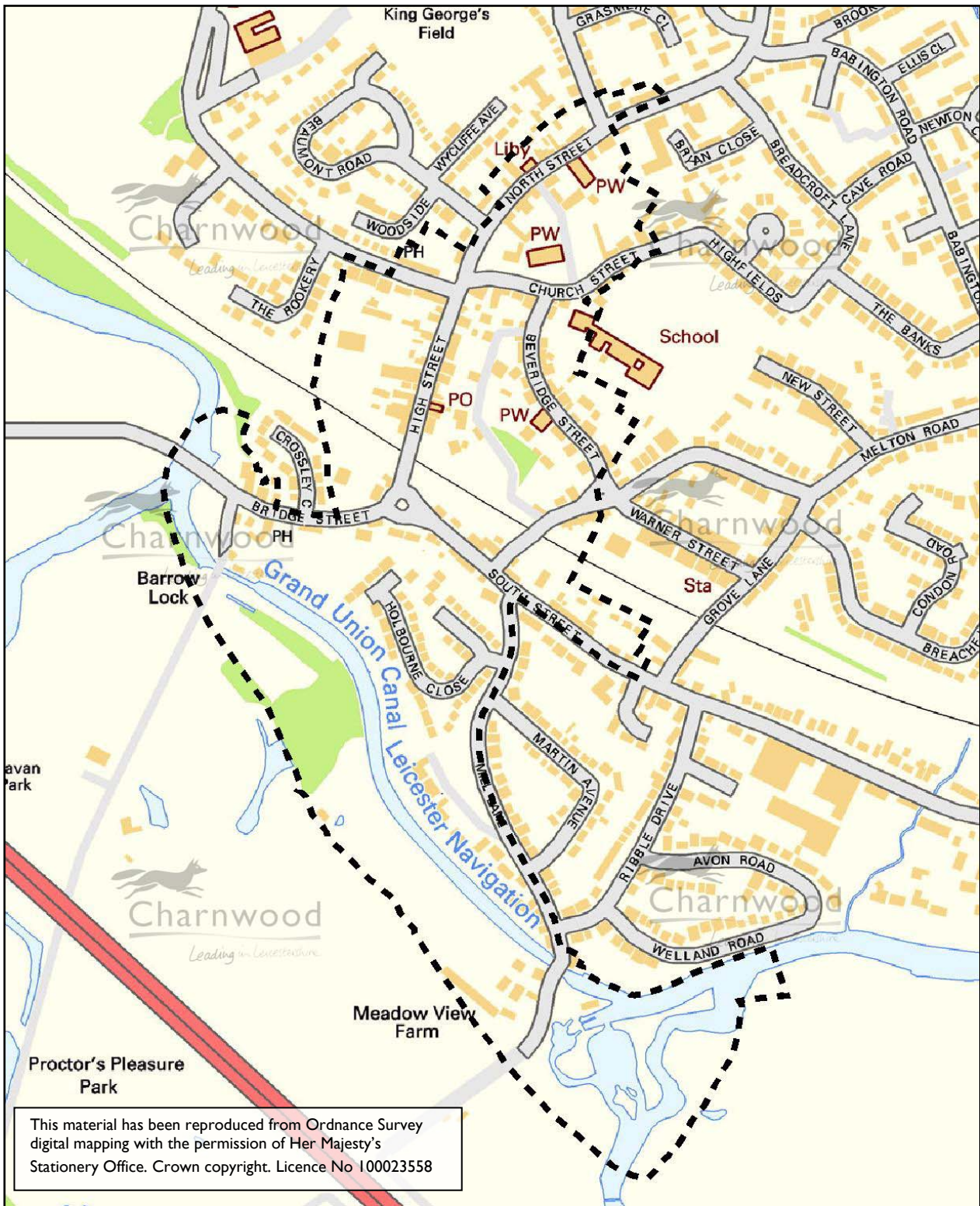


BARROW UPON SOAR CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

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BARROW UPON SOAR CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL



Current map of Barrow upon Soar showing the Conservation Area

Introduction

Barrow upon Soar Conservation Area was designated in January 1976. It covers an area of about 29.8 ha (71 acres).

The boundaries of the Conservation Area generally define the extent of the settlement, as it existed at the end of the 19th century. The Area includes much of the medieval heart of the settlement, focussing on Holy Trinity Church which is Grade II* listed and its neighbouring almshouses and the principal roads through the village: High Street, North Street, Beveridge Street and South Street. The Conservation Area includes a large sweep of land to take in the stretch of the Grand Union Canal from Mill Lane to Barrow Deep Lock.

The Area contains a broad range of residential and commercial development that is representative of the settlement from the medieval period through to the Victorian and Edwardian expansion of the village in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Area also contains residential development alongside the canal up to the present.

The purpose of this appraisal is to examine the historical development of the Conservation Area and to describe its present appearance in order to assess its special architectural and historic interest. The appraisal is then used to inform the consideration of management and development proposals within the Area.

This document sets out the planning policy context and how this appraisal relates to national, regional and local planning policies.

The main part of the report focuses on the assessment of the special interest of the Conservation Area:

- Location and setting describes how the Area relates to the historic settlement and surrounding area;
- Historic development and archaeology sets out how architecture and archaeology are related to the social and economic growth of the village;
- Spatial analysis describes the historic plan form of the settlement and how this has changed, the interrelationship of streets and spaces, and identifies key views and landmarks;
- Character analysis identifies the uses, types and layouts of buildings, key listed and unlisted buildings, coherent groups of buildings, distinctive building materials and architectural details, significant green spaces and trees, and detrimental features.

These elements are brought together in a summary of the special interest of the Conservation Area. An assessment of the general condition of the buildings and spaces within the Area is included. The main issues and proposed management actions are summarised. Recommendations for developing longer term management proposals for the area are suggested.

Acknowledgment

The Council thank Stephen Bradwell of Trigpoint Conservation and Planning for the major contribution he has made to the research and writing of this Appraisal.

Planning Policy Context

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest whose character or appearance should be preserved or enhanced. In making decisions on potential development within a conservation area, the Council is required to 'pay attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area'. Permission will not be granted for proposals that are likely to harm the character or appearance of a conservation area. Sections 69 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Planning Policy Guidance note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment says that special attention should be paid when considering proposals for development in a conservation area.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands published in March 2005 advises local authorities to develop strategies that avoid damage to the region's cultural assets. Policy 27: Protecting and Enhancing The Region's Natural and Cultural Assets.

The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan 1996 to 2016, published in December 2004, seeks to identify, protect, preserve and enhance areas, sites, buildings and settings of historic or architectural interest or archaeological importance. Development within conservation areas should preserve or enhance their character and appearance. Environment Policy 2: Sites and Buildings of Historic Architectural and Archaeological Interest.

The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Leading in Design' builds on the design policies set out in the Charnwood Local Plan and will contribute to the development of more effective approaches to securing good design in the emerging Local Development Framework. The guide is also intended to support the implementation of the community strategy, Charnwood Together, by providing a set of principles that will inform the physical development implicit in the initiatives and actions of all partners in the local strategic partnership.

Barrow upon Soar Village Design Statement provides guidelines, established by local residents, for new development throughout the village. Adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in January 2002.

Other relevant SPG/SPD guidance includes:

- Backland & Tandem Development.
- House Extensions
- Shopfronts & Signs

ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Location and Setting

Barrow upon Soar lies on the eastern side of the River Soar about 3 miles south-east of Loughborough. It is a thriving and large village, located away from the main trunk routes. The village occupies a sloping site above a natural cliff on the edge of the Soar valley. It is described in White's 1846 Directory as 'a large village pleasantly situated on the east side of the navigable River Soar'.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Origins and Development

The origins of Barrow are not clear. The first settlers may have been people using the ancient Celtic trackway known as the Great Salt Road of which Paudy Lane to Six Hills was certainly a part. In the mid 19th century there were some significant discoveries of Roman remains and a Roman cemetery adjacent to Sibley Road which indicate a Roman presence in the area.

