

CABINET – 21ST JANUARY 2010

Report of the Director of Development

ITEM 8 PROPOSED CONSERVATION AREAS - ROTHLEY RIDGEWAY AND LOUGHBOROUGH EMMANUEL CHURCH

Purpose of the Report

To secure Cabinet approval for the designation of conservation areas for Rothley Ridgeway (Appendix 1) and the Emmanuel Church area of Loughborough (Appendix 2).

Recommendations

- 1 That the Rothley Ridgeway Conservation Area be designated and the Character Appraisal and Management Plan adopted.
- 2 That the Loughborough Emmanuel Church Conservation Area be designated and the Character Appraisal and Management Plan adopted.
- 3 That 11th February 2009 is set for the date of adoption.
- 4 That delegated authority is given to the Director of Development, in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, to make minor amendments to Rothley Ridgeway and Loughborough Emmanuel Church Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans prior to publication.

Reasons

1. To recognise that Rothley Ridgeway has special interest architecturally and historically, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
2. To recognise that the area around Emmanuel Church, Loughborough has special interest architecturally and historically, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
- 3 To allow adequate time to organise the necessary notifications and advertisements to be arranged.
- 4 To allow the Director of Development to make minor amendments to documents before they are finalised for publication.

Policy Context

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that every local planning authority shall from time to time review the extent of conservation area designation and designate further areas if appropriate. A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable

to preserve or enhance. Conservation area designation is the main instrument available to local authorities to give effect to conservation policies for a particular neighbourhood or area. Designation imposes certain duties on local planning authorities:

- to formulate and publish from time to time proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their districts, and submit them to public consultation;
- in exercising their planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of conservation areas.

These duties can be achieved partly through the development control system, partly by strategic policy making and partly by direct intervention, such as environmental improvement works and grant schemes.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 identifies that our experience of the historic environment depends on much more than the quality of individual buildings. It is about the layout of properties and their boundaries, characteristic materials and details, views along streets and between buildings, and the extent to which traffic intrudes. Conservation area designation should be seen as a means of recognising the importance of these factors and ensure that the quality of the townscape in its broadest sense is protected.

The Council's Policies in respect of Rothley Ridgeway are set out in the 'Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan 2004'. Local Plan Policy CT/5 recognises that the Ridgeway area is quite unique in Charnwood deriving its spacious and dignified character in a mature landscape setting from the concepts of the Garden City movement of the early C20. The area covered by this policy comprises three distinct residential enclaves which are contained by defined limits separated by open land from one another and from nearby settlements. Development proposals within these limits are determined against Policy H/20. This applies to all development proposals requiring planning permission such as houses, large garages and other buildings and structures. Supporting text indicates that tandem development proposals would not be in keeping with the unique character of the area, and are unlikely to be permitted. (The complete policies are set out in Appendix 3.)

For land that lies outside the area defined by these residential enclaves the range of appropriate development is set out in Policy CT/I (Principles for Areas of Countryside, Green Wedge and Local Separation). (The complete policy is set out in Appendix 3.)

Nationally there is a growing recognition of the heritage interest of suburbs. The identification and protection of suburbs of significance, character and distinctiveness is supported by English Heritage and the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA):

English Heritage, 'Suburbs and the Historic Environment' (March 2007)

“Where the assessment of the authority’s historic suburbs indicates that a neighbourhood is of significant historic or architectural interest, the local authority should give consideration to designation as a conservation area”.

TCPA, ‘Policy Advice Note: Garden City Settlements’ (October 2008)

“Local authorities should review and identify garden city settlements and where appropriate designate as necessary”.

Background to Rothley Ridgeway

On 19th November 2008 Rothley Parish Council wrote to the Borough Council stating their concern that protection for the Rothley Garden Suburb, provided by conservation area status, is urgently required. Proposals for the demolition of one of the original houses built as part of the suburb and the distinct possibility that other significant buildings in the area could be demolished prompted this request for conservation area designation.

The Parish Council also requested that the Conservation and Landscape Team’s priorities were reconsidered to allow an appraisal and assessment of the area’s special interest to be undertaken as soon as possible. As a result the Conservation and Landscape Team’s Action Plan for 2009/10 included a requirement to carry out this work.

Background to Loughborough Emmanuel Church

At the Council Cabinet meeting on 6th August 2009 Councillor Vincent raised a question regarding the extension of the Victoria Street Conservation Area identified in the Character Appraisal of that area and requested that the Council action the necessary assessment in order to assure the future of the area concerned and protect local historically important buildings such as the Loughborough Mission for the Deaf.

The Leader concurred with this and proposed that in the context of the uncertainty now pertaining to the Deaf Mission it would be appropriate for the Conservation and Landscape Team to bring forward the review of the Victoria Street Conservation Area.

Public Consultation

Within both areas all affected occupiers were invited to a public meeting.

On the evening of 25th November 2009 a public meeting regarding the Rothley Ridgeway area, attended by 81 people, was held at The Rothley Centre. The meeting was chaired by Rothley Parish Council Chair, Mr Percy Hartsorn. There was an initial presentation by the Council’s Conservation and Landscape Team followed by a question and answer session and a chance for people to express their views. Comments received at this meeting are recorded in the table in Appendix 4.

Local residents were also encouraged to submit their comments either by letter or email to the Council to help guide the decision on the designation. A summary of these comments is included in Appendix 4.

There has been a conversation with a director of the Great Central Railway and a meeting with the Agent for Rothley Temple Estates, the two major interests in the area. Their comments are included in Appendix 4.

On the evening of 3rd December 2009 a public meeting regarding the Loughborough Emmanuel Church area, attended by 28 people, was held at John Storer House. There was a presentation by the Council's Conservation and Landscape Team followed by a question and answer session and a chance for people to express their views. Additional meetings were held with representatives from Emmanuel Church, Derwent Housing Association and the users of the Deaf Mission Church. Comments received at all these meetings along with comments received by letter and email are recorded in the table in Appendix 5.

For both areas, other parties and key stakeholders were consulted by letter but to date only one response has been received, from Natural England supporting the proposal for Rothley Ridgeway.

Additional planning controls within a designated conservation area

Extra controls over:

- alterations to the rear and sides of property, including roof extensions;
- demolition of buildings over 115 cubic metres;
- work carried out on any trees.

There is an expectation of higher quality design and materials. This may be modern design and does not necessarily mean copying what already exists. Designation will not prevent modernisation or updating of buildings but it helps to ensure that new development or alterations respect and respond to the character of the area.

Issues relating to the Rothley Ridgeway area.

Clearly there is an established and significant policy context which already influences decisions on development proposals within the Rothley Ridgeway area. Recent relaxation of permitted development rights for dwellings are likely to result in significant alterations that could have an adverse impact on the character of the area. The Council is anxious to ensure that any further development within this part of Rothley does not damage the unique character and appearance of the area. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal clearly identifies this unique character and what it is that needs to be protected (Appendix 1).

A number of the consultation responses recommend that a wider area than the study merits conservation area designation, ie the fields between Swithland Lane and The Ridings, and between The Ridings and Mountsorrel and Rothley village should be included. However, these fields are open arable land which is distinctly different to the character of the proposed conservation area. The landscape quality of these fields is adequately protected by Policies CT1 and CT5 of the Local Plan. (see Appendix 4).

