

Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document

Adopted Document

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Oadby & Wigston
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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1. Introduction

Definition of a Conservation Area

- 1.1 Conservation Areas are defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 as *'an area which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'*. When considering the designation of conservation areas, the National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities must ensure that an area justifies such status and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest. Conservation Area designation recognises the unique quality of an area as a whole.
- 1.2 The character of a Conservation Area is often the product of various elements such as the mixture and style of buildings, the extent and form of open spaces and other natural elements such as trees and hedges.
- 1.3 When a conservation area is designated, it increases the Council's preservation controls, with planning applications judged by their impact on the character and appearance of the area. Greater controls over the demolition of buildings and structures are imposed, whilst the rights which owners have to do works to their properties without planning permission (known as 'permitted development rights') is reduced or can be taken away. Stricter controls are also exercised over the design of new buildings, and owners must give the Council six weeks' notice of their intention to carry out works to trees. Planning applications affecting a Conservation Area must be advertised on site and in the local press to give people opportunity to comment.

Planning Policy Context

- 1.4 This section sets out the relevant national and local planning guidance which relate to this Supplementary Planning Document.
- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework makes the following statements regarding Conservation Areas:

'When considering the designation of Conservation areas, Local Planning Authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.'

'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.'

'Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Sites will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Sites should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than

substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Sites as a whole.'

- 1.6 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), in its definition of a conservation area, is consistent with that set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990. NPPG states that a conservation area is an area *'which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'*.
- 1.7 The Council's Local Plan sets out a specific local policy relating to development within conservation areas, Policy 41 Development in Conservation Areas. This document will supplement Policy 41. In addition to Policy 41 the Local Plan sets out number of other policies that could also influence development within conservation areas. The relevant policies are as follows:
- Policy 6: High Quality Design and Materials.
 - Policy 10: Public Realm.
 - Policy 11: Housing Choices.
 - Policy 15; Urban Infill Development.
 - Policy 32: Shop Fronts.
 - Policy 33: Security Shutters.
 - Policy 40: Culture and Historic Environment Assets.
 - Policy 44: Landscape and Character.
- 1.8 Conservation Area Appraisals including Development Control Guidance have been produced for each of the Borough's nine Conservation Areas. The Development Control Guidance statements have been brought together within this Supplementary Planning Document. The relevant Conservation Area Appraisal must be read in conjunction with this Supplementary Planning Document.

Aims of the Supplementary Planning Document

- 1.9 The objectives of the Supplementary Planning Document are as follows:
- To assess and define opportunities and threats within the Conservation Areas; and
 - To provide policy guidance to ensure that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will be maintained through the effective management of change and that those opportunities to enhance the character and appearance are maximised.

Structure of document

- 1.10 Part A of the document sets out generic development control guidance which applies to all Conservation Areas within the Borough.
- 1.11 Each Conservation Area has its own individual and unique character; therefore Part B sets out management tools relating specifically to each Conservation Area so that proposals can be considered against this guidance.

- 1.12 Once adopted this Supplementary Planning Document will supersede any existing related Development Control Guidance documents.

Part A

General Conservation Area Guidance

2. Planning submissions in a conservation area

Outline planning submissions

- 2.1 Outline submissions for development within a Conservation Area will not be accepted unless they contain sufficient supporting information by which the impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area can be judged.
- 2.2 On major development sites this may include a masterplan supported by detailed design codes or statements to demonstrate the form which new buildings will take.

Full planning submissions

- 2.3 As required by the nation Planning Policy Framework, these will need to include sufficient detail by which the full impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the area can be judged. This will need to include consideration of the issues raised in the accompanying Conservation Area Appraisals (especially the 'Key Characteristics' Section) and a Design and Access Statement which clearly sets out how the proposal is felt to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Listed Building consent

- 2.4 This is required for any works which would affect the character as a building of special architectural or historic interest of the interior or exterior of any Listed Building and any building constructed before 1 July 1948 which stands within its curtilage. Applications must include a statement which demonstrates an understanding of the aspects of the building to be affected, describes why the work is needed, explains why any alternative options were discounted and considers how the damage to any historic fabric will be minimised.
- 2.6 Where a building is to be replaced by a new structure, consideration of how the building will contribute to the character and appearance of the area will need to be included in the Design and Access Statement which accompanies any planning submission.

3. Demolition in a conservation area

- 3.1 Buildings situated within a Conservation Area, and / or buildings that are nationally Listed (including their outbuildings and lodges) and / or buildings that are Locally Listed have a general presumption in favour of retention and preservation. Local Plan Policy 41 Development in Conservation Areas gives further information and policy guidance relating to demolition in Conservation Areas.
- 3.2 The demolition of such buildings will only be approved where proposals conform to relevant policies set out within the Council's Local Plan.
- 3.3 The demolition of unsympathetic extensions to buildings will be approved provided that the intention is to return the building to its original state, or where any replacement extension will better respect the special architectural or historic interest of the building.
- 3.4 The demolition of other buildings (and boundary walls over 1 metre high fronting public highways) will be approved where proposals conform to relevant policies set out within the Council's Local Plan.

4. Alterations and extensions within a conservation area

4.1 Alterations and extensions should normally be confined to the rear or least important elevations unless the result would sustain or improve the architectural character of the building in its setting. Planning permission will be granted for proposals which:

- respect the prominent building line;
- do not destroy symmetry of balanced elevations or groups;
- do not lead to terracing (excluding South Wigston Conservation Area and other areas where terracing is the prevalent feature);
- do not interfere with key architectural features of the composition;
- are subordinate and appropriate to the form of the main building and either of the same materials as the main building or provide an appropriate contrast;
- serve to reinstate missing traditional features, such as doors, windows, front porches and other decorative features;
- use traditional and, where appropriate, reclaimed or recycled building materials; and
- explore the opportunity to implement energy efficiency measures.

4.2 Specific guidance on alterations and extensions is provided within this document.

5. Works to Listed buildings

- 5.1 Works which affect the special architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building require Listed Building Consent. This applies to works to the main building, any outbuildings or boundaries (built before 1 July 1948) and the interior of any building. The acceptability of works to Listed Buildings is governed by relevant local and national planning policy.
- 5.2 Additional guidance is provided within this document.

6. Works to Locally Listed buildings

- 6.1 The buildings identified as Locally Listed Buildings in the Councils Local Plan make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Borough, (or area in which they are situated). In order to protect these properties and their boundaries from unsympathetic alterations, consideration will be given to making Directions under, Article 4.
- 6.2 'Article 4 Directions' effectively remove a householders permitted development rights. The types of development which might be controlled would include but is not limited to:
- painting, cladding or rendering of building facades;
 - insertion or replacement of doors and windows;
 - removal or replacement of boundary walls and fences; and
 - alteration of roof profiles and replacement of roofing materials.

7. Proposals affecting the setting of a conservation area

- 7.1 Development will not be permitted which, although not within the Conservation Area, will have an adverse effect upon the area's special character or appearance, including intruding into any significant vista or view into, out of, within or across the area which is identified as being of significance.
- 7.2 Any future development of sites adjacent to a conservation area should have special regard to the special character identified within the accompanying conservation area appraisal. Particular attention should be given to the design, layout and massing of new buildings their relationship to the Conservation Area, the impact on car parking and landscape proposals.

Part B

Conservation Area Specific Guidance

8. All Saints Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 8.1 The Wigston All Saints Conservation Area was first designated in 1977. Changes were made to the Conservation Area Boundary in January 2007 following a Conservation Area Appraisal. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance was updated in September 2018 and must be read in conjunction with this Guidance.

Overview of the area

- 8.2 This area formed the southern core of Wigston Magna village and includes some of the most historically and architecturally significant buildings in the Borough. The survival of these traditional properties in this area provides an indication of the original character of the village of Wigston Magna before it became an urban town.
- 8.3 This southern core is centred around the Church of All Saints which formed one of the 'Two Steeples' of 'Wigston Magna District of Two- Steeples' as the settlement came to be known by 1529. It is very much the focal point of the Conservation Area and is an important local feature.
- 8.4 Newgate End retains a village like feel with its attractive group of older vernacular properties. This contrasts with the more mixed development of mostly later nineteenth or twentieth century development that has occurred along Moat Street and Bushloe End.
- 8.5 It is a predominantly residential area, but fragments of Wigston's hosiery industry remain in Bushloe End and Moat Street with the survival of framework knitter's buildings and workshops. The Framework Knitters Museum in Bushloe End is an important local attraction.
- 8.6 The area is located at the south-western corner of the old rectangular village centre that contains 'The Lanes' a system of footpaths that connects the two cores of the original village of Wigston Magna.

Protection of open spaces

- 8.7 The area is focused on the junction of Newgate End and Moat Street where the largely fourteenth century All Saints Church (Grade I) forms a local feature. The quiet back water of Newgate End, with its older vernacular brick properties, some of which retain their large curtilages, gives some indication of the original character of the village. However, much of the frontage to Moat Street and Bushloe End which would once have displayed a similar character has been infilled during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The curtilage of the Manor House extends westwards to Launceston Road where it forms part of the western boundary of the Conservation Area. The survival of this orchard together with the substantial trees which have been retained around the more modern building of the Menphys Centre and Pochin's Close contributes to the semi-rural character of the Conservation Area as seen from Launceston Road and this area forms a significant urban open space.

- The Council will resist proposals for the development of the area of orchard adjoining the Manor House.

8.8 Numbers 42-44 Bushloe End are Grade II* listed buildings. The eighteenth century cottage and the framework knitting workshop to the rear were occupied by a Master Hosier and illustrate the character of Wigston's industrial past. The buildings and their contents, which have survived unchanged since before the First World War, are now preserved as the Framework Knitter's Museum.

- The Council will seek to enhance the setting of the Framework Knitters Museum. Development which would detract from the special character and the setting of the Grade II* Listed Buildings will not be permitted.

8.9 Gas Lane has an informal and rural feel which is created by the combination of hedges and trees which enclose it, and the unmetalled surface of the lane itself. It is important that this 'rural' feel is retained.

- The Council will work with and ensure that the Leicestershire County Council Highways Authority and other statutory undertakers utilise appropriate surfacing materials in the area.

The design of new buildings

8.10 There are very few potential development sites in the Conservation Area. The remaining possible sites include, the Menphys Centre, Birkett House and the rear of the British Legion building. Proposals for the development within the curtilage of the Manor House and number 10 Newgate End or on the corner green space on Bushloe End and Launceston Road will not be permitted.

8.11 To be acceptable, the design of any new building will need to respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:

- being of an appropriate mass, form and scale to complement the mainly two storey residential properties;
- respecting any well-defined building lines;
- having interesting roof forms and producing an interesting skyline silhouette;
- using materials which either reflect those found on the traditional buildings in the area or produce an acceptable and exciting contrast;
- respecting prevalent architectural detailing such as bay windows, window and door surrounds and decorative eaves and responding to the differences in detailing between terraces where a development covers more than one street;
- creating positive street corners with active frontages on all elevations; and
- providing a Design and Access Statement as part of a Planning Submission which sets out the rationale behind the design of the buildings.

8.12 Infill development will need to comply to all relevant planning policy and should respond to the prevailing local character and quality of the surrounding townscape. The design of any proposed infill development should respond to:

- established building and boundary lines and the local scale of development;
- prevailing overall heights, storey heights and the massing of adjacent buildings;

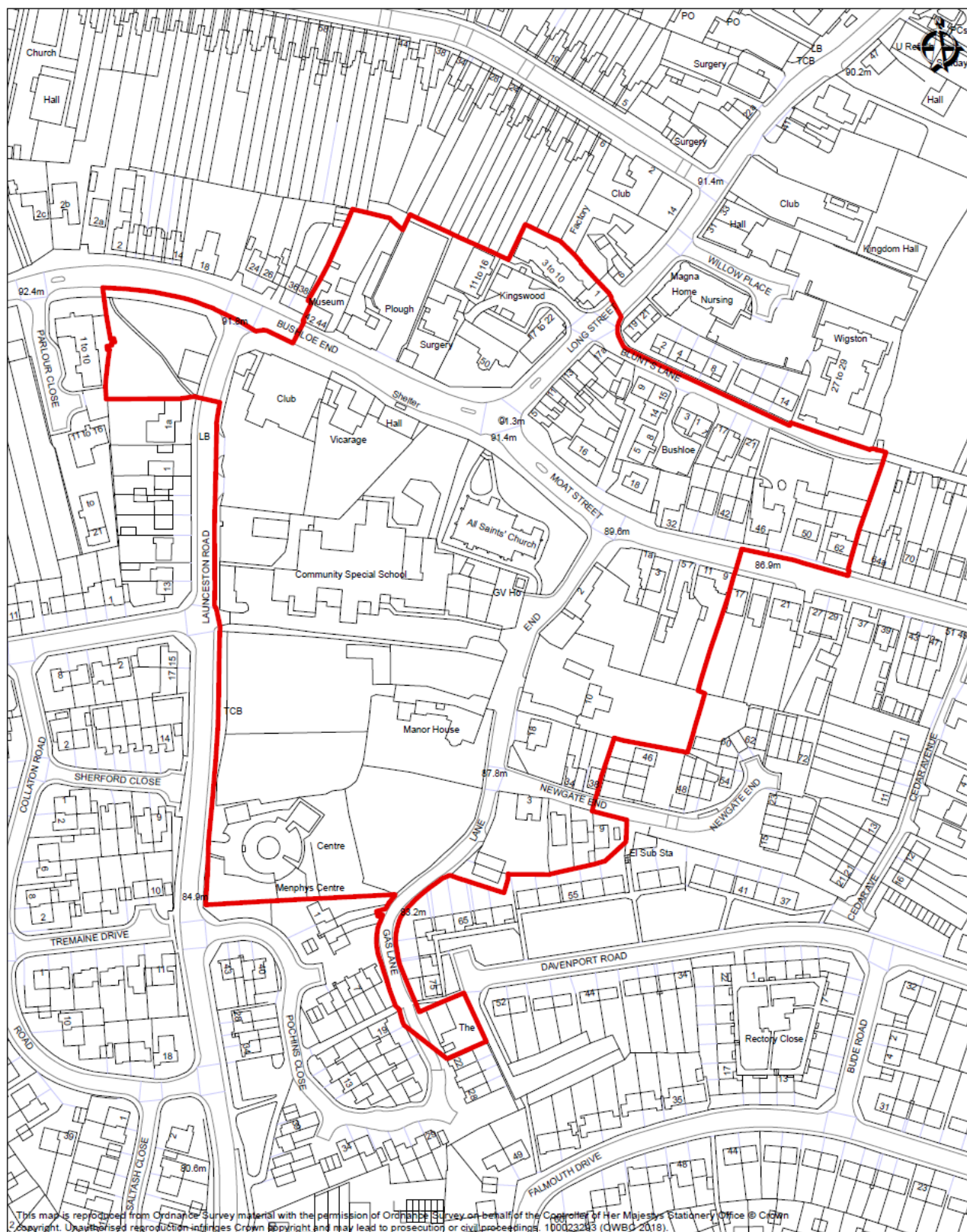
- characteristic frontage or plot widths;
- roof profiles and silhouettes of adjoining buildings;
- colour, type, source and texture of facing, roofing and paving materials;
- distinctive forms or architectural detailing prevalent in the immediate area;
- average dwelling size and net residential densities; and
- existence of set piece or otherwise unified architectural compositions or significant building groups.