The village has the character of a nucleated settlement which is typical of the East Midlands. Such settlements were often situated on the slopes above a river valley so that they could take advantage of natural springs in the hillside, the meadowland which provided grazing in the floodplain and the drier arable fields on the wolds beyond the village.

Thus the present village may have first developed as a Saxon settlement. The origin of the name Barrow is unclear; Nichols (1811) suggests that it is named because of its situation, being built on a little mount or rising ground after the Saxon word '*Beoph*' signifying a mount or hill and this would support a Saxon origin for the village. It is also suggested that the name originated from the Old English, meaning an ancient burial tumulus or barrow. However the Domesday Survey of 1085-86 lists the settlement as '*Barhoo*', but it has also been known as *Barogh-on-Sore*, *Barow*, *Barewe-upon-Sore*, *Baro*, and *Barrough*.

Potter (1842) notes that at the time of the Battle of Hastings, the manor of Barrow was part of the Saxon King Harold's estates and that after the Conquest it was passed by William the Conqueror to his nephew Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, who is recorded as the lord of the manor in the Domesday Survey. (Hugh Lupus was also responsible for building the castle at Mountsorrel). The manor afterwards passed to the Erdington family in 1346, and then in 1461 passed to Sir Richard Neale and then to Lord Wm. Hastings.

It is likely that the oldest part of the settlement lay around the Church and there is evidence of a church on this site from the reign of King Stephen (1135 - 1154), although the present Church was substantially rebuilt by the Victorians. The chancel was rebuilt in 1865 and the nave and tower were rebuilt in 1870 following its collapse in 1868. The feudal village was at the centre of a large parish consisting of Barrow proper and extending westwards to include the north-end of Mountsorrel and parts of Quorn, Woodhouse, Woodhouse Eaves and Beaumanor and the hamlets of Mapplewell and Charley. These feudal and historical links with Charnwood Forest are now physically evident in the widespread use of Mountsorrel granite and Swithland slate in many of the older buildings in the village.

The early development and prosperity of most medieval Soar valley villages relied on an agricultural economy based on a system of open fields, meadows and common land. Barrow had its own open fields split between Brookfield and Middlefield to the north of the village and Netherfield to the south with extensive meadows in Burrow Holme, South Holme and Hillings. These open fields and common lands which totalled some 2,250 acres were however enclosed by an Act of Parliament in 1760 and, unlike the Enclosure of the lands in Mountsorrel which made provision for an area of common land, Joyce (1999) notes that the Barrow Enclosure Award made it quite clear that all rights of common were forever extinguished.

The enclosure of the open fields had a profound effect on the local landscape with small, hedged fields replacing the original open fields. It also affected the economic and social structure of the village, removing the villager's traditional dependency on the land so that many were forced to look for new employment. Nevertheless, Pemberton (1984-5) notes that enclosure brought increasing wealth to many local benefices, in this case allowing the vicar of Barrow to enlarge his house by 'the addition of two parlors and two chambers above'.

The enclosure of the open fields allowed the new landowners to introduce new crops and new methods of husbandry and to convert former arable land into more profitable pasture land, reducing the need for farm labourers. The enclosure awards also left many of the new holdings too small to be viable, forcing many villagers to sell their holdings, particularly those of less than 10 acres, so that by the turn of the 19th century ownership of land was in the hands of a smaller group of people than at the time of Enclosure (Joyce, 1997).

With the loss of their open fields and common land, the villagers had to seek alternative employment, although Joyce (1997) notes that the local economy may not have been so dependent on agriculture at the time of Enclosure since framework knitting had been established in the village during the first half of the 18th century and there was also a long-standing tradition of limestone quarrying.

By the mid-18th century Barrow had a sizable domestic framework knitting industry. Nichols (1811) noted that 'several frameworkers were employed there' and in 1831 Curtis noted that most of the inhabitants were employed in framework knitting and hosiery. Early knitters were traditionally employed as out-workers by larger factories, principally based in Leicester, working within their main home or in purpose built workshops to the rear of their properties with the involvement of the whole family. The Victoria County History (1955) notes that Barrow had 210 framework knitters in 1844 and 261 in 1851.

From the second half of the 19th century the cottage hosiery industry went into decline as the trade was moved into factories, particularly those in Leicester and other Soar valley villages. However, there is no strong evidence that the hosiery industry, or the later boot and shoe industry, was established in Barrow to the same degree as other Soar valley villages. These industries generally relied on high rates of unemployment amongst framework knitters and the production of lime provided an alternative and sizable source of employment.

However, Barrow stands on a hard blue limestone and White's Directory of 1846 remarks that 'Barrow-Upon-Soar...has for ages been celebrated for its excellent limestone'. It has been used for both building and agricultural purposes and, particularly with the introduction of new farming methods after Enclosure, to raise the fertility of the soil. The lime has a unique property of hardening under water which White's Directory suggests results from the relatively high proportion of silicate of alumina in the limestone. White's Directory of 1877 notes that the increase in population in the previous 10 years was attributable to the opening of a limeworks.

The limestone beds also contain a large number and variety of fossils, consisting mainly of marine shells and fossil fish, which were a great curiosity and of interest to natural historians. There is a fossil trail in the village and the Barrow Kipper is the emblem of the village.

The burning of the limestone was carried out in bottle shaped, coal-burning kilns, that gave off a pungent aroma which could be smelt throughout the village. However as White's Directory of 1863 notes this aromatic air was considered to be a cure for consumption and it was common practice for London doctors to send tuberculosis patients to the village for the 'Barrow Cure', so Barrow may have also been a place of convalescence.

The lime was used during Roman and Norman times and a report of the building of Kirby Muxloe Castle in 1480 refers to the use of lime from 'Barough'. The properties of Barrow lime meant that it was in demand for building docks and piers (such as Ramsgate) and bridges and it was also exported to Holland.

The limestone was situated very close to the surface, Nichols (1811) notes that it was found at depths of between 0.5 metres to 3.4 metres (2' to 10' or 12'), and was extracted from relatively shallow pits or delphs. Once dug the limestone was then burnt in bottle shaped limekilns to convert it into usable lime. Kelly's Directory of 1888 noted that 'the burning of lime was extensively carried on'.

However the early industry was quite sporadic with little or no control over where lime pits were dug. By 1845 there were eleven lime delphs in the parish, a number of which along with their associated lime kilns were situated close to the village centre, such as on land to the north of Church Street and to the north of Cotes Road as shown on the 1884 OS map.

However, whilst the lime could be used locally, the development of the industry was perhaps limited by the problems of transporting it long distances. Nicholls (1811) suggests that until the Soar was made navigable 'the use of Barrow lime, even though it should merit all its reputation, can never be general because of its being located in the centre of the kingdom'. He also reports that the limestone for the Ramsgate pier had to be taken over land to Nottingham before it could be shipped by water. The large scale development of a local lime industry was boosted by the arrival of the Soar Navigation in 1794 which allowed much larger quantities of lime to be easily transported. By 1797, 1,421 tons of limestone was shipped by canal from Barrow Wharf along with 782 tons of agricultural lime (Joyce, reprint 1997).

A major producer of lime was John Ellis who operated a drift mine off Sileby Road. His company produced lime until 1925, but had diversified into the manufacture of cement in the early 1900s and the manufacture of concrete building blocks and other precast concrete goods. Whilst the lime and gypsum works on Sileby Road still survive, the name of John Ellis disappeared upon the acquisition of the company by Redland Ltd in the 1970s.

The physical, social and historical development of Barrow upon Soar and its historic built legacy has also been marked by a number of philanthropic gifts leading to the foundation of a Free Grammar School in 1717 following an endowment from Humphrey Perkins and the foundation of an Old Men's Hospital and an Old Women's Hospital. The Men's Hospital was founded as an almshouse by Dr Humphrey Babington in 1686 for six widowers or "ancient bachelors", to be called 'Theophilus Cave's Bedesmen' after his uncle in whose honour he made the gift, and in 1825 the Humphrey Babington charity set up the Women's Hospital as an almshouse for poor unmarried women. These two hospital buildings are still in use today as homes for the elderly and are two of the most important buildings in the Conservation Area, the Men's Hospital standing on Church Street at its junction with Beveridge Street and the Women's Hospital standing on North Street.

The rapid growth in the village throughout the 19th century was also reflected in the improvements and growth of community facilities. Kelly's Directory of 1891 notes that the village was lit by gas and supplied with water and by 1927 the village had electric lighting. A National School, now part of the Hall Orchard Primary School site on Church Street, was set up in 1859. Rimmington (1976-77) notes that the growth of population in the 19th century was a source of much dissent and this was reflected in the building of new places of worship, a Wesleyan Chapel on the High Street, a Baptist Chapel on Beveridge Street and a Methodist Chapel on North Street along with a Roman Catholic Church at the head of Church Street.

The legacy of the village's historic development, its historic street pattern and much of the physical built development that took place in the village from the late 16th century and into the early 20th century, is now reflected in the special historic and architectural interest of the present Conservation Area.

Archaeological Interest

The Conservation Area encompasses the core medieval settlement of Barrow. The historical development of the Area is evident in the pattern of streets, the housing plots and the age of many of the properties, and it would suggest that there is good potential for below ground archaeology.

There are however few records of any archaeological excavations carried out within the village. One such dig on North Street, reported in the Transactions of the Leicestershire and Archaeological History Society (1998), revealed evidence of a medieval wall and other deposits of medieval origin along with the remains of an 18th century building. These excavations suggest that there is archaeological potential in the form of below ground archaeology and any major development within the Conservation Area requiring excavation works should be preceded by a considered archaeological assessment and investigation.

Population

The population of Barrow has varied over time. The most recent 2001 Census figures published by Leicestershire County Council show that there were some 5,627 people residing in the parish of Barrow and Sileby West. The historical fluctuations of the village's population are recorded in the Victoria County History which show that the population has risen steadily from about 27 households at the time of the Domesday Survey, to about 337 people at the time of the 1377 Poll Tax, increasing to 64 households recorded in the Diocesan Returns of 1563, and to 101 households at the time of the 1670 Hearth Tax. This was followed by a relatively steady and quickening rise in population throughout the 19th century (from 1,090 in 1801; to 1,841 in 1841; 1,963 by 1871 and 2,245 in 1891) and into the 20th century (from 2,481 in 1911; to 2,661 in 1931 and 2,788 in 1951).

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

General Character and Plan Form

The distinct topography of the Area is evident on the approach to the village across the Soar floodplain from Quorn, which offers the dramatic prospect of rooftops rising out of the tree-lined slopes above the valley floor. The sudden change in land levels is reflected in the steep rise along Bridge Street from the Soar Bridge to its junction with South Street and High Street. From this junction South Street runs on a fairly level course in a south-easterly direction following the edge of the high ground above the valley floor before descending quite steeply into Sileby Road.

High Street on the other hand continues to rise steadily until its junction with Cotes Road/Church Street, after which it continues as North Street across a relatively level plateau. From its junction with High Street, Church Street skirts around the southern edge of the churchyard and then appears to follow the edge of the plateau with the land generally falling away to the south and east.

The historic pattern appears to have been strongly influenced by two distinctive routes running north-south and east-west through the village. The basic north-south route follows the eastern side of the Soar Valley, linking Barrow with Sileby, an important medieval administrative centre, to the south and Cotes to the north from where there are links to Loughborough by a bridge across the Soar floodplain and to Nottingham. The principal east-west route is identified by Hoskins (1957) as a pre-Roman trackway that ran between Six Hills and the Charnwood Forest and forded the Soar at Barrow.

Late 18th century maps show the resulting historic street pattern, of a self-contained village based around a close-knit network of streets comprising High Street, North Street and South Street as the principal network with a secondary network provided by Church Street and Beveridge Street.

In 1784 the River Soar between Leicester and Loughborough was made navigable. In places this was achieved by locking the river itself but it involved a considerable cut in the vicinity of Barrow upon Soar. The canal forms a strong line between the floodplain of the river and the base of the slopes on which Barrow is built. The Conservation Area has been designated to include the canal and the boundary has been drawn as a mostly arbitrary line to protect a strip of wetland wilderness between the canal and the floodplain, in particular, though not solely, the caravan park.

However, the close-knit historic settlement of Barrow was severely split by the arrival of the Midland Counties Railway in 1844. The route of the railway line was constructed in a deep cutting along the southern edge of the village, cutting off South Street from High Street and Beveridge Street.

The historic settlement pattern surviving at the end of the 19th century is clearly shown on the 1884 Ordnance Survey map and this now provides the basis of the Conservation Area. There are a considerable number of surviving domestic and commercial buildings within the Area that date from the late 16th century through to the early 20th century which now contribute to the special architectural and historic interest of the Area. Within this core there are 23 listed buildings or structures. Holy Trinity Church is listed Grade II* and the remainder listed Grade II.

The most significant change has been the extent of the 20th century infill development, particularly in the new residential developments along South Street and North Street and the range of new and large retail units along High Street which have not respected either the prevailing built form or the materials of the older buildings.

Townscape

High Street and the Area around Holy Trinity Church

All the streets in this part of the Conservation Area show their descendancy from the medieval streets, especially Church Street and Beveridge Street, but also High Street and North Street, which though they are much wider, perhaps, than they would have been, they all have subtle curves which offer changing views. High Street itself is a busy commercial street with its continuation into North Street.

High Street and North Street are bordered by houses, shops and public houses. The buildings generally come to the pavement edge, which on the north side side creates a strong sense of enclosure, while on the south side the much wider pavement has been streetscaped to provide space to meet and sit down.

Most of the buildings on High Street and North Street are of two storey with the ridge line parallel to the street. There are some intrusive single storey and two storey buildings with flat roofs, such as the Library, the shop extension to no. 31 North Street and nos. 6-10 North Street.

The townscape of the High Street changes dramatically at the high brick wall surrounding the old Vicarage, over which hangs the dominant horse chestnut tree. And, more noticeable when coming from the East, there is a gateway created by the Hammer and Pincers and no. 29 North Street both of which are set close to the street.

Church Street and Beveridge Street are much quieter with a greater variety of houses, many of them listed. The streets curve gently and they have a strong sense of enclosure. In general the buildings come right up to the edge of the pavement. The churchyard and its extension on the other side of Church Lane provide two quiet open green spaces within the built environment. The creation of Industry Square as a green space forms an entrance to Beveridge Street from the south.

South Street

Visually the railway is well obscured in its deep cutting. Even the sound of the high speed trains is not as intrusive as in other villages along the line. Nevertheless, the road traffic is heavier along South Street than elsewhere in the village with more simply passing through between Sileby and Loughborough. Predominantly the houses are close to the pavement edge and the historic junctions are still tight. An exception is the eased junction into Mill Lane.

Grand Union Canal

The Canal is a quiet waterway offering a place of repose and recreation for the village. It is well maintained both on its public face by British Waterways, the open spaces by the Parish Council, and its private face where the adjacent properties reach to its bank.

At each end of the stretch of canal within the Conservation Area there is a small group of buildings, originating in the facilities needed by the navvies. At the south end of the Canal is the Navigation Inn, a mixed row of cottages along Mill Lane and the more substantial property of no. 90 Mill Lane beside the bridge. These have been joined by the boatyard and a small row of cottages below the canal.

At the north end by Barrow Bridge and Barrow Deep Lock is the Lock Cottage, Sewage Pumping Station and two pubs, the Riverside Inn and the Soar Bridge Inn.

These two groups have gradually been joined together and joined to the rest of the village by development. The east bank of the southern part of the stretch of canal is now lined with riverside houses and bungalows dating from the early 1900s to the present. At the northern end the slope up the hill is too steep for housing but at the top is the modern suburban estate of Holbourne Close and the slope itself has been landscaped to provide a public open space. Similarly Bridge Street was developed with two groups of houses leading up the hill to Jerusalem Island and yet newer development of Crossley Close into land which was previously a railway yard.

Key Views and Vistas and Landmarks

Holy Trinity Church occupies the highest point in the village and is a particularly distinctive landmark that is visible from many vantage points around the village, generally seen through gaps between the buildings.

The curving and sloping streets of Barrow upon Soar offer a continually changing view: from Bridge Street up the hill under the canopy of trees to Jerusalem Island, continuing up the High Street past the high boundary wall of the Old Vicarage into North Street; beyond the stone buildings of nos. 101-107 into the undulating wolds. In the other direction one passes through a gateway of the Hammer and Pincers on one side and no. 29 North Street on the other. There is a similar changing scene along Church Street and Beveridge Street and to a lesser extent along South Street for which Jerusalem Island is a significant marker.

The canal has its own special relationship of views, along the waterway itself; the attractive rear faces and gardens of the properties on Mill Lane; the slopes of the public open space with the well placed houses of Holbourne Close at the top; the vistas and glimpses out through the wilderness of willow trees to the meadows; slightly marred by the Caravan Park and the dominant electricity pylons. Of particular note is the riverside scene at Barrow Bridge with good views of the listed bridge itself and the calmness as one proceeds upstream beyond Barrow Boating.

Jerusalem Island with its monument to the plesiosaurus fossil is a focal point from all three directions, Bridge Street, High Street and South Street.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Building Types and Uses

Most of the buildings in the Conservation Area are dominated by residential and commercial uses. These represent only some of the land uses that have accounted for the historic development of the village but which have now disappeared from the centre.

Along Church Street, Cotes Road, Beveridge Street and South Street the buildings are now mostly residential of two storeys. There are occasional former public buildings such as the old school on Cotes Road and the Theophilus Cave Almshouse on Church Street, which stands behind a stone wall. In general the buildings are of two storey with the ridge line parallel to the street. The old Vicarage is uniquely protected by a high brick and stone wall.

There is a greater variety of buildings in North Street. No 29 and the Hammer and Pincers stand at right angles to the street creating a gateway and the low flat roofed Library and the flat roofed row of shops, nos. 6-10, stand away from the pavement edge. Also in North Street are two public buildings, the Humphrey Babington Women's Hospital which stands above the level of the street behind a stone wall and the Methodist Church. The final group of buildings within the Area are nos. 101-107, now residential, standing tall directly on the pavement edge.

High Street appears to have been the historic commercial centre of the village, providing a range of shops including the post office, as shown on the early OS maps. Most of these buildings have retained their commercial use. They are two storey with the ridge line parallel to the street.

Many of the industrial uses associated with the village's historic economy have now disappeared, apart from the site of Mayflower Soft Furnishings on North Street. As a small and self-reliant village there was a range of local trades and businesses to serve the local economy. For example, the early OS maps show a number of smithys within the village centre, on North Street (located where the car park is now at the rear of the Three Crowns), to the rear of nos. 14-18 Beveridge Street and within the outbuilding at the rear of no. 20 Church Lane.

The WEA Guide (1985) refers to the large number of framework knitters' workshops in Beveridge Street (known as Industry Street until 1922) and a number of these workshops may still survive behind existing frontage properties throughout the village. For example there are two pantile-roofed sheds off Shooting Close Lane to the rear of nos. 8-10 Beveridge Street and small workshops alongside no. 45 Beveridge Street and to the rear of no. 35 Beveridge Street.

Key listed buildings and structures

The Conservation Area has a wealth of historic buildings. The most important individual buildings are Holy Trinity Church, the Old Vicarage, the Round House, the Theophilus Cave and the Humphrey Babington Almshouses.

Bishop Beveridge House while being one of the oldest houses in the village forms part of the residential scene of Beveridge Street.

Cliffe House, also listed, is set well back from the street and almost obscured by trees.

The railway bridge and Barrow Bridge are also listed structures.

Key unlisted buildings

No. 90 Mill Lane is a key building at the bridge over the canal. The two canal bridges and the deep lock are important features of the canal.

No. 2 High Street occupies an important position overlooking the railway, having been built for himself by the railway's engineer.

Coherent groups

There is an important group of houses at the top of Bridge Street, nos. 1 to 13. The group is interrupted by the garden of Cliffe House. No. 1 has a traditional, though unused, shop front. They form a transition between the riverside with its pubs and the village on the hill.

The row of cottages beside the Three Crowns Inn on Cotes Road form a similar transition into the historic core of the village.

Building Materials and Architectural Details

Traditionally Barrow has had extensive interests in Charnwood Forest and as a consequence there is a widespread use of local Charnwood granite and Swithland slate along with locally produced Barrow-on-Soar lime-mortar, described as 'three almost indestructible building materials' by Hoskins (1970) in relation to Mountsorrel, which contribute much to the particular character and appearance of the village.

A considerable number of buildings are constructed wholly from granite, including Holy Trinity Church (Grade II* listed); no. 2 High Street and nos. 35-37, Beveridge Street (Grade II listed). There is also one example of a coursed limestone building at nos. 22-24 Beveridge Street (Grade II listed).

Granite is used extensively throughout the village either as plinth to support brickwork or in the ground floors and gable ends in conjunction with brick. No. 16, Church Street (Humphrey Babington Almshouses, Grade II listed) is one of the most important buildings in the village and it provides a good example of the use of random granite rubble in the ground floor with Flemish bonded brickwork to the first floor. The use of granite is also common in many of the vernacular buildings, such as in the rear elevations of nos. 13-21 Church Street (Grade II listed), which have a granite rubble ground floor and a brick first floor, the Victorian cottages at nos. 7-13 North Street, where granite is used in the end gables supporting Flemish bonded brickwork to the front elevation, and at nos. 8-10 & 12-16 Cotes Road, which in their front elevation have a granite ground floor with brickwork above.

In some instances, perhaps because of changing fashions or social pretensions, the granite is restricted to less public parts of the building, such as at nos. 22-26 High Street, where the front elevation is rendered while the side gable and rear walls are left in unfaced granite; and at no. 3 South Street, which is a double pile house, the front portion of which is built in brick while the rear portion is built in the local granite.

Charnwood stone has also been extensively used in the construction of boundary walls throughout the village and these make a significant and distinctive contribution to the local street scene and the Conservation Area generally. Some of the most notable are those around the churchyard and the Old Vicarage but there are extensive boundary walls along High Street, Beveridge Street and Shooting Close Lane. In some cases the walls are architectural features in their own right, such as the front wall to the Men's Hospital on Church Street which has a central stone gateway with Tuscan pilasters, architraving and a broken pediment with an inscription plate, or the boundary wall to the Women's Hospital on North Street (Grade II listed) which has decorative polygonal gate piers, wrought iron gates and an overarch.

It is likely that the earliest medieval buildings were timber frame and thatched properties, but there are few surviving examples left in the village. There are no thatched buildings left in the village but Newham (n.d.) recalls several thatched properties along South Street and Beveridge Street (demolished to make way for the former Co-op Store) and at nos. 4 & 20 Church Street; no. 21 North Street and nos. 13, 23 & 64 High Street. There is good photographic evidence of a thatched property on North Street and of a timber frame and thatched property on the corner of North Street and Church Street, shown on the OS maps of 1884 and 1903 but demolished by 1915 (Wilford 1981, pages 32 & 34 respectively). The only remaining evidence of timber frame properties in the village appears to be restricted to the remnants of a timber frame found in the front and rear walls of no. 13 Church Street and a small cruck frame at no. 4a Beveridge Street (both Grade II listed).

Despite the widespread use of granite, red brick is now the most common building material and it provides a broad uniformity of material and appearance. In most of the traditional properties, the brick is laid in a Flemish bond, a distinctive pattern of alternating headers and stretchers, and this can be seen at nos. 16 and 20 Church Street; nos. 4 (Chippindall House, Grade II listed), nos. 7-13 & 24-32 North Street, nos. 48-52 & 54-60 High Street; nos. 3, 17, 21-23, 53-55 & 57 South Street; and nos. 13-15 & 21 Beveridge Street. In some cases the distinctive Flemish bond pattern is emphasized by contrasting lighter headers with darker stretchers, such as at nos. 1-9 Cotes Road, no. 23 South Street, nos. 54-60 High Street and no. 4 Beveridge Street; or by using contrasting vitrified headers such as at no. 47 Beveridge Street (Grade II listed).

A small number of the properties have been rendered either in whole or in part. The main examples include The Three Crowns on Cotes Road, nos. 20-26 High Street, nos. 49-49A & 51 Beveridge Street (both Grade II listed). Render can also be part of the original design, such as in the Edwardian properties at nos. 24-26 & 30-32 Church Street, no. 11 High Street and nos. 4 & 13-15 Melton Road, which have a rendered first floor over a brick ground floor, or it can be combined with mock timber framing such as in the first floor of nos. 64 & 66 High Street.

Welsh slate is the predominant traditional roofing material and it can still be found on most of the properties in the Conservation Area, such as at nos. 2-4, 20, 24, 26 & 30-32 Church Street, the Hammer and Pincers on North Street, nos. 1-9 Cotes Road, no. 64 High Street and no. 17 South Street.

However, before the widespread availability of Welsh slate there was a reliance on local materials and on Swithland slate, reflecting the early historical associations of the village with Charnwood Forest, and this remains a common roofing material that is found on a large number of properties throughout the Conservation Area. Examples of its use include no. 16, no. 31 and the Round House (Grade II listed) on Church Street, no. 4 North Street, a small outbuilding at the entrance to Mayflower Furnishings and a rear extension to the Hammer and Pincers, all on North Street, nos. 24-26 and 54-60, High Street, no. 2 Bridge Street and its outbuildings, nos. 3, 7-9 and 53-55 South Street, and nos. 22, 47, 49-49a and 51 Beveridge Street.

Other roofing materials represented in the Conservation Area include a few examples of plain clay tiles, such as the Methodist Church and Conservative Club on North Street, and pantiles which were historically used as a replacement for thatch. These are generally confined to no. 4a Beveridge Street, no. 15 Church Street, to outbuildings at no. 20 Church Street (described by the WEA guide as a former smithy) and at the rear of nos. 23-29 Church Street.

One of the most significant visual changes within the Conservation Area has been the widespread use of concrete roof tiles, whilst not particularly widespread, these tiles look out of place and are visually intrusive and should be avoided by specifying either Welsh or other natural slate or plain clay tiles for any new development within the Conservation Area.

There is a broad range of window types throughout the Conservation Area, and the overall survival rate of original windows and doors is reasonably good. Such features are integral to the building's appearance, although a substantial number of properties have been fitted with replacement upvc windows and doors that have little respect for the building's original appearance.

Of the surviving traditional windows the most common are sash windows. The best examples are the multi-pane sash windows such as at the Old Vicarage on Church Street (Grade II listed) which has a mix of 3-light sash windows to the ground floor and 9-light sliding sashes in the upper floors, and the 16-light sliding sashes with horns at no. 70 High Street and no. 3 South Street. Other types of sash window include triple pane sliding sash windows, such as at no. 2 Church Street, a mix of styles at no. 4 North Street which has both single and triple pane sashes without horns, and the split pane sashes at no. 17 South Street. A more unusual style are the 4-pane sliding sash windows with slim margin panes at nos. 47 & 49-49a Beveridge Street.

A number of properties have opening casement windows, such as at nos. 1-9 Cotes Road and nos. 42-44 High Street, and there are also examples of mullion and transom windows such as at nos. 64 & 66 High Street, which have side hung casements. A particularly interesting variation are the mullion and transom windows at nos. 37 & 35 Beveridge Street, which have horizontal sliding sashes.

There are a number of Yorkshire sliding sashes, a traditional vernacular window style, such as at nos. 2, 10, 13-21 & 20 Church Street, the Hammer and Pincers on North Street, nos. 2 & 3 Bridge Street and no. 51 Beveridge Street.

There are examples of metal-framed windows such as the mullion and transom windows with latticed casements at no. 16, Church Street and a single multi-pane cast iron window with a central two-light opener in outbuildings to the side of the Hammer and Pincers.

Although not a particularly common feature in the Conservation Area, a number of properties have distinctive bay windows, such as the small box bay windows at no. 2 Bridge Street and nos. 48-52 High Street, or the canted bays at no. 17 South Street and no. 4 North Street. Dormers windows are not a particularly common feature and are restricted to a range of small gabled dormers within the roofs of nos. 35-37 & 49-49a Beveridge Street.

As well as timber windows, many of the properties in the Conservation Area have retained their original timber panelled doors and in some cases their timber door surrounds. Some of the best examples of panelled doors include no. 1 Cotes Road, which has a 4-panelled door, while nos. 48 & 53 High Street have 8-panelled doors under pitched roof canopies that are supported on elaborate console brackets. The Old Vicarage, Church Street has a 6-panelled door and no. 35 Beveridge Street (Grade II listed) has a good 3-panelled door.

A number of properties have relatively simple door surrounds, such as no. 107 North Street which has a slim flat canopy supported by console brackets, nos. 47 & 49 Beveridge Street which have timber fluted doorcases with traceried fanlights, and nos. 5 & 5a South Street which have stucco door surrounds.

Such original architectural features make a unique contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and wherever possible they should be retained as they add to the collective wealth and variety of architectural details.

In most properties window and door openings are typically defined by arches and projecting cills. The most common are brick segmental arches or a simple stone lintel combined with a projecting stone cill such as at no. 20 Church Street and nos. 7-13 North Street. Many of the earlier Georgian houses that are built in a more polite style, have segmental brick arches, such as at no. 16 Church Street, or fine-gauged brick heads, such as at no. 4 North Street, no. 5 Bridge Street (Cliffe House, Grade II listed) and the Old Vicarage, Church Street. An interesting variation are the chamfered brick architraves that rise to a shallow pointed arch around the doors and windows at nos. 1-9 Cotes Road.

Most properties are simply detailed and lack architectural embellishment although some do have relatively subtle detailing. For example at nos. 21-23 Beveridge Street, a broken rectangle detail has been tooled into the lintels over the doors and windows, at nos. 48-52 High Street there is a moulded dentil course over the ground floor windows and a nail head moulding as a cill band at the first floor. These properties also have herringbone brickwork in the apex of the gable windows over the first floor windows. At nos. 53-55 & 57 South Street contrasting blue and red bricks within the arches over the doors and windows provides additional detailing, while at nos. 11-13 South Street a contrasting cream brick is used in the quoins and architraving.

As a longstanding commercial area, there are a number of surviving historic timber shop fronts along High Street that make a significant contribution to the historic character and appearance of the Area. The best examples are those surviving traditional shop fronts at no. 1 (Sparkles), no. 3 (Coomb Hampshire's), no. 5 (Morgan Pine); no. 13, no. 17 (Sylvia's Florists), no. 22 (Frame-it) and no. 68 (opticians). These properties generally have relatively simple shop fronts with large display windows resting on a brick stall riser that is framed by plain pilasters with brackets supporting a cornice sitting over a narrow fascia panel. In some cases the original shop fronts may be seen in historic photographs such as at no. 21 High Street (Wilford 1981, page 31) and no. 68 High Street (Wilford 1995, page 35). Given their rarity, these traditional shop fronts make a significant contribution to the historic character of the Area.

Parks, Gardens and Trees

In the centre of the historic village the churchyard around Holy Trinity Church is a valuable quiet open green space. Separated by the footpath of Church Lane is the old graveyard which has been deconsecrated and the Swithland slate gravestones used to create a fence alongside the footpath. The space is now a calm area for recreation bordered by the listed row of cottages of Church Street. The main churchyard contains some mature sycamores which add to the chestnut, beech and pine trees in the Vicarage. To the side and at the back of the churchyard there are cherries, birch trees, and limes. In the ex-graveyard there are mature maples and sycamores, a beech and a weeping ash.

The rear of the churchyard is rather spoiled by a hedge of cypress protecting the untidy back yard of the Hammer and Pincers.

Along North Street there is an area of grass on each side of the junction where development has been prevented in order to maintain sight lines at the junction with Thirlmere Drive. This unused space contrasts with the carefully landscaped opening to Cotes Road which though paved is more sympathetic to the village.

Industry Square at the end of Beveridge Street has also been landscaped to provide a setting for the listed War Memorial.

There is a fine sweep of open green space on the village side of the canal. It runs from the triangle of recreation and playground beside Mill Lane, with a path between no. 36 Mill Lane and no. 16 Holbourne Close to the slopes above the canal all the way to the Deep Lock. The recreation ground has been planted with ornamental trees and the hillside beside the canal has been newly planted with flowering cherries. Along the canal there are some mature sycamores, ashes and willows. At the entrance from Bridge Street is a gnarled old hawthorn.

The recreation ground occupies a grassy slope between Mill Lane and the access drive to the riverside houses. It has seats and trees both mature and newly planted. The grass is protected from the road by a subtle row of low timber

posts in line with a planting of specimen trees. The lower part of the slope has an open accessible playground with new swings and roundabouts in bright colours and a refreshing absence of security fences.

Across the canal bridge at the Deep Lock there is another riverside landscape of grass with birch, willow, maple, poplar, sorbus and cherry trees.

There are a number of large gardens within the Conservation Area containing some important trees. Notable are the beeches and chestnut in No 2 High Street, the trees in the old Vicarage, the poplar and sycamores at Cliffe House, Bridge Street. There is a well maintained cypress hedge at the entrance to Crossley Close, a canopy of trees at the top of Bridge Street which culminate in the two yews at no. 2 beside Jerualem Island.

At the secluded entrance to Holbourne and Cramps Close from South Street there is an attractive area of open grass with an old yew tree and a newly planted blue cedar to replace the fine cedar that had been such a feature of this part of the village. The old tree had suffered from vandalism and in June 2005 the decision was sadly taken that for safety the tree should be cut down. There is a group of horse chestnuts at the footpath from the Close to the open space by the canal and the rear of the Close is protected by a line of sycamores at Mill Road.

There are many trees in the gardens of the private properties of Mill Road, especially willows bordering the canal. At the south end of the canal there is a large beech tree in the garden of no. 90 Mill Road which overhangs the water. There are several ornamental trees associated with Barrow Boating.

The canal itself is bordered by several willows and sycamores, those on the west side composing an area of undisturbed wilderness and wetland.

At the bottom of Bridge Street, there is an attractive public open space beside the river planted with several ornamental species, including birch, cherry and sorbus.

Biodiversity

Small sections of the River Soar, which has been notified as a Local Wildlife Site, are encompassed within the northern and southern sections of the Conservation Area. The River and its floodplain have a significant influence on the biodiversity of the area.

A stretch of the Grand Union Canal links the two sections of the River Soar and forms the major wildlife corridor through the southern half of the Conservation Area. The last few years has seen the rapid spread of floating pennywort along the River Soar and the Canal. This non-native plant is extremely invasive and can rapidly choke canals and watercourses and have an adverse impact on aquatic ecosystems. The Environment Agency is currently monitoring on a regular basis the spread of floating pennywort along the River Soar. British Waterways is also undertaking some control along the navigation channel. Research is being carried out on the best way to keep the invasion under control.

The contrast between the eastern and western banks of the Canal is striking. Most of the eastern side, where gardens abut the Canal, appears fairly manicured with lawns and ornamental trees, and is managed too intensively to be of great value to biodiversity.

Although the public open space running parallel to the eastern side of the Canal is fairly intensively managed with many areas of amenity grassland, it still comprises elements which are of value to wildlife: a native hedgerow has been planted all along the boundary fence. The hedgerow provides a good habitat which complements the back gardens off Holbourne Close and supports a rich assemblage of garden birds such as robin, dunnock, blue tit and great tit. Several mature oak trees have been retained within the linear park. Other trees have been more recently introduced, but ornamental species are often of lesser value to biodiversity.

In contrast to the eastern side, the western side of the Canal is more rural in character, either farmed or left unmanaged: this side is of great value to wildlife and either comprises or is adjacent to existing Local Wildlife Sites.

One Local Wildlife Site (LWS) consists of two wet grassland fields which support species such as meadowsweet, ragged robin, greater bird's-foot trefoil, tubular water-dropwort, marsh marigold, other wetland specialists such as common spike-rush and reed sweet-grass and a veteran ash tree within a boundary hedgerow. Only a small part of this LWS is located within the Conservation Area, but most is adjacent to it.

Another LWS which is partly included within the southern end of the Conservation Area is located off Betty Henser's Lane: it is another species-rich neutral grassland on slightly drier ground, with typical plants such as black knapweed, lady's bedstraw, meadow vetchling and ox-eye daisy. The field's northern boundary hedgerow is diverse with several native trees and shrub species, including hawthorn, blackthorn, field rose, ash and goat willow. Birds such as reed bunting, which is listed as a UK Biodiversity Action Plan species, have been recorded on this site.

Small pockets of wet woodland, a UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitat which is also listed in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan as a priority habitat, are dotted along the western side of the Grand Union Canal. Crack willows are the principal tree component; some of these veteran trees have partially collapsed within the small waterlogged woodlands and are a source of standing and lying dead wood.

Some mature pollarded willow trees line the towpath, whilst boundary hedgerows are mainly free-growing and are dominated by locally native species such as hawthorn and mature ash trees.

The range of floodplain wetland habitats found along the western side of the Canal is of considerable importance for diversity, as many have dramatically decreased both nationally and in Leicestershire. These habitats often support specialised and rare fauna: the Conservation Area comprises areas where Red Data Book beetles species have been recorded: they usually are specialists, often confined to ditches, ponds, wet meadows and wet woodlands and are characterised by their inability to disperse beyond the confines of these vulnerable and declining habitats.

The tree-lined River and Canal, associated with their wetland habitats, form a very important wildlife corridor through the Conservation Area, which provides links to the countryside's network biodiversity further a field. Bat species and their roosts, including one known maternity roost of pipistrelles, have been recorded within the built environment, adjacent to the conservation area. Bats favour feeding along tree lines and open water, as these areas are particularly rich in insects. Daubenton's bats, noctules and pipistrelles have been recorded along the River and Canal and the area around Barrow Bridge is known as a hot point for foraging bats, probably due to its sheltered location.

Bats and their roosts have also been recorded further north within the Conservation Area off the High Street. Pipistrelle bats are often associated with buildings, including old to more recent dwellings and, being nocturnal, often go unnoticed. They do not cause any structural damage to buildings and help to keep the number of insects down as they are exclusively insectivorous. All bat species and their roosts are legally protected due to their drastic decline and their high vulnerability to disturbance and loss of roosts.

Detrimental features

Seven years ago the footbridge across the railway between Bridge Street and Cotes Road was repaired and the footpath link was reinstated with great approval. However, it appears now to be little used. The concrete retaining wall against the properties of Crossley Close is broken and the fences to both Crossley Close and the Riverside Inn are dilapidated.

The entrance roadway to Proctor's Caravan Park, Proctor's Park Road is a relic of former days. Although it is in fact tidy, it is in great need of redesign so that the riverside scene may be more fully appreciated. The combination of the entrance roadway, the poorly maintained Sewage Pumping Station and the poor architecture of no 35a Bridge Street, a former tea hut which now houses a restaurant, create an impression of development which has outlived its useful life. There is also a detail which adds to the detriment: the poor quality repair of the arch to the bridge at the lock, where rendering has been used to hide damage to the historic brickwork. The Parish Council has played its part by careful landscaping of the bank which is under its control – it is now the responsibility of the other land-owners to play their part.

A similar ill-conceived repair of rendering over historic brickwork has been carried out at Mill Lane bridge, which has also been spoilt by square red brick coping to one of the parapets instead of the existing rounded brick.

There is an intrusion into the peace of the canal and its canalside open green spaces by the constant rush of traffic along the A6 in the river floodplain. Along the towpath the barbed wire fencing is in places broken and the neighbouring meadows are marred by the sprawl of Proctor's caravan park although this area has been improved in recent years. At one point the view away from the canal through the hedges and trees is dominated by a large pylon carrying the high tension line from Ratcliffe on Soar power station.

In places, the broad pavement along High Street/North Street is used as forecourt for parking, such as outside the Library and nos 6-10 North Street. The Parish Plan has attempted to resolve part of this issue, namely is the High Street to be used for traffic, parking and access to the shops, or should it be made a place for pedestrians?

Industry Square with the war memorial makes an entrance to Beveridge Street from the south but it is weakly defined in the other directions. There is a good late Victorian building with a traditional shopfront at no. 17 Melton Road and the new development at the junction of Melton Road with Warner Street does address some of the issues of enclosure of this space. However, the Square could be included in the Conservation Area if the issues were further dealt with.

There is a multiplicity of road signs on individual poles which detract from the street scene particularly at Jerusalem Island.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The main contributions to the special character of Barrow upon Soar Conservation Area are:

- Church Street and Beveridge Street with their wealth of listed buildings;
- The changing views provided by the gently curving streets;
- The roundhouse on Church Street;
- The focal point of Jerusalem Island;
- The number of traditional shopfronts on High Street which are still intact;
- The two almshouses, and their continuing use, with their associations to the village and its history;
- The Grand Union Canal and its associated open spaces, which is an integral part of Barrow upon Soar;
- The diversity of wildlife associated with the wetlands adjacent to the canal;
- The riverside scene at Barrow Boating and at Barrow Bridge.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

General Principles

Any proposed changes should be carried out in a sensitive manner, taking into account the established character. New development must respond to its immediate environment i.e. its context, in terms of scale, form, materials and detailing. Otherwise, alterations will have a detrimental effect on the historic and locally distinctive form of the village.

Within the Conservation Area, where the quality of the general environment is already considered to be high, the Council will insist on good quality schemes which respond positively to their historic setting, this extends to small buildings such as garages and even boundary walls and fences. Minor alterations need to be carefully considered as incremental change can have a significant detrimental affect on the character of an area over a period of time.

Central government guidance contained in PPS1 and PPG 15, Borough of Charnwood Local Plan, Leading in Design and other SPD, and Village Design Statements will be used to assess the quality of proposal for new development.

The character of the Conservation Area identified in the appraisal document is such that the following general principles should be noted when considering any development in all parts of the Conservation Area:

1. The Conservation Area has a distinct “grain” or pattern of built form and spaces which are part of its historic development. This gives the Conservation Area great individuality, characterised by the pattern of historic buildings, ancient footpaths and highways and clearly defined boundaries. This “grain” is an important part of the character of the Conservation Area and will be protected.
2. The emphasis for new proposals will be on high quality of design. There may be opportunity for innovative modern design. However a dramatic contemporary statement is unlikely to be appropriate. Good modern design can be used to create positive changes in historic settlements
3. Scale is the combination of a building’s height and bulk when related to its surroundings. Proposed new development must take into account the scale of the existing buildings, and must not dominate or overwhelm them.
4. Alterations and extensions must respect the form of the original building and its locality. The use of high quality materials and detailing, whether modern or traditional is essential. Roof lines, roof shape, eaves details, verge details and the creation of new chimneys are important considerations.
5. Windows and doors of a traditional design respect the historic nature of the buildings to which they belong and make a very important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The use of upvc and standardised high speed joinery techniques nearly always leads to unsuitably detailed windows which will be generally unacceptable in the conservation area. In most cases the building regulation requirements can be met without the need to use clumsy and awkwardly detailed windows.
6. The appraisal has identified the types of materials that characterise the Conservation Area and where possible this should be used to help alterations respect that established character.
7. Applicants for planning permission must provide a meaningful “Design & Access Statement”, to explain the design decisions that have been made and to show how proposed alterations relate to their context. A detailed analysis of the locality should demonstrate that there is a full appreciation of the local streetscape and how it has developed, including prevailing building forms, materials and plot ratios.

Procedures to Ensure Consistent Decision-Making

As mentioned previously the basis of the character appraisal is to inform and guide development control decisions. A consistent approach to this decision making will be aided by providing:

- Conservation and design surgeries to help development control officers to make informed decisions, no matter how minor the proposed changes.
- Opportunities for pre-application discussion regarding significant alterations.
- Opportunities to review decisions and assess the impact of approved alterations through post development site visits.

Enforcement Strategy

Effective enforcement is vital to make sure there is public confidence in the planning system to protect the special character of the area. Unauthorised development can often be damaging to that character.

Taking proactive action can improve the appearance and character of the area, making it more attractive and in some instances increasing the potential for investment. Effective monitoring of building work to make sure it is carried out in accordance with the approved details and with planning conditions ensures new development makes the positive contribution envisaged when permission was granted.

In order to protect the character of the Conservation Area the Borough Council will seek to:

- use enforcement powers in cases where unauthorised development unacceptably affects the character of the Conservation Area.
- take proactive action to improve or enhance the appearance of the Area.
- monitor development under way to make sure it fully complies with the terms of any planning permission or listed building consent.

Carrying out unauthorised work to a listed building or to protected trees and hedgerows and the unauthorised demolition a building within a conservation area is an offence. In such cases, the Council will consider prosecution of anyone responsible and any necessary remedial action.

The powers set out in Section 215 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 will be used where sites are identified as detracting from the character of the conservation area by being eyesores or untidy.

Article 4 Direction

The quality of a conservation area is often threatened by the cumulative impact of numerous small changes to many buildings. Terraces that once displayed integrity of design through the use of matching features such as doors, windows, chimneys and porches, have been unbalanced by various alterations and additions. On the whole such changes do not require planning permission.

In order to preserve and enhance the character of conservation areas, many planning authorities use Article 4 Directions to restrict permitted development rights on groups of buildings or areas. Restrictions normally relate to particular elements such as replacement windows and doors, or roofing.

The character assessment has identified a wealth and variety of significant historic features which could justify the introduction of an Article 4 Direction.

General Condition

There is a broad range of window types throughout the Conservation Area, but unfortunately the overall survival rate of original windows and doors has not been good. Such features are often integral to the appearance of buildings but a substantial number of properties have fitted replacement upvc windows and doors which greatly detract from the appearance and character of the Area.

To maintain the character of the Conservation Area, any new development should ideally use red brick laid to follow the prevailing bonding pattern in the particular part of the Conservation Area. As an exception it may be acceptable to use a roughcast render. Care should be taken in specifying reclaimed brick to avoid significant variations in the colour of the brick that would give a random and mottled appearance.

Welsh or other natural slate or plain clay tiles should be specified for rooves in any new development. Concrete roof tiles are out of place and visually intrusive. They should be avoided.

Buildings at Risk

It is the intent of the Borough Council to take necessary action to secure repair & full use of any buildings at risk. At the moment none of the listed buildings are at risk of decay and all appear to be in a good state of repair. The Listed Buildings in Barrow upon Soar are generally in good condition.

Review of the Conservation Area Boundary

Following a survey of the existing Conservation Area and its immediate environs a number of changes are suggested to the boundary of the Area.

Mill Lane

The housing development in Cramps Close and Holbourne Close is of no special historic or architectural interest and is not worthy of inclusion in a conservation area.

Historic development in this area of the Grand Union Canal is limited to two clusters of development one at the end of Mill Lane and the other at Bridge Street. Overall the surviving historic properties are of poor quality, generally spoilt by modern alterations and extensions. Within these clusters of historic development no. 90 Mill Lane, the Navigation Inn and no. 4 Bridge Street are of special architectural or historic interest, along with the two bridges and the lock. The lock cottage is a modern building.

However, a major asset to the Conservation Area is the section of the Grand Union Canal between Bridge No. 28 at the Navigation Inn and Bridge No. 29 at Proctor's Park Road. The canal has historical value in its own right and there is also the significant and valued sweep of open green space from Mill Lane to the Lock.

Industry Square

The traditional shopfront at no. 17 Melton Road at the corner of Industry Square has been successfully preserved. The whole of Industry Square warrants inclusion in the Conservation Area.

Warner Street

Warner Street is a late Victorian early Edwardian street of terraced housing with many surviving features, notably the front garden walls and boundaries. There has been some loss of traditional windows but the possibility of inclusion in the conservation Area should be considered.

South Street to Grove Lane

The Hunting Lodge public house and its associated Gates and Stable buildings (both Locally Listed) and the buildings at the junction of South Street with Grove Lane should be considered for inclusion in the Area.

Possible Buildings for Spot Listing

In carrying out the Appraisal none of the buildings within the Conservation Area were identified for "spot listing", i.e. considered for inclusion on the list of statutory listed buildings.

Enhancement Opportunities

The character appraisal has identified the poor appearance of the entrance to Proctor's Caravan Park, the uncared for Sewage Pumping Station, the unattractive hut housing the restaurant and the general poor economic condition of this part of the Area. These are all areas outside the direct control of the Borough Council. However, opportunities should be taken to encourage re-investment in this area so that it may realise its potential for tourists and to the benefit of the village in general.

Proposals for Economic Development and Regeneration

Repair and reinstatement works to historic buildings that make a vital contribution to maintaining and improving the character of the Conservation Area may be eligible for grant assistance. Charnwood Grants includes an element to assist in the repair and maintenance of historic buildings such as listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas. The County Council operates a scheme for listed buildings.

Management and Protection of Important Trees, Greenery and Green Spaces

The Borough Council supports the priorities set out in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan for the conservation of a variety of wildlife and their habitats within Charnwood. The Council will collaborate with its partners when the plan is reviewed and modified to ensure that the necessary actions are being taken by the appropriate agencies.

Monitoring Change

It is planned to review the conservation area character appraisal and its management plan every five years, although the management plan may under certain circumstances need to be reviewed over a shorter time period. A photographic record of the Conservation Area has been made and will be used to help identify the need to review how changes within the Conservation Area are managed. A greater degree of protection will be accomplished if the local community help monitor any changes.

Consideration of Resources

This management plan sets out the commitment of the Borough Council to protecting the character and appearance of Charnwood's conservation areas and how it will use its resources to achieve these aims.

Summary of Issues and Proposed Actions

Conservation Area Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners
Modern housing development at Holbourne Close and Cramps Close Industry Square Warner Street Junction of South Street and Grove Lane	Review the Conservation Area boundary.	Charnwood BC	
Proctor's Park Road, Sewage Pumping Station, no 35a Bridge Street.	Encourage economic regeneration.	Charnwood BC	Barrow upon Soar PC
The area supports populations of species which may be at risk, pockets of habitats such as wet woodland and mature trees, which are listed in the UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plans.	Investigate further designation of Local Wildlife Sites along the western side of the Canal.	Charnwood BC	Barrow upon Soar PC
Loss of bankside native vegetation, long grass areas, and planting of ornamental non native species in the open space to the east of the canal.	Investigate whether the management of the linear public open space could incorporate elements to further biodiversity objectives.	Charnwood BC	Barrow upon Soar PC

Developing Management Proposals

Various forces, historical, cultural and commercial, have shaped the development of the conservation area, creating a sense of place and individual identity. The character and appearance of the conservation area is vitally important, both in attracting investment in the area itself, and in the encouragement of initiatives to the benefit of the wider community.

Based on the issues that have been identified the following objectives will have a positive impact in both protecting and enhancing the character of the conservation area, and provide the basis of a long term management plan:

- 1 Review how the Council's adopted 'Shopfronts & Signs' guidance is being used.
- 2 A policy regarding the co-ordination of the placing of all permanent items within the streets needs to be formulated. The opportunities to renew, redesign, re-site, eliminate or combine existing street furniture are substantial. Similarly there is a need to look at traffic signs and highway markings with a view to their rationalisation. The appropriateness of the existing street lighting and the scope to introduce imaginative lighting schemes, including the illumination of key buildings, also merits examination. Guidelines could be set out in a public realm manual.

- 3 The west side of the Canal should retain its natural state and future management should not compromise the biodiversity interest: operations such as clearance and removal of dead wood would likely have an adverse impact on Red Data Book species.
- 4 Positive pro-active management such as re-pollarding of willow trees along the canal to prolong their life should be encouraged.
- 5 The production of heritage trail leaflets to increase community awareness and appreciation, including the encouragement of tourism, should be considered. This might involve interpretation material, plaques or similar for key sites and buildings.

Community Involvement

This document was made available as a draft via the Council's website prior to submission to Cabinet for adoption. A public meeting was held in Barrow upon Soar so that local residents could contribute their ideas for enhancement and preservation of the Conservation Area. All comments and responses were considered and appropriate amendments were made to the document prior to submission to Cabinet.

Advice and Guidance

The Borough Council Development Department can advise on the need for Planning Permission or Listed Building Consent and can provide guidance on matters such as appropriate methods of maintenance/repairs, changes to shopfronts, alterations and extensions and suitable materials.

Contacts:

- Conservation & Landscape Team
Tel. 01509 634748
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- Development Control
Tel. 01509 634691
Development.control@charnwood.gov.uk
- Planning Enforcement
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Statutory Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area

Beveridge Street

No. 4A- Grade II
Nos. 35-37 - Grade II
Nos. 22-24 - Grade II
No. 47 - Grade II
Nos. 49 and 49A - Grade II
No. 51 - Grade II

Bridge Street

No. 5 (Cliffe House) - Grade II
Bridge over the Soar - Grade II

Church Street

Holy Trinity Church - Grade II*
Memorial to John Storer Beaumont - Grade II
The Old Vicarage and Wall - Grade II
Nos. 3-11 - Grade II
Nos. 13-21 - Grade II
Nos. 23-29 - Grade II
No. 16, Theophilus Cave's Alsmhouse - Grade II
The Round House - Grade II

High Street

Bridge Over Railway - Grade II

Melton Road

No. 1 - Grade II

North Street

No. 4, Chippindall House - Grade II
Nos. 24-32, Humphry Babington House - Grade II
Wall, Gate Piers and Gates to nos. 24-32 - Grade II

South Street

Nos. 7-9 - Grade II