Some other comments received urge that the whole built area be included. This is an important concern as conservation areas must be seen to justify their status and the concept should not be devalued by the designation of areas lacking any special interest. There is no definition of what is sufficient to constitute a conservation area because of the great diversity, both in terms of size and substance, of the areas which merit designation. However, an area must pass two tests to be capable of being a Conservation Area:

- i) It must be an area of special architectural or historic interest.
- ii) It must be an area the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

The area that was the subject of the consultation and appraisal exercises was wide and from the survey work it is clear that some parts are not of the special architectural or historic interest that would be appropriate to a conservation area. Nevertheless, significant parts of the area relate to the original garden suburb vision, which represents an important phase in English Garden Suburb development, and are of special interest.

Within the study area there are 5 statutorily listed buildings and a further 4 buildings that have been included on the Council's list of buildings of local historic and architectural interest. However, in addition to such significant buildings, an area must have a quality of its own, which exceeds the value of the individual buildings. The majority of buildings should have some inherent architectural or historic merit, by virtue of age, design, materials and such buildings should retain the majority of their original features.

The survey work undertaken by the Conservation and Design Team has demonstrated that the garden suburb villagescape substantially survives in many parts of the area. Although some properties have been altered and some replacement dwellings added, the special character on the whole has been retained. Even very modest houses display a great deal of original fabric and detail. Many of these details are evident on buildings erected in the 1930's and 1950's.

However, it is clear from the results of the survey that there are some parts of the area where conservation area status would be inappropriate because they are composed of

groups of relatively modern buildings, Gipsy Lane and Plain Gate, some houses on The Ridings and bungalows on Swithland Lane.

Issues relating to the Emmanuel Church area.

As part of the assessment for the designation of the Queen's Park Conservation Area the initial part of Forest Road was evaluated for designation. But it was considered that the character of this part of Loughborough related better historically and architecturally to the Victoria Street area and as such would be more coherent as an extension to the existing Victoria Street Conservation Area.

The survey work now undertaken by the Conservation and Design Team has demonstrated that the streets and buildings between the existing Victoria Street Conservation Area and the area of Forest Road up to Emmanuel Church are not of sufficient architectural and historic merit to warrant designation. It is therefore considered that a small but independent area along Forest Road and around Emmanuel Church be designated. The Character Appraisal clearly identifies the important features of the area (Appendix 2).

Some of the consultation responses question whether parts of the area merit conservation area designation. The details of the reasoning for including or excluding such areas are set out in the responses to the consultation, Appendix 5.

The survey work and the resulting appraisal identify the importance of trees to the character of the area and in some instances the boundary has been drawn to include groups of trees.

Procedures for formal adoption.

Once designation has taken place we will:

- circulate a leaflet to all occupiers and interested parties.
- advertise in the Loughborough Echo, Leicester Mercury and the London Gazette.
- notify appropriate government departments, Leicestershire County Council, Parish Councils, other teams within the Council and other key stakeholders.
- publicise it on the Council's website.

Financial implications

Additional planning controls will have some resource implications for both Development Control and Conservation and Landscape. However, the demands will be negligible and can be easily accommodated within the existing workloads of the two teams. The recommendations do not carry any direct financial implications.

Risk assessment

None

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: Planning Policy Guidance Note No.15: Dept of the Environment. (Sept 1994)
Suburbs and the Historic Environment: English Heritage (March 2007).
Garden City Settlements: Town and Country Planning Association (Oct 2008)
Garden City Settlements and their future; Town and Country Planning Association (June 2008)

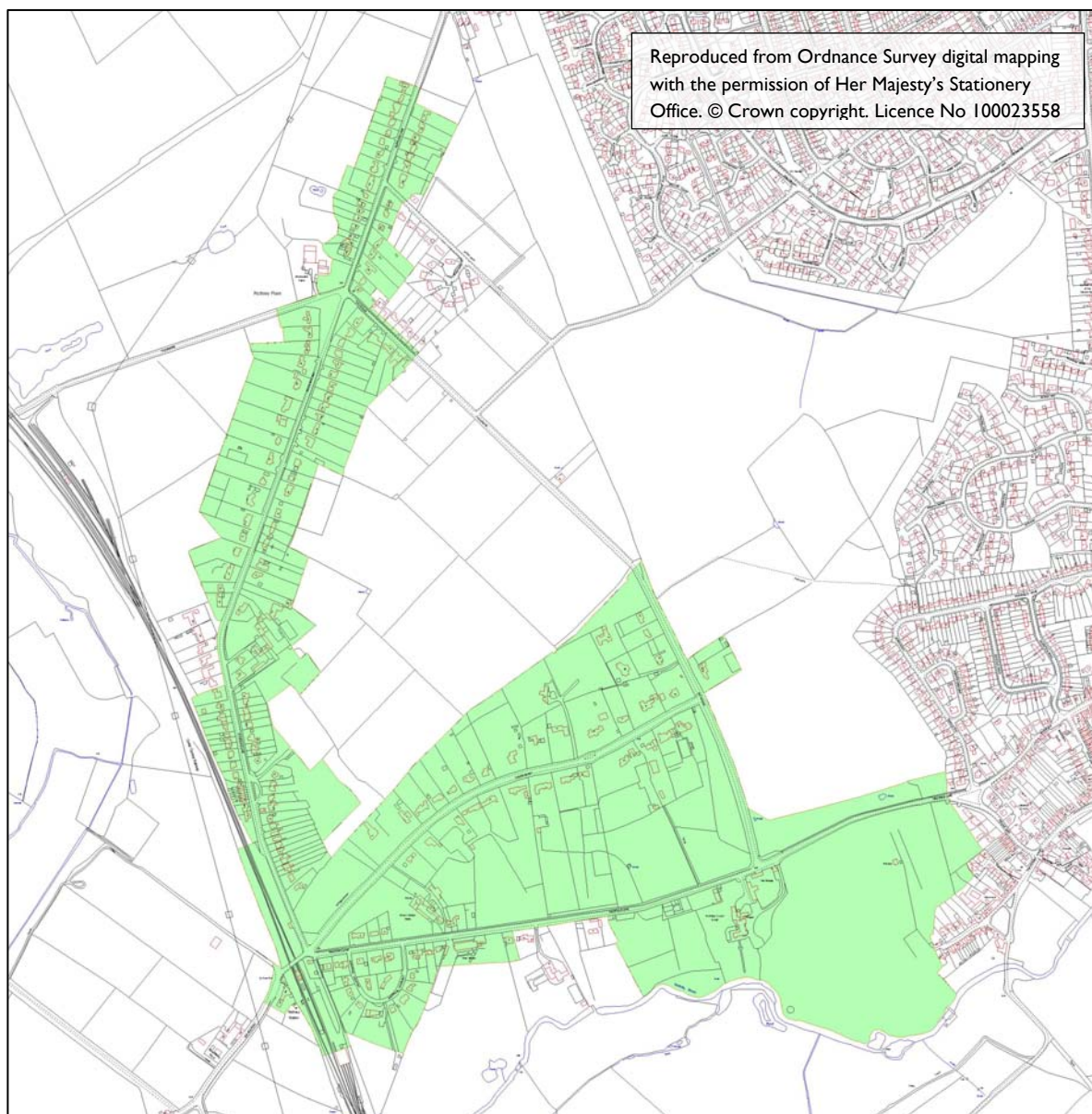
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Rothley Ridgeway Conservation Area



Map showing the Conservation Area

Introduction

This document describes the special character of the garden suburb development which began following the opening of the Great Central Railway to the west of Rothley. The appraisal examines the historical development of the garden suburb and describes 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.

The document begins by setting out the planning policy context and how this appraisal relates to national, regional and local planning policies.