8.13 High standards of energy efficiency will also be encouraged in new buildings and the possibility of on-site generation of energy from renewable sources should be explored. The visual impacts on the Conservation Area, however, must be carefully considered and any energy efficiency/generation measures must not adversely affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Enhancement opportunities

- 8.14 The removal of on street parking bays from the Newgate End entrance to Birkett Head School would vastly improve the general setting of All Saints Church.
- 8.15 The single storey wing of the British Legion complex on the corner of Bushloe End and Launceston Road is a weak structure and its improvement would be encouraged. Redevelopment of this wing in a style more sympathetic to the existing Georgian building would dramatically enhance the corner. The car park to the rear could also be enhanced through planting and screening schemes that would minimise the impact to the relevant streetscapes and would complement the attractive green spaces on the opposite side of the road. Improvement of the Georgian building façade would be encouraged.
- 8.16 Similarly the parking and garden areas to the two public houses, The Plough and The Old Crown, could be improved either by further hard landscaping and / or the addition of soft landscaping.
- 8.17 The pavements along Newgate End are attractively edged with historic stone. However the pavement surfacing consists of tarmac which has been repeatedly patched. This adds a distinctively urban element to an area that has an historic rural feel. Resurfacing the pavements with a more appropriate material such as a bonded gravel would do much to improve the public realm in the area.
- 8.18 Although Gas Lanes informal and rural character is derived from its un-adopted feel, its unmetalled surface is liable to flooding and has a rather untidy appearance. Appropriate resurfacing works in an informal material would not only improve the appearance but would also improve the functionality of the lane.
- 8.19 The greenspace on the corner of Bushloe End and Launceston Road adds character to the area. However, the seating area on the Launceston Road side could be improved. This could be improved with refurbishing the benches or new benches and the addition of some planters.
- 8.20 The Borough Council may seek to use 'Article 4 Directions' in order to retain traditional detailing on the exterior of non-listed buildings within the conservation area boundaries where such detail has not already been lost.

ALL SAINTS CONSERVATION AREA



9. London Road and Saint Peters Church Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 9.1 The London Road and Saint Peters Church Conservation Area was first designated in 1988. Changes were made to the Conservation Area Boundary in March 2007 following a Conservation Area Appraisal. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance was updated in September 2018 and must be read in conjunction with this Guidance.

Overview of the area

- 9.2 The area retains some of its village character with a mixture of uses preserving the appearance of its organic growth. The area is centred on the oldest remaining part of Oadby around St Peter's Church and stretches along London Road.
- 9.3 The linear character of the Conservation Area reflects the development of the original settlement along the road between Leicester and London with the village green to the southeast of St Peter's Church. Agriculture formed the basis of life in the village which was consequently surrounded by fields.
- 9.4 There is great variety in scale between buildings and as a result, the roofscape provides interest to views in and out of, and within the Conservation Area. Although most properties sit on the back of the footpath, the juxtaposition of scales adds diversity to the street scene. Part of the Conservation Area now comprises a Local Centre.
- 9.5 There are a handful of listed buildings scattered within the Conservation Area. These tend to be 2 storey houses which are grander than the other terraced properties in the area. The exception is the small row of cottages on London Road which is a surviving example of the type of dwelling in which artisans would have lived. There are also a number of Locally Listed Buildings.
- 9.6 The area is well represented with a selection of Baptist related buildings, the most prominent being the striking Baptist Church in London Road.
- 9.7 The village green has long since disappeared with the redevelopment of the village as its size and nature has become much more urban. The only clue to its existence is the orientation of two large houses, The Hermitage and The Nook, both of which used to overlook the green. Today the area is merely a car park and the area to the west of it was redeveloped in the twentieth century.
- 9.8 The key public green space in today's Oadby is the former driveway of The Elms, locally known as 'Chicken Alley'. This is now a public footpath which, for much of its length, is lined by vegetation and trees. The north-south leg, in particular, contains some of the most important trees in the area and contributes to the verdant southern part of the Conservation Area.
- 9.9 Saint Peter's Church is very much the centre point of the 'village' as it is located at the junction of the London and Wigston Roads and would have at one point

overlooked the village green. Its steeple is prominent in long views and the building itself forms a local landmark.

The design of new buildings

- 9.10 Within the London Road and Saint Peter's Conservation Area, new development or redevelopment schemes should be well related to the context of adjoining buildings and should preserve the mix of uses and range of building styles in order to retain the form and scale of the former village street scene.
- 9.11 The London Road and Saint Peter's Conservation Area Appraisal describes Oadby's 'grain', i.e. how the existing buildings relate to the street. The relevant Conservation Area Appraisal, 'Key Characteristics' summarises information such as building heights and line, materials, detailing, etc. Paying particular attention to the street in which the new building(s) will sit will establish appropriate design principles and ensure that new buildings will respect Oadby's existing character.
- 9.12 In order to be acceptable, the design of any new building will, therefore, need to:
- be of an appropriate mass and scale to maintain consistency of, or juxtaposition of, scales and to avoid dominating the smaller residential properties;
 - be of an appropriate form to sit comfortably with the mix of residential and commercial styles of the buildings in the area;
 - have pitched roof forms or produce an interesting skyline silhouette;
 - respect the well-defined building line and plot position;
 - use materials and detailing which follow on from the design principles which influenced the basic form of the building, i.e. which either reflect those found on traditional buildings in the area or, as part of a very high quality design approach, produce a successful contrast; and
 - provide a Design and Access Statement as part of a planning application which sets out the rationale behind the design of the building.

Change of use

- 9.13 Appropriate redevelopment and / or changes of use of existing premises to retail or commercial uses should take into account:
- the appearance of the building, which should be maintained without disfiguring extensions and alterations;
 - the survival of any elements of an original or appropriate shopfront which should be retained unless completely beyond repair;
 - the effect on the character of the street scene which should not be unduly altered;
 - the potential for restoring any important 'lost', altered or dilapidated architectural details;
 - satisfactory vehicular access, parking and servicing arrangements being provided to ensure highway safety is not jeopardised; and
 - the need to ensure that development proposals would not have any detrimental effects on the amenities of any nearby residential properties.

- 9.14 The change of use of retail properties to non-retail uses will not normally be permitted, particularly where it would result in an over-representation of non-retail uses in a length of shopping frontage. All development proposals would need to conform to relevant planning policy.
- 9.15 Where retail uses remain viable on only the ground floors of properties, 'Living over the Shop' will be actively encouraged to bring vacant upper floors back into use and generate activity at different times of the day. Such uses will be supported provided that:
- appropriate noise insulation between the living accommodation and the shop below can be provided;
 - where the living accommodation is to be accessed separately from the shop, an appropriate separate entrance can be provided without damaging the character of the building and any original or appropriately designed shop front; and
 - adequate waste storage and car and cycle parking can be provided for the occupants.
- 9.16 Planning permission for proposals, such as restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments or hot food takeaways (Use Classes A3, A4 and A5 respectively) will only be approved when it conforms to relevant planning policy and it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm to residential amenity or local environmental quality as a result of smells, noise, increased late-night activity and disturbance, or increased parking and traffic. Adequate parking must be provided and considered as part of the overall design. Unsightly plant such as air conditioning units, ducting, flues, etc. should be appropriately screened.

Shop fronts, signage, blinds and security measures

- 9.17 In keeping with its village origins and continuing character, the area has a variety of small shop units along London Road. These now comprise part of a Local Centre.
- 9.18 Shop fronts. Several good quality late nineteenth century and early twentieth century shop fronts survive in London Road. Planning Permission will not be approved to remove such shop fronts or any elements of them unless they are beyond repair.
- 9.19 Where some elements of an original shop front survive, the existing elements should be retained and used as the basis for the restoration of the original frontage or incorporated into an appropriate new shop front design. Removal of original features will only be permitted if they are completely beyond repair or are incapable of being successfully incorporated into a new shop front.
- 9.20 The replacement of inappropriate shop fronts will be encouraged provided that the replacement respects the character of the building, adjacent buildings if part of a group or terrace or the area as a whole. To be acceptable, new designs should:
- have a clear structural logic with a clearly defined frame of pilasters, fascia and, where appropriate, stall risers;
 - relate to the character and proportions of the original building;
 - maintain or improve the ease of access to the building for those with disabilities;
 - be of appropriate materials;

- not stretch across the frontage of more than one building; and
- provide an appropriately designed separate access where separate living accommodation is to be provided within the upper storeys.

9.21 Where change of use is sought for the conversion of a shop to residential use and elements of an historical shop front survive, these will be retained in any conversion unless they are completely beyond repair.

9.22 Signage. Several buildings in Oadby have been disfigured by inappropriate and clumsy signage. In future, to be acceptable, new signage must:

- not obliterate, hide or destroy the proportions of the building or any of its architectural features;
- have lettering of appropriate size, materials and font type for the building;
- be clear and simple to read and not incorporate garish or unsuitable colours; and
- have only one appropriately designed and located hanging sign for each shop frontage.

9.23 Illumination. Advertisement Consent is required for most forms of illuminated signage in the Conservation Area. Clumsy, internally illuminated 'box' signs will not be permitted. Fascia or hanging signs should be of traditional design and externally illuminated where necessary. To be acceptable, illuminated signs must:

- have a discrete light source which does not interfere with the proportions of the building or frontage or damage any architectural features;
- not affect the amenity of nearby residential uses; and
- have a subdued and consistent light level.

9.24 Blinds and canopies. Blinds and canopies will only be permitted in the Conservation Area when there is a historical precedent and the existing blind box survives, where they can be accommodated without damaging the character of the building or shop frontage and will relate successfully to existing features and detailing of the building. Such blinds or canopies may need the consent of the Local Highways Authority if it overhangs a public footpath.

9.25 Shop front security. When designing a new shop front, consider the likely security needs of the occupier. It is much easier to design in suitable security measures at the outset than attempt to add them to existing frontages.

9.26 Solid external shutters will only be permitted in the Conservation Area where it can be clearly demonstrated that they are the only viable means of security to enable the shopkeeper to retain his livelihood. Even if the security need is demonstrated, an open removable mesh shutter should be considered before solid external shutters.

9.27 External shutters, of the solid or grille type, will only be permitted when they respect the features and proportions of the shop front, do not cover the pilasters and fascia and are of an appropriate colour and finish.

Car parking

9.28 There are several areas of car parking in Oadby which are poorly landscaped and dominate the setting of the surrounding buildings. The manner in which car parking is arranged has a fundamental effect on the quality of the townscape and its impact should be alleviated with appropriate landscaping. The following should be considered in any landscaping schemes:

- opportunities to screen vehicles with planting to integrate parking into the urban landscape;
- establishing direct footways connecting with nearby buildings;
- creating shared surface treatments, providing that pedestrian routes are clearly defined; and
- dividing up larger areas with tree planting and other soft landscaping.

Enhancement opportunities

9.29 A key enhancement opportunity within London Road and Saint Peters Conservation Area is the replacement of the less attractive buildings with more appropriately designed alternatives that reflect the character of the surrounding buildings. Such redevelopment should be in accordance with the accompanying Development Control Guidance document and any subsequent planning briefs which may be drawn up for certain sites.

9.30 The redevelopment of (or) better landscaping and screening of parking areas within the Conservation Area would greatly enhance the existing streetscape, as such areas are unattractive open spaces which contribute little to the townscape. The largest areas are the parking area between Nos. 62a and 64 London Road and the car park adjacent to the restaurant on New Street.

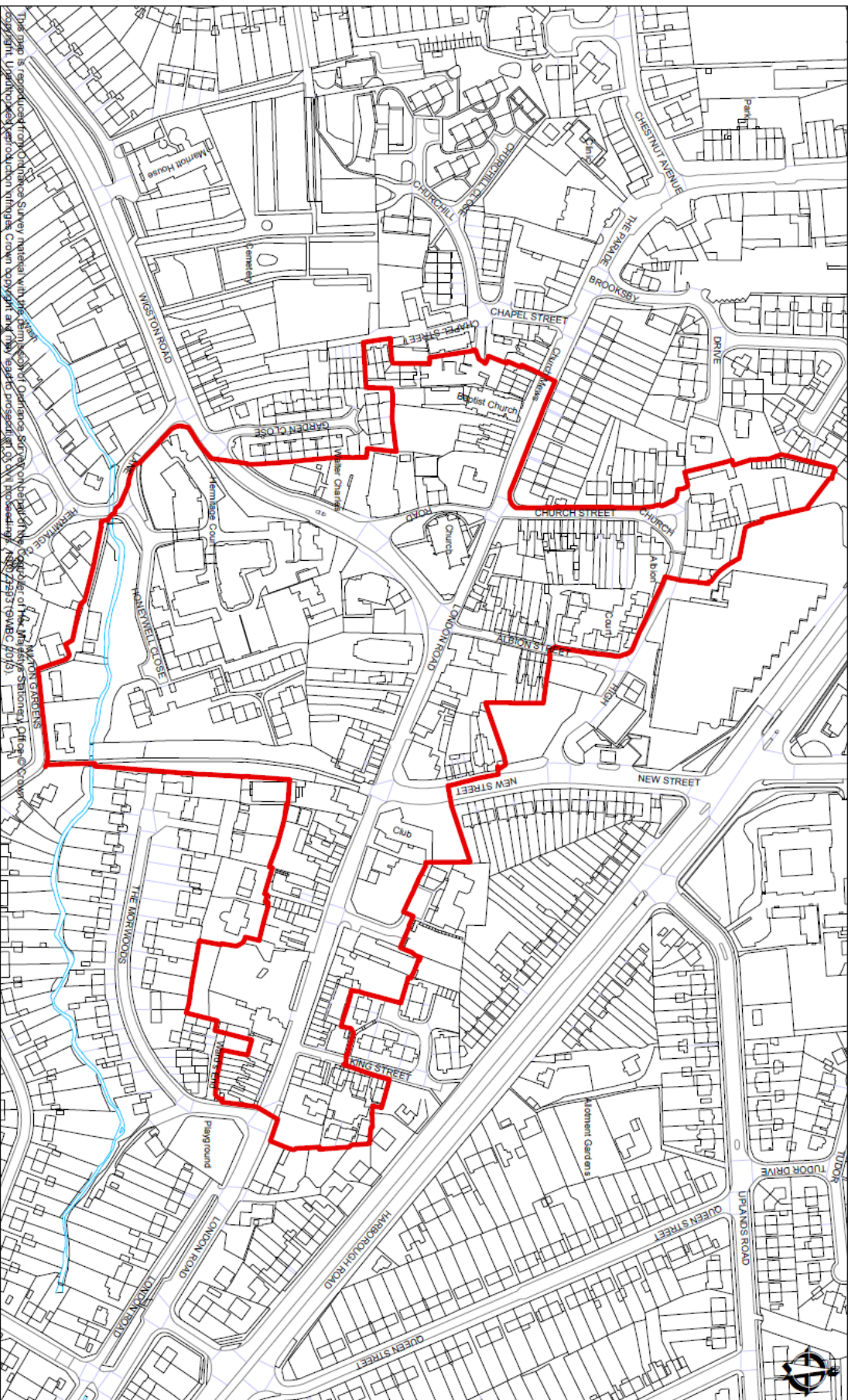
9.31 If the opportunity for replacement street-lighting in the Conservation Area arises, the Borough Council and the County Council will cooperate to ensure an appropriate style is chosen.

9.32 In some areas, particularly along London Road, the streetscape has become cluttered with street signage which detracts from the Conservation Area. Should the opportunity become available, it would be beneficial to rationalise the street signage.

9.33 The footpath along Lawyers Lane has been paved with a modern tarmac surfacing which has a rather urban feel. The use of a surfacing material that seeks to soften the appearance of the path, giving it a more rural appearance in keeping with the lane, would be encouraged.

9.34 The Borough Council may seek to use 'Article 4 Directions' in order to retain traditional detailing on the exterior of non-listed buildings within the conservation area boundaries where such detail has not already been lost.

LONDON ROAD / ST PETERS CONSERVATION AREA



10. Midland Cottages Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 10.1 The Midland Cottages Conservation Area was first designated in 1989. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance was updated in September 2018 and must be read in conjunction with this Guidance.

Overview of the area

- 10.2 The Midland Cottages Conservation Area is a small area containing a row of twenty former railway workers cottages together with the former Railway Hotel. The buildings were all built between 1871 and 1881 and are of virtually identical materials. Although the Railway Hotel is a much more imposing building, like the cottages it is of two storeys and sits on what was the road which crossed the railway line at a level crossing. The erection of a new road bridge in the first years of the twentieth century means that today the buildings sit at the bottom of the embankment carrying the new road.
- 10.3 The cottages and former hotel have considerable architectural and historic interest and have been Locally Listed, though the character of the former has been reduced in recent years due to incremental alterations made to individual properties. Whilst these could be considered minor in themselves, the cumulative effect has been to rob the terrace of its homogenous feel. The reinstatement of lost features and the removal of paint and cladding from the properties offer a great opportunity to restore the character of the terrace. The former hotel is remarkably well preserved and continues to serve local people as a public house.
- 10.4 The embankment effectively defines the southern boundary of the Conservation Area, whilst the railway line demarcates the western boundary. To the east are houses, whilst to the north stand modern houses and industrial concerns.
- 10.5 Not surprisingly, the setting is very urban and there is little greenery other than that which has colonised the railway line and embankment and the occasional garden tree. However the track in front of the cottages and the forecourt of the public house in particular offer great opportunities for enhancing the character of the area. Improvements to the railway land opposite the cottages and the embankment would also be a tremendous benefit to the setting and outlook of the cottages.

Control of minor alterations to the Midland Cottages

- 10.6 In addition to promoting the restoration of lost features of the cottages, it is important to ensure that features do not continue to be lost. Article 4 Directions could therefore be considered which would mean that Planning Permission could be required for the following types of work:
- cladding or painting the external walls including window surrounds and reveals;
 - replacing or altering external windows and doors;
 - alterations to the roof, including changing the roof covering, inserting dormers or rooflights;
 - removal or alteration of chimney stacks;

- the demolition or alteration of rear boundary walls;
- the erection of porches, canopies and window shutters; and
- the erection of satellite dishes.

10.7 The Borough Council will promote the reinstatement of lost features. This will include new windows to the original designs (3 over 3 sashes to the first floor window over the front door and plate glass sash windows elsewhere), a standardised front door design and the reinstatement of front door canopies to match that on numbers 17 and 18.

Rear extensions to the Midland Cottages

10.8 The backs of the cottages are very visible from the main Blaby Road and the replacement of the single storey pitched roofed service wings with flat roofed extensions has damaged the unified character of the terrace.

10.9 Applications for alterations to the rear wings will only be considered if they conform to a high quality and are in keeping with the areas historic look and feel.

Retention of public house

10.10 The public house is an important aspect of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area with its historical associations as a former hotel to the railway line. The change of use of the public house will be resisted unless it can be proved that the current use is economically unviable, as whilst the appearance of the building could be retained even if the use of the building changed, the historical associations of the former hotel to the railway line would still be lost.

10.11 If it can be evidenced that the use as a public house is not viable, conversion to a suitable new use in line with current Planning Policy will be considered provided that:

- some form of interpretation material which chronicles the previous use of the building and its associations with the railway is provided in a publicly accessible part of the building.
- the façade, appearance and the historic features of the building are retained and restoration work to improve the condition of these is carried out.
- improvements are made to the public realm and setting of the building which are in keeping with the building and its history.

Demolition and redevelopment

10.12 The demolition of any Locally Listed Building will not be approved unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the building is structurally unsound, it cannot continue in its current use and it cannot be converted to another acceptable use or there are major public benefits from demolition which would outweigh the architectural and historic interest of the building and its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Any new development on land within or which affects the setting of the Midland Cottages Conservation Area must:

- respect the scale of all the buildings within the area;

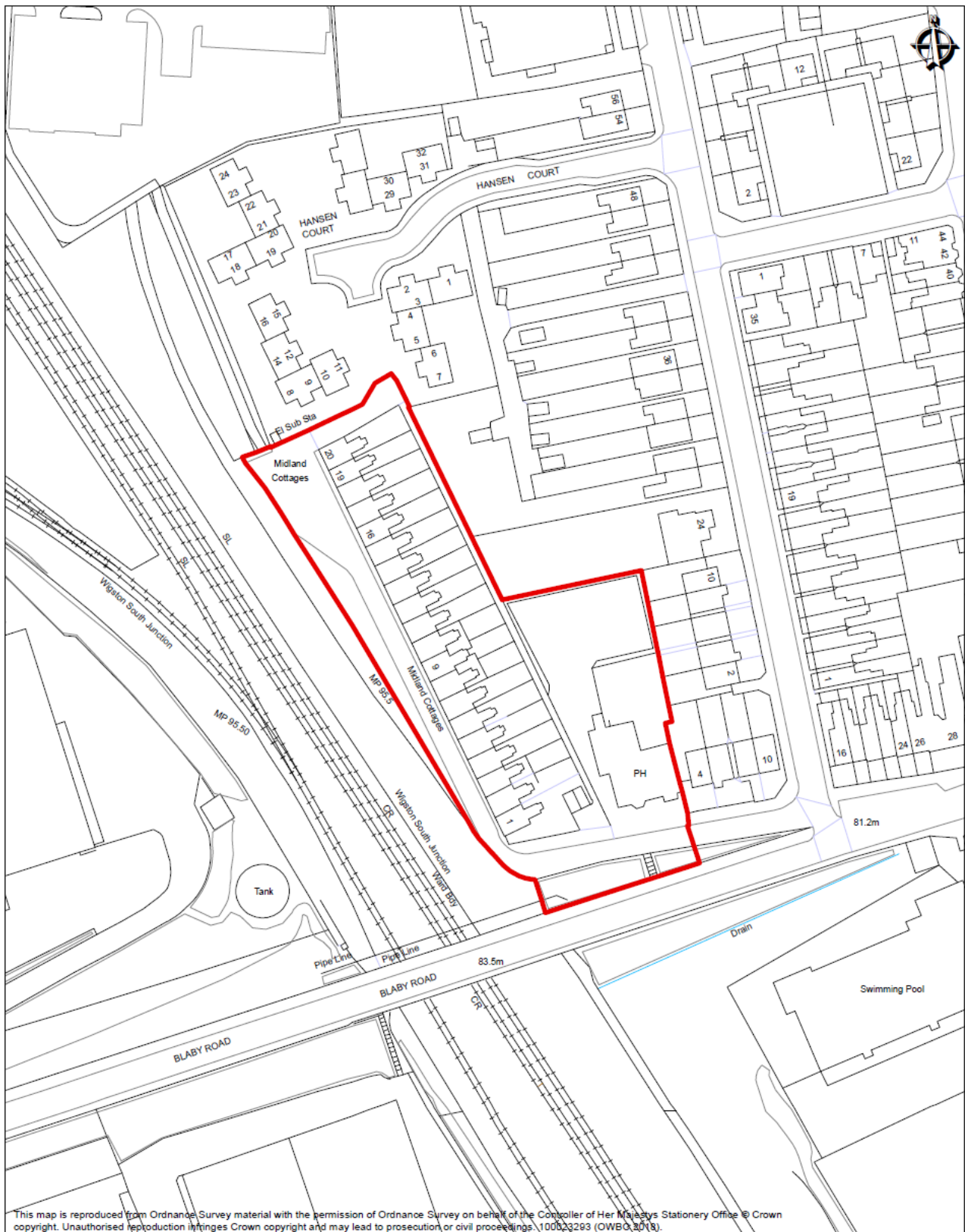
- be built either of matching materials to the existing buildings or provide a successful contrast with them;
- have window and door openings, bays, chimney stacks and other features positioned to produce a clear rhythm reflecting the character of existing buildings;
- directly address the street and have a strong vertical proportion;
- have appropriate architectural detailing to window and door heads, eaves, verges, gable ends etc;
- produce a simple silhouette with ridge lines broken only by chimney stacks; and
- have suitable boundary treatments.

Enhancement opportunities

- 10.13 The greatest opportunity for enhancement within this Conservation Area is the restoration of features that have been lost. Such will include; the careful removal of stone cladding, render and paintwork from building facades; the reinstatement of sash windows to the original patterns; and possibly the restoration of front door canopies. The adoption of 'Article 4 Directions' to prevent further loss of original features could be considered.
- 10.14 Poor quality rear extensions, which are apparent from Blaby Road, would be helped by a standardised homogenous design that would gradually improve the terraces. Such an issue is explored within the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance.
- 10.15 Repair to the brick wall, to the rear of the cottages is required, whilst a partial rebuild to the public house car park wall will also be needed. As well as this, a more appropriate alternative to replace the fence around No.1 would also be of enhancement.
- 10.16 Attempts should be made to persuade the railway company to paint the unattractive galvanised fence and improve planting, to reduce impacts. The grass verges between the fence and the cottages could also be planted to reduce the impact of the fence, thus significantly enhancing the setting of the cottages.
- 10.17 The garages built at the ends of the terraces are in very poor condition and lack the quality and detailing of the cottages and their replacement in more appropriate materials and with pitched roofs would significantly improve the character of the area.
- 10.18 The front apron of the public house would be significantly enhanced by repaving in historically appropriate materials such as setts or blue brick pavers.
- 10.19 The track to the western side of the road in front of the cottages could be resurfaced in bonded gravel or another appropriate finish with the footpath repaved with setts or blue brick pavers. Existing York stone kerb stones should be reused with any damaged lengths replaced with matching materials.
- 10.20 The improved maintenance of the embankment would significantly improve the outlook, particularly of the public house. The retaining wall in particular could be an attractive feature though it requires repair. The steps down the embankment that have been lost over time should be reinstated, however if they are not to be

replaced, the position of the steps should be marked by appropriate detailing in the retaining wall.

MIDLAND COTTAGES CONSERVATION AREA



11. North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters Cottages Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 11.1 The North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters Cottages Conservation Area was first designated in 1988. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance were updated in September 2018 and must be read in conjunction with this Guidance.
- 11.2 The land and properties within the Conservation Area are almost entirely in the boundary of the North Memorial Homes and the Framework Knitters Cottages. These organisations are both social housing providers and the properties are managed by Boards of Trustees.

Overview of the area

- 11.3 The Conservation Area comprises two sets of well-maintained 'open plan' almshouses which sit opposite each other east and west of Stoughton Drive. Although both were built in the early twentieth century of red brick with clay tiled roofs, both comprise homes set within attractive well-kept grounds and both are accessed from the road through private gateways, the character of the two groups is rather different.
- 11.4 The Framework Knitters Cottages are all single storey. They are mostly arranged around an open lawn and gardens however some directly face Stoughton Drive. More recently-built cottages stand to the south of the site and effectively create informal courts. The earliest cottages date from 1909 with the most recent built circa 2000. The general forms of the cottages are similar with hipped roofs and tile hung gables but there are considerable differences in detailing particularly between the earlier and more recent cottages. The cottages are built as pairs or small groups of three. Two communal buildings, Corah Hall and Corah House face each other across the open lawn. The former is part of the original foundation and is designed to be a feature building; the latter is modern and takes the general form of the cottages.
- 11.5 The North Memorial Homes are all two storey pairs some of which have been further split to form flats. They are quite formally arranged around the central gardens and are well screened from Stoughton Drive. All the houses were built in 1927 and at first sight are virtually identical. Closer inspection reveals that there are two predominant building types, with only one pair, which is effectively the focus of the main view east, being a slight variation. All the pairs have sweeping roofs with central chimney stacks, verandahs, gables (some hipped) and some have hipped roof dormers. The former Memorial Hall, which occupies a quite grand setting on the western boundary, is now leased to the Evangelical Church and is in a restrained Neo-Georgian style.
- 11.6 Both groups of houses, (North Memorial Homes and Framework Knitters Cottages), sit within attractive grounds mostly laid to lawn but with flower and shrub beds. The majority of mature trees in the Framework Knitters site are along the boundaries; the major exception being the Canadian Oak behind the main gate. Trees in the

North Memorial Homes site are especially prevalent to the west of the site, and on the east and south boundaries with some trees strategically placed within the gardens.

- 11.7 Cars are restricted to the area in front of the Evangelical Church on the North Memorial Homes site. This allows the majority of the gardens to be kept free from vehicles as all the houses have rear access lanes. Vehicles can drive around the edge of the gardens on the Framework Knitters site, though the car parking area is well screened and vehicles rarely interrupt the attractive setting of the cottages. The streetlights on the Knitters site are of the traditional lantern type and complement their setting. Although the lights on the North Memorial Homes site are modern, the columns are painted dark green and the style is not intrusive.
- 11.8 All of the North Memorial Homes are Locally Listed Buildings, as are those Framework Knitters properties built before 1925. There are Tree Preservation Orders in force in the Conservation Area.

Protection of open spaces

- 11.9 The spacious open plan nature of both the Framework Knitters Homes and North Memorial Homes and lack of private garden enclosures are an important element of the character of the conservation area. This open plan nature should be protected and development that would change this character would not be acceptable.

The design of new buildings

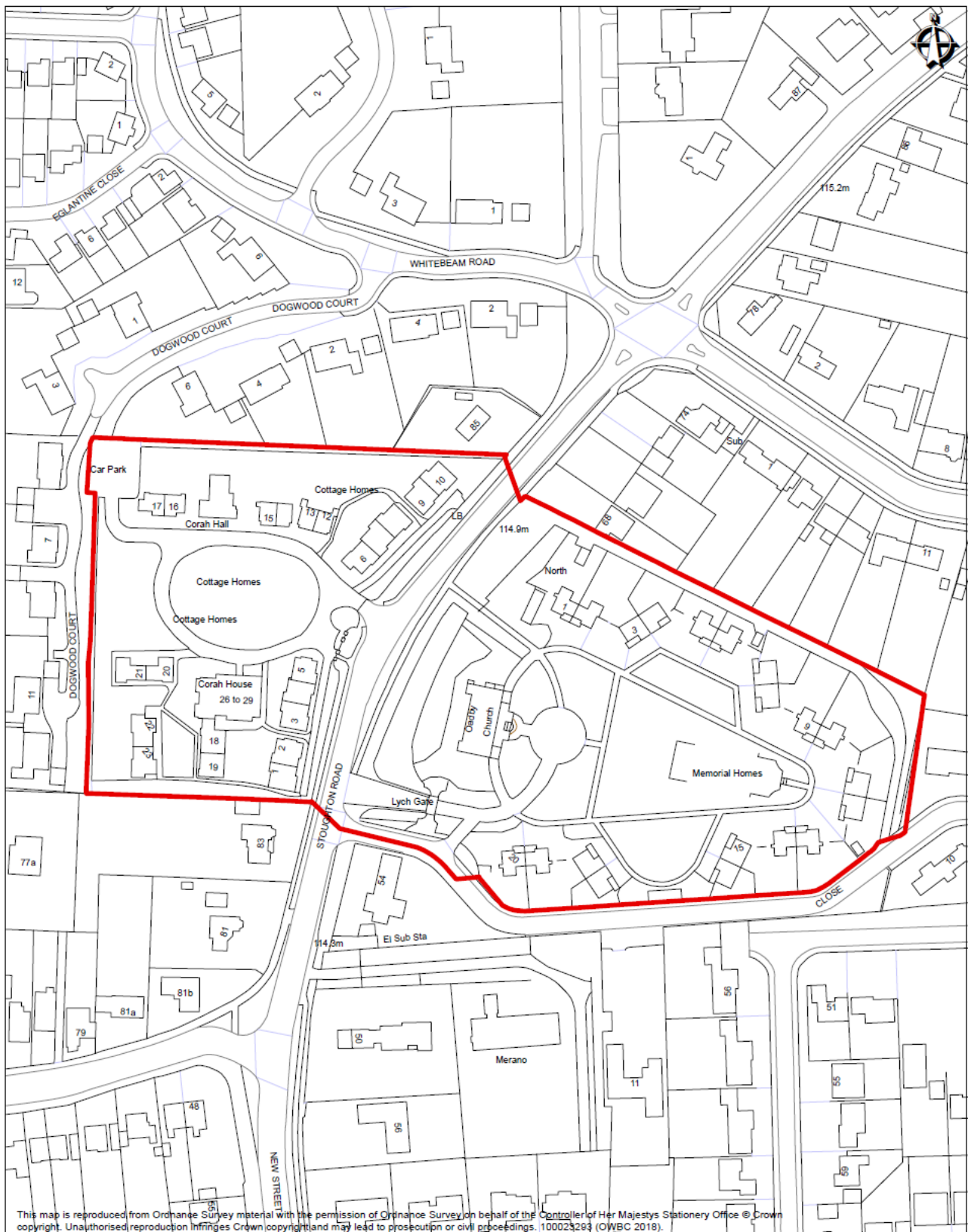
- 11.10 There are very few potential development sites within the Conservation Area and the Council will seek to protect the spacious open plan character. For any new development to be acceptable, the design of any new building will need to respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:-
- being of an appropriate mass, form and scale to complement residential properties, (single storey for Framework Knitters Homes and two storey for North Memorial Homes);
 - respecting any well-defined building lines;
 - having interesting roof forms and producing an interesting skyline Silhouette;
 - using materials which either reflect those found on the traditional buildings in the area or produce an acceptable and exciting contrast.
 - respecting prevalent architectural detailing such as bay windows, window and door surrounds and decorative eaves and responding to the differences in detailing between terraces where a development covers more than one street.
 - creating positive street corners with active frontages on all elevations.
 - providing a Design Statement as part of a Planning Application which sets out the rationale behind the design of the buildings.
- 11.11 Infill development will not be permitted as this would harm the spacious open plan nature of both sites.
- 11.12 High standards of energy efficiency will also be encouraged in new buildings and the possibility of on-site generation of energy from renewable sources could be explored. The visual impacts on the Conservation Area, however, must be carefully

considered and any energy efficiency/generation measures must not adversely affect the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Enhancement opportunities

- 11.13 Both sites within the Conservation Area are extremely attractive, therefore management to ensure that the essential character is maintained, rather than redevelopment, repair or enhancement is the key consideration.
- 11.14 The modern black-top surfacing to some of the paths within the Framework Knitters site has a rather urban appearance. Clearly, the surface needs to be smooth. However, if an aggregate or gravel could be bonded into the tarmac, this would soften the appearance of the paths whilst maintaining a trip-free surface. This has recently been completed within the North Memorial Homes site and has greatly improved the look of the paving and it is much more in keeping with the setting.
- 11.15 The street lighting in North Memorial Homes could be improved. Whilst the columns have been painted dark green and they are generally unobtrusive, they are modern in style and out of character. These could be replaced with something more traditional in style.

NORTH MEMORIAL / FRAMEWORK KNITTERS CONSERVATION AREA



12. Oadby Court Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 12.1 The Oadby Court Conservation Area was first designated in 1997. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance was updated in September 2018 and must be read in conjunction with this Guidance.

Overview of the area

- 12.2 Oadby Court is a very small Conservation Area which contains a large Victorian house and part of its original extensive grounds on an area on which five 'Modern Movement' style houses were built in 1933.
- 12.3 The 1930s houses (which give the Conservation Area its name) are the most visible of the buildings and despite considerable extensions and alterations maintain their cubed forms and white rendered walls. A number of fine and very mature trees surround the original Victorian house which was in use as an office for many years, but has now been converted to residential apartments. The trees add considerable value to the amenity of the area and the setting of both this house and the 1930s houses. A handful of similarly mature trees survive in the gardens of Oadby Court; the remnants of the tree screen which originally enclosed the south eastern corner of the Victorian property's extensive grounds.
- 12.4 The Oadby Court houses have lost some of their originally homogenous character. Although sufficient survives to allow them to be understood as a group, it is important that future alterations help restore the character rather than further eroding it.
- 12.5 The Victorian house (built as Oadby Hill and now called Brook's House) is a very attractive mid-nineteenth century villa and externally little altered. However, its setting has been significantly diminished due to the construction of Oadby Hill Drive, Granville Avenue and several other streets of twentieth century houses on land north east of the house. Part of the eastern and western tree belts survive and help buffer the building from the busy A6 road and the newer houses. Although the remaining garden area of the house is now mostly car parking, this does at least give the building some space around it.
- 12.6 Oadby Court is therefore a small enclave, well protected by mature trees and to some extent by the verge and planting left over following the realignment of the road in the late twentieth century.

Alterations and extensions of Oadby Court Houses

- 12.7 Although they are Locally Listed Buildings, the Oadby Court houses have all been altered and / or extended in some form. However, they do still retain character as a group. This is mostly because of the angular form of the buildings and their white painted render. The windows have been replaced with 'modern' windows, but have maintained the typical 1930s horizontal emphasis and provide a good representation of the original 'Crittall' patterns. Steps should be taken going forward to ensure that these window representations are maintained and that the render to the buildings remains white. This would help to maintain the character of the

buildings individually and as a group and not allowing it to be further eroded. The Borough Council will therefore consider the use of Article 4 Directions to control the following types of work:

- Repainting the external walls of the houses; and
- Replacing windows and doors.

12.8 Subject to conforming to all other relevant planning policy, extensions to the Oadby Court Houses will be permitted when they fulfil all of the following criteria:

- they maintain or restore the group character of the houses;
- they respect the angular form, proportions, materials and detailing of the original houses; and
- they preserve or enhance the setting of the houses and do not adversely affect any significant trees or hedges.

Alterations and extension of Brooks House, No. 81 Leicester Road

12.9 Brook's House is a Locally Listed Building. Any alterations which materially affect the external appearance of the building will require Planning Permission. Any alterations which would entail the loss of original architectural features will be resisted unless a convincing justification can be made that the feature is so badly damaged as to be beyond repair, or its removal or alteration will be to the long-term benefit of the building.

12.10 Subject to conforming to all other relevant planning policy, extensions to Brook House will be permitted if they fulfil the following criteria:

- they will not adversely affect significant elevations of the building;
- they will not destroy important architectural features or damage the proportions of the elevation;
- they will not bring about the loss, now, or in the future, of important trees or landscape features; and
- their design, materials and detailing will match or complement the design of the original building.

Change of use of Brooks House, No. 81 Leicester Road

12.11 Brooks House, No. 81 is currently used for residential apartments. The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential uses will not normally be permitted.

Development within the grounds of Brooks House, No. 81 Leicester Road

12.12 Subject to conforming to all other relevant planning policy, development within the grounds of Brook's House will be permitted when the following criteria are met:

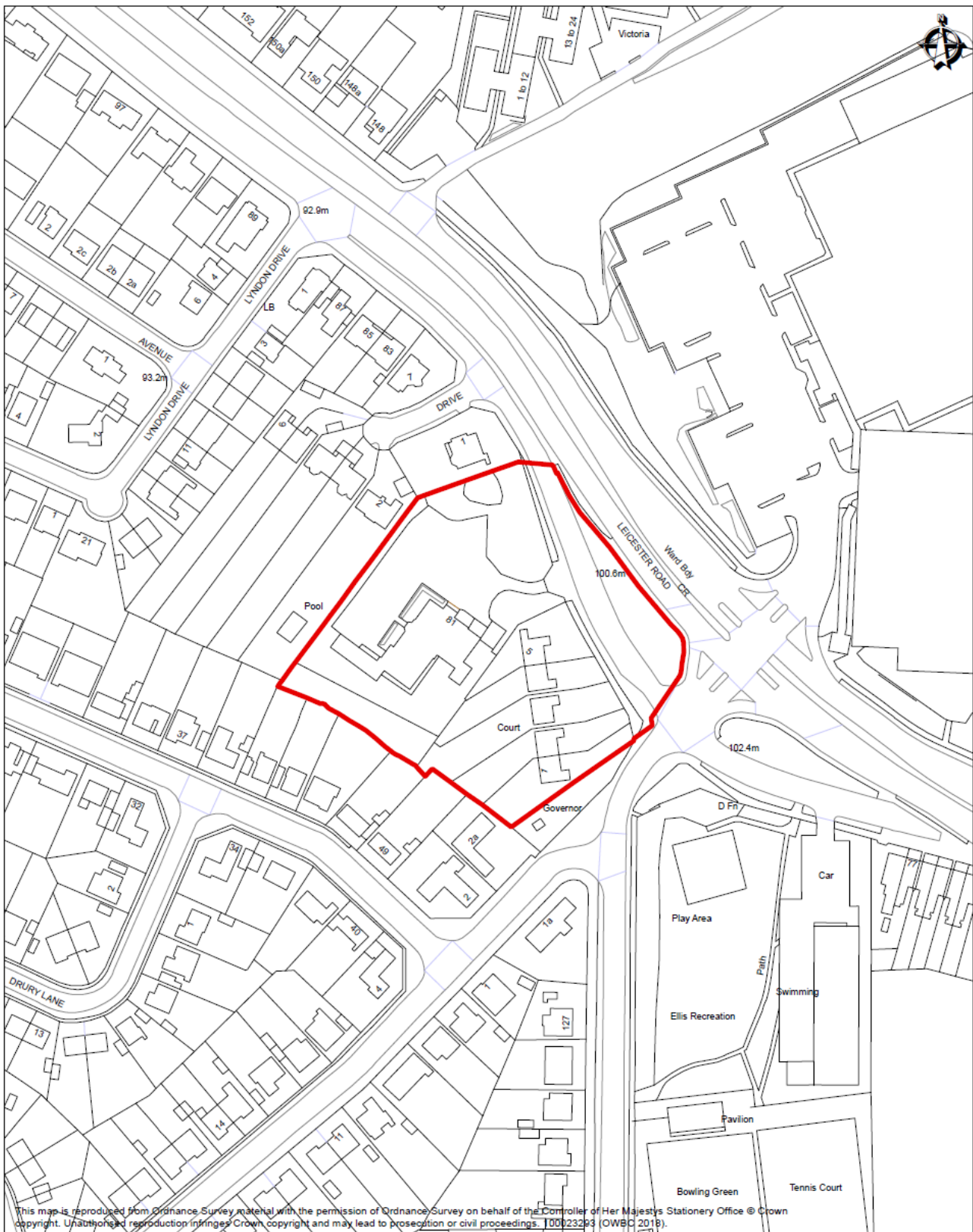
- the proposed development will not adversely affect the setting of Brook's House and will not interfere with key views of the principal elevations of that house;
- the design of any new buildings will respect or complement Brook's House in terms of scale and mass, form, materials and detailed design;

- Brook's House will retain an appropriate setting and amenity space and any new buildings will have adequate and suitably landscaped amenity space;
- the amount of car parking is not reduced;
- existing vehicle access is adequate, or can be modified without affecting the setting of the building or involving the loss of any important tree, boundary or hedge; and
- no important trees will be lost or unsuitably pruned either as a result of the change of use, any alterations or the likely future needs of occupiers of the building with regard to adequate lighting levels.

Enhancement opportunities

- 12.13 The principal enhancement opportunity relating to the Oadby Court houses would be the improved standardisation of the design in regards to extensions and windows.
- 12.14 The setting of Brooks House No. 81 Leicester Road would be considerably improved if some of the car parking could be broken up with some strategically placed trees or soft landscaping.

OADBY COURT CONSERVATION AREA



13. Oadby Hill Top and Meadowcourt Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 13.1 The Oadby Hill Top and Meadowcourt Conservation Area was first designated in 1987 with the comparatively much smaller area of Meadowcourt designated in the following year. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance was updated in September 2018 and must be read in conjunction with this Guidance.

Overview of the area

- 13.2 The Oadby Hill Top Conservation Area is an excellent example of an area developed for housing for the rich industrialists of a booming industrial town. Such people sought the space and fresh air which was in short supply in the town, often as a result of their own industrial concerns which manufactured bricks and machinery as well as hosiery and footwear. The availability of the land, mostly as a result of the sale of the Powys Keck estate, allowed the opportunity for the construction of large houses on the very large plots available.
- 13.3 The biggest plots were off Stoughton Drive South and to a lesser extent Glebe Road and Manor Road and it is on these roads that the finest houses, many of which are either nationally or Locally Listed, where the most impressive gardens can be found. The houses were built by the leading local architects, with the father and son combination of Stockdale and Shirley Harrison pre-eminent, and were constructed in fashionable Arts and Crafts styles. This style which had developed from the Victorian Gothic Revival allowed the use of elements from different periods of particularly vernacular architecture and gave scope for considerable freedom of expression for the owner and architect alike. Many of the earliest designs of the largest houses incorporate elements of Jacobethan architecture. This allowed the wealthy Leicester industrialists to build their own versions of the Elizabethan 'prodigy' houses as each sought to demonstrate his taste, wealth and standing in the town.
- 13.4 On the other streets, there are some equally impressive houses, though the plots tend to be smaller except where they were joined together. The houses show probably more variety than the larger houses and there are elements of Jacobethan, Vernacular-Revival, Art Nouveau and Neo-Georgian - the latter becoming particularly popular in the 1920s even for big houses such as Southmeade. The result is an area of exceptionally strong character. As well as this, after the Second World War, Leicester University began to purchase the larger properties in the area and use many of them for student accommodation, which has ensured that these important houses, now too large for individual occupancy or single families are continued to be enjoyed. The only discordant notes are struck by the occasional 1960s bungalow or house, or more particularly by the large student accommodation blocks.

Change of use

13.5 To residential uses. The change of use of single family houses to, halls of residence, boarding houses, or guest house, or for the provision of flats or other more intensive residential uses (including hospitals or nursing homes) will only be permitted, subject to conforming to all other relevant planning policy and where it can be demonstrated that:

- the amenity of adjoining residents will not be significantly affected;
- adequate car and cycle parking and refuse storage can be provided and suitably screened from public view;
- existing vehicle accesses are adequate, or appropriately sized accesses can be provided without affecting the setting of the building or involving the loss of any important tree, boundary or hedge;
- car parking can be accommodated without the need for large areas of hard standing.
- the appearance of the dwelling will be maintained without the need for disfiguring extensions or alterations;
- the setting of the building will not be adversely affected and appropriate measures are in place for the maintenance of gardens, trees and hedges;
- no important trees will be lost or unsuitably pruned either as a result of the change of use, any alterations or the likely future needs of occupiers of the building with regard to adequate lighting levels;
- any signage will not adversely affect the residential character of the area and will not be illuminated; and
- there will be no significant increase in traffic generation or on street car parking.

13.6 Change of use to non-residential use. There will be a presumption against the change of use of existing family homes to non-residential uses. Any proposal for change of use would need to conform to all relevant policies within the Council's Local Plan.

Subdivision of plots

13.7 A characteristic of many parts of the area is relatively large historic buildings, in spacious plots. Any proposals for the sub-division of plots, infill, backland and / or tandem development, or loss of open space will be considered on a case by case basis and must take account of all relevant local and national policy and guidance.

The design of new buildings

13.8 Subject to conforming to all other relevant planning policy, in order to be acceptable, the design of any new building will need to respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:

- being of an appropriate mass and scale to avoid over development of the site, as well as avoid over-dominating the traditional 2 – 2.5 storey houses which characterise the Conservation Area;
- being of an appropriate form to sit comfortably with the Jacobethan, Vernacular Revival and Neo-Georgian styles of the buildings in the area;
- having interesting roof forms and producing an interesting silhouette;

- using materials which either reflect those found on the traditional buildings in the area or producing an acceptable and exciting contrast;
- taking their inspiration from the interesting plan forms, bays, oriels, gables and sweeping roofs of the traditional buildings in the area; and
- providing a Design and Access Statement as part of a planning application which sets out the rationale behind the design of the building.

Works to Listed Buildings

13.9 The acceptability of works to Listed Buildings is governed by relevant local and national planning policy. The Listed Buildings in the Oadby Hill Top Conservation Area are predominantly used as flats or student accommodation. Whilst such uses have ensured that the buildings are well maintained and enjoyed, the need to adapt buildings to comply with changing legislation can occasionally lead to inappropriate incremental alterations to the buildings. This section therefore seeks to give some additional guidance.

General.

- Before considering any work to a historic building, applicants must fully understand what the implications of the proposed work are on the historic building;
- For complex buildings or major applications, a Conservation Plan or Statement of Significance will help define what the significant aspects of the building, group and setting are; and
- When submitting an application to alter a Listed Building, a Design and Access Statement will be needed which describes why the alterations are needed, what alternative approaches have been considered and how the proposed works are felt to be the least damaging to the special interest of the building.

Fire precaution works.

- Ensure that any compartmenting of the building does not adversely affect principal rooms, staircases, corridors or hallways;
- Consider how historic doors and glazing can be upgraded by use of intumescent products etc rather than replacing them;
- Where improved insulation is needed to floors, install this from above to avoid damage to plaster ceilings;
- Place alarms, sniffers and other equipment in the least prominent location possible (e.g. by locating them close to light fittings etc);
- Do not place equipment on panelling and ensure that cable runs do not cut across cornices, dados, panelling or open areas of wall; and
- Only consider external fire escapes as a last resort and locate them away from prominent facades and key architectural features.

Kitchens and bathrooms.

- Keep away from principal elevations if it would mean external SVPs, vents or obscured glass;
- Keep out of sensitive rooms with decorative plasterwork and panelling and do not locate them above such rooms;

- Group them together vertically so that pipe runs can be minimised; and
- Route vents up redundant chimney flues where possible.

Disabled access.

- Fully understand the issues and problems before proposing modifications and carry out an access audit of larger buildings and groups;
- Respect the balance of symmetrical facades when proposing ramps;
- Use appropriate materials; and
- Keep lifts away from principal rooms / staircases.

Trees and landscaping

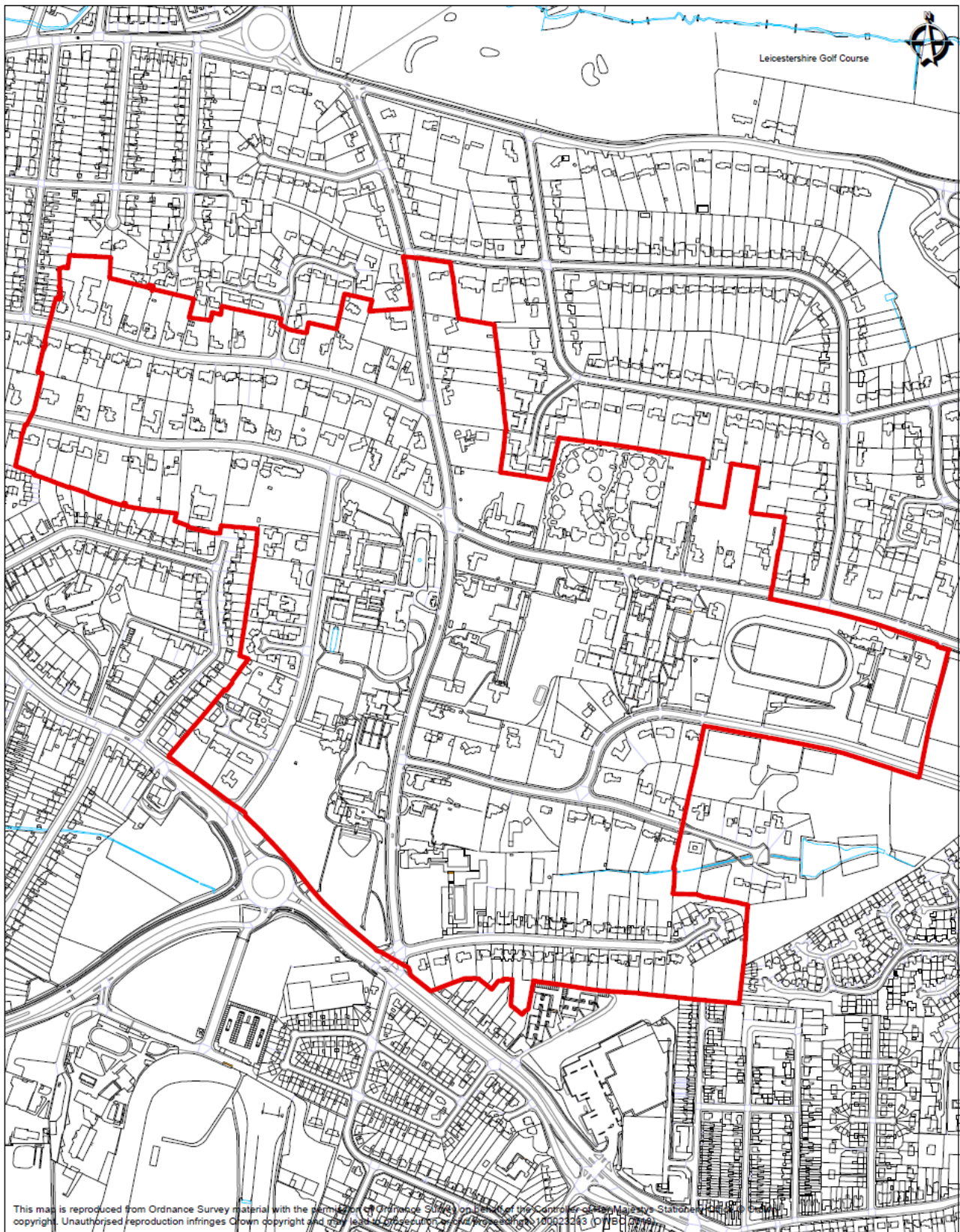
- 13.10 Trees. All trees within the Conservation Area already enjoy a degree of protection as owners are required to give the Borough Council 6 weeks' notice of the intention to carry out works to trees.
- 13.11 Development involving the felling, significant surgery (now or in the foreseeable future), or potential root damage to trees will only be permitted where there are demonstrable public benefits stemming from the proposal. When felling is permitted, replacement planting will be sought wherever possible and conditions will be imposed on planning permissions to ensure the replanting and maintenance of new tree planting.
- 13.12 New buildings will not be permitted in close proximity to important trees, unless it can be robustly demonstrated that the new building will not have a detrimental impact on the tree.
- 13.13 Landscaping. Landscaping schemes will be required to accompany proposals for new development where it is appropriate to the character of the development. Conditions will be imposed on planning permissions to ensure the implementation of approved landscaping schemes.
- 13.14 Open Spaces. Development on major areas of public or private open space will only be permitted where there is clear, demonstrable public benefit stemming from the proposal and where there are no significant adverse impacts upon ecological habitats.

Enhancement opportunities

- 13.15 The potential use of 'Article 4 Directions' to control incremental changes to Locally Listed Buildings.
- 13.16 Repair and restoration of greenhouses for example to the rear of Highgrove.
- 13.17 Improved screening to the rear of university houses, in particular Gilbert Murray Hall.
- 13.18 Improved screening to Beaumont Hall from the Botanic Gardens, Knighton Grange Road and Aigburth.

- 13.19 Where the gardens of the historic buildings have been surfaced over for parking, the expanses of tarmacadam which is a negative feature, could be broken up with suitable planting.
- 13.20 Enhance the role that the Botanic Gardens play within the local area.

OADBY HILLTOP / MEADOWCOURT CONSERVATION AREA



14. South Wigston Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 14.1 South Wigston Conservation Area was first designated in 1989. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance was updated in September 2018 and must be read in conjunction with this Guidance.

Overview of the area

- 14.2 South Wigston is a town developed in the late nineteenth century by the owner of a large brickworks. The settlement follows the tradition of establishing 'model' towns set by Victorian philanthropists at places such as New Lanark and Saltaire and continued in towns such as Bourneville and Port Sunlight. Unlike the majority of these other towns however, South Wigston was not just intended to house workers in the brickyard. Other commercial premises, particularly associated with the clothing industry, were established right from the start.
- 14.3 Like model settlements such as Saltaire, the settlement pattern is generally laid out as a grid and most of the housing is in terraces. Most of the houses are of similar type (though some were built bigger and had front gardens) with just a few larger houses on Orange Street, Blaby Road (until many were converted to shops) and particularly Saffron Road built to house wealthier residents. The clear provision of different sizes and standards of housing to suit different 'classes' of occupiers is not so great as in many model towns.
- 14.4 Although there are differences of detailing between the terraces and groups of houses, the area has a very strong character. The majority of traditional buildings are of red brick with a colour range towards orange and purple, with a few houses of gault brick or with such brick used as detailing. The settlement developed very quickly and was largely complete by 1913. Thereafter the main development was the provision of local authority housing on the undeveloped sites. Some of this was in terraces, the rest in more typical semi-detached forms.
- 14.5 Today, South Wigston retains its strong character despite more recent building and alterations to many of the houses. Some of the industrial uses have contracted or ceased and the buildings they have left behind offer scope for enhancement of the area.

Development of large / sensitive sites

- 14.6 The following sites have long term potential for enhancing the character of the Conservation Area.
- Station Street – Bus garage. Allocated for residential use in the new Local Plan. The Council also have an adopted Local Development Order for the site.
 - Lower Canal Street/Park Road. Large industrial buildings mixed with residential uses. Opportunity for redevelopment to residential uses.

- Countesthorpe Road – Alpha House. Currently an office block. Site addresses both Orange Street and Countesthorpe Road. Potential for redevelopment with a building that respects the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Countesthorpe Road – tyre depot. (southern end of Countesthorpe Road) Small site currently occupied by car park and single storey building. Associated with car spares sales in adjoining building. Opportunity for redevelopment to residential uses.
- Canal St – building immediately south of Healy Street. Locally Listed building. Retain and refurbish. Future use to ensure the external appearance and detailing remains intact. Has recently been subject to Compulsory Purchase Order with a view to redevelopment of the building to residential dwellings.

The design of new buildings

14.7 To be acceptable, the design of any new building will need to respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:

- being of an appropriate mass and scale to avoid dominating the small two-storey residential terraces and/or, in the case of mixed small commercial and residential streets, to maintain an appropriate juxtaposition of scales;
- being of an appropriate form to sit comfortably with the mix of residential, industrial and commercial styles of the buildings in the area;
- respecting any well-defined building lines;
- having interesting roof forms and producing an interesting skyline silhouette;
- using materials which either reflect those found on the traditional buildings in the area or produce an acceptable and exciting contrast;
- respecting prevalent architectural detailing such as bay windows, window and door surrounds and decorative eaves and responding to the differences in detailing between terraces where a development covers more than one street;
- creating positive street corners with active frontages on all elevations; and
- providing a Design and Access Statement as part of a Planning Application which sets out the rationale behind the design of the buildings.

14.8 Appropriate infill development, subject to conforming to all other relevant planning policy, will be permitted as long as its design has regard to the prevailing character and quality of the surrounding townscape. The design of this type of development should respond to:

- established building and boundary lines and the local scale of development;
- prevailing overall heights, storey heights and the massing of adjacent buildings;
- characteristic frontage or plot widths;
- roof profiles and silhouettes of adjoining buildings;
- colour, type, source and texture of facing, roofing and paving materials;
- distinctive forms or architectural detailing prevalent in the immediate area;
- average dwelling size and net residential densities; and
- existence of set piece or otherwise unified architectural compositions or significant building groups.

Change of use

- 14.9 The conversion of former industrial or commercial buildings of townscape value to residential or appropriate commercial use will be actively encouraged provided that:
- the appearance of the building will be maintained without the need for disfiguring extensions or alterations;
 - where the property was purpose-built as a shop and elements of an original or appropriate shopfront survive, these will be retained in any conversion unless they are completely beyond repair;
 - the amenity of adjoining residents will not be significantly affected;
 - adequate car and cycle parking and refuse storage can be provided and suitably screened from public view;
 - existing vehicle accesses are adequate, or appropriately sized accesses can be provided without affecting the overall townscape quality of the area, the setting of the building or involving the loss of any important tree or boundary; and
 - any important 'lost', altered or dilapidated architectural details will be restored.
- 14.10 There is a presumption to retain retail uses along Blaby Road. However it is recognised that shopping patterns are changing in the area. Many of the properties, especially at the western end and the terrace of buildings with Gothic detailing were built as houses and were converted to shops later. Where retail uses are no longer commercially viable in these buildings, subject to conforming to all relevant planning policy, conversion back to residential use will be supported when:
- the architectural character and detailing of the original houses will be restored;
 - front gardens with appropriate boundaries will be reinstated;
 - adequate car and cycle parking and refuse storage can be provided and suitably screened from public view; and
 - the living accommodation meets the technical housing standards as detailed in Policy 11 of the Local Plan and the occupants have an acceptable level of amenity.
- 14.11 Where retail uses remain viable on only the ground floors of properties, 'Living over the Shop' will be actively encouraged to bring vacant upper floors back into use and generate activity at different times of the day. Such uses will be supported provided that:
- appropriate noise insulation between the living accommodation and the shop below can be provided;
 - where the living accommodation is to be accessed separately from the shop, an appropriate separate entrance can be provided without damaging the character of the building and any original or appropriately designed shop front; and
 - adequate waste storage and car and cycle parking can be provided for the occupants.
- 14.12 The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential uses will not normally be permitted.
- 14.13 Planning permission for proposals, such as restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments or hot food takeaways (Use Classes A3, A4 and A5 respectively),

subject to conforming to all other relevant planning policy, will only be approved when it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm to residential amenity or local environmental quality as a result of smells, noise, increased late-night activity and disturbance, or increased parking and traffic.

14.14 The sub-division of single residential properties into multiple dwellings, subject to conforming to all other relevant planning policy, will only be permitted if:

- the appearance of the building will be maintained without the need for disfiguring extensions or alterations;
- the amenity of adjoining residents will not be significantly affected;
- satisfactory car and cycle parking, and refuse bin storage for the occupants can be adequately accommodated and appropriately screened;
- the location of the property or the nature of nearby land uses will not affect the quality of the occupants' residential amenity;
- the living accommodation created will be satisfactory;
- where separate accesses are required, these entrances are adequate and safe, and can be provided without damaging the character of the building; and
- appropriate noise insulation between dwellings can be provided.

Shopfronts, signage, blinds and security measures

14.15 The provision of shops was an important element of the original foundation of South Wigston. Blaby Road developed as the main shopping street, but shops were also found on the ends of many of the residential streets to the north and south. Although some old shopfronts survive, many others have been lost or disfigured by modern alterations or the addition of clumsy signage.

14.16 The Council is always seeking to improve the quality of the shopfronts in the Conservation Area and will apply the following guidance to achieve this aim. The restoration of original shopfronts in South Wigston is not a difficult task. Many shopfronts were of consistent design within terraces and good photographic records of the area also survive.

14.17 Shopfronts. Several good quality late nineteenth century and early twentieth century shopfronts survive in South Wigston. Planning Permission will not be approved to remove such shopfronts or any elements of them unless they are beyond repair.

14.18 Where some elements of an original shopfront survive, the existing elements should be retained and used as the basis for the restoration of the original frontage or incorporated into an appropriate new shopfront design. Removal of original features will only be permitted if they are completely rotten or are incapable of being successfully incorporated into a new shopfront.

14.19 The replacement of inappropriate shopfronts will be encouraged provided that the replacement respects the character of the building, adjacent buildings if part of a group or terrace or the area as a whole. To be acceptable, new designs should:

- have a clear structural logic with a clearly defined frame of pilasters, fascia and, where appropriate, stallrisers;
- relate to the character and proportions of the original building;

- maintain or improve the ease of access to the building for those with disabilities;
- be of appropriate materials;
- not stretch across the frontage of more than one building; and
- provide an appropriately designed separate access where separate living accommodation is to be provided within the upper storeys.

14.20 Where change of use is sought for the conversion of an original shop back to residential use and elements of an original or appropriate shopfront survive, these will be retained in any conversion unless they are completely beyond repair.

14.21 Signage. Several buildings in South Wigston have been disfigured by inappropriate and clumsy signage. To be acceptable, new signage must:-

- not obliterate, hide or destroy the proportions of the building or any of its architectural features.
- have lettering of appropriate size, materials and font type for the building.
- be clear and simple to read and not incorporate garish or unsuitable colours.
- have only one appropriately designed and located hanging signage for each shop frontage.

14.22 Illumination. Advertisement Consent is required for most forms of illuminated signage in the Conservation Area. Clumsy, internally illuminated 'box' signs will not be permitted. To be acceptable, illuminated signs must:-

- have a discrete light source which does not interfere with the proportions of the building or frontage or damage any architectural features.
- not affect the amenity of nearby residential uses.
- have a subdued and consistent light level.

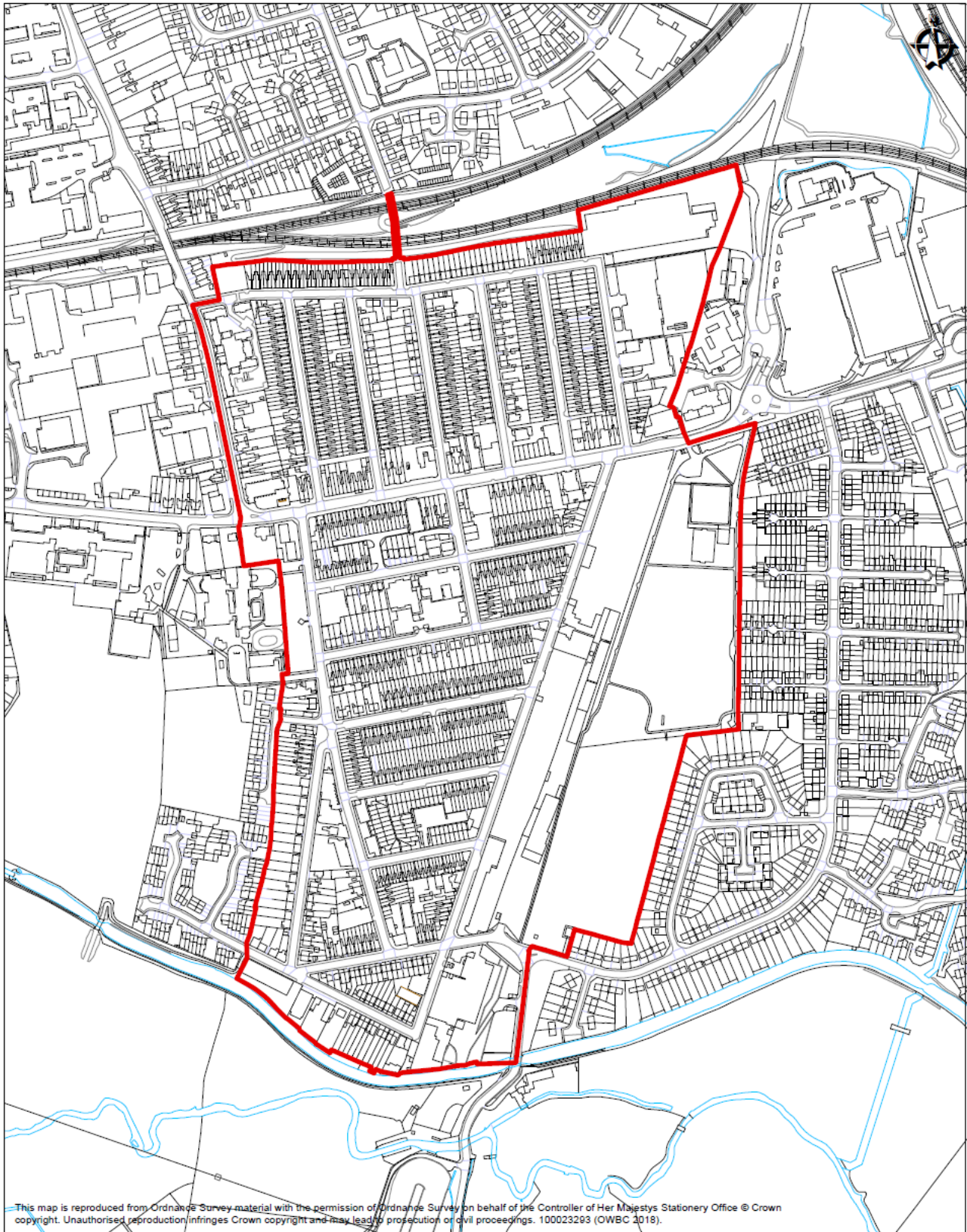
14.23 Blinds and Canopies. Blinds and canopies will only be permitted in the Conservation Area when there is a historical precedent and the existing blind box survives, where they can be accommodated without damaging the character of the building or shop frontage and will relate successfully to existing features and detailing of the building.

14.24 Shopfront Security. When designing a new shopfront, consider the likely security needs of the occupier. It is much easier to design in suitable security measures at the outset than attempt to add them to existing frontages.

14.25 Solid external shutters will only be permitted in the Conservation Area where it can be clearly demonstrated that they are the only viable means of security to enable the shopkeeper to retain their livelihood.

14.26 External shutters, of the solid or grille type, will only be permitted when they respect the features and proportions of the shopfront, do not cover the pilasters and fascia and are of an appropriate colour and finish.

SOUTH WIGSTON CONSERVATION AREA



15. Spa Lane Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 15.1 Spa Lane Conservation Area was first designated in 1989. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance were updated in September 2018 and must be read in conjunction with this Guidance.

Overview of the area

- 15.2 This area of Wigston is part of the original northern core of Wigston Magna village. Only St Wistan's Church, albeit rebuilt, remains from the village's origins, but the area still contains a mixture of residential and industrial uses reflecting a later period of the village's development and is a valuable record of Wigston's working past. A good example of the area's industrial past is the former Broughton's Hosiery Factory, now known as The Kings Centre. The building retains many of its original features, including a stone 'Bulls Head' above one of its entrances.
- 15.3 The area is separated from the centre of the modern borough by Bull Head Street, a dual carriageway 'A'-road. This wide expanse of fast moving traffic is a major physical barrier and has had a detrimental effect on the setting of the few remaining traditional buildings along the street by sweeping away their original village context.
- 15.4 There are a number of vacant and / or unsightly areas within the Conservation Area which currently detract from the character of the area. However, they offer scope for appropriate and well-designed development in the future.

Development of vacant sites

- 15.5 The vacant land within the Conservation Area forms areas which detract from its appearance. It is important that any proposed development of these vacant areas should be of a high quality both in terms of design and materials in order to ensure that the Conservation Area is visually enhanced by the scheme.
- 15.6 The following sites have potential for enhancing the character of the Conservation Area:
- Former Filling Station site, Bull Head Street. Currently used as a hand car wash. Flanked by two residential Locally Listed Buildings (Numbers. 20-22 & Spoutewell Cottage – one of the oldest buildings in Wigston). Potential to significantly improve aspect to Bull Head Street Potential housing or commercial site.
 - Mowsley End / Spa Lane. Currently contains Kwik Fit garage, various light industrial buildings and vacant plots. Potential housing or commercial site, possibly linking into Filling Station site. Identified Locally Listed Buildings and buildings of townscape value should be retained and integrated into any new development. Potential to significantly improve aspect to Mowsley End / Spa Lane & Bull Head Street. Main vehicle access for any development should be via Mowsley End / Spa Lane.

- Ford Dealership, Spa Lane. Currently workshop / garage and showroom with surrounding car parking area. Potential to significantly improve aspect to Spa Lane and setting of nearby Locally Listed Buildings. Possible site for housing and opportunity to establish appropriate building line.

Change of use

- 15.7 The conversion of former industrial or commercial buildings of townscape value will be considered if the site would make an important contribution towards improving the environment and where their conversion would not result in an unacceptable loss of the buildings historic integrity. Schemes will be encouraged provided that:
- the appearance of the building will be maintained without the need for disfiguring extensions or alterations;
 - the amenity of adjoining residents will not be significantly affected;
 - adequate car and cycle parking and refuse storage can be provided and suitably screened from public view;
 - existing vehicle accesses are adequate, or appropriately sized accesses can be provided without affecting the townscape quality of the area, the setting of the building or involving the loss of any important tree or boundary; and
 - any important 'lost', altered or dilapidated architectural details will be restored.
- 15.8 The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential uses will not normally be permitted.

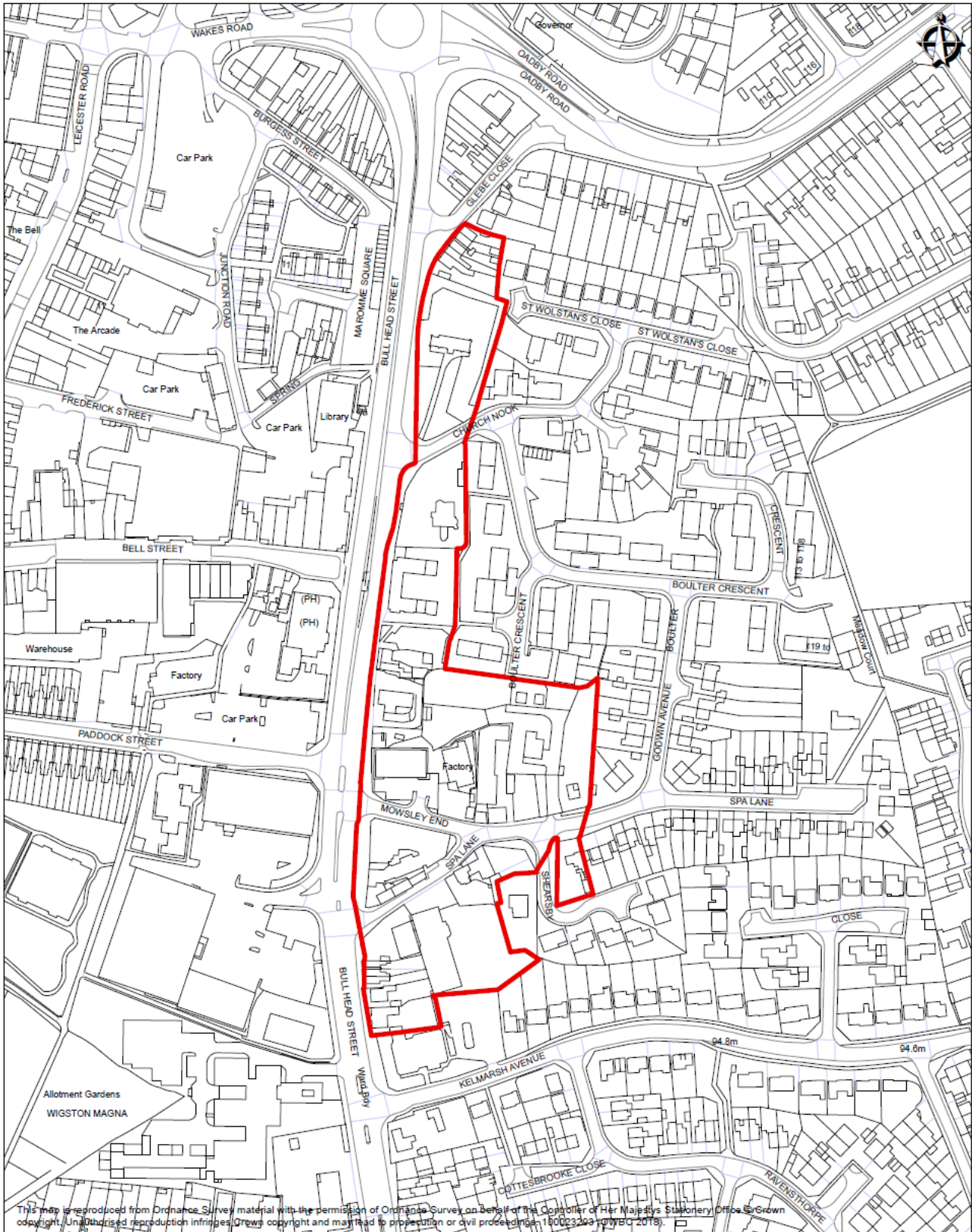
The design of new buildings

- 15.9 The Spa Lane Conservation Area Appraisal describes the area's 'grain', i.e. how the area's existing buildings relate to the street. The appraisal summarises information such as boundary treatments, building heights and line, materials, detailing, etc. Paying particular attention to the street in which proposed development will sit will establish appropriate design principles and ensure that the new buildings will respect the Conservation Area's existing character.
- 15.10 In order to be acceptable, the design of any new building will need to respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:
- Being of an appropriate mass and scale to avoid dominating the two storey residential properties and to maintain an appropriate juxtaposition of scales;
 - Being of an appropriate form to sit comfortably with the mix of residential, industrial and commercial styles of the buildings in the area;
 - Having interesting roof forms and producing an interesting silhouette;
 - Use materials and detailing which follow on from the design principles which influenced the basic form of the building, i.e. which either reflect those found on traditional buildings in the area or, as part of a very high quality design approach, produce a successful contrast;
 - Providing a Design and Access Statement as part of a Planning Application which sets out the rationale behind the design of the building;
 - Responding to the differences in detailing where a development covers more than one street; and
 - Creating positive street corners with active frontages on all elevations.

Enhancement opportunities

- 15.11 The vacant land along Spa Lane (to the east of No. 6A Spa Lane) forms an unsightly area which detracts from the Conservation Area's appearance. It is important that any proposed development of these vacant areas should be of a high quality both in terms of design and materials in order to ensure that the Conservation Area is visually enhanced by the scheme.
- 15.12 The unattractive car parking area to the front of the Kwik Fit garage and the adjacent gravelled space erode the character of the Conservation Area. An appropriate screening or improved landscaping of such areas would improve the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 15.13 Similarly the Ford dealership garage on Spa Lane and the hand car wash on Bull Head Street have a negative visual impact upon the Conservation Area. Relocation to a more appropriate location would aesthetically be the most satisfactory solution. However, a good landscaping scheme may be able to 'soften' the impact of all the vehicles, the utilitarian buildings and the proliferation of signage.
- 15.14 The churchyard of St Wistans Church is very much overgrown, almost obscuring the church from view. The churchyard should be reclaimed, with much of the vegetation cleared away, leaving key shrubs and trees. Such a scheme would enable appropriate use and would provide a viable green space in a predominately urban industrial area.
- 15.15 The Council may seek to use 'Article 4 Directions' in order to retain traditional detailing on the exterior of non-listed buildings within the conservation area boundaries where such detail has not already been lost.

SPA LANE CONSERVATION AREA



16. The Lanes Conservation Area Guidance

Background

- 16.1 The Lanes Conservation Area was first designated in 1981. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance were updated in September 2018 and must be read in conjunction with this Guidance.

Overview of the area

- 16.2 'The Lanes' Conservation Area is characterised by the contrast between the 'hidden' green open space of the Manchester Gardens, (Allotment Space), and the urban built development that surrounds it.
- 16.3 The Lanes themselves are a throwback to the village's origins and probably served to link the two cores of the original settlement. Today they are a series of quiet routes away from traffic in the middle of an urban environment and are of great value in creating the feeling of a quiet backwater in the town centre.
- 16.4 The survival of the Manchester Gardens at the heart of 'The Lanes' as an area of open space in such an urban environment is hugely beneficial. Today it acts as a 'green lung' providing a respite from the urbanity of the surrounding streets with their continuous built frontage (except where this is broken by the Peace Memorial Park).
- 16.5 The four perimeter streets of the rectangular 'village' centre, (Long Street to the west, Bull Head Street to the east, Bell Street to the north and Moat Street to the south), are characterised by their commercial character with small clusters of residential properties. This is reversed in the streets that run west from this central rectangle which are dominated by nineteenth century housing. The northern and eastern sides of the built frontage to the central green area are mainly comprised of commercial buildings and form part of the centre of the modern Wigston Magna.
- 16.6 The northern and eastern sides of the built frontage to Manchester Gardens area are mainly comprised of commercial buildings and form part of the centre of the modern Wigston Magna. A large area of the Conservation Area is taken up by the vast concrete mid twentieth century Police and Fire Stations and large twentieth century superstores
- 16.7 The southern and western sides of the built frontage to the central green space are much more residential in character and contain many terraces with subtle variations between them in their architectural detailing.

Protection of open space

- 16.8 Few towns possess such an intricate system of footpaths as Wigston. These 'Lanes' link across the town centre extending from Junction Road to the Little Hill Estate and provide a series of quiet routes across the town centre away from traffic. Improvements to enhance the footpaths will be carried as and when schemes are permitted.

- The Council will preserve and enhance The Lanes system of footpaths and use development control powers to ensure the character and appearance of the area is not prejudiced by unsympathetic development on land adjoining the footpaths.

16.9 Outside 'The Lanes' proper, at the western boundary of the Conservation Area is The Black Pad which links Central Avenue to Bushloe End. This public footpath has an informal, semi-rural feel similar to that of 'The Lanes'. This character is largely due to the vegetation that lines The Black Pad, and it is, therefore, important that the key vegetation is retained and maintained.

- The Council will work with statutory undertakers and the Highways Authority to ensure that the vegetation is retained during, and reinstated (if necessary) after, any works undertaken along The Black Pad. Where appropriate, sustainable drainage methods and materials should be used, provided that these do not have an adverse visual impact on the historic environment.

16.10 The informal nature of The Lanes is a key component of the quiet character of this green space in the heart of the town centre. The Lanes are well used by the local community and it is, therefore, important that these footpaths are adequately maintained and appropriately surfaced.

- The Council will work with the Highways Authority and statutory undertakers to ensure the adequate maintenance of The Lanes and that appropriate surfacing materials are used in the area. Where appropriate, sustainable drainage methods and materials should be used, provided that these do not have an adverse visual impact on the historic environment.

16.11 The survival of the Manchester Gardens as an area of open space at the heart of the Conservation Area is of great value in creating a feeling of a quiet backwater near the town centre.

- The Council will resist proposals for the development of the Manchester Gardens.

16.12 Although the Manchester Gardens are surrounded by built development, except on the Chapel Lane frontage where they adjoin the Memorial Park, these buildings are largely set back from the Gardens' boundary, to which they turn their backs. This factor also contributes to the sense of space felt by people who use The Lanes.

- The special character of the Manchester Gardens will comprise a material consideration when the Council determines planning applications on adjacent land within the Conservation Area.

Change of use

16.13 The conversion of former industrial or commercial buildings of townscape value will be considered if the site would make an important contribution towards improving the environment and where their conversion would not result in an unacceptable loss of the buildings historic integrity. Schemes will be encouraged provided that:

- the appearance of the building will be maintained without the need for disfiguring extensions or alterations;
- where the property was purpose-built as a shop and elements of an original or appropriate shopfront survive, these will be retained in any conversion unless they are completely beyond repair;
- the amenity of adjoining residents will not be significantly affected;
- adequate car and cycle parking and refuse storage can be provided and suitably screened from public view;
- existing vehicle accesses are adequate, or appropriately sized accesses can be provided without affecting the overall townscape quality of the area, the setting of the building or involving the loss of any important trees or boundaries; and
- any important 'lost', altered or dilapidated architectural details will be restored.

16.14 Where retail uses remain viable on only the ground floors of properties, 'Living over the Shop' will be actively encouraged to bring vacant upper floors back into use and generate activity at different times of the day. Such uses will be supported provided that:

- appropriate noise insulation between the living accommodation and the shop below can be provided.
- where the living accommodation is to be accessed separately from the shop, an appropriate separate entrance can be provided without damaging the character of the building and any original or appropriately-designed shopfront.
- adequate waste storage and car and cycle parking can be provided for the occupants.

16.15 The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential uses will not normally be permitted.

16.16 Planning permission for proposals, such as restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments or hot food takeaways, (Use Classes A3, A4 and A5 respectively), subject to conforming to all other relevant planning policy, will only be approved when it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm to residential amenity or local environmental quality as a result of smells, noise, increased late-night activity and disturbance, or increased parking and traffic. Adequate parking must be provided and considered as part of the overall design. Unsightly plant such as air conditioning units, ducting, flues, etc. should be appropriately screened.

The design of new buildings

16.17 In order to be acceptable, the design of any new building will need to respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:

- being of an appropriate mass and scale to avoid dominating the mainly two-storey residential properties and/or, in the case of mixed small commercial and residential streets, to maintain an appropriate juxtaposition of scales;
- being of an appropriate form to sit comfortably with the mix of residential, industrial and commercial styles of the buildings in the area;
- respecting any well-defined building lines;
- having interesting roof forms and producing an interesting silhouette;

- using materials which either reflects those found on the traditional buildings in the area or producing an acceptable and exciting contrast;
- providing a Design and Access Statement as part of a Planning Application which sets out the rationale behind the design of the building; and
- respecting prevalent architectural detailing.

Alterations and extensions

16.18 Rear Extensions. These are the most common type of extension as they usually offer the greatest degree of flexibility and privacy. Care is needed, however, to ensure that the effect upon neighbouring properties is kept to a minimum. Particular care should be taken in the design of rear extensions to the terraces along Central Avenue as these are visible from public footpaths. In addition to all other relevant policy and guidance;

- an extension should not dominate the neighbour's house or garden or affect their light quality;
- two storey extensions on common boundaries are unlikely to be approved;
- the eaves level of a rear extension should be kept as low as possible and particular care should be taken to ensure the ridgeline of the new roof does not interfere with the existing roof; and
- it should not be visible from the front of the building.

16.19 Roof Extensions. These are a popular way of extending houses, but can pose considerable challenges in order to avoid damaging alterations to the character of the property. On terraces and groups of similar properties such as those along Central Avenue and Paddock Street, they can also be highly intrusive because of the relative uniformity of the houses and so their impact on the street must be carefully considered.

- roof extensions should relate well to the local roof form and should reflect or complement the character of the property and the area;
- ridgelines and chimneystacks, in particular, are often a key part of a building's character and they should not be altered unless it can be demonstrated that this would create a positive feature;
- the potential for overlooking should be addressed in the design;
- the size and number of dormer windows should be kept to a minimum and they should generally not be placed on the front elevation (or the elevation most visible from the public realm) unless it is appropriate to the design or history of the building.
- the style of windows should be influenced by the design, proportion and arrangement of existing windows in the building; and
- roof lights should be of the traditional 'Conservation' type which lies flush with the roof slope and should also be kept off the front roof slope, particularly on formal buildings.

Shopfronts, signage, blinds and security measures

16.20 Parts of Leicester Road and the northern end of Long Street fall within Wigston's primary shopping area.

- 16.21 Although many of the retail units in these shopping areas are housed in older nineteenth century/early twentieth century properties, most appear to have lost their traditional shopfronts and have been much altered in the later twentieth century. The following guidance aims to enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area by providing detailed design principles for designers to follow to ensure that new and refurbished shopfronts fit into their context.
- 16.22 Shopfronts. Number 2 Leicester Road, a Locally Listed Building, retains a good quality 1940s shopfront. Planning permission will not be approved to remove this shopfront or any element of it.
- 16.23 Where some elements of an original shopfront survive, the existing elements should be retained and used as the basis for the restoration of the original frontage or incorporated into an appropriate new shopfront design. Removal of original features will only be permitted if they are completely beyond repair or are incapable of being successfully incorporated into a new shopfront.
- 16.24 The replacement of inappropriate shopfronts will be encouraged provided that the replacement respects the character of the building, adjacent buildings if part of a group or terrace, or the area as a whole. As well as conforming to all other relevant planning policy, to be acceptable, new designs should:
- have a clear structural logic with a clearly defined frame of pilasters, fascia and, where appropriate, stall risers;
 - relate to the character and proportions of the original building;
 - maintain or improve the ease of access to the building for those with disabilities;
 - be of appropriate materials;
 - not stretch across the frontage of more than one building;
 - provide an appropriately designed separate access where separate living accommodation is to be provided within the upper storeys.
- 16.25 Where change of use is appropriate and not detrimental to the area and elements of a good shopfront survive, these will be retained in any conversion unless they are completely beyond repair.
- 16.26 Signage. Several buildings in Wigston have been disfigured by inappropriate and clumsy signage. Along with conforming to all other relevant planning policy, to be acceptable, new signage must:
- not obliterate, hide or destroy the proportions of the building or any of its architectural features.
 - have lettering of appropriate size, materials and font type for the building.
 - be clear and simple to read and not incorporate garish or unsuitable colours.
 - have only one appropriately designed and located hanging sign for each shop frontage.
- 16.27 Illumination. Advertisement Consent is required for most forms of illuminated signage in the Conservation Area. Clumsy, internally illuminated 'box' signs will not be permitted. To be acceptable, illuminated signs must:

- have a discrete light source which does not interfere with the proportions of the building or frontage or damage any architectural features.
- not affect the amenity of nearby residential uses.
- have a subdued and consistent light level.

16.28 Blinds and Canopies. Blinds and canopies will only be permitted in the Conservation Area when there is a historical precedent and the existing blind box survives, where they can be accommodated without damaging the character of the building or shop frontage and will relate successfully to existing features and detailing of the building.

16.29 Shopfront Security. When designing a new shopfront, consider the likely security needs of the occupier. It is much easier to design in suitable security measures at the outset than attempt to add them to existing frontages.

16.30 Solid external shutters will only be permitted in the Conservation Area where it can be clearly demonstrated that they are the only viable means of security to enable the shopkeeper to retain his livelihood.

16.31 External shutters, of the solid or grille type, will only be permitted when they respect the features and proportions of the shopfront, do not cover the pilasters and fascia and are of an appropriate colour and finish.

Street furniture

16.32 The traditional lampposts found throughout The Lanes are noted as positive aspects. The traditional style of these lampposts and lighting contributes to the character of the historic 'Lanes' footpath system as well as providing lighting and safety after dark.

- The Council will encourage the appropriate maintenance of the lampposts within The Lanes area. Where a traditional lamppost is incapable of repair, its replacement must be appropriate to the history of the area. Similarly, the opportunity to remove any modern lampposts within The Lanes area should be taken; these should be replaced with traditional lampposts appropriate to the history of the area.

Enhancement opportunities

16.33 The two shops at 41 – 47 Bell Street could both benefit from shop front improvements to a style more in keeping with the age and style of the buildings and the first floor windows which are currently boarded up, should be reinstated. Additionally, the replacement of the heavy metal shutters to a style that is more appropriate within the Conservation Area would be of benefit.

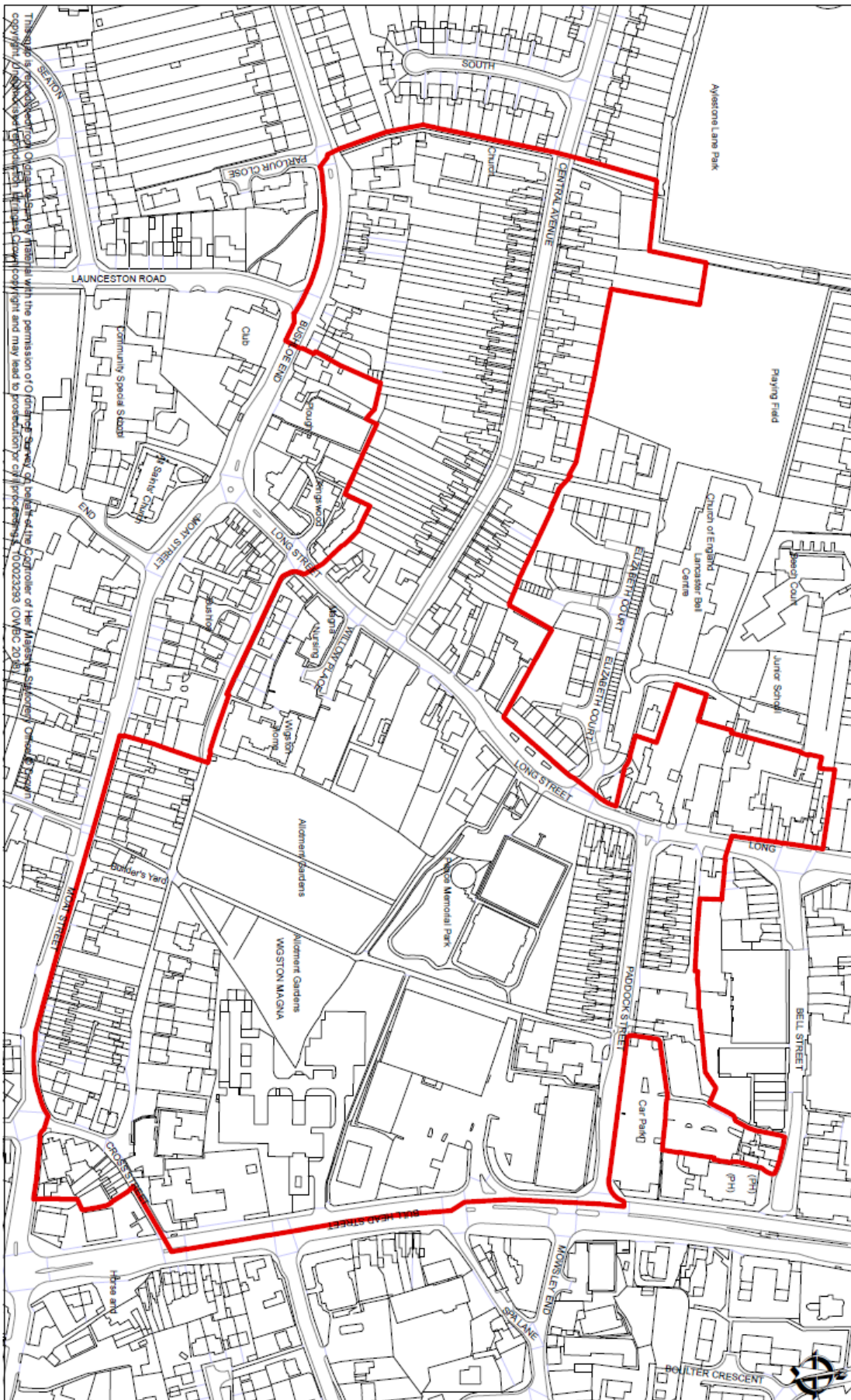
16.34 Views from Paddock Street into the service yards of the Bell Street commercial units are unattractive, thus creating an unpleasant pedestrian environment for users of Long Lane. Appropriate screening of these servicing areas would dramatically enhance the Conservation Area.

16.35 The car parking area to the west of Belvoir House on Paddock Street is unattractive and detracts from the street scene. The redevelopment of the site should be considered and has the potential to enhance the character and appearance of the

Conservation Area. Any proposed redevelopment of this site should refer to Development Control Guidance.

- 16.36 Similarly, Paddock Street Car Park detracts from the Conservation Area and redevelopment of the site should be considered to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 16.37 Some forecourts to properties such as the Wigston Conservative Club, the Royal Mail Depot and Nos. 61 and 65 Long Street would benefit from more attractive landscaping, thus not only enhancing the setting of the buildings but also the street scene.
- 16.38 The vacant site adjacent to the Working Men's Club should be redeveloped. The site detracts from the appearance of the Conservation Area and has the potential for enhancing the character through redevelopment. Any proposed redevelopment of this site should refer to The Lanes Development Control Guidance.
- 16.39 The quiet backwater and historic character of The Lanes is reinforced by the informal nature of its footpaths which criss-cross the area. However, regular maintenance is necessary to ensure they continue to be well used by the local community and their traditional character is retained. Clearly, the surface needs to be smooth. However, if an aggregate or gravel could be bonded into the tarmacadam, this would soften the appearance of the paths whilst maintaining a trip-free surface. Similarly, traditional street furniture that contributes to the area's historic character should be maintained and replaced where necessary with matching designs.
- 16.40 In their present condition the vacant office building and adjoining site of the former shop situated on Long Street are negative features to the surrounding streetscape. The area should be redeveloped and tidied, to 'add to' the surrounding area.
- 16.41 The Borough Council may seek to use 'Article 4 Directions' in order to retain traditional detailing on the exterior of non-listed buildings within the conservation area boundaries where such detail has not already been lost.

THE LANES CONSERVATION AREA



17. Implementation and monitoring of this supplementary planning document

- 17.1 The nine designated Conservation Areas within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston play an important role in safeguarding its heritage.
- 17.2 Once adopted, the SPD will be implemented through the planning process, being taken into account and applied when determining planning applications for development within or adjacent to Conservation Areas. In addition, applicants will be encouraged to consider the enhancement opportunities and to take these into account when preparing proposals for development. The Council will also seek to work with potential applicants to assist them in ensuring that development enhances the character of the Conservation Area, for example through pre-application meetings.
- 17.3 The SPD will be monitored by considering the impact of the proposals when considering planning applications and the number of enhancement opportunities taken forward over time. In addition, there will be period reviews of the Conservation Area Appraisals and the SPD.