local Plan. The assessments can also be used to review and, if necessary, modify this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

## **Appendix. Conservation Area Boundary Amendments**

- A1 Conservation areas are a heritage designation guided by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Act requires local planning authorities to identify ‘areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. It also places a duty upon local planning authorities ‘to review’ their conservation areas ‘from time to time’.<sup>12</sup>
- A2 As part of the last review of the conservation area, the Council consulted on a draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan in 2023. Some people who responded to the consultation suggested that Rowhill School and an area to the north of the conservation area, comprising Princes Gardens and the two 1930s former cinema buildings, should be included within the conservation area. The Council agreed that the school and the area to the north have historic and architectural interest and warranted inclusion within the conservation area. Upon adoption of this document, the conservation area was extended to include these two areas, and a number of additional minor adjustments were also made to the conservation area boundary. The following section summarises why the school and the area to the north were considered appropriate for inclusion within the conservation area and describes the minor adjustments to the conservation area boundary in more detail. The map below (Figure 3) also depicts the conservation area boundary amendments.

### **Rowhill School**

- A3 Located on York Road, Rowhill School, the former West End Infant School, is an attractive Victorian building and is locally listed. Built in 1898 by the Aldershot School Board, but with later additions, and still in its original use, the building shares a common palette of materials, style and form with the wider conservation area and is of historic interest as a school built in response to the 1870 Education Act. The building also has a connection with the West End Centre, the former West End Junior School, which was built further to the east on Queens Road a few years earlier.

### **Gardens and Cinemas**

- A4 Located to the north of the conservation area adjacent to the commercial sub-area (Sub-Area 3), this area (Sub-Area 4) is occupied by Princes Gardens and two large 1930s buildings, both of which were formerly in cinema use (the Ritz and the Empire) and are locally listed.

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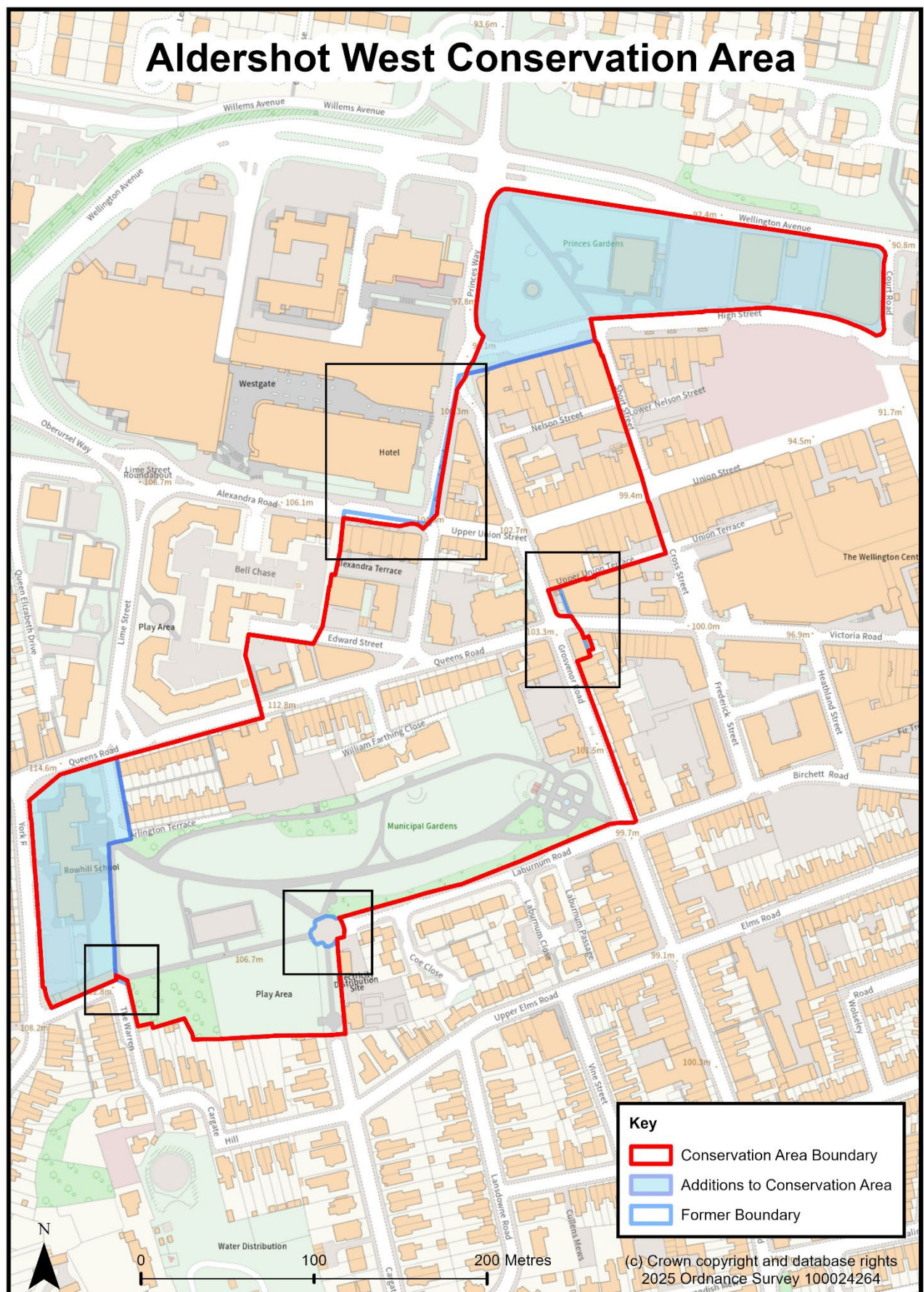
<sup>12</sup> Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; s. 69(1), s69(2).

- A5 Although parts of the area have seen the introduction of unsympathetic development over the last few decades, with the presence of a hand car wash, a modern GP surgery building and a surface car park, the area as a whole is of local historic interest. The gardens were considered worthy of inclusion within the conservation area as they form a commemorative open space which unites the civilian and army populations of Aldershot, and the space has historic associations with the Royal Engineers. The Empire and Ritz are also landmark-quality buildings, both by design and by architect. Despite their external appearance having declined in recent years, both buildings retain their architectural form and features and reflect the cinema-going habits of the 1930s.

#### **Minor Boundary Adjustments**

- A6 Following the review of the conservation area, a number of slight adjustments to the boundary were made to realign it with property and highways extents. A reflection of minor building extensions which had taken place since the last review of the conservation area in 1989, the conservation area boundary on Grosvenor Road to the east had previously cut through 27 Grosvenor Road and a small part of 23 Grosvenor Road, the majority of which was located outside the conservation area. The boundary was therefore realigned to include all of 27 Grosvenor Road and to remove the entirety of 23 Grosvenor Road from the conservation area. A small adjustment was also made to the western boundary on Barrack Road and to the north-western boundary on Alexandra Road to align the boundary with the pavement. Further boundary adjustments included small re-alignments to the pavement and paths within the Municipal Gardens. These changes ensure that the position of the conservation area boundary is more easily defined and identified on the ground and are consistent with Historic England advice on the location of conservation area boundaries.

Figure 3: Map of Boundary Changes







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June 2025