The main part of the document focuses on the assessment of the special interest of the potential conservation area, describing:

- Location and setting, how the conservation area relates to the surrounding area.
- Historic development and archaeology, sets out how architecture and archaeology are related to the social and economic growth of the area.
- Spatial analysis describes the plan form of the area 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 material and architectural details, significant green spaces and trees, and detrimental features.

These elements are brought together in a summary of the overall special interest of the potential conservation area. An assessment of the general condition of the buildings and spaces within the area is included.

Proposals are made for management actions and recommendations for developing longer term management proposals for the area are suggested.

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 key principles of Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation require that planning policies and decisions not only avoid, mitigate or compensate for harm but also seek ways to enhance, restore and add to biodiversity and geodiversity.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands published in March 2009 advises local authorities that the historic environment should be understood, conserved and enhanced, in recognition of its own intrinsic value.. Policy 27: Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment.

The Borough of Charnwood Local Plan 1991 – 2006 adopted in January 2004 seeks to ensure a high standard design of all new development and that the design should be compatible with the locality and utilises materials appropriate to the locality. Policy EV/1.

Policies in respect of Rothley Ridgeway are set out in the 'Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan 2004'. Local Plan Policy CT/5 recognises that the Ridgeway area is quite unique in Charnwood deriving its spacious and dignified character in a mature landscape setting from the concepts of the Garden City movement of the early C20. The area covered by this policy comprises three distinct residential enclaves which are contained by defined limits separated by open land from one another and from nearby settlements. Development proposals within these limits are determined against Policy H/20. This applies to all development proposals requiring planning permission such as houses, large garages and other buildings and structures. Supporting text indicates that tandem development proposals would not be in keeping with the unique character of the area, and are unlikely to be permitted.

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.

Other SPG/SPD guidance.

- Backland and Tandem Development.
- House Extensions

Assessment of Special Interest

LOCATION AND SETTING

The conservation area is an area of high quality housing to the west of Rothley village. The area is the result of a vision for a garden suburb which followed from the opening on 15 March 1899 of Rothley Station on the Great Central Railway. The area covers about 85.6 Hectares of fairly level higher ground between the valleys of Rothley Brook and Swithland Reservoir. It is about 5 miles equidistant from Loughborough and Leicester.

To the south-east is Rothley Temple, now Rothley Court, which sits in an area of parkland about half a mile from the centre of Rothley Village. To the north and east separated by barely a quarter mile of farmland is the late 20th century housing on the edge of Mountsorrel. To the west are the linear villages of Swithland and Cropston with the hills of Charnwood Forest rising above.

The roads covered by this appraisal are The Ridgeway, Westfield Lane from the Temple to the Station, Swithland Lane from the Station to the boundary with Mountsorrel, The Ridings, and Brownhill Crescent.

BOUNDARY OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

The development that took place resulting from the original vision was ultimately not limited to a closely defined area, but was in places scattered throughout the area. In addition, most of the development that took place after World War I respected the character of the original vision and some development that has taken place in more recent times also respects the character. Throughout the whole area development has taken place that does not respect the character.

The Conservation Area incorporates:

- The development on The Ridgeway, Swithland Lane, Westfield Lane, The Ridings and Brownhill Crescent;
- The site of the Roman villa;
- The Golf Club clubhouse;
- The Railway Station as far as the metal clad shed;
- The railway cutting up to No 20 Swithland Lane;
- Rothley Court Hotel, the Chapel and the curtilage of these Listed Buildings;
- The whole of the parkland associated with the Hotel;
- The cricket pitch and paddocks;
- The fields between Westfield Lane and The Ridgeway.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Great Central Railway was completed in 1899 and the opening of Rothley Station offered opportunities for businessmen and their families to move away from the crowded, dirty centres of Loughborough and Leicester, yet remain within easy reach of both. At the same time the garden city ideas of Ebenezer Howard were spreading. His idea was “to combine all the advantages of the town by way of accessibility and all the advantages of the country by way of environment without any of the disadvantages of either”.

Frederick Merrtens, a Manchester cotton merchant, was attracted by the idea of living in the countryside and being able to work in Manchester. He bought the Rothley Temple Estate and set about planning a new development. It is ironic that the idea of a garden suburb should have been the idea which took hold for “the suburb” did not contain a mix of living in the country with the amenities of the city. This is precisely what has happened in The Ridgeway where there are few amenities and no local opportunities for employment or shopping.

The term 'Garden Suburb' was loosely applied to developments such as Bedford Park (Chiswick) formed in 1875, where high architectural and amenity values were promoted through the use of restrictive covenants. Many such were founded in the late Victorian Era. Merrtens appears to have proposed this type of development at Rothley.

At Hampstead Garden Suburb, Henrietta Barnett attempted to apply inclusive social criteria to a high amenity Garden Suburb, which, however, fell short of the self-contained concept advanced by Ebenezer Howard and his supporters. Indeed, the Garden City Association was very sceptical of the worth of HGS, which was master-planned by Raymond Unwin, who had transformed Howard's mechanistic diagrams with Arts and Crafts values at Letchworth Garden City. Unwin's initial plan for HGS appeared in 1905, when Mrs Barnett also wrote an essay on her objectives for the Suburb in the *Contemporary Review*. The plan was refined prior to foundation and Edwin Lutyens was appointed as architect for the Central Square, with its churches and institute. The formal foundation on 7 May received high profile publicity, and Unwin's masterpiece, the 'Artisans' Quarter' was built between 1907-09, together with a number of middle-class developments. Illustrated prospectives showing the development (with photographs as well as drawings) were published in 1908 and 1909. In the latter year, Raymond Unwin's seminal book *Town Planning in Practice* appeared, and included many drawings, diagrams and photographs of Hampstead Garden Suburb, which provided a record of its significance in a worldwide context. In the hope of emulating its success, Merrtens referred to Hampstead Garden Suburb as an exemplar, when publicising his development.

It is likely that the example of Bedford Park which was developed at Chiswick in the 1870s was also used in the development at Rothley.

The historic map of 1903 shows that The Ridgeway must have been constructed at the same time as the railway. And four large houses are shown on this map, Uplands, The Coppice, No 33 and No 39. However, a brochure for Rothley Garden Suburb was first published in February 1909, suggesting that the idea of the garden suburb took some time to gain ground. It was a very ambitious scheme, to create individualised houses set in good garden spaces both front and rear. In 1910 a plan was published which shows a comprehensive network of streets covering nearly 220 Hectares taking the suburb from Swithland Reservoir and the then Mountsorrel Mineral Railway in the west to Mountsorrel Lane in the east on the edge of Rothley Village itself. Many of the houses would be laid out around village greens. A golf course was also suggested but only if finance became available. Almost none of this materialised - by 1929 no more roads had been constructed and not much more than 30 Hectares had actually been developed. Of the promised facilities there was one tennis court and an area of allotments. However, there was a golf course, opened in 1912, just beyond the area of the 1910 plan, running south from Westfield Lane across the brook.

The current built area comprises about 55 Hectares. The situation today is changing rapidly. There is pressure to extend existing houses.

Before the idea of a garden suburb the area was farmland. There were three farms and a few cottages. West Fields, Rothley Plain Farm which is now The Homestead and the group around the Brick Yard at the crossroads of The Ridings and Swithland Lane. Linford Cottage had been built on The Ridings, the terrace of Newtown Cottages on Swithland Lane and the pair of semi-detached cottages at 77-79 Swithland Lane.

Archaeological Interest

Prehistoric flint dating from the Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age has been recovered from this area, and there is evidence for burials, one of which, a cremation, lies just south of The Ridgeway, suggesting that there was a settlement here during the Bronze Age.

There are a significant number of Roman sites in the vicinity, most notably the Scheduled Ancient Monument, a Roman villa, which was discovered close to the road junction of The Ridgeway and Swithland Lane. As well as this, burials and various finds such as coins have been recorded.

Though initial finds had already been recovered in the 18th century, an Anglo-Saxon cemetery was discovered during the construction of the railway cutting. This was an extensive inhumation cemetery with numerous grave goods and burials.

During the medieval period the Templar Preceptory was constructed. It became a manor house after the dissolution.

A broad area of The Ridgeway has a potential for archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric to the medieval period. Any below ground works may, therefore, affect burial archaeological remains and archaeological investigation is likely to be required.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Plan Form

The area as it exists today is based on three roads which radiate out like a loose fan from the railway station: Swithland Lane, The Ridgeway and Westfield Lane. Connecting these at the rear is The Ridings which for most of its length from Swithland Reservoir to Rothley Temple is still a country road.

Townscape

The most important aspect of the townscape of the whole area is the setting of each house in its plot so that a feeling of spaciousness is created both for the house itself in relation to its garden and for the house in relation to the street. Any building line in itself is not necessarily the guiding principle. Some of this pattern is disturbed by large outbuildings for double and triple garages which have been built in front of the houses, occupying too great a proportion of the front garden.

The principal street in the area is The Ridgeway, which now appears as if it were an independent estate, more or less unconnected to the other roads. Partly this is because the completion of the garden suburb with its crossing network of streets did not happen and partly because vehicle access to and from the station has been blocked.

The Ridgeway is a quiet street, intended to be an avenue. It has verges on either side and there is a strong growth of trees, shrubs and hedges which give it a rather secluded character, through which the large houses are seen and occasionally hidden. There is an island with an oak tree part way along. The last 200 meters to the station passes between open fields, on the left meadows of Westfields Farm and on the right, the site of a Roman Villa which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument though nothing is visible except for the roughness of the ground left after the excavations.

Swithland Lane has the character of ribbon development. A long straight road, made pleasant by grass verges, many trees and the fine gardens and houses which in general are set well back from the road. In keeping with the garden suburb ideal most of the houses are set spaciouly within their plot and the planting is maintained to give views and glimpses of each house. The focus of Swithland Lane is the area of open grass and individual trees at the crossroads with The Ridings.

Westfield Lane is also a ribbon of development but with less coherence. Only a small section, less than a third of the potential, was developed and much of the lane still has a rural nature, passing between wooded strips on either side. The plan of 1910 suggests that it was not possible to purchase all the fields of Westfield Farm which remain as grassland.

Opposite Westfields Farm is Brownhill Crescent which was not in the original vision for the suburb. The group of houses on the crescent, including those on Westfield Lane forms a pleasant small scale version of the garden suburb. The crescent is almost a private drive, a very narrow lane without kerbs and with narrow verges bounded by hedges beyond which the individual houses sit within their own plots.

The Ridings is a rather smaller road than Swithland Lane. The houses are set back from the road which is bounded by grass verges and trees, shrubs and hedges, planted to create a feeling of an avenue of spaciousness with views of each house.

Interrelationship of spaces

The original intention was to create a network of crossing streets with culs-de-sac and loops based on village greens at the centre of groups of houses. None of this happened and in only two places is there any semblance of a green: at the crossroads of Swithland Lane and The Ridings and at the junction of the three roads by the railway station. The roads themselves are long stretches. Swithland Lane and Westfield Lane are well used by traffic moving through the area which has an impact on what would otherwise be suburban streets. The Ridgeway is much quieter being a cul-de-sac.

Key views and vistas

The Area is well planted with trees and shrubs so that in general there are no open vistas either into or out of the area. There are excellent developing views in both directions along Swithland Lane, down The Ridings towards the reservoir and along The Ridgeway. Along all the roads there are views and glimpses of the houses in their gardens. From Westfield Lane there are glimpses and views between the trees across the fields to the rear of some of the fine houses on The Ridgeway.

On leaving Rothley village along Westfield Lane there are superb vistas across the parkland of the cricket pitch and Rothley Court down to the valley of Rothley Brook.

Landmarks

At the junction of Swithland Lane, The Ridgeway and Westfield Lane is the railway and entrance to the station with the distinctive blue brick parapets of the bridge. The triangle of

land at the road junction is pleasantly grassed. There is a rural finger post, a red pillar box and a village notice board.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Building uses, types and layouts

The Area is almost exclusively residential. Westfields Farm and Brickyard Farm remain but Rothley Plain Farm is converted to domestic use. The exceptions are Rothley Court Hotel, Rothley Station and Rothley Golf Course. While there were initial proposals to create public buildings, businesses and shops, none of this happened apart from a few areas set aside for recreation such as the golf course. Almost all the houses have an individual detached style, with a few pairs of semi-detached houses or pairs of detached houses of the same design. There are some older terraces.

Along The Ridgeway most of the houses are large and even very large, though surprisingly, since this is the principal street of the garden suburb less than half are in the Domestic Revival style. Even more surprisingly there are several houses which do not respect the character of the Domestic Revival. Two properties are currently being rebuilt; the plans indicate an appropriate development and it will be interesting to see whether the reality respects the character.

The greatest proportion of the Domestic Revival style houses are along the lower part of Swithland Lane, from No 1 up to the bend, where nearly two thirds are modest vernacular style houses, often called cottages in the 1910 brochure.

Key listed buildings and structures

The Area does not have a recognisable centre. To the south west is the complex of Rothley Railway Station, listed Grade II. From Westfield Lane the station is rather unremarkable, being a small entrance porch within the parapet of the bridge which is also part of the listing. The station offices, waiting rooms and platform are very well preserved and managed. The yard is rather rough standing for parking. There is a café created in an old coal store and there is a miniature railway at the base of the bank. To the south of the Conservation Area the railway land reverts to a rather shabby industrial heritage with a large metal clad shed and cypress trees lining the track.

At the south east of the Area is Rothley Temple, now Rothley Court Hotel. The original 13th Century Knights Templar Chapel is listed Grade I and the listing covers the whole of the 17th and 18th Century hotel and its associated buildings. The temple was a preceptory of the Knights Templar, to whom the manor was given by Henry III. After their suppression it was given to the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem. At the dissolution it became a private house and the seat of the Babington family. Lord Macaulay was born here on 25th

October, 1800. It is also recognised as the place where William Wilberforce drafted the legislation which eventually abolished slavery. The hotel is set in delightful parkland.

Almost hidden behind trees and shrubs off Swithland Lane is the 18th Century farmhouse now known as The Homestead which is Grade II Listed. The three storey red brick farmhouse with a Swithland slate roof forms a group with four cottages, Nos 57-63 Swithland Lane, separately Listed Grade II and some outbuildings which are also separately Listed Grade II. The whole complex was modified at the time of the building of the garden suburb by the resident architect George Clare.

Key unlisted buildings

The finest Domestic Revival style houses of the garden suburb are set on The Ridgeway. Four of these are locally listed: Nos 33, 54, 60 and 62.

No 33 was once owned by Cecil Gee, a local hosiery manufacturer. It is a Wrenaissance* style of mellow red brick with projecting terra cotta string courses and expressed brick quoins. It has a stone clad projecting centre bay containing the entrance door surmounted by an Italianate pediment. Above the door is a segmental arched pediment containing a tympanum embellished with relief decoration. The hipped Swithland slate roofs have terra cotta ridges and deep dentilated eaves. A Serliana style dormer is centred above the entrance bay with hipped dormers on either side. It has a tall rectangular gable and chimney stacks with corbelled heads and terracotta pots. The windows are a mix of casement and tall sash windows.

No 54 is of mellow red brick to the ground floor with a rendered upper façade and projecting gable. It has a Swithland slate pitched roof with a blind dormer and chimney stack on the front elevation. The chimneys are rectangular stacks with terra cotta pots. It has horizontal casement windows.

No 60 is of mellow red brick to the ground floor with the upper façade rendered with a half timbered gable to the front elevation. It has steeply pitched clay tile roofs, oversailing eaves and tall 'Tudor' style eaves and gable chimney stacks. At the first floor an oriel window projects under a half timbered gable carried on timber corbel brackets. It has horizontal casement windows.

No 62 is of mellow red brick with rendered and half timbered gables with multi-gabled red clay tile pitched roofs. The eaves are deep and it has massive 'Tudor Revival' chimney stacks. The gable bay of the attic storey is carried on timber corbel brackets above a first

* Wrenaissance: a style of the 1880s derived from the Queen Anne revival.

floor oriel window which is also carried on timber brackets. Generally, it has simple casement windows.

Three properties within the Area have been given Charnwood Borough Council Design Awards in previous years: An addition to Newtown Cottages, the Victorian terrace on Swithland Lane, were commended for conservation in 1996. The extensions to either side of Nos 52 and 54 Swithland Lane were commended for new build in 1994. No 93 Swithland Lane was a winner in the new build category in 1992.

Coherent groups

Nos 96, 100 and 104 Swithland Lane form a good enclosure to the green space at the crossroads.

Building materials and architectural details

The original vision of the garden suburb was for houses built in the Domestic Revival style. The Conservation Area is based on these houses of which there is a fair proportion, about 40% of the total. Some of the later houses have also followed the traditions of the Domestic Revival, using similar forms, materials and elements so that these houses are in harmony with the existing ones.

The style creates informal compositions of elements and materials. In general, the houses have complex asymmetrical shapes, of two storeys or one and a half storeys with steeply pitched generally hipped rooves which may slope to below the first floor. There are gables and bay windows, or bays extending the full height. Large expanses of steeply sloping roof are broken up with dormer windows. There are oriel windows, oculars, small oval windows and large multipane windows to staircases. Eaves may overhang deeply, being supported on brackets or on projecting bay windows. Doors are set in porches or in openings formed under the slope of the roof. Tall corbelled brick chimney stacks, which may be rectangular, octagonal or with triangular projections, are a feature of many houses.

While most of the houses are quite modest there are also large houses, extending to two and a half storeys. The 1910 brochure advertised some of these larger houses as cottages.

In general the walls are of a mellow red brick, though darker and more bluish brick is also used. Many walls especially at upper levels are rendered and gables may be tile hung or half timbered. Where the whole wall is rendered it is set on a brick plinth. In general the roofs are of plain red clay tile, though darker red tiles are also seen. Rooves may also be of Welsh slate and there is some Swithland slate. Windows are of white painted timber, casements or mullioned and transomed with small panes but there are also sash windows with the upper sash divided in small panes over a single pane lower sash.

Below is a list of the elements and materials of the houses, generally the ones that are easiest to observe from the public realm, which form the principal character of the Conservation Area. Each entry describes the combination of elements and materials of one house.

Red brick, timbered gable, timbered porch, plain clay tile, small pane casement windows, oval window to staircase, ridge stacks;

Rendered, plain clay tile, casement windows with timber mullion and transom, dormers, gable;

Rendered, new concrete tile roof, bay windows, casements, semi-circular arched window to staircase, classical porch, timbered gables;

Red brick, rendered at first floor with red brick quoins, white painted timber gable, bay window, fanlight over door, porch, ocular to hall;

Rendered over brick plinth, plain clay tile, bay, semicircular arch door under sloping roof porch, hoodmould over window, casements, tall plain stack;

New, red brick, half hipped series of slate roofs, bay, casements, door within sloping roof forming porch;

Red brick, white painted timber gable with deep overhang above projecting bay window on brackets, square bay at ground floor, plain clay tile;

Multi colour brick, bay windows, leaded light casements, triangular oriel, small window to attic in timbered, rendered gable;

Rendered, Dutch gable with tall oriel window and small oval window below, long slate roof with dormers in two attic storeys, door set into porch with stone quoins, casement windows, tall chimney stacks with angular projections - open aspect to front garden with large specimen conifer;

Red brick with render above, long sloping roof of plain clay tile, large flat roof dormer, door in porch beneath overhang of roof with brick pillars, casements either side;

Red brick, rendered first floor, tile hung gable, plain clay tile roof, oval window to staircase, flat roof dormer (rather too close to eaves);

Rendered on buff brick plinth, casement windows with half dormers above, plain clay tile roof, door set into semicircular arched opening;

New build - red brick plinth with grey render above, central bay in brick, plain clay tile, casement windows with leaded lights and with red brick separations, simple hood moulds, dormer, projecting rectangular oriel on brackets, oak door in brick semicircular arched opening;

Red brick with plain clay tile, gables with large Diocletian semicircular casement windows and rectangular lucarne slits in apex above, house sensitively extended to create third gable, dormers, door in porch under overhanging roof slope;

Pair of semi detached - Red brick and render, plain clay tile, bay window supporting gable, red painted door in semicircular opening, long casement window to staircase, small rectangular window to entrance closet, tall chimney stacks, ;

Red brick, timbered with timbered and rendered gable projecting over ground floor with projecting bay window, plain clay tile roof with dormers, door set into rectangular opening;

Bluish red brick on slate plinth, Swithland slate mansard roof, large central gable, large timber mullion and transom windows with small panes, door set into deep opening, broad chimney stacks;

Dark red brick with tile hung gable above, plain clay tile sloping to ground floor, rather poorly proportioned dormer with tile hung cheeks, wide casement in gable and smaller casement in apex, door set in classical style porch;

Pair of semi detached, sensitively extended to match on both sides, red brick with rendered projecting bay and overhanging gable above with Serliana casement windows, plain clay tile roof, projecting bay window supporting half hipped roof;

Modest semi detached, red brick and hipped slate roof, large flat roofed circular bay window to ground floor with projecting bay window on brackets supporting eaves above, door set in hipped slate roof porch;

Render on brick plinth, plain clay tile, gable with casement window, timbered apex, door set in timbered apex porch, tiled roof to projecting ground floor;

Render on red brick plinth, slate roof, semicircular bay at ground floor, projecting bay window supporting hipped roof with deep eaves, casement windows, door set in semicircular arched porch;

Pair of semi-detached, render with white quoin blocks, string course, slate roof, timbered gable, flat roof bay with three light sash window (small panes in upper sash, large panes in lower sash) and three light sash window above;

Semi detached, red brick with blue brick string courses, slate roof with ridge tiles, flat roof bay with three light sash window (small panes in upper sash, large panes in lower sash) and three light sash window projecting slightly on brackets above, garage protruding in front of house;

Render on dark red brick plinth, plain clay tile, circular bay, tile hung below projecting hipped roof, gable above door projecting slightly on brackets, timber mullion and transom windows;

Red brick with render to first floor above corbelled string course, flat roof bay with four light sash window (small panes in upper sash, large panes in lower sash) with two light sash window above with arched brick head, flat canopy on brackets;

Red brick with render above first floor sill level, plain clay tile, full height bay, timber mullion and transom windows, gable above door set in modern porch;

Red brick with render above, slate roof, gable with flat roofed projecting bay window below and Serliana window above - replacement uPVC windows, tall octagonal chimneys;

Red brick with Swithland slate roofs with shallow hipped bays, casement windows, door under Swithland slate canopied porch;

Red brick, plain clay tile roofs with deep eaves, casement windows, door beneath brick parapet porch;

Mellow red brick, rendered and white painted half timbered gables, red clay tile roof, deep eaves, octagonal chimney stacks, casement windows;

Cream painted render, red brick, part tile hung, plain red clay tile;

Red brick with render to first floor, red clay tile, massive chimney stacks, timber mullion and transom windows;

Queen Anne style, mellow red brick, terra cotta string courses and brick quoins, Swithland slate hipped roof with terracotta ridge tiles, deep eaves, entrance door in gable with classical pediment, Serliana style dormer and hipped dormers, chimney stacks joined by three arched wall, mullion and transom casement and tall sash windows;

Dark red brick, plain clay tile, hipped and gabled, with deep eaves, tall chimney stacks, casement windows;

Pale red brick, render to first floor, red clay tile, tall chimney stacks with triangular relief, casement windows, small casement in apex of gable;

Red brick, tile hung gable, plain clay tile roof sloping to form canopy over door, bay with casement windows under rendered gable with deep overhanging eaves, flat roof dormer;

White painted render on brick plinth, plain clay tile roof, door in semi-circular brick arched porch under tiled roof with flat roofed dormer over, rendered gable over brick corbel string, tall chimney stacks;

White render on red brick plinth with terracotta string, plain clay tile hipped roof sloping to ground floor, two gables of unequal size with small tile filled apex, double stacked hipped dormer, tile hung, large chimneys, casement windows, door in brick gable.

Parks, gardens and trees

Before the development of the garden suburb the land was fairly open with coppices and small areas of broadleaved woodland. There were hedgerows along the roads. The original landscape can still be seen outside the Area, along The Ridings and West Cross Lane from where there are views out across to the Forest and to the Soar Valley.

However, as a result of the vision the Area was planted with a wealth of trees, shrubs and hedges. Much of this planting followed the popular romantic Victorian ideal of specimen trees. The planting is now fully matured. In general, the planting was designed to enhance the feeling of spaciousness, providing views of each house only partly shielded. Today in places, trees and shrubs have been allowed to grow to a density which effectively shields the house from the road. In several places the romantic evergreen planting has been supplemented with Leyland Cypress, now considered to be unfriendly though most of the cypress hedges are very well managed, clipped and restrained in height.

All the original areas of woodland and most of the later planting of avenues along the roads and of trees within the properties are already protected.

Essential to the character of the Area are the grass verges and lack of pavements.

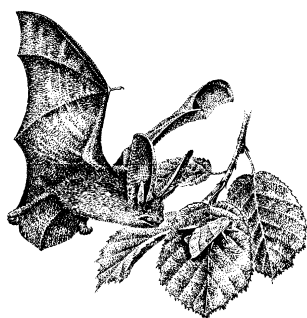
The Conservation Area includes the parkland of Rothley Court and the cricket pitch. This is a beautiful stretch of open grassland, some of it used for grazing. It is bounded by park-style railings and planted with some magnificent oak trees, lime trees and other trees. There is a broad footpath running through it from Westfield Lane to Town Green Street. The parkland spreads across to the north side of Westfield Lane. The resulting strip is ungrazed and bordering the road the undergrowth has been allowed to grow to form a rather straggly hedge.

Biodiversity

The southern boundary of the Conservation Area is defined by a stretch of Rothley Brook. The brook has been notified as a Local Wildlife Site: it comprises earth cliffs, riffle and pool systems, as well as mature trees with overhanging branches and exposed roots which are all of great value to biodiversity. The brook is lined by trees such as crack willow *Salix fragilis*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and alder *Alnus glutinosa*, and a couple of veteran pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* trees. Local Wildlife Sites are non-statutory sites of high ecological interest and often the best examples of important habitats which sustain species of conservation interest.

Species of principal importance for biodiversity, such as the white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*, have been recorded along this section of the Brook, whilst the otter *Lutra lutra* has been recorded further downstream but is likely to venture this far along the Brook.

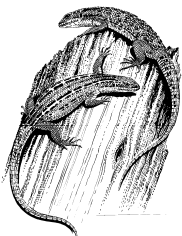
The proposed Conservation Area is characterised by a high level of tree cover, either in the forms of small spinneys, within private gardens and the wood pasture of Rothley Park. The private gardens are large enough to accommodate trees, including mature trees, and many have retained their boundary hedgerows. A number of small mature spinneys, such as Long Spinney, Hicklings Spinney, Riding Spinney have previously been identified for their ecological interest. The whole area, with its network of spinneys, trees within gardens and hedgerows provides a mosaic of linked-up habitats. Habitat connectivity is of high value to a wide range of species which can travel and commute within the area and beyond into the surrounding countryside.



Of particular note is the presence of a high number of bat roosts within the Conservation Area. This includes brown long-eared bats *Plecotus auritus*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and whiskered bats *Myotis mystacinus*. Daubenton's bats *Myotis daubentonii* are known to feed along Rothley Brook, scooping insects from the water surface. Brown long-eared bats require the

spacious lofts which are typical of large dwellings, together with adequate tree cover in close proximity to their roosts. They use hedgerow and tree cover to commute to their feeding grounds in open woodland and parkland.

The barn owl *Tyto alba* has also been recorded within the area close by, and is an indicator of the availability of good quality agricultural habitats nearby.



One record for the proposed Conservation Area is of the common lizard *Lacerta vivipara*. This is a reminder of the proximity of the Area to Charnwood Forest, which is a stronghold for this species.

Detrimental features

Most unfortunate is the proximity of the high tension pylon line which runs along the west side of the railway.

Within the area there are some properties that do not respect the character of the garden suburb ideal and its Domestic Revival style. Original architectural treatments for new developments may be appropriate but they need to draw on the architectural vocabulary and proportions of the original houses in the suburb.

The spaciousness in some parts of the suburb has been compromised by infill: new properties, large garages in front of the property, or extensions that fill the width of the site.

Some of the Lawson Cypress trees and hedges have been allowed to become too large.

There is a tendency to enclose properties with large security gates.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- Development based on the vision of the Garden Suburb;
- A wealth of mature trees, shrubs and hedges;
- Houses built in Domestic Revival style;
- Rothley Court Hotel, its Knights Templar Chapel, Listed Grade I;
- The parkland and cricket pitch associated with Rothley Court;
- The tourist attraction of the well preserved and Grade II Listed Rothley Station;

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 Area.

Within the proposed Area 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 proposed 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 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 proposed 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.
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 and 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.
8. Safeguarding of protected species must be taken on board when considering planning proposals such as conversion, tree felling, housing development and other changes which may affect their roosting places, commuting routes and feeding areas.

Procedures to ensure consistent decision-making

The purpose 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 and 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 proposals

The quality of the 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, window, 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.

General condition

The general condition of the proposed Conservation Area is very good. Properties and gardens are well maintained.

It is intent of the Borough Council to take necessary action to secure repair and 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 locally listed buildings are also in good condition.

Possible buildings for spot listing

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

No particular sites or issues have been identified.

Proposals for developing an economic development and regeneration strategy for the area

Historic building repair grants are available from both Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council. Repair and reinstatement works to historic buildings, that make a vital contribution to maintaining and improving the character of the conservation area are likely to be eligible for grant assistance.

Strategy for the 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.

General management guidelines for biodiversity are:

- Retention and protection of mature trees.
- Replacement planting to provide the next generation of trees to retain the landscape character of the area and its biodiversity interest.

Management Recommendations for Biodiversity Gain

The watercourse needs to be clean and free of pollution to support abundant species such as the white-clawed crayfish and otter.

Many individual wildlife species receive statutory protection under a range of legislative provisions. Prior surveys are particularly critical where there is a reasonable likelihood of legally protected species or priority Biodiversity Action Plan species being present and at risk of impact from development or management. Bat species such as the brown long-eared bat require large loft spaces: loft conversions and work within roof spaces may have a detrimental impact on this species.

Monitoring change arrangements

It is planned to review the conservation area character appraisal and its management plan every five year, 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. Pursuing all actions may be seen as desirable but continued monitoring and review will help focus the use of available resources in the most effective way.

Summary of issues and proposed actions

Conservation Area Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners

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:

Community involvement

This document has been made available as a draft via the website for 4 weeks prior to submission to Cabinet. A public meeting was held in Rothley so that local residents could contribute their ideas about the proposed Conservation Area. All comments and responses have been considered and appropriate amendments have been made to the document before 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 and Landscape Design Team
Tel. 01509 634748
built.heritage@charnwood.gov.uk

Development Control
Tel. 01509 634691
Development.control@charnwood.gov.uk

Planning Enforcement
Tel. 01509 634722

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Internet Resources

www.rothleypark.co.uk (accessed 26th August 2009) for the history of Rothley Park Golf Club.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

John Wright for allowing us to see his collection of original plans and drawings;
Dr Mervyn Miller for his helpful comments about the Garden City;
Terry Sheppard for his knowledge of the history of Rothley.

LISTED BUILDINGS IN THE PROPOSED ROTHLEY RIDGEWAY CONSERVATION AREA

Statutory Grade I Listed Building

Rothley Court Hotel and Knights Templar Chapel

Statutory Grade II Listed Buildings

The Homestead, No 65 Swithland Lane
Nos 57-63 Swithland Lane
Outbuilding between No 57 and No 65 Swithland Lane
Rothley Station

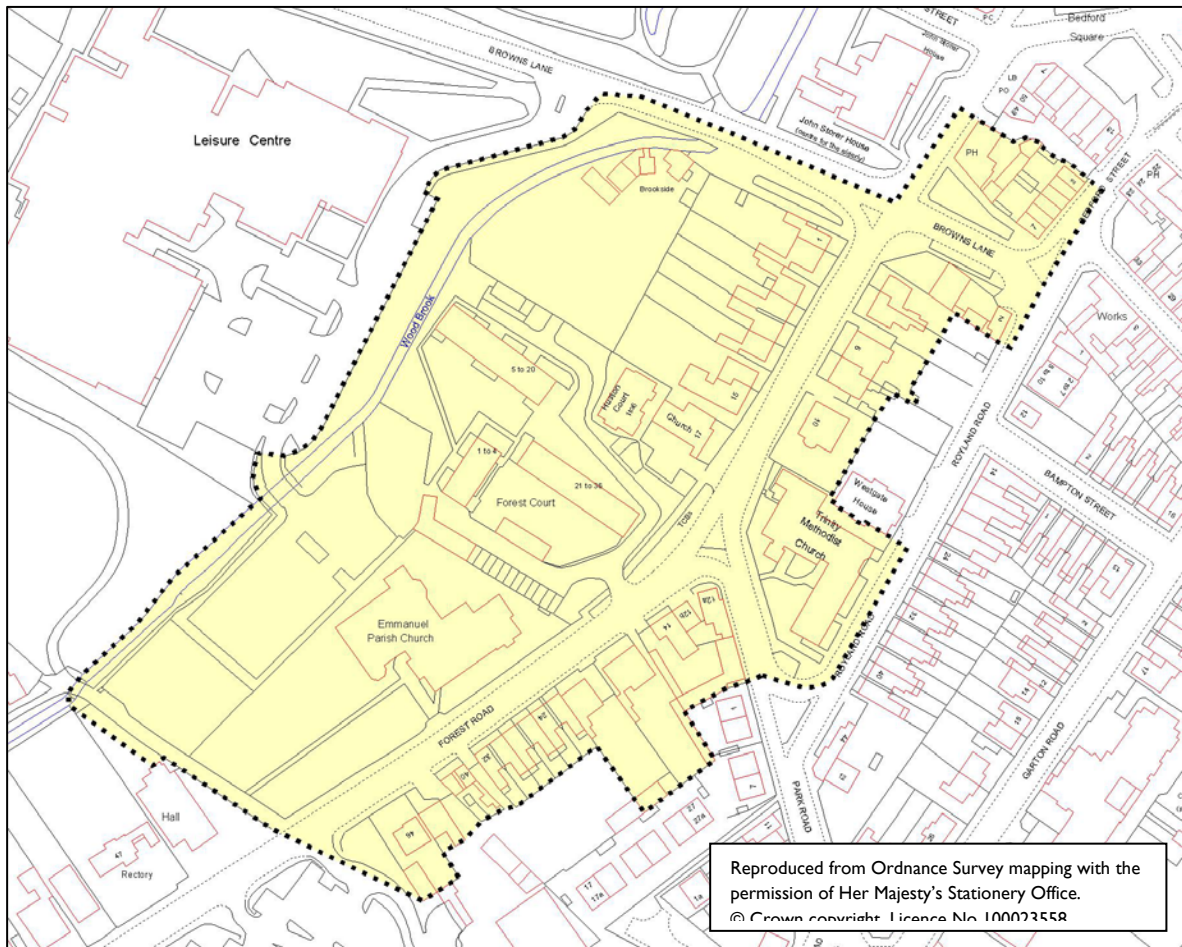
Locally Listed Buildings

No 33 The Ridgeway
No 54 The Ridgeway
No 60 The Ridgeway
No 62 The Ridgeway

Loughborough Emmanuel Church Conservation Area Draft Appraisal

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Loughborough Emmanuel Church Conservation Area



Map showing the Conservation Area

Introduction

This document describes the special character of Emmanuel Church and the Forest Road approach to Loughborough. The appraisal examines the historic development of the general area of a short stretch of Forest Road and describes 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.

The document begins by setting out the planning policy context and how this appraisal relates to national, regional and local planning policies.

The main part of the document focuses on the assessment of the special interest of the potential conservation area, describing:

- Location and setting, how the conservation area relates to the surrounding area.
- Historic development and archaeology, how architecture and archaeology are related to the social and economic growth of the area.
- Spatial analysis describes the plan form of the area 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 material 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.

Proposals are made for management actions and recommendations for developing longer term management proposals for the area are suggested.

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 key principles of Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, require that planning policies and decisions not only avoid, mitigate or compensate for harm but also seek ways to enhance, restore and add to biodiversity and geodiversity.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands published in March 2009 advises local authorities that the historic environment should be understood, conserved and enhanced, in recognition of its own intrinsic value.. Policy 27: Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment.

The Borough of Charnwood Local Plan 1991 – 2006 adopted in January 2004 seeks to ensure a high standard design of all new development and that the design should be compatible with the locality and utilises materials appropriate to the locality. Policy EV/1.

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.

Other SPG/SPD guidance.

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

ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Location and Setting

The Conservation Area of 4 Hectares is focussed on Emmanuel Church accompanied by a short stretch of Forest Road of Victorian and Edwardian villas with some 20th Century blocks of flats. The area lies to the west of Loughborough town centre on the banks of the Wood Brook. The valley of the brook is very shallow, the land seems to be flat and much of the Area is within the floodplain, though actual flooding is a rarity now that the brook has been channelled.

Historic Development

The origins of settlement in the Area can be traced back to the beginnings of Loughborough in mediaeval times and before. However, while there was certainly agriculture, there were probably very few buildings in the area until the expansion of the town in the nineteenth century. During all the preceding centuries the shallow Wood Brook valley had remained as fields and moorland because the brook was frequently flooded, especially in the winter months.

At the end of the 18th Century the Charnwood Forest Canal was constructed from the forest to Nanpantan and the Blackbrook Reservoir was constructed to supply water to the canal. This imposed some control on the flooding of the valley lower down but the fortune lasted only until 1799 when the earth dam of the reservoir gave way. The dam was repaired but still the Wood Brook was subject to flooding.

In October 1835, with what appears to be astonishing foresight, work began on building Emmanuel Church. It was completed just under two years later at a cost of £7,000. The site chosen for the church was just above the floodplain of the brook on the very edge of the town. Still beyond it to the west were fields, paddocks and orchards and a substantial part of the area to the east was also undeveloped, being orchards and nurseries. The large house of Forest Field, now the offices of William Davis Ltd, was built for the successful grocer, Richard Crosher and his family, in about 1850.

By mid century the town was changing dramatically and there was continuing pressure to control the flooding of the Wood Brook. In 1877 White's Directory described Loughborough as a thriving and rapidly expanding market and manufacturing town with new streets and building operations. Housing was being built both to the north-east and south of the church. The villas along Forest Road which are included in the proposed Conservation Area were built at around this time. No 1 Forest Road was built in 1878. But it would be a few decades before building took place further along Forest Road to the west.

In 1880 T C Clarke built the Strict Baptist Chapel on Forest Road, recorded as a Calvinist Baptist Chapel in White's street directory of 1888, and called Church of the Resurrection in

the 20th century. In 1949 the chapel was bought and refurbished by the Loughborough Mission for the Deaf. In 2009 the chapel was closed for lack of funds to maintain it.

Nanpantan Reservoir was built in 1870 which helped to control the flooding and finally the Wood Brook was tamed in 1895.

Development has continued in the 20th Century. Emmanuel Church Hall was built in the 1950s. In the early 1960s there was a major scheme to improve traffic flow in the town. Loughborough Football Club ground was closed; Browns Lane, which had been little more than a simple footpath through the fields, was made into a proper road; terraces of cottages on both sides of Wards End and on Bedford Street, which were acknowledged as slums, were demolished; and the one way system of Roylands Road and Forest Road was created. The Blacksmiths Arms, which had been built in Art Deco style in 1931 to replace an earlier pub, and the dairy which was tucked behind the houses and has become Browns Lane Restaurant were preserved. John Storer House was built in 1965 and Trinity Methodist Church in 1966. Later, the swimming pool and leisure centre were built with their sprawling car parks on the site of the football ground. The latest development has been the building of a new Church Centre for Emmanuel Church in the mid 1990s.

Archaeology

Most archaeological remains in the vicinity are likely to date from the later post-medieval period. Small scale works within this area are unlikely to require archaeological work, though larger scale development may require some level of assessment.

Boundary of the Conservation Area

The Area includes the Victorian and Edwardian development along Forest Road from Emmanuel Church to the cross roads with Browns Lane. Together with the church and the chapel, these domestic buildings form the architectural core of the Area. Besides the buildings, the character of the Area is greatly enhanced by the green spaces and the trees, in particular the trees which line the Wood Brook to the rear of the buildings. In order to include the Wood Brook the blocks of 20th Century flats are also incorporated into the Area. At the cross roads Browns Lane restaurant, the Blacksmiths Arms (now Liquid Spice) and the Bedford Street terrace of workers cottages at the rear are included.

The Forest Court flats in themselves are of little architectural value. However, they have been built on the site of the former vicarage and the landscaping of the gardens has largely been retained so that the flats still stand with mature trees around them, especially at the rear.

Trinity Methodist Church is included in the area. The church was built in the 1960s and has limited architectural value but it forms a major landmark at the junction of Park Road and Forest Road and the beech tree at the rear of the church is one of the finest trees in the whole area.

The small area to the south of Forest Road, at the entrance to William Davis's premises is included within the Conservation Area as it provides a link with the tree line along the Ingle Pingle path on the opposite side of Forest Road.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Plan Form

The Conservation Area is based on a short stretch of Forest Road as it enters the town centre. The road passes through two major traffic intersections, one at the end of the one way system where Park Road turns into Forest Road and one where Browns Lane crosses Forest Road. Roughly parallel to Forest Road is the Wood Brook.

Townscape

Entering the town from the west Emmanuel Church marks a change in the townscape. The broad open aspect of semi-detached houses set back from the road ceases and Forest Road becomes more strongly enclosed by the terrace of houses on one side and tall mature trees on the other side through which is seen the church well sited in open green space. This character is then echoed by the blocks of flats also sited in green space with a row of mature trees alongside the road. The road enters the traffic island which is well marked by the Deaf Church, Trinity Methodist Church with its magnificent beech tree and the rather sombre No 12 Forest Road at the corner. Beyond the island the road passes between quality Victorian villas, tall and imposing on the south side, more modest but well proportioned on the north side, to the crossroads which marks the beginning of the town centre itself. The crossroads is well marked by the Blacksmiths Arms, with green space to the side, and shrubs and planting forming the forecourt to Browns Lane Restaurant and John Storer House behind its screen of trees.

The land surrounding the church and flats is highly permeable (the reason for the close boarded fence in order to prevent people crossing the lawn). Ingle Pingle Walk is actually a public highway which feels as though it is part of the churchyard leading beside the church hall to a footpath along the brook.

Interrelationship of spaces

Loughborough town centre has been likened to a string of pearls in which open spaces are linked by more narrow streets, such as the progression of Bedford Square, Devonshire Square and the Market Place. The same string of pearls forms the character of the proposed conservation area in which the open dual carriageway of Forest Road beyond the area to the west, narrows as it passes Emmanuel Church, broadens at the triangular junction with Park Road, is enclosed by the villas and opens again at the cross roads with Browns Lane.

At the Church and at the block of flats of Forest Court the space opens up beyond the trees which enclose the road. The space is terminated by the backdrop of trees along the Wood Brook. The merging between the public and private realm in front of the flats increases the feeling of spaciousness, though this has been damaged by the close boarded fence with concrete posts at the edge of the drive to the garages.

Key views, vistas and Landmarks

There are glimpses of Emmanuel Church and especially its tower as one approaches in either direction along Forest Road. From the west the glimpse opens into a wonderful vista of the church in its open green space, framed by the trees along the road, the fine row of lime trees along Ingle Pingle and terminated by the trees along the Wood Brook. The new church centre complements the vista and successfully emphasises the tower and historic west front. The east window of the church is equally respected. It stands clear above the low range of garages of Forest Court so that there is a wonderful view of the window as one leaves the town, although one must be on foot to appreciate it.

There is an important view of the Carillon and its green copper roof as one enters the traffic island from Park Road. The view is framed by the red brick walls of the listed outbuildings of No 14 Forest Road, the beech tree of Trinity Methodist Church and the Mission to the Deaf chapel.

Both the church tower and the Carillon tower are landmarks which are important to the town as a whole as well as the Conservation Area being seen from many different viewpoints.

Trinity Methodist Church, built in the 1960s by T H Thorpe of Derby, forms an important landmark on the approