

**Borough of  
Oadby and Wigston**

**Conservation Areas  
Supplementary Planning  
Document**

**Consultation Draft**

**March 2026**

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# 1. Introduction

## Definition of a Conservation Area

- 1.1 Conservation Areas are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as places of special architectural or historic interest, where preserving or enhancing their character or appearance is considered desirable. National Planning Policy Framework adds that local planning authorities must be confident that an area genuinely merits this status because of its special interest, and that the value of conservation is not diluted by designating places without clear significance. A Conservation Area therefore recognises the distinctive character and overall quality of an area, rather than individual buildings alone.
- 1.2 The character of a Conservation Area typically arises from the interplay of elements such as the mix and style of its buildings, the pattern and openness of its spaces, and natural features like trees, hedges, and other landscape components.
- 1.3 When a Conservation Area is designated, the Council gains stronger powers to protect its character, and planning proposals are assessed in terms of how they affect the area's appearance and significance. Demolition controls become tighter, and the permitted development rights that normally allow owners to carry out certain works without planning permission are reduced or can be removed entirely. New development is subject to more rigorous design scrutiny, and anyone wishing to carry out works to trees must give the Council six weeks' notice. Planning applications within or affecting a Conservation Area must also be advertised appropriately.

## 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.'*

*'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.'*

*‘Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.’*

- 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 adopted Local Plan (2019) sets out a specific local policy relating to development within conservation areas, Policy 41 Development in Conservation Areas. This document is supplementary to 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 The Council’s emerging new Local Plan is due to be adopted by 2027. Emerging relevant Policies in that document that will continue to influence development in conservation areas will include the following (please note: policy numbering and titles may be subject to change prior to adoption):
- Policy 12: Housing Choices
  - Policy 13: Self and Custom Build
  - Policy 14: Retention of Existing Dwellings
  - Policy 17: Urban Infill Development
  - Policy 23: Improving Health and Wellbeing
  - Policy 27: Public Realm
  - Policy 28: High Quality Design and High-Quality Materials
  - Policy 29: Landscape and Character
  - Policy 30: Culture and Historic Environment Assets
  - Policy 31: Development in Conservation Areas
  - Policy 33: Phone Masts
  - Policy 36: Local Green Space
  - Regeneration Policy 1: Kilby Bridge Settlement Envelope
- 1.9 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

1.10 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

1.11 Part A of the document sets out generic development control guidance which applies to all Conservation Areas within the Borough.

1.12 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.

1.13 Once adopted this Supplementary Planning Document will compliment and sit alongside all other adopted Supplementary Planning Documents and the adopted Local Plan for the Borough.

# **Part A**

## **General Conservation Area Guidance**

## **2. Planning Submissions in a Conservation Area**

### Outline Planning Submissions

- 2.1 Outline applications for development within a Conservation Area will only be accepted where they include enough supporting detail to allow the impact on the area's character and appearance to be properly assessed.
- 2.2 On major development sites, this should include a masterplan supported by detailed design codes or statements, prepared in line with the Council's adopted Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (2025), to demonstrate the intended form of new buildings.

### Full Planning Submissions

- 2.3 As required by the National Planning Policy Framework, proposals must include enough detail to allow their full impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area to be properly assessed. This should address the matters identified in the accompanying Conservation Area Appraisals, particularly the 'Key Characteristics' section, and be supported by a Design and Access Statement that clearly explains how the scheme is considered to preserve or enhance the area's character and appearance.

### Listed Building Consent

- 2.4 Listed Building Consent is required for any works, internal or external, that would affect the special architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building, including any structure built before 1 July 1948 within its curtilage. Applications must be supported by a statement that demonstrates a clear understanding of the elements of the building that will be affected, explains the justification for the proposed works, sets out why alternative approaches were discounted, and identifies how any harm to historic fabric will be minimised.
- 2.6 A Design and Access Statement must also explain how any replacement building will contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and this assessment should accompany any planning submission.

### **3. Demolition in a Conservation Area**

- 3.1 Buildings within a Conservation Area, nationally Listed buildings (including associated outbuildings and lodges), and Locally Listed buildings are generally expected to be retained and preserved. Further guidance on demolition within Conservation Areas is set out in Local Plan Policy 41: Development in Conservation Areas (or any subsequent update).
- 3.2 Demolition of these buildings will only be supported where the proposals comply with the relevant policies set out in the Council's Local Plan.
- 3.3 The demolition of unsympathetic extensions will be supported where the intention is to restore the building to its original form, or where any replacement extension would provide a design that better respects the building's special architectural or historic interest.

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## 4. Alterations and Extensions within a Conservation Area

4.1 Alterations and extensions should generally be limited to the rear or least prominent elevations unless they would help to sustain or enhance the building's architectural character within its setting. Planning permission will be supported for proposals that:

- respect the established building line.
- retain the symmetry of balanced elevations or groups.
- avoid creating a terraced appearance (except in South Wigston Conservation Area or other areas where terracing is characteristic).
- do not compromise key architectural features.
- remain subordinate to the main building and use either matching materials or an appropriate contrasting palette.
- reinstate traditional features such as original doors, windows, porches, or decorative elements.
- use traditional and, where suitable, reclaimed or recycled materials.
- consider opportunities to incorporate energy-efficiency measures.

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

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## **5. Works to Listed Buildings**

- 5.1 Works that affect the special architectural or historic interest of a Listed Building require Listed Building Consent. This applies to the main building, any outbuildings or boundary structures built before 1 July 1948, and to all internal works. The acceptability of such proposals is determined in accordance with relevant national and local planning policy.
- 5.2 Additional guidance is provided within this document.

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## 6. Works to Locally Listed Buildings

- 6.1 Buildings designated as Locally Listed in the Council's Local Plan are recognised for the positive contribution they make to the character and appearance of the Borough and their immediate surroundings. To safeguard these properties and their settings from unsympathetic alteration, the Council may consider introducing Directions under Article 4.
- 6.2 Article 4 Directions remove a householder's permitted development rights, allowing the Council to manage changes that could harm local character. Works that may be brought under control include, but are not limited to:
- painting, cladding or rendering external facades.
  - inserting or replacing doors and windows.
  - removing or replacing boundary walls or fences. and
  - altering roof profiles or changing roofing materials.

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## **7. Proposals Affecting the Setting of a Conservation Area**

- 7.1 Development outside a Conservation Area will be refused if it would harm the area's special character or appearance, including by intruding into any important view or vista into, out of, within, or across the area that has been identified as significant.
- 7.2 Any development on sites adjoining a Conservation Area should respond directly to the special character set out in the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal. Particular care is required in the design, layout and massing of new buildings, their relationship with the Conservation Area, and the effects on parking and landscaping.

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## **Part B**

# **Conservation Area Specific Guidance**

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## 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.

### Overview of the Area

- 8.2 This part of Wigston Magna formed the village's southern core and contains several of the Borough's most historically and architecturally significant buildings. Preserving these traditional properties offers a glimpse of how the original village appeared before its growth into an urban town.
- 8.3 This southern core centres on the Church of All Saints, one of the two steeples that by 1529 gave Wigston Magna its name, the District of Two-Steeples. The church remains the Conservation Area's principal landmark and a defining feature of the local landscape.
- 8.4 Newgate End keeps a distinctly village-like character, marked by its appealing cluster of older vernacular buildings. This stands in contrast to the more varied mix of mainly late-nineteenth and twentieth-century development found along Moat Street and Bushloe End.
- 8.5 It is mainly a residential area, but traces of Wigston's hosiery industry remain along Bushloe End and Moat Street, where several former framework knitters' houses and workshops still stand. The Framework Knitters Museum on Bushloe End is a notable local attraction.
- 8.6 This area sits at the south-western edge of the old rectangular village centre, which includes The Lanes, a network of footpaths linking the two original cores of Wigston Magna.

### Protection of Open Spaces

- 8.7 The area centres on the junction of Newgate End and Moat Street, where the largely fourteenth-century Grade I-listed All Saints Church forms a prominent local landmark. The quiet back water of Newgate End, with its older vernacular brick buildings, some still set within generous plots, offers a sense of the village's early character. Much of the original frontage along Moat Street and Bushloe End, which would once have shared this appearance, was replaced by nineteenth and twentieth-century infill development. The Manor House grounds extend west to Launceston Road, forming part of the Conservation Area's western boundary. The survival of the orchard, along with the mature trees surrounding the later buildings of the Menphys Centre and Pochin's Close, reinforces the semi-rural quality of views from Launceston Road and creates an important area of urban open space.
- The Council will oppose any proposals to develop the orchard adjoining the Manor House.

- 8.8 Numbers 42-44 Bushloe End are Grade II\* listed and include an eighteenth-century cottage with a rear framework-knitting workshop once occupied by a Master Hosier, reflecting Wigston's industrial heritage. The buildings and their original contents, unchanged since before the First World War, are now preserved as the Framework Knitters Museum.
- The Council will seek to enhance the setting of the Framework Knitters Museum, and development that would harm the special character or setting of these Grade II\* listed buildings will not be permitted.
- 8.9 Gas Lane has a distinctly informal, rural character created by the enclosing hedges and trees and by its unmade surface. Preserving this rural quality is important.
- The Council will ensure, in collaboration with the Leicestershire County Council Highways Authority and other statutory undertakers, that appropriate surfacing materials are used in this area.

#### The Design of New Buildings

- 8.10 Very few development opportunities remain within the Conservation Area. A potential site includes the former Birkett House school site,. Development within the curtilage of the Manor House, at 10 Newgate End, or on the green space at the corner of Bushloe End and Launceston Road will not be permitted.
- 8.11 To be acceptable, any new building must be designed to complement the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:
- having a mass, form, and scale appropriate to the predominantly two-storey residential context;
  - respecting established building lines where they exist;
  - incorporating varied roof forms that contribute to an interesting skyline;
  - using materials that either reflect those of traditional local buildings or provide a well-considered, high-quality contrast;
  - responding to characteristic architectural details such as bay windows, door and window surrounds, and decorative eaves, and acknowledging differences in detailing where a scheme spans more than one street;
  - creating strong street corners with active frontages on all visible elevations; and
  - including a Design and Access Statement within any planning submission to explain the design rationale.
- 8.12 Infill development will need to comply to all relevant planning policy and reflect the prevailing character and quality of the surrounding townscape. Its design should take account of:
- established building and boundary lines, along with the local development scale;
  - the typical overall heights, storey heights, and massing of neighbouring buildings;
  - characteristic frontage or plot widths;
  - the roof profiles and silhouettes of adjoining properties;

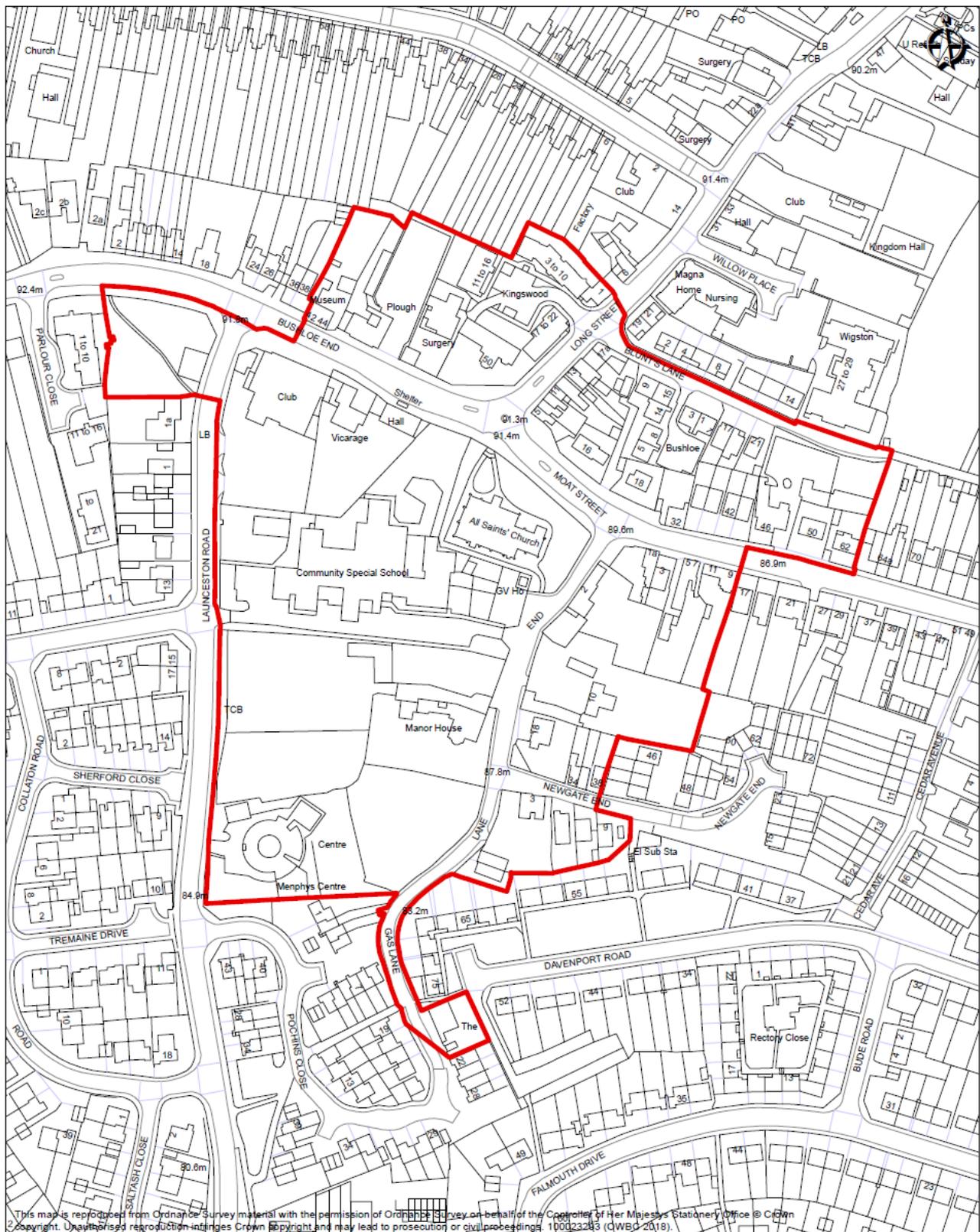
- the colour, type, source, and texture of facing, roofing, and paving materials;
- distinctive architectural forms or detailing common in the immediate area;
- typical dwelling sizes and net residential densities; and
- any unified architectural compositions or notable building groups present nearby.

8.13 High standards of energy efficiency should be encouraged in new buildings, and opportunities for generating renewable energy on site should be considered. However, the visual impact on the Conservation Area must be carefully assessed, and any energy-efficiency or energy-generation measures must avoid harming its character or appearance.

#### Enhancement Opportunities

- 8.14 Removing the on-street parking bays at the Newgate End entrance to the former Birkett House School would significantly enhance the overall setting of All Saints Church.
- 8.15 Enhancing the façade of the Georgian building at the corner of Bushloe End and Launceston Road would also be encouraged.
- 8.16 The parking and garden areas of the two public houses, The Plough and The Old Crown (the latter being temporarily closed at the time of writing), could also be improved through additional hard landscaping and/or the introduction of soft landscaping.
- 8.17 The pavements along Newgate End are attractively edged with historic stone, but the tarmac surfacing has been repeatedly patched, introducing a noticeably urban element into an area with a traditionally rural character. Resurfacing the pavements with a more suitable material, such as bonded gravel, would significantly enhance the public realm.
- 8.18 Gas Lane's informal, rural character stems from its unadopted nature, but its unmetalled surface is prone to flooding and can appear untidy. Using an appropriate informal surfacing material would improve both its appearance and its practical function.
- 8.19 The greenspace at the corner of Bushloe End and Launceston Road contributes positively to the character of the area, but the seating area on the Launceston Road side could be improved. Refurbishing the existing benches or replacing them with new ones, along with adding planters, would enhance this space.
- 8.20 The Borough Council could also consider using Article 4 Directions to preserve traditional external detailing on non-listed buildings within the conservation area, where such features still survive.

# 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.

### Overview of the Area

- 9.2 The area retains elements of its village character, with a mix of uses that reflect its organic development. It is centred on the oldest surviving part of Oadby around St Peter's Church and extends south-east along London Road.
- 9.3 The linear form of the Conservation Area reflects the way the original settlement developed along Leicester and London Road, with the village green lying to the southeast of St Peter's Church. Agriculture shaped village life, and the settlement was therefore surrounded by open fields.
- 9.4 There is considerable variation in building scale, and this creates an engaging roofscape that enriches views into, out of, and within the Conservation Area. While most buildings sit directly on the back of the footpath, the contrast in their sizes adds visual diversity to the street scene. Part of the Conservation Area now also functions as Old Oadby Local Centre.
- 9.5 A small number of listed buildings are dispersed throughout the Conservation Area. These are generally two-storey houses that are grander than the surrounding terraced properties. The exception is the short row of cottages on London Road, a surviving example of the type of dwelling once occupied by artisans. Several Locally Listed Buildings are also present.
- 9.6 The Conservation Area includes several Baptist-related buildings, the most prominent of which is the distinctive Baptist Church on London Road.
- 9.7 The village green has long since disappeared as the settlement grew and took on a more urban character. Its former presence is hinted at only by the orientation of two large houses, The Hermitage and The Nook, which once overlooked it. Today the space functions as a car park, and the land to its west was redeveloped during the twentieth century.
- 9.8 The main public green space in modern Oadby is the former driveway of The Elms, locally known as 'Chicken Alley'. It now serves as a public footpath, much of it bordered by vegetation and trees. The north-south section, in particular, contains some of the area's most significant trees and contributes to the lush character of the southern part of the Conservation Area.
- 9.9 Saint Peter's Church remains the focal point of the 'village', positioned at the junction of London Road and Wigston Road and once overlooking the former village

green. Its steeple is a prominent feature in long views, and the church itself stands as a key local landmark.

### The Design of New Buildings

- 9.10 New development or redevelopment within the London Road and Saint Peter's Conservation Area should relate closely to the character of neighbouring buildings and maintain the existing mix of uses and building styles, helping to preserve the form and scale of the historic village street scene.
- 9.11 The London Road and Saint Peter's Conservation Area Appraisal outlines Oadby's 'grain', i.e. the way buildings relate to the street. Its 'Key Characteristics' section summarises features such as building heights, building line, materials, and detailing. Focusing closely on the specific street where new development is proposed helps establish appropriate design principles and ensures that new buildings respect Oadby's existing character.
- 9.12 To be acceptable, the design of any new building should:
- be of a mass and scale that maintains the existing variety of building sizes without overwhelming the smaller residential properties;
  - adopt a form that fits comfortably alongside the area's mix of residential and commercial building styles;
  - incorporate pitched roofs or create an interesting and appropriate roofline;
  - respect the established building line and plot arrangement;
  - use materials and detailing that follow the design principles shaping the building's form, either reflecting traditional local characteristics or, where of very high quality, providing a successful contemporary contrast; and
  - include a Design and Access Statement explaining the design rationale as part of any planning application.

### Change of Use

- 9.13 Appropriate redevelopment or changes of use to retail or commercial purposes should consider:
- the building's appearance, which should be preserved without unsympathetic extensions or alterations;
  - the retention of any original or suitable shopfront elements unless they are entirely beyond repair;
  - the impact on the character of the street scene, which should not be significantly altered;
  - opportunities to reinstate important architectural details that have been lost, altered, or fallen into disrepair;
  - the need for safe and adequate vehicular access, parking, and servicing arrangements; and
  - the requirement to ensure that nearby residential properties are not adversely affected in terms of amenity.

- 9.14 Changing retail premises to non-retail uses will generally not be supported, especially where it would create an excessive concentration of non-retail frontages. Any proposal must also comply with the relevant planning policies.
- 9.15 Where retail use remains viable only at ground-floor level, 'Living over the Shop' will be encouraged to bring vacant upper floors back into use and introduce activity throughout the day. Such proposals will be supported where:
- effective noise insulation can be provided between the living accommodation and the shop below;
  - a separate access to the residential accommodation can be created without harming the character of the building or its original or well-designed shopfront; and
  - adequate waste storage, and suitable car and cycle parking, can be provided for residents.
- 9.16 Planning permission for uses such as restaurants, cafés, drinking establishments, or hot food takeaways will only be granted where proposals comply with relevant planning policy and it can be shown that they will not harm residential amenity or local environmental quality through odours, noise, late-night activity, disturbance, or increased parking and traffic. Adequate parking must form part of the overall design, and any visually intrusive equipment such as air-conditioning units, ducting, or flues, should be properly screened.

#### Shopfronts, Signage, Blinds and Security Measures

- 9.17 The area's village origins are reflected in the mix of small shop units along London Road, which now form part of a designated Old Oadby Local Centre.
- 9.18 Several good late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century shopfronts survive along London Road. Planning permission will not be granted for their removal, or for the removal of any of their components, unless they are genuinely beyond repair.
- 9.19 Where elements of an original shopfront survive, they should be retained and used either as the foundation for restoring the original frontage or incorporated into a suitably designed new shopfront. Original features should only be removed if they are entirely beyond repair or cannot be successfully integrated into a new design.
- 9.20 Shopfronts. Replacing inappropriate shopfronts is supported where the new design respects the character of the building, any adjoining group or terrace, and the wider area. Acceptable designs should:
- have a clear structural logic, with a well-defined frame of pilasters, fascia and, where suitable, stall risers;
  - relate to the proportions and character of the original building;
  - maintain or improve accessibility for people with disabilities;
  - use appropriate materials;
  - avoid spanning more than one building frontage; and
  - include a suitably designed separate entrance where upper-floor living accommodation is proposed.

- 9.21 Where a change of use is proposed to convert a shop into residential accommodation, any surviving elements of a historic shopfront should be retained unless they are entirely beyond repair.
- 9.22 Signage. Signage on several Oadby buildings has been harmed by unsuitable or poorly executed designs. To be acceptable, new signage must:
- avoid obscuring, overwhelming, or damaging the building's proportions or architectural features;
  - use lettering of a size, material, and font appropriate to the building;
  - remain clear and simple, avoiding garish or unsuitable colours; and
  - include no more than one well-designed and suitably placed hanging sign per shop frontage.
- 9.23 Illumination. Advertisement Consent is required for most illuminated signs in the Conservation Area, and bulky internally lit box signs will not be allowed. Fascia and hanging signs should follow traditional designs and use external lighting where needed. Illuminated signs must:
- use a discreet light source that does not disrupt the building's proportions or harm architectural features;
  - avoid causing any nuisance to nearby residential properties; and
  - maintain a subdued and consistent level of illumination.
- 9.24 Blinds and canopies. Blinds and canopies will be permitted in the Conservation Area only where there is historical precedent and an existing blind box remains, and where they can be introduced without harming the character of the building or its shopfront while relating well to the building's existing features and detailing. Consent from the Local Highways Authority may also be required if they project over a public footpath.
- 9.25 Shop front security. Designing a new shopfront should take the occupier's likely security needs into account, as it is far easier to incorporate suitable security measures from the outset than to add them later to an existing frontage.
- 9.26 Solid external shutters will be allowed in the Conservation Area only where it is clearly demonstrated that they are the sole viable means of providing security necessary for the shopkeeper's livelihood. Even where such a need is proven, an open, removable mesh shutter should be considered before resorting to a solid external shutter.
- 9.27 External shutters, whether solid or grille-type, will be permitted only where they respect the proportions and features of the shopfront, do not cover the pilasters or fascia, and are finished in an appropriate colour and material.

### Car Parking

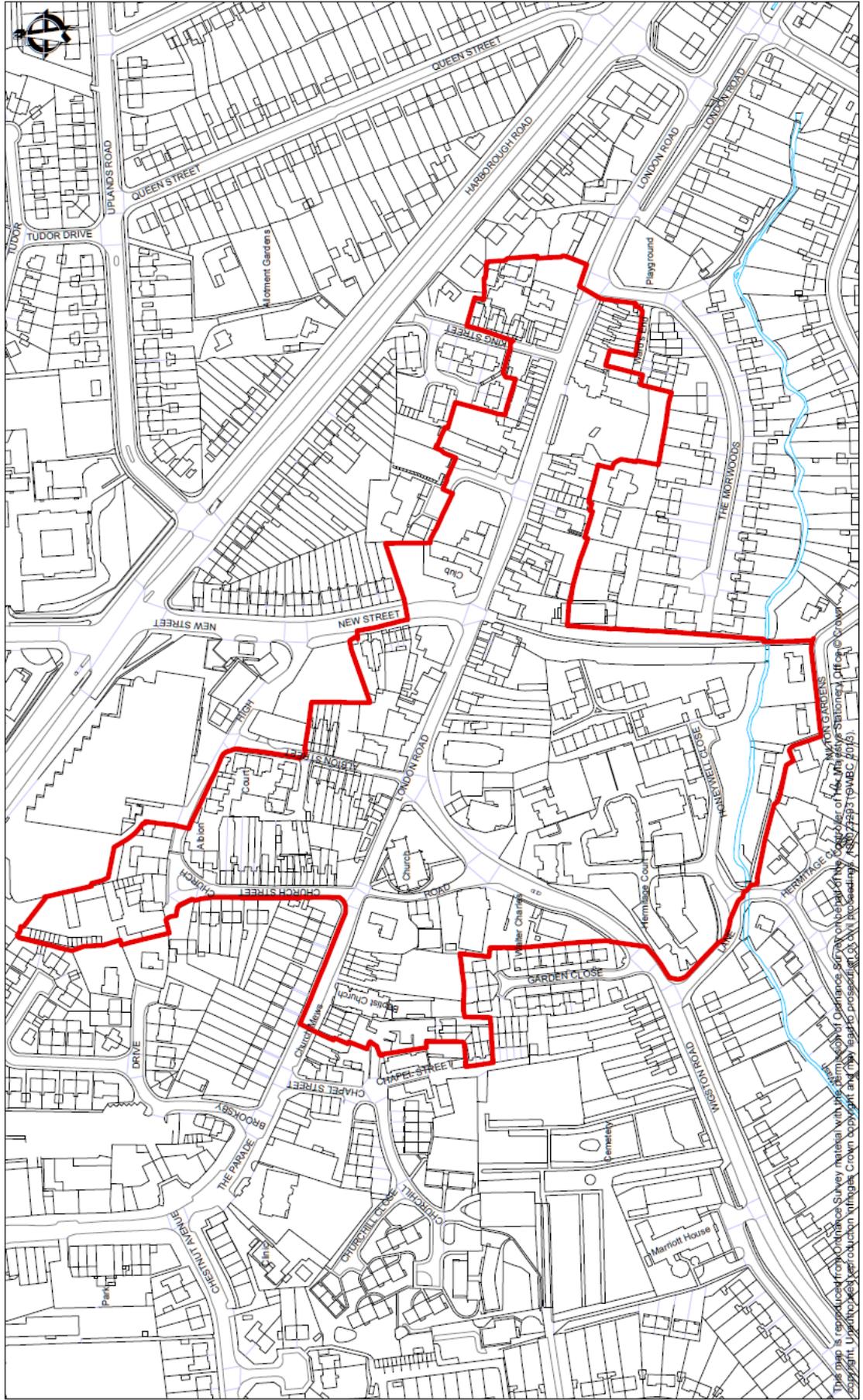
- 9.28 Several parking areas in Oadby are poorly landscaped and visually overpower the surrounding buildings. The layout of these parking spaces has a major influence on the character of the townscape, and thoughtful landscaping is needed to soften their impact. Landscaping plans should take into account:

- using planting to screen vehicles and help parking areas blend into the urban environment;
- providing direct pedestrian routes that link clearly to nearby buildings;
- introducing shared surface treatments, as long as pedestrian paths remain easy to identify; and
- breaking up large parking expanses with trees and other soft landscaping.

### Enhancement Opportunities

- 9.29 A major opportunity for improving the London Road and Saint Peters Conservation Area lies in replacing the less sympathetic buildings with new development that better reflects the character of the surrounding townscape. Any such redevelopment should follow the accompanying Development Control Guidance and any future planning briefs prepared for specific sites.
- 9.30 Redeveloping or improving the landscaping and screening of parking areas within the Conservation Area would significantly enhance the streetscape, as these open parking spaces are currently unattractive and add little to the overall townscape. The most prominent examples are the parking area between 62a and 64 London Road and the car park on New Street.
- 9.31 If an opportunity arises to update street lighting in the Conservation Area, the Borough and County Council will work together to select a style that is appropriate for the setting.
- 9.32 Street signage has become excessive in some locations, especially along London Road, and this visual clutter detracts from the character of the Conservation Area. If the chance arises, reducing and streamlining the signage would be a worthwhile improvement.
- 9.33 The footpath along Lawyers Lane has been resurfaced with modern tarmac, giving it an overly urban appearance. Using a material that softens its look and provides a more rural character, in keeping with the nature of the lane, would be preferable.
- 9.34 The Borough Council may use 'Article 4 Directions' to help preserve traditional external detailing on non-listed buildings within the conservation area, where those features still survive.

# LONDON ROAD / ST PETERS CONSERVATION AREA



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## 10. Midland Cottages Conservation Area Guidance

### Background

10.1 The Midland Cottages Conservation Area was first designated in 1989.

### Overview of the Area

- 10.2 The Midland Cottages Conservation Area is a compact enclave made up of a row of twenty former railway workers' cottages and the former Railway Hotel. All of the buildings were constructed between 1871 and 1881 using almost identical materials. Although the Railway Hotel is a more prominent structure, it shares the cottages' two-storey form and originally stood on the road that crossed the railway at a level crossing. When a new road bridge was built in the early twentieth century, the buildings were left at the foot of the embankment that now carries the road.
- 10.3 The cottages and the former hotel hold significant architectural and historic value and are included on the Local List, though the character of the cottages has been diminished in recent years by gradual alterations to individual homes. While each change may seem small, together they have weakened the terrace's once uniform appearance. Restoring lost features and removing paint or cladding would offer a strong opportunity to recover the terrace's original character. The former hotel, by contrast, remains largely intact and was operating as a public house serving the local community.
- 10.4 The embankment forms the effective southern edge of the Conservation Area, while the railway line marks its western limit. Housing lies to the east, with modern homes and industrial premises situated to the north.
- 10.5 The setting is distinctly urban, with limited greenery apart from the vegetation that has naturally grown along the railway line and embankment, plus the occasional garden tree. Even so, the track in front of the cottages and the public house forecourt offer strong opportunities to enhance the area's character. Improvements to the railway land opposite the cottages and to the embankment would also greatly benefit the cottages' outlook and overall setting.

### Control of Minor Alterations to the Midland Cottages

10.6 Preventing further loss of original cottage features is as important as encouraging their reinstatement. Article 4 Directions could therefore be introduced, requiring Planning Permission for the following types of work:

- cladding or painting external walls, including window surrounds and reveals;
- replacing or altering external windows and doors;
- making changes to the roof, such as altering the covering or adding dormers or rooflights;
- removing or modifying chimney stacks;
- demolishing or altering rear boundary walls;
- adding porches, canopies, or window shutters; and

- installing satellite dishes or any other form of optional external physical technology.

10.7 The Borough Council will encourage the reinstatement of lost architectural features. This includes installing new windows that follow the original designs (3-over-3 sashes for the first-floor window above the front door and plate-glass sash windows elsewhere), adopting a consistent front-door style, and restoring front-door canopies similar to those on numbers 17 and 18.

#### Rear Extensions to the Midland Cottages

10.8 The rear elevations of the cottages are highly visible from Blaby Road and replacing the original single-storey pitched-roof service wings with flat-roofed extensions has undermined the terrace's once unified appearance.

10.9 Alterations to the rear wings will only be supported where they are of high quality and respect the historic character of the area.

#### Retention of Public House

10.10 The former public house is a key element of the Conservation Area's character, reflecting its historic role as the former railway hotel. A change of use will be opposed unless it can be clearly demonstrated that its current function is no longer economically viable, as even if the building's appearance were retained, its historic association with the railway would be lost.

10.11 If it can be demonstrated that operating as a public house is no longer viable, conversion to an appropriate alternative use in line with current planning policy may be supported, provided that:

- interpretation material is installed in a publicly accessible part of the building to explain its former role and its links to the railway.
- the façade, overall appearance, and historic features are retained, with restoration carried out where needed.
- improvements to the public realm and the building's setting are made in a way that respects its character and history.

#### Demolition and Redevelopment

10.12 Demolition of any Locally Listed Building will only be supported where it is clearly shown that the structure is unsound, cannot continue in its existing use, cannot be adapted for another acceptable use, or where the public benefits of demolition would significantly outweigh its architectural and historic value and its contribution to the Conservation Area. Any new development within the Midland Cottages Conservation Area, or affecting its setting, must:

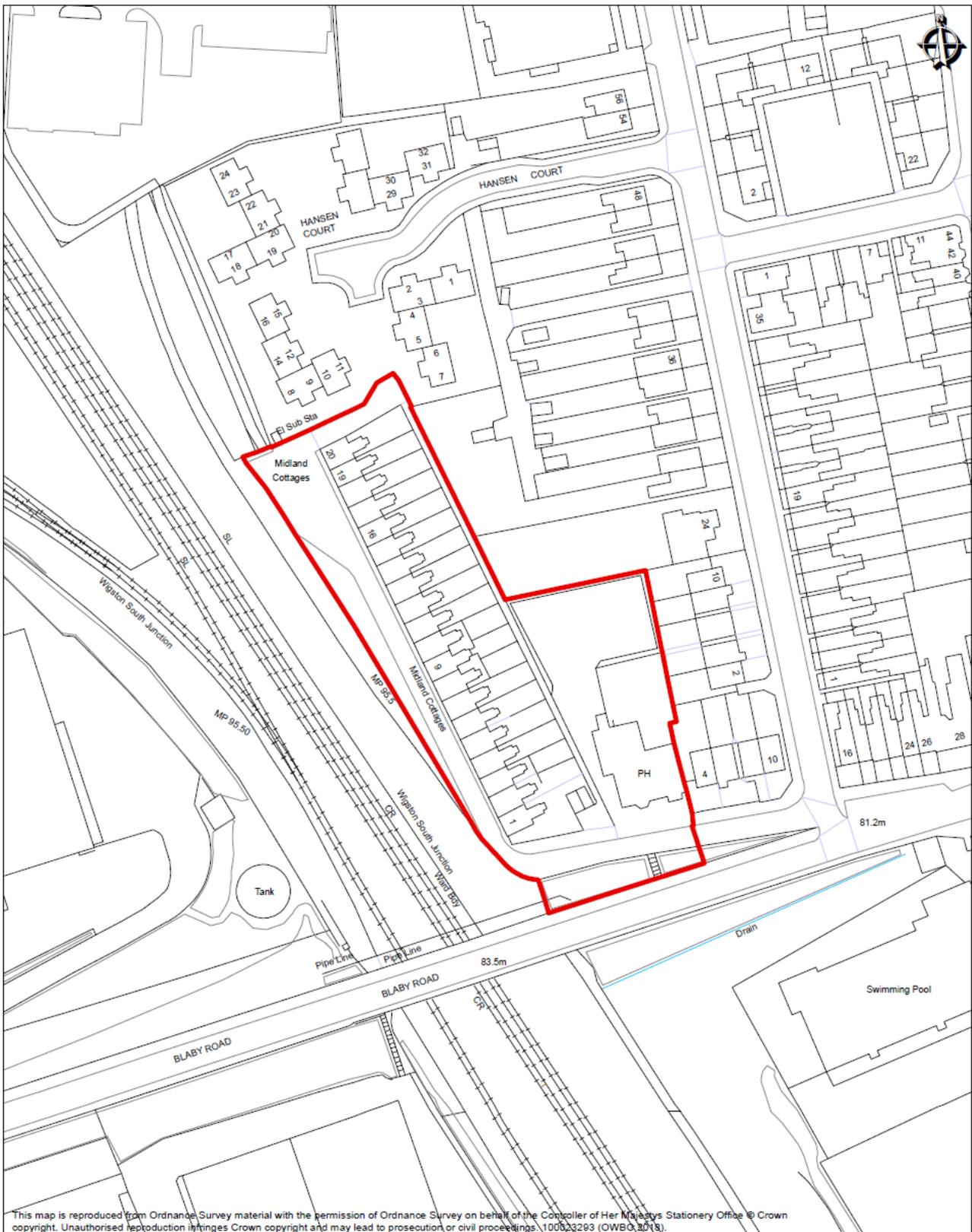
- respect the scale of all buildings in the area;
- use materials that either match the existing buildings or provide a well-judged contrast;
- position windows, doors, bays, chimneys, and other elements to create a clear rhythm consistent with neighbouring buildings;

- face directly onto the street and maintain a strong vertical emphasis
- include appropriate architectural detailing to window and door heads, eaves, verges, and gable ends;
- maintain a simple roofline, with ridges interrupted only by chimney stacks; and
- incorporate boundary treatments that are suitable for the setting.

### Enhancement Opportunities

- 10.13 The most significant opportunity for improving this Conservation Area lies in restoring features that have been lost. This may include carefully removing stone cladding, render, and paint from façades; reinstating sash windows in their original patterns; and potentially reintroducing front-door canopies. The use of Article 4 Directions could also be explored to prevent further loss of original features.
- 10.14 Poor-quality rear extensions, which are visible from Blaby Road, would benefit from a consistent, unified design approach that could gradually improve the appearance of the terrace. This issue is addressed in the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal and Development Control Guidance.
- 10.15 Repairs are needed to the brick wall behind the cottages, and part of the wall bordering the public house car park will also require rebuilding. In addition, replacing the fence around No. 1 with a more suitable alternative would further enhance the area.
- 10.16 Efforts should be made to encourage the railway company to paint the unattractive galvanised fence and improve planting to lessen its visual impact. Planting the grass verges between the fence and the cottages would also help soften its appearance and significantly enhance the cottages' setting.
- 10.17 The garages at the ends of the terraces are in very poor condition and lack the quality and detailing of the cottages. Replacing them with structures built from more appropriate materials and incorporating pitched roofs would greatly enhance the character of the area.
- 10.18 Repaving the public house's front apron in historically appropriate materials, such as setts or blue brick pavers, would greatly enhance its appearance.
- 10.19 The track on the western side of the road in front of the cottages could be resurfaced with bonded gravel or another suitable material, while the footpath could be repaved using setts or blue brick pavers. Existing York stone kerbs should be retained, with any damaged sections replaced in matching stone.
- 10.20 Improved maintenance of the embankment would greatly enhance the outlook, particularly for the public house. The retaining wall has the potential to be an attractive feature, though it is in need of repair. The steps down the embankment, which have disappeared over time, should be reinstated; if reinstatement is not possible, their former position should be indicated through appropriate detailing within 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.
- 11.2 Most of the land and properties within the Conservation Area fall under the ownership of the North Memorial Homes and the Framework Knitters Cottages. Both organisations operate as social housing providers, with their properties overseen by Boards of Trustees.

### Overview of the Area

- 11.3 The Conservation Area contains two groups of well-maintained, open-plan almshouses facing each other on the east and west sides of Stoughton Road. Although both were built in the early twentieth century using red brick and clay tile roofs, each group sits within attractive, carefully tended grounds and is approached through private gateways. Despite these shared qualities, the two sets of buildings have distinctly different characters.
- 11.4 The Framework Knitters Cottages are all single-storey buildings. Most are arranged around an open lawn and gardens, though some face directly onto Stoughton Road. More recently built cottages to the south of the site form informal courtyard groups. The earliest cottages date from 1909, with some new additions currently under construction. While the cottages share similar overall forms, including hipped roofs and tile-hung gables, there are notable differences in detailing, particularly between the older and newer buildings. They are arranged in pairs or small groups of three. Two communal buildings, Corah Hall and Corah House, stand opposite each other across the central lawn; Corah Hall is part of the original foundation and designed as a focal building, while Corah House is modern and follows the general form of the cottages.
- 11.5 The North Memorial Homes consist of two-storey pairs, some of which have been subdivided into flats. They are formally arranged around the central gardens and are well screened from Stoughton Road. All were built in 1927 and appear almost identical at first glance, though closer inspection shows two main building types, with one pair, forming the focal point of the main eastward view, differing slightly. Each pair features sweeping roofs with central chimney stacks, verandas, gables (some hipped), and, in some cases, hipped-roof dormers. The former Memorial Hall, set prominently along the western boundary, is now leased to the Evangelical Church and is designed in a restrained Neo-Georgian style.
- 11.6 Both the North Memorial Homes and the Framework Knitters Cottages sit within attractive grounds, largely laid to lawn and complemented by flower and shrub beds. In the Framework Knitters site, most mature trees are positioned along the boundaries, with the notable exception of the Canadian Oak behind the main gate. At the North Memorial Homes, trees are especially concentrated along the western

edge and the eastern and southern boundaries, with additional specimens placed strategically within the gardens.

- 11.7 Cars are limited to the area in front of the Evangelical Church within the North Memorial Homes site, allowing most of the gardens to remain free of vehicles since all houses have rear access lanes. At the Framework Knitters site, vehicles can circulate around the edge of the gardens, but the parking area is well screened, so cars seldom disrupt the attractive setting of the cottages. Streetlighting on the Knitters site uses traditional lantern-style fittings that suit the surroundings, while the modern lights at the North Memorial Homes are painted dark green and remain unobtrusive.
- 11.8 All of the North Memorial Homes are Locally Listed Buildings, as are the Framework Knitters properties constructed before 1925. Tree Preservation Orders also apply within the Conservation Area.

#### Protection of Open Spaces

- 11.9 The open, unenclosed layout of both the Framework Knitters Homes and the North Memorial Homes is a defining aspect of the Conservation Area's character. This openness should be preserved, and any development that would erode or alter it would be unacceptable.

#### The Design of New Buildings

- 11.10 Very few sites within the Conservation Area offer development potential, and the Council aims to safeguard its spacious, open-plan character. For any new development to be acceptable, its design must respect the Conservation Area's character and appearance by:
- being of a mass, form, and scale appropriate to neighbouring residential properties (single storey for the Framework Knitters Homes and two storey for the North Memorial Homes);
  - following established building lines where they exist;
  - incorporating varied roof forms that contribute to an interesting skyline silhouette;
  - using materials that either reflect those of the area's traditional buildings or provide a high-quality, distinctive contrast.
  - responding to prevalent architectural details such as bay windows, window and door surrounds, and decorative eaves, and acknowledging differences in detailing between terraces where development spans more than one street.
  - creating positive street corners with active frontages on all elevations.
  - including a Design Statement within any planning application explaining the design rationale.
- 11.11 Sensitive infill development will be allowed, as long as it would not undermine the spacious, open-plan character of both sites.
- 11.12 High energy-efficiency standards will be encouraged in new buildings, and opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation may be explored. Any such

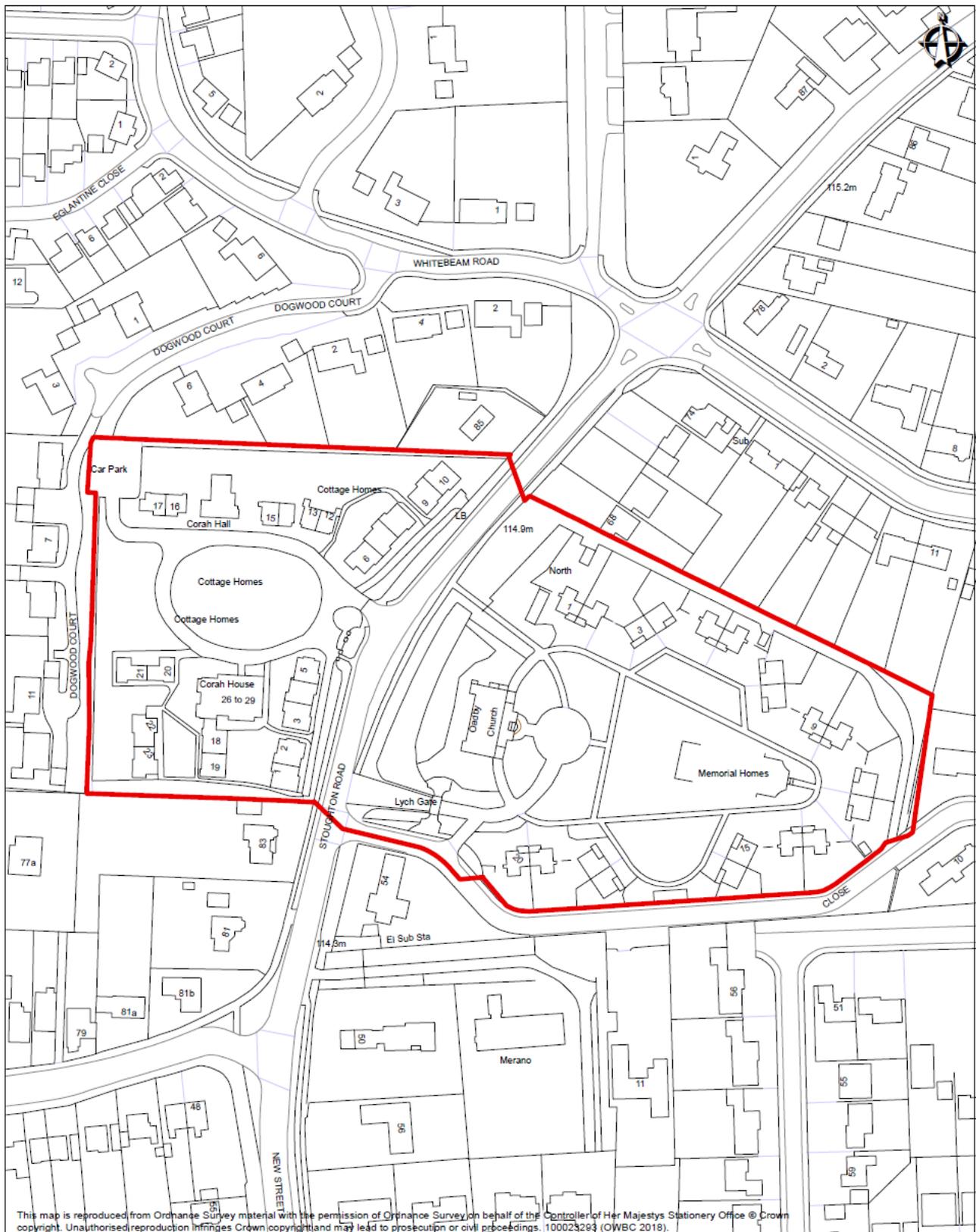
measures must, however, be carefully assessed to ensure they do not harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

### Enhancement Opportunities

- 11.13 Both sites within the Conservation Area are highly attractive, so the priority is to manage them in a way that preserves their essential character. Maintenance, repair, and sensitive enhancement should take precedence over redevelopment.
- 11.14 Some of the paths within the Framework Knitters site have modern black-top surfacing that gives them a rather urban appearance. While a smooth finish is essential, bonding aggregate or gravel into the tarmac would soften their look while still providing a safe, even surface. This approach has recently been used at the North Memorial Homes, where it has greatly improved the appearance of the paving and is far more in keeping with the setting.
- 11.15 The street lighting at the North Memorial Homes could be improved. Although the columns are painted dark green and remain generally unobtrusive, their modern design is out of keeping with the area's character. Replacing them with a more traditional style would be more appropriate.

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# 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.

### Overview of the Area

- 12.2 Oadby Court is a small Conservation Area that includes a large Victorian house and part of its original extensive grounds, 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 prominent buildings and, despite substantial extensions and alterations, still retain their cubic forms and white rendered walls. A number of impressive, mature trees surround the original Victorian house, which served as an office for many years and has since been converted into residential apartments. These trees make a significant contribution to the area’s amenity and enhance the setting of both the Victorian house and the 1930s properties. A small number of similarly mature trees also remain within the gardens of Oadby Court, surviving as remnants of the tree screen that once enclosed the south-eastern corner of the Victorian property’s extensive grounds.
- 12.4 The Oadby Court houses have lost some of their original uniform character. Although enough remains for them to still be understood as a coherent group, it is important that future alterations help to restore this character rather than diminish it further.
- 12.5 The Victorian house, originally built as Oadby Hill and now known as Brook’s House, is an attractive mid-nineteenth-century villa that has remained largely unaltered externally. Its setting, however, has been significantly reduced by the creation of Oadby Hill Drive, Granville Avenue, and several other twentieth-century residential streets on land to the northeast. Portions of the original tree belts to the east and west survive, helping to screen the house from the busy A6 and the newer surrounding development. Although much of the remaining garden has been converted to car parking, this still provides the building with a degree of space around it.
- 12.6 Oadby Court is therefore a small enclave, sheltered by mature trees and partly by the verge and planting that remained after the road was realigned in the late twentieth century.

### Alterations and Extensions of Oadby Court Houses

- 12.7 Although the Oadby Court houses are Locally Listed, all have undergone some degree of alteration or extension. Even so, they still retain a shared character, largely due to their angular forms and white rendered walls. While the original windows have been replaced with modern versions, these continue to reflect the 1930s horizontal emphasis and provide a good approximation of the original Crittall patterns. Going forward, it is important to ensure that these window styles are preserved and that the render remains white, helping to maintain both the individual

and collective character of the buildings. The Borough Council will therefore consider using Article 4 Directions to control:

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

12.8 Extensions to the Oadby Court houses will be supported, provided they comply with all other relevant planning policies and meet the following criteria:

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

#### Alterations and Extension of Brook's House, No. 81 Leicester Road

12.9 Brook's House is a Locally Listed Building, and any alteration that materially changes its external appearance requires Planning Permission. Proposals that would remove original architectural features will be opposed unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the feature is beyond repair or that its removal or alteration would provide a long-term benefit to the building.

12.10 Extensions to Brook House will be supported, provided they comply with all other relevant planning policies and meet the following criteria:

- they do not harm any significant elevations of the building;
- they do not remove important architectural features or disrupt the proportions of the elevation;
- they do not result in the loss, now or in the future, of important trees or landscape features; and
- their design, materials, and detailing match or complement the original building.

#### Change of use of Brook's House, No. 81 Leicester Road

12.11 Brook's House, No. 81 is currently in use as residential apartments, and the change of residential properties to non-residential uses will generally not be permitted.

#### Development within the Grounds of Brook's House, No. 81 Leicester Road

12.12 Development within the grounds of Brook's House will be supported, provided it complies with all other relevant planning policies and meets the following criteria:

- the proposal does not harm the setting of Brook's House or obstruct key views of its principal elevations;
- the design of any new buildings respects or complements Brook's House in scale, massing, form, materials, and detailing;
- Brook's House retains an appropriate setting and amenity space, and any new buildings are given adequate, well-landscaped amenity areas;
- the existing level of car parking is maintained;

- vehicle access is sufficient, or can be improved without affecting the building's setting or requiring the loss of important trees, boundaries, or hedges; and
- no significant trees are lost or inappropriately pruned as a result of the development, any alterations, or the future needs of occupants regarding natural light.

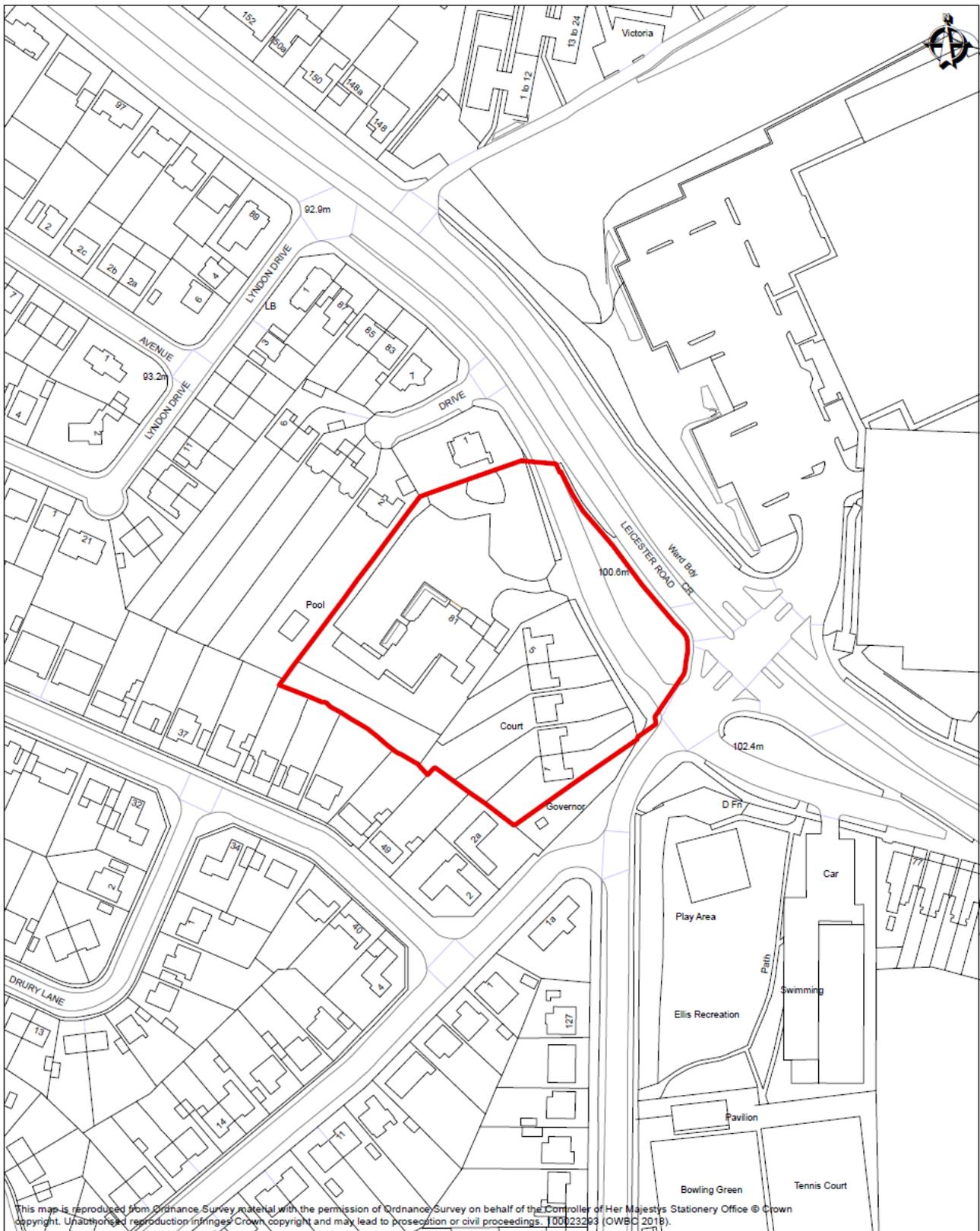
#### Enhancement Opportunities

12.13 The main opportunity for enhancing the Oadby Court houses lies in achieving greater consistency in the design of extensions and window treatments.

12.14 The setting of Brook's House, No. 81 Leicester Road, would be greatly improved if some of the car parking were broken up with carefully placed trees or soft landscaping.

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# 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.

### Overview of the Area

- 13.2 The Oadby Hill Top Conservation Area is a strong example of a district created to accommodate the wealthy industrialists of a rapidly expanding manufacturing town. These individuals sought cleaner air and more generous space, amenities increasingly scarce in the town itself, largely due to industries such as brickmaking, machinery production, hosiery, and footwear. The release of substantial land, primarily following the sale of the Powys Keck estate, made it possible to build large houses on exceptionally spacious plots.
- 13.3 The largest plots were located along Stoughton Drive South, and to a lesser extent on Glebe Road and Manor Road. These streets became the setting for the area's most distinguished houses, many now nationally or locally listed, set within particularly impressive gardens. Designed by leading local architects, most notably the father-and-son team Stockdale and Shirley Harrison, the houses were built in the fashionable Arts and Crafts style. Evolving from the Victorian Gothic Revival, this style embraced elements from various periods of vernacular architecture and offered considerable creative freedom to both architect and client. Many of the earliest and grandest homes incorporated Jacobethan features, enabling Leicester's wealthy industrialists to create their own interpretations of Elizabethan "prodigy" houses as a display of taste, prosperity, and social standing.
- 13.4 On the surrounding streets, there are similarly impressive houses, though the plots are generally smaller unless several were combined. These homes display even greater stylistic variety than the larger properties, incorporating Jacobethan, Vernacular Revival, Art Nouveau, and Neo-Georgian influences, the latter becoming especially fashionable in the 1920s, even for substantial residences such as Southmeade. Together, they create an area of remarkably strong character. After the Second World War, Leicester University began acquiring many of the larger houses for student accommodation, ensuring that these significant buildings, now too large for single households, continue to be used and appreciated. The only discordant elements are the occasional 1960s bungalow or house, and more notably, the large student accommodation blocks.

### Change of Use

- 13.5 To residential uses. The conversion of single-family homes into halls of residence, boarding houses, guest houses, flats, or other more intensive residential uses (including hospitals or nursing homes) will only be permitted where all other relevant planning policies are met and it can be demonstrated that:

- the amenity of neighbouring residents will not be significantly harmed;
- adequate car and cycle parking, along with refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view;
- existing vehicle access points are sufficient, or new appropriately sized accesses can be created without detracting from the building's setting or requiring the removal of important trees, boundaries, or hedges;
- car parking can be accommodated without extensive areas of hard surfacing;
- the appearance of the dwelling can be maintained without the need for intrusive extensions or alterations;
- the building's setting will be preserved, with suitable arrangements in place for the upkeep of gardens, trees, and hedges;
- no important trees will be removed or inappropriately pruned as a result of the change of use, any alterations, or the likely future needs of occupants regarding natural light;
- any signage will respect the residential character of the area and will not be illuminated; and
- the proposal will not lead to a significant increase in traffic generation or on-street parking.

13.6 Change of Use to Non-Residential Use. There will be a general presumption against converting existing family homes to non-residential uses. Any proposal for such a change must comply with all relevant policies set out in the Council's Local Plan.

#### Subdivision of Plots

13.7 A defining feature of much of the area is the presence of substantial historic buildings set within generous plots. Any proposals for plot subdivision, infill development, backland or tandem schemes, or the loss of open space will be assessed individually and must comply with all relevant local and national policies and guidance.

#### The Design of New Buildings

13.8 Subject to compliance with all other relevant planning policies, any new building will only be considered acceptable if its design respects the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:

- being of a suitable mass and scale that avoids overdevelopment and does not overpower the traditional 2–2.5-storey houses that define the area;
- adopting a form that sits comfortably alongside the Jacobethan, Vernacular Revival, and Neo-Georgian styles found locally;
- incorporating varied and engaging roof forms that create an interesting silhouette;
- using materials that either reflect those of the area's traditional buildings or provide a high-quality, well-judged contrast;
- drawing inspiration from the distinctive plan forms, bays, oriels, gables, and sweeping roofs characteristic of the area's historic architecture; and
- including a Design and Access Statement with the planning application that clearly explains the design rationale.

## Works to Listed Buildings

13.9 The acceptability of any works to Listed Buildings is determined by relevant local and national planning policy. Within the Oadby Hill Top Conservation Area, most Listed Buildings are now used as flats or student accommodation. While these uses have helped ensure the buildings remain well maintained and appreciated, the need to adapt them to meet evolving legislation can sometimes result in inappropriate, incremental alterations. This section therefore provides additional guidance to help manage such changes appropriately.

### General.

- Before proposing any work to a historic building, applicants must have a thorough understanding of how the changes would affect its historic fabric;
- For complex buildings or major proposals, a Conservation Plan or Statement of Significance should be used to identify the key features of the building, its group value, and its setting; and
- Applications to alter a Listed Building must include a Design and Access Statement explaining the need for the changes, the alternative options considered, and why the proposed works represent the least harmful approach to the building's special interest.

### Fire precaution works.

- Ensure that any internal subdivision of the building does not harm principal rooms, staircases, corridors, or hallways;
- Explore ways to upgrade historic doors and glazing—such as using intumescent products—rather than replacing them;
- Where floor insulation is required, install it from above to avoid damaging plaster ceilings;
- Position alarms, detectors, and similar equipment as discreetly as possible, ideally near existing features like light fittings;
- Avoid fixing equipment to panelling, and ensure cable routes do not cut across cornices, dados, panelling, or open wall surfaces; and
- Consider external fire escapes only as a last resort, and place them away from prominent elevations and key architectural features.

### Kitchens and bathrooms.

- Avoid principal elevations if doing so would require external soil-vent pipes, vents, or obscured glazing;
- Keep installations out of sensitive rooms with decorative plasterwork or panelling, and do not position them above such spaces;
- Group services vertically wherever possible to minimise the length and visibility of pipe runs; and
- Route vents through redundant chimney flues when feasible.

### Disabled access.

- Fully understand the issues before proposing any modifications, and carry out an access audit for larger buildings or groups of buildings;

- Maintain the symmetry of façades when designing ramps;
- Use materials that are appropriate to the building and its setting; and
- Position lifts away from principal rooms and main staircases.

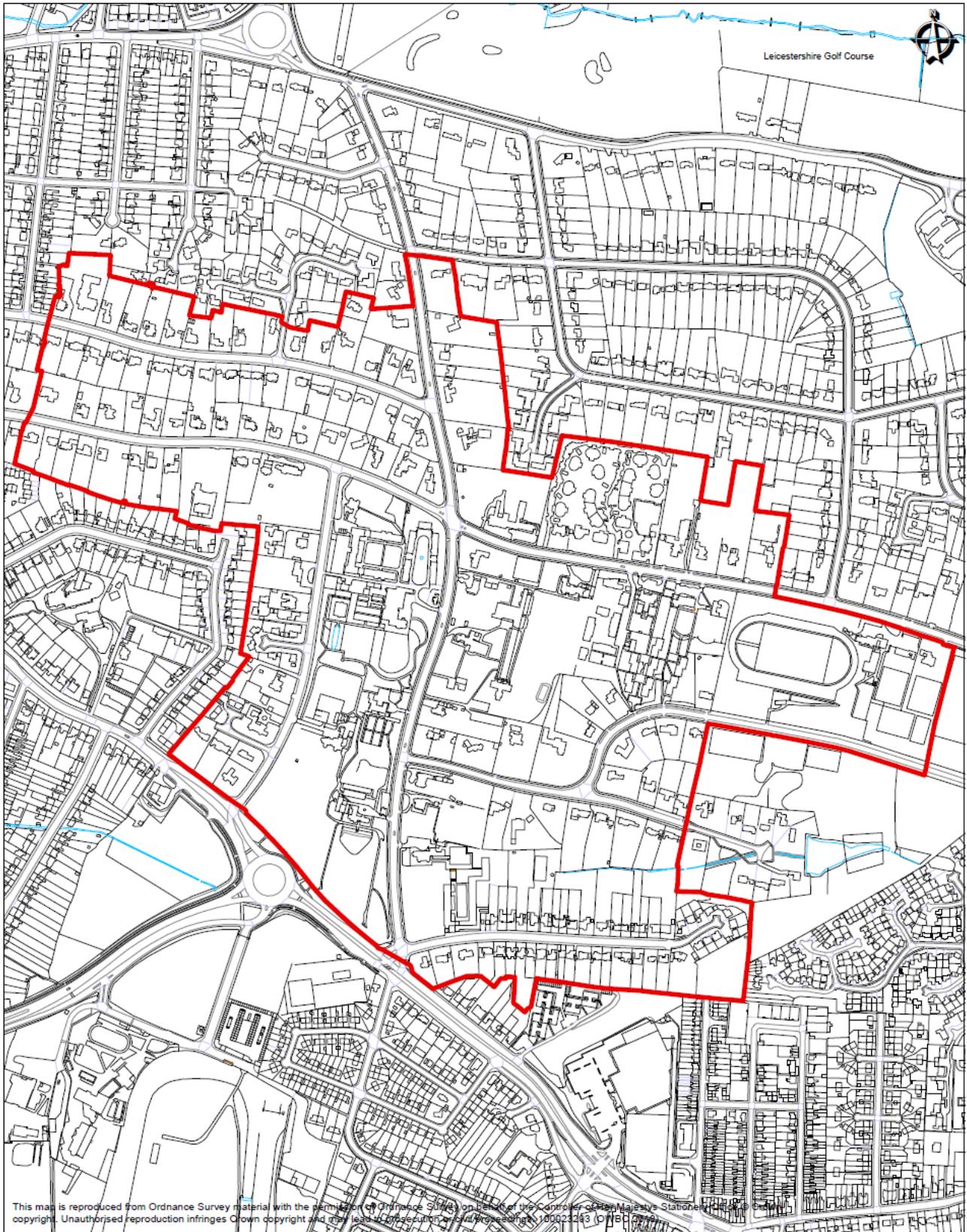
### Trees and Landscaping

- 13.10 Trees. All trees within the Conservation Area already benefit from a level of protection, as owners must give the Borough Council six weeks' notice before carrying out any works to them.
- 13.11 Development that involves felling trees, carrying out major pruning (either now or in the foreseeable future), or creating a risk of root damage will only be permitted where clear public benefits can be demonstrated. Where tree removal is approved, replacement planting will be required wherever possible, and planning conditions will be used to secure the replanting and ongoing maintenance of new trees.
- 13.12 New buildings will not be permitted close to important trees unless it can be clearly demonstrated that their presence will not cause any harm to the tree.
- 13.13 Landscaping. Landscaping schemes will be required to accompany proposals for new development where they are appropriate to the character of the scheme. Planning permissions will include conditions to ensure that approved landscaping is fully implemented.
- 13.14 Open Spaces. Development on major areas of public or private open space will only be supported where clear and demonstrable public benefits can be shown, and where there are no significant adverse effects on ecological habitats.

### Enhancement Opportunities

- 13.15 The potential use of 'Article 4 Directions' may be considered to help manage and control incremental alterations to Locally Listed Buildings.
- 13.16 Repair and restoration of greenhouses, such as those located to the rear of Highgrove.
- 13.17 Improved screening to the rear of university properties, particularly behind Gilbert Murray Hall.
- 13.18 Improved screening of Beaumont Hall from the Botanic Gardens, as well as from Knighton Grange Road and Aigburth.
- 13.19 Where the gardens of historic buildings have been hard-surfaced for parking, the resulting expanses of tarmac, which detract from their character, could be softened and broken up through appropriate planting.
- 13.20 Enhance the contribution that the Botanic Gardens make to the surrounding area.

# OADBY HILLTOP / MEADOWCOURT CONSERVATION AREA



## 14. South Wigston Conservation Area Guidance

### Background

14.1 South Wigston Conservation Area was first designated in 1989.

### Overview of the Area

- 14.2 South Wigston was developed in the late nineteenth century by the owner of a major brickworks. Its creation followed the tradition of Victorian philanthropists who established 'model' towns such as New Lanark and Saltaire, a movement later continued in places like Bournville and Port Sunlight. However, unlike most of these settlements, South Wigston was not intended solely to house brickyard workers. From the outset, it also incorporated a range of commercial premises, particularly those linked to the clothing industry.
- 14.3 Like other model settlements such as Saltaire, the town is largely arranged on a grid, with most housing built as terraces. The majority of homes follow a similar pattern, although some were constructed on a larger scale and included front gardens. A small number of bigger houses were built on Orange Street, Blaby Road (before many were converted to shops), and especially Saffron Road to accommodate wealthier residents. However, the distinction between different sizes and standards of housing for different social groups is less pronounced here than in many other model towns.
- 14.4 Although the terraces and groups of houses vary in their detailing, the area as a whole has a very strong and distinctive character. Most traditional buildings are constructed in red brick, ranging in tone from orange to purple, with occasional use of gault brick either for entire façades or as decorative detailing. The settlement expanded rapidly and was largely complete by 1913, after which development mainly consisted of local authority housing on the remaining undeveloped plots, some built as terraces, others in more typical semi-detached forms.
- 14.5 Today, South Wigston retains much of its strong character despite more recent development and alterations to many houses. Some industrial activities have reduced or ceased altogether, and the buildings they left behind now offer opportunities for enhancing the area.

### Development of Large / Sensitive Sites

- 14.6 The following sites offer long-term opportunities to enhance the character of the Conservation Area:
- Station Street – Bus garage. Allocated for residential development in the 2019 adopted Local Plan. The Council also issued a Local Development Order for the site, although this has since expired.
  - Lower Canal Street/Park Road. An area containing large industrial buildings alongside residential properties, presenting potential for redevelopment for housing.

- Countesthorpe Road – Alpha House. A former office block occupying a site that fronts both Orange Street and Countesthorpe Road. The site offers scope for redevelopment with a building that respects the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Countesthorpe Road – tyre depot. (southern end of Countesthorpe Road): A small site currently used as a car park with a single-storey building, associated with car spares sales in the adjoining premises. There is potential for redevelopment for residential use.

### The Design of New Buildings

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

- being of a suitable mass and scale so that it does not dominate the small two-storey residential terraces and, in mixed commercial–residential streets, maintaining an appropriate relationship between different building sizes;
- adopting a form that sits comfortably alongside the area’s mix of residential, industrial, and commercial architectural styles;
- respecting established building lines where these are clearly defined;
- incorporating varied and engaging roof forms that contribute positively to the skyline;
- using materials that either reflect those found on traditional buildings in the area or provide a high-quality, well-considered contrast;
- responding to prevalent architectural details, such as bay windows, window and door surrounds, and decorative eaves, and acknowledging differences in detailing between terraces where a development spans more than one street;
- creating strong and active street corners with frontages that engage all elevations; and
- including a Design and Access Statement within any planning application to explain the design rationale.

14.8 Appropriate infill development will be supported, provided it complies with all other relevant planning policies and its design responds sensitively to the prevailing character and quality of the surrounding townscape. In particular, such development should take account of:

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

## Change of Use

14.9 The conversion of former industrial or commercial buildings that contribute positively to the townscape will be actively encouraged, provided that:

- the building's appearance can be retained without requiring unsympathetic extensions or alterations;
- where a property was originally built as a shop and elements of an original or appropriate shopfront survive, these features are retained unless they are beyond repair;
- the amenity of neighbouring residents is not significantly affected;
- adequate car and cycle parking, as well as refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view;
- existing vehicle access points are sufficient, or new appropriately sized accesses can be created without harming the area's townscape quality, the building's setting, or any important trees or boundaries; and
- any significant architectural details that have been lost, altered, or fallen into disrepair are reinstated.

14.10 There is a general presumption to retain retail uses along Blaby Road. However, it is recognised that shopping patterns in the area are changing. Many properties, particularly those at the western end and the terrace featuring Gothic detailing, were originally built as houses and later converted to shops. Where retail use is no longer commercially viable, and subject to compliance with all relevant planning policies, conversion back to residential use will be supported when:

- the architectural character and detailing of the original houses are reinstated;
- front gardens and appropriate boundary treatments are restored;
- adequate car and cycle parking, along with refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view; and
- the living accommodation meets the technical housing standards set out in Policy 11 of the Local Plan and provides an acceptable level of amenity for future occupants.

14.11 Where retail use remains viable only on the ground floor, 'Living over the Shop' will be actively encouraged to bring vacant upper floors back into use and introduce activity throughout the day. Such proposals will be supported provided that:

- suitable noise insulation can be installed between the living accommodation and the shop below;
- where a separate entrance is required, it can be created without harming the character of the building or any original or appropriately designed shopfront; and
- adequate waste storage and car and cycle parking can be provided for residents.

14.12 The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential purposes will generally not be permitted.

14.13 Planning permission for proposals such as restaurants, cafés, drinking establishments, or hot food takeaways, subject to compliance with all other relevant

planning policies, will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm to residential amenity or local environmental quality arising from odours, noise, increased late-night activity and disturbance, or additional parking and traffic.

14.14 The subdivision of a single residential property into multiple dwellings, subject to compliance with all other relevant planning policies, will only be permitted where:

- the building's appearance can be retained without requiring unsympathetic extensions or alterations;
- the amenity of neighbouring residents is not significantly harmed;
- satisfactory car and cycle parking, along with refuse storage, can be accommodated and appropriately screened;
- the property's location and surrounding land uses do not compromise the quality of residential amenity for future occupants;
- the resulting living accommodation is of an acceptable standard;
- any required separate entrances are safe, adequate, and can be provided without detracting from the building's character; and
- appropriate noise insulation can be installed between dwellings.

#### Shopfronts, Signage, Blinds and Security Measures

14.15 The provision of shops was a key feature of South Wigston's original development. Blaby Road emerged as the main shopping street, but shops were also located at the ends of many residential streets to both the north and south. While some historic shopfronts remain, many others have been lost or altered through unsympathetic modern changes or poorly designed signage.

14.16 The Council is committed to improving the quality of shopfronts within the Conservation Area and will apply the following guidance to support this aim. Restoring original shopfronts in South Wigston is often straightforward, as many were designed consistently within terraces and good photographic records of the area still exist.

14.17 Shopfronts. Several high-quality late nineteenth and early twentieth-century shopfronts still survive in South Wigston. Planning permission will not be granted for their removal, or for the removal of any of their components, unless they are genuinely beyond repair.

14.18 Where elements of an original shopfront remain, they should be retained and used as the foundation for restoring the original frontage or incorporated into a suitably designed new shopfront. The removal of original features will only be permitted where they are completely decayed or cannot be successfully integrated into a new design.

14.19 The replacement of inappropriate shopfronts will be encouraged, provided the new design respects the character of the building, any adjoining properties within a group or terrace, and the wider area. To be acceptable, new shopfronts should:

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

- maintain or enhance accessibility for people with disabilities;
- use appropriate materials;
- avoid spanning the frontage of more than one building; and
- include a suitably designed separate entrance where upper-floor living accommodation is proposed.

14.20 Where a change of use is proposed to convert an original shop back into residential accommodation, any surviving elements of an original or otherwise appropriate shopfront must be retained unless they are genuinely beyond repair.

14.21 Signage. Several buildings in South Wigston have been visually harmed by inappropriate or poorly designed signage. To be acceptable, new signage must:

- avoid obscuring, overwhelming, or damaging the building's proportions or any of its architectural features.
- use lettering of a suitable size, material, and font for the building.
- be clear and simple to read, avoiding garish or unsuitable colours.
- include no more than one well-designed and appropriately positioned hanging sign for each shop frontage.

14.22 Illumination. Advertisement Consent is required for most types of illuminated signage within the Conservation Area. Internally illuminated 'box' signs, which are visually intrusive, will not be permitted. To be acceptable, illuminated signs must:

- use a discreet light source that does not disrupt the proportions of the building or frontage, nor harm any architectural features.
- avoid causing any adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residential properties.
- maintain a subdued and consistent level of illumination.

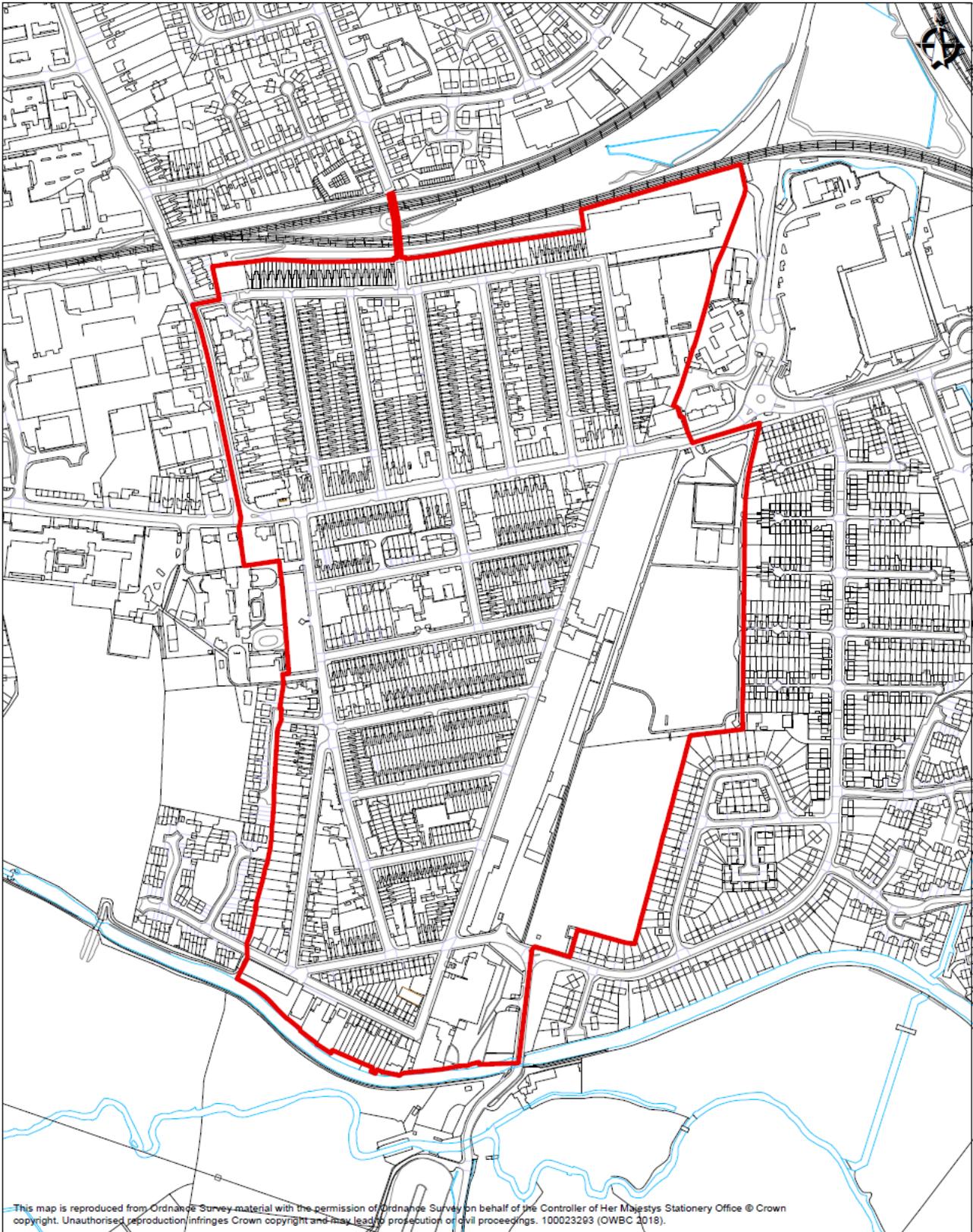
14.23 Blinds and Canopies. Blinds and canopies will only be permitted within the Conservation Area where there is historical precedent and an existing blind box remains, and where they can be installed without harming the character of the building or shopfront, while relating appropriately to the building's existing features and detailing.

14.24 Shopfront Security. When designing a new shopfront, the likely security needs of the occupier should be considered from the outset. It is far easier to incorporate appropriate security measures into a new design than to add them later to an existing frontage.

14.25 Solid external shutters will only be permitted within the Conservation Area where it can be clearly demonstrated that they are the sole viable security option necessary for the shopkeeper to protect their livelihood.

14.26 External shutters, whether solid or grille-type, will only be permitted where they respect the proportions and features of the shopfront, do not obscure the pilasters or fascia, and are finished in an appropriate colour and material.

# SOUTH WIGSTON CONSERVATION AREA



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## 15. Spa Lane Conservation Area Guidance

### Background

15.1 Spa Lane Conservation Area was first designated in 1989.

### Overview of the Area

- 15.2 This part of Wigston forms the original northern core of Wigston Magna village. Although only St Wistan's Church, albeit rebuilt, survives from the village's earliest origins, the area still contains a mix of residential and industrial uses that reflect a later stage in the village's development and provide a valuable record of Wigston's working past. A notable example of this industrial heritage is the former Broughton's Hosiery Factory, now The Kings Centre, which retains many 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 stretch of fast-moving traffic forms a significant physical barrier and has harmed the setting of the few remaining traditional buildings along the street by removing their original village context.
- 15.4 There are several vacant or unsightly sites within the Conservation Area that currently detract from its overall character. However, these locations also present opportunities for appropriate, well-designed development in the future.

### Development of Vacant Sites

- 15.5 The vacant land within the Conservation Area creates gaps that detract from its overall appearance. It is essential that any proposed development on these sites is of high quality, in both design and materials, to ensure that the Conservation Area is visually enhanced by the scheme.
- 15.6 The following sites offer opportunities to enhance the character of the Conservation Area:
- Former Filling Station site, Bull Head Street. Currently operating as a hand car wash and flanked by two residential Locally Listed Buildings (Nos. 20–22 and Spoutewell Cottage, one of Wigston's oldest buildings). This site has strong potential to improve the appearance of Bull Head Street and could be suitable for housing or commercial development.
  - Mowsley End / Spa Lane. Currently occupied by a Kwik Fit garage, various light-industrial buildings, and vacant plots. The site has potential for housing or commercial development, possibly in conjunction with the former Filling Station site. Any Locally Listed Buildings or structures of townscape value should be retained and integrated into new proposals. Development here could significantly enhance the appearance of Mowsley End, Spa Lane, and Bull Head Street. Main vehicular access should be taken from Mowsley End or Spa Lane.

- Ford Dealership, Spa Lane. Currently a workshop, garage, and showroom with surrounding car parking. Redevelopment offers the opportunity to improve the appearance of Spa Lane and the setting of nearby Locally Listed Buildings. The site may be suitable for housing and provides a chance to establish an appropriate building line.

### Change of Use

- 15.7 The conversion of former industrial or commercial buildings of townscape value will be supported where the redevelopment would make a positive contribution to the environment and would not result in an unacceptable loss of the building's historic integrity. Proposals will be encouraged where:
- the building's appearance can be retained without requiring unsympathetic extensions or alterations;
  - the amenity of neighbouring residents is not significantly harmed;
  - adequate car and cycle parking, along with refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view;
  - existing vehicle accesses are sufficient, or suitably sized new accesses can be created without harming the area's townscape quality, the building's setting, or any important trees or boundaries; and
  - any significant lost, altered, or deteriorated architectural details are reinstated.
- 15.8 The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential purposes will generally not be permitted.

### The Design of New Buildings

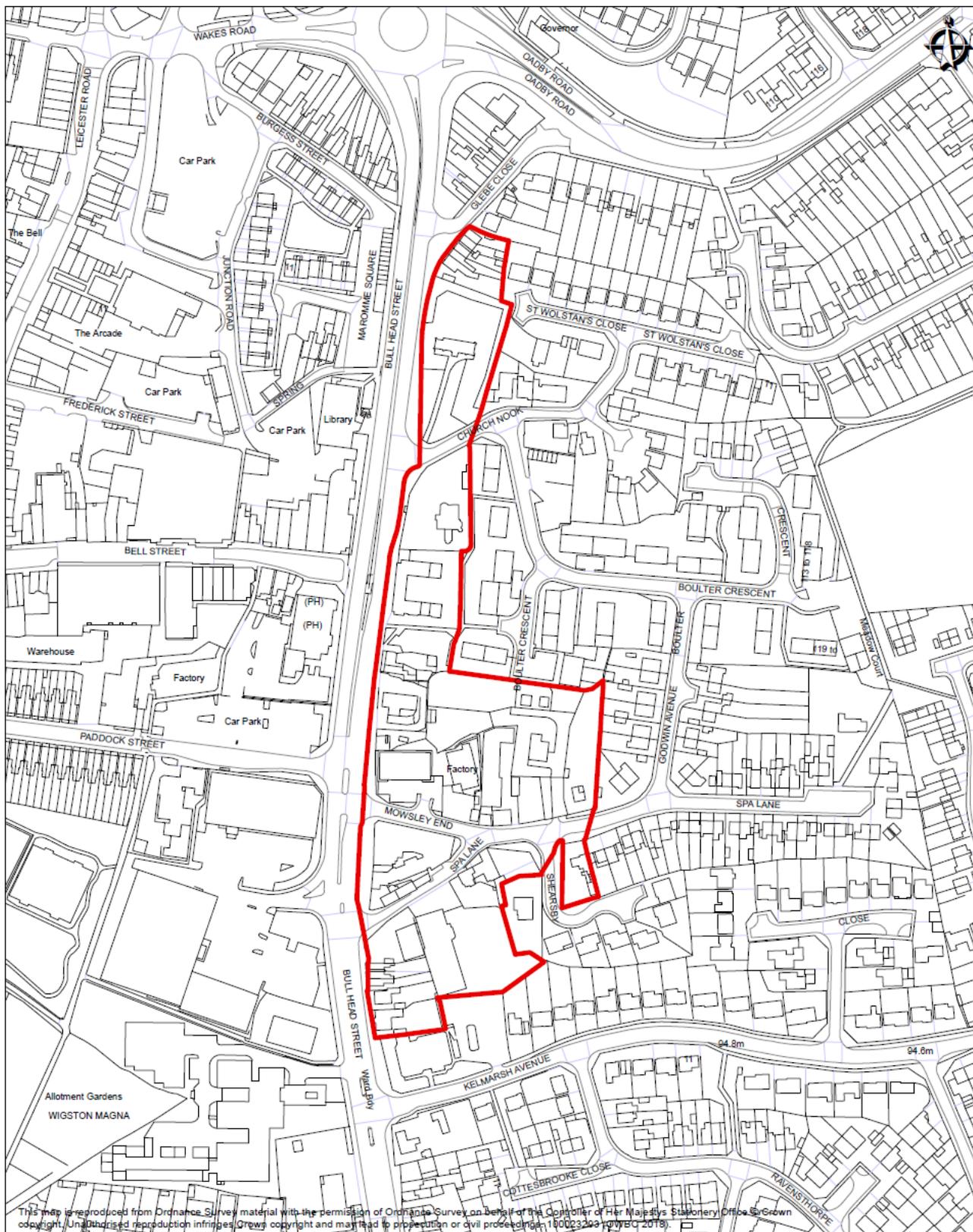
- 15.9 The Spa Lane Conservation Area Appraisal describes the area's 'grain', that is, the way existing buildings relate to the street. It summarises key characteristics such as boundary treatments, building heights and lines, materials, and architectural detailing. Careful consideration of the street in which new development is proposed will help establish appropriate design principles and ensure that new buildings respect the existing character of the Conservation Area.
- 15.10 To be acceptable, the design of any new building must respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:
- being of a suitable mass and scale so it does not dominate the surrounding two-storey residential properties and maintains an appropriate relationship between building sizes;
  - adopting a form that sits comfortably alongside the area's mix of residential, industrial, and commercial building styles;
  - incorporating interesting roof forms that create an engaging silhouette;
  - using materials and detailing that follow the design principles underpinning the building's overall form, either reflecting traditional local characteristics or, where of exceptionally high quality, providing a successful contemporary contrast;
  - including a Design and Access Statement with the planning application that explains the design rationale;
  - responding appropriately to variations in detailing where a development spans 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) creates an unattractive gap that detracts from the overall appearance of the Conservation Area. It is essential that any future development on this site is of high quality, in both design and materials, to ensure the scheme enhances the visual character of the Conservation Area.
- 15.12 The unattractive car parking area in front of the Kwik Fit garage, along with the adjacent gravelled space, undermines the character of the Conservation Area. Introducing appropriate screening or enhanced landscaping would help improve the setting and overall appearance of the area.
- 15.13 Similarly, the Ford dealership on Spa Lane and the hand car wash on Bull Head Street have a negative visual impact on the Conservation Area. Relocating these uses to more suitable sites would be the most effective long-term solution. However, a well-designed landscaping scheme could help soften the visual impact of the vehicles, utilitarian buildings, and extensive signage.
- 15.14 The Council may use 'Article 4 Directions' to help retain traditional external detailing on non-listed buildings within the Conservation Area, where such features still survive.

# SPA LANE CONSERVATION AREA



## 16. The Lanes Conservation Area Guidance

### Background

16.1 The Lanes Conservation Area was first designated in 1981.

### Overview of the Area

- 16.2 'The Lanes' Conservation Area is defined by the striking contrast between the secluded green space of Manchester Gardens (the allotments) and the surrounding urban development.
- 16.3 The Lanes themselves are a reminder of the village's early origins and likely once linked the two cores of the original settlement. Today, they provide a series of quiet, traffic-free routes at the heart of an urban area, offering a valuable sense of calm and creating the feeling of a secluded backwater within the town centre.
- 16.4 The continued presence of Manchester Gardens at the heart of 'The Lanes' provides significant value as an open green space within such an urban setting. Today, it serves as a vital 'green lung', offering relief from the surrounding streets' dense built frontage, broken only 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 predominantly commercial nature, with small clusters of residential properties. In contrast, the streets extending west from this central rectangle are largely made up of nineteenth-century housing. The northern and eastern edges of the built frontage facing the central green space are mainly commercial buildings and form part of the core of modern Wigston Magna.
- 16.6 The northern and eastern sides of the built frontage facing Manchester Gardens are largely made up of commercial buildings and form part of the centre of modern Wigston Magna. A significant portion of the Conservation Area is also occupied by the expansive mid-twentieth-century concrete Police and Fire Stations, along with large twentieth-century superstores.
- 16.7 The southern and western sides of the built frontage facing the central green space are far more residential in character, featuring numerous terraces with subtle variations in their architectural detailing.

### Protection of Open Space

- 16.8 Wigston is unusual in having such an intricate network of footpaths. These Lanes link across the town centre, from Junction Road to the Little Hill Estate, providing a series of quiet, traffic-free routes. Improvements to enhance these paths will be carried out as opportunities arise.
- The Council will protect and enhance the Lanes footpath network and will use development control powers to ensure that the character and appearance of the area are not harmed by unsympathetic development on adjoining land.

- 16.9 The Black Pad, located at the western edge of the Conservation Area outside 'The Lanes', links Central Avenue to Bushloe End. This public footpath has an informal, semi-rural character similar to that of the Lanes, largely due to the vegetation that lines it. It is therefore important that this key vegetation is retained and properly maintained.
- The Council will work with statutory undertakers and the Highways Authority to ensure that vegetation is preserved during any works along the Black Pad and reinstated where necessary. Where suitable, sustainable drainage methods and materials should be used, provided they do not adversely affect the historic environment.
- 16.10 The informal character of the Lanes is central to the quiet atmosphere of this green space in the heart of the town centre. As they are well used by the local community, it is important that these footpaths are properly maintained and surfaced in an appropriate manner.
- The Council will work with the Highways Authority and statutory undertakers to ensure the Lanes are adequately maintained and that suitable surfacing materials are used. Where appropriate, sustainable drainage methods and materials should be incorporated, provided they do not have a negative visual impact on the historic environment.
- 16.11 The continued presence of Manchester Gardens as an open space at the heart of the Conservation Area is highly valuable, helping to create a sense of a quiet retreat close to the town centre.
- The Council will oppose any proposals for development within Manchester Garden
- 16.12 Although Manchester Gardens is surrounded by built development, except along the Chapel Lane frontage where it adjoins the Memorial Park, most of the surrounding buildings are set back from its boundary and turn their backs to it. This arrangement contributes to the strong sense of openness experienced by those using the Lanes.
- The special character of Manchester Gardens will be a material consideration when the Council assesses planning applications on adjacent land within the Conservation Area.

### Change of Use

- 16.13 The conversion of former industrial or commercial buildings with townscape value will be supported where it would make a positive contribution to the environment and where the building's historic integrity would not be unacceptably compromised. Proposals will be encouraged provided that:
- the building's appearance can be retained without requiring intrusive extensions or alterations;

- where a property was originally built as a shop and elements of an original or appropriate shopfront survive, these features are retained unless they are entirely beyond repair;
- the amenity of neighbouring residents is not significantly affected;
- adequate car and cycle parking, as well as refuse storage, can be provided and effectively screened from public view;
- existing vehicle access points are sufficient, or new appropriately sized accesses can be created without harming the area's townscape quality, the building's setting, or any important trees or boundaries; and
- any significant architectural details that have been lost, altered, or fallen into disrepair are restored.

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

- suitable noise insulation can be installed between the living accommodation and the shop below.
- where separate access to the accommodation is required, an appropriate entrance can be created without harming the character of the building or any original or well-designed shopfront.
- adequate waste storage, as well as car and cycle parking, can be provided for occupants.

16.15 The change of use of residential dwellings to non-residential purposes will generally not be permitted.

16.16 Planning permission for uses such as restaurants and cafés, drinking establishments, or hot food takeaways will only be granted, subject to compliance with all other relevant planning policies, where it can be demonstrated that there will be no harm to residential amenity or local environmental quality from smells, noise, late-night activity, disturbance, or increased parking and traffic. Adequate parking must form part of the overall design, and any unsightly plant, such as air-conditioning units, ducting, or flues, should be appropriately screened.

### The Design of New Buildings

16.17 To be acceptable, the design of any new building must respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by:

- being of a suitable mass and scale so that it does not dominate the predominantly two-storey residential properties and, in mixed commercial-residential streets, maintains an appropriate relationship between different building scales;
- adopting a form that fits comfortably alongside the area's mix of residential, industrial, and commercial building styles;
- respecting any established building lines;
- incorporating roof forms that create visual interest and contribute to an attractive silhouette;
- using materials that either reflect those found on traditional buildings in the area or provide a high-quality, well-considered contrast;

- including a Design and Access Statement within the planning application that explains the design rationale; and
- respecting the prevailing architectural detailing within the Conservation Area.

### Alterations and Extensions

16.18 Rear Extensions. Rear extensions are the most common type of addition, as they usually offer the greatest flexibility and privacy. However, care must be taken to ensure that any impact on neighbouring properties is minimised. This is especially important for the terraces along Central Avenue, where rear extensions are visible from public footpaths. In addition to all other relevant policy and guidance:

- an extension should not dominate a neighbour's house or garden, nor significantly reduce their light;
- two-storey extensions on shared boundaries are unlikely to be supported;
- the eaves of a rear extension should be kept as low as possible, and particular attention should be given to ensuring the new roof ridge does not conflict with the existing one; and
- the extension should not be visible from the front of the building.

16.19 Roof Extensions. Roof extensions are a popular way to enlarge a home, but they can present significant challenges if the character of the property is to be preserved. On terraces and groups of similar houses, such as those along Central Avenue and Paddock Street, they can be particularly intrusive due to the uniformity of the buildings, so their impact on the street scene must be carefully considered.

- roof extensions should relate well to the existing roof form and complement the character of both the property and the wider area;
- ridgelines and chimneystacks are often key elements of a building's character and should not be altered unless it can be clearly demonstrated that doing so would create a positive feature;
- the design must address any potential overlooking;
- 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 this is appropriate to the building's design or history.
- window styles should be guided by the design, proportions, and arrangement of the building's existing windows; and
- roof lights should be traditional 'Conservation' types that sit flush with the roof slope, and they should be avoided on the front roof plane, especially on more formal buildings.

### Shopfronts, Signage, Blinds and Security Measures

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

16.21 Although many of the retail units in these shopping areas occupy nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century buildings, most have lost their traditional shopfronts and were significantly altered during the later twentieth century. The following guidance is intended to enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area by setting out

detailed design principles to help ensure that new and refurbished shopfronts are appropriate to their context.

16.22 Shopfronts. Number 2 Leicester Road, a Locally Listed Building, retains a high-quality 1940s shopfront. Planning permission will not be granted for its removal or for the removal of any part of it.

16.23 Where elements of an original shopfront remain, they should be retained and used as the foundation for restoring the original frontage or incorporated into an appropriate new shopfront design. Original features should only be removed if they are entirely beyond repair or cannot be successfully integrated into a new scheme.

16.24 The replacement of inappropriate shopfronts will be supported where the new design respects the character of the building, any adjoining properties within a group or terrace, and the wider area. In addition to meeting all other relevant planning policies, acceptable new designs should:

- have a clear structural logic, with a well-defined framework of pilasters, fascia, and, where appropriate, stall risers;
- relate to the character and proportions of the original building;
- maintain or improve accessibility for people with disabilities;
- use appropriate materials;
- avoid spanning the frontage of more than one building;
- include a suitably designed separate entrance where upper-floor living accommodation is proposed.

16.25 Where a change of use is appropriate and would not harm the character of the area, any surviving elements of a good shopfront should be retained and used in the conversion, unless they are entirely beyond repair.

16.26 Signage. Several buildings in Wigston have been visually harmed by poorly designed or inappropriate signage. In addition to complying with all other relevant planning policies, new signage must:

- avoid obscuring, overwhelming, or damaging the building's proportions or architectural features.
- use lettering of a size, material, and font appropriate to the building.
- be clear and simple, avoiding garish or unsuitable colours.
- include no more than one well-designed and suitably positioned hanging sign per shop frontage.

16.27 Illumination. Advertisement Consent is required for most types of illuminated signage within the Conservation Area. Internally illuminated 'box' signs, which are visually intrusive, will not be permitted. To be acceptable, illuminated signs must:

- use a discreet light source that does not disrupt the proportions of the building or frontage, nor harm any architectural features.
- avoid causing any adverse impact on nearby residential properties.
- maintain a subdued and consistent level of illumination.

- 16.28 Blinds and Canopies. Blinds and canopies will only be permitted within the Conservation Area where there is historical precedent and an existing blind box remains, and only where they can be installed without harming the character of the building or shopfront, while relating appropriately to the building's existing features and detailing.
- 16.29 Shopfront Security. When designing a new shopfront, the likely security needs of the occupier should be considered from the outset. It is far easier to incorporate suitable security measures into a new design than to add them later to an existing frontage.
- 16.30 Solid external shutters will only be permitted in the Conservation Area where it can be clearly demonstrated that they are the sole viable security option necessary for the shopkeeper to maintain their livelihood.
- 16.31 External shutters, whether solid or grille-type, will only be permitted where they respect the proportions and features of the shopfront, do not cover the pilasters or fascia, and are finished in an appropriate colour and material.

### Street Furniture

- 16.32 The traditional lampposts found throughout The Lanes are recognised as positive features. Their historic style contributes to the character of the old footpath network while also providing lighting and enhancing safety after dark.
- The Council will encourage the proper maintenance of lampposts within The Lanes. Where a traditional lamppost cannot be repaired, any replacement must be appropriate to the historic character of the area. Likewise, opportunities to remove modern lampposts should be taken, with replacements using traditional designs that reflect the area's history.

### Enhancement Opportunities

- 16.33 The two shops at 41–47 Bell Street would benefit from shopfront improvements that are more in keeping with the age and character of the buildings, and the first-floor windows, currently boarded over, should be reinstated. Replacing the heavy metal shutters with a style more appropriate to the Conservation Area would also be an improvement.
- 16.34 Views from Paddock Street into the service yards behind the Bell Street commercial units are unattractive, creating a poor pedestrian environment for those using Long Lane. Providing appropriate screening for these areas would significantly 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. Redevelopment of the site should be explored, as it has the potential to enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Any proposals for redevelopment should refer to Development Control Guidance.

- 16.36 Paddock Street Car Park also detracts from the Conservation Area, and its redevelopment should be considered as a means of enhancing the area's overall character and appearance.
- 16.37 Some forecourts, such as those at the Wigston Conservative Club, the Royal Mail Depot, and Nos. 61 and 65 Long Street, would benefit from improved landscaping, which would enhance both the setting of the buildings and the wider street scene.
- 16.38 The vacant site next to the Working Men's Club should be redeveloped, as it currently detracts from the appearance of the Conservation Area. Redevelopment offers an opportunity to enhance the area's character, and any proposals should refer to The Lanes Development Control Guidance.
- 16.39 The quiet backwater and historic character of The Lanes is reinforced by the informal network of footpaths that cross the area. Regular maintenance is needed to ensure they remain well used by the community and retain their traditional character. While the surface must be smooth, bonding aggregate or gravel into the tarmacadam would soften the appearance of the paths while still providing a safe, trip-free finish. Likewise, traditional street furniture that contributes to the area's historic character should be maintained and, where necessary, replaced with matching designs.
- 16.40 The vacant office building and the adjoining former shop site on Long Street currently detract from the surrounding streetscape. The area would benefit from being tidied and redeveloped to make a positive contribution to its setting.
- 16.41 The Borough Council may use 'Article 4 Directions' to preserve traditional external detailing on non-listed buildings within the conservation area, where such features still survive.



## **17. Implementation and Monitoring of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

- 17.1 The nine Borough designated Conservation Areas within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston play a vital role in protecting local heritage.
- 17.2 Once adopted, the SPD will be applied through the planning process and taken into account when determining development proposals within or adjacent to Conservation Areas. Applicants will also be encouraged to consider opportunities for enhancement when preparing their schemes. The Council will work with prospective applicants, such as through pre-application discussions, to help ensure that development contributes positively to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 17.3 The SPD will be monitored by assessing its influence on planning decisions and by tracking how many enhancement opportunities are delivered over time. Periodic reviews of both the Conservation Area Appraisals and the SPD will also be undertaken.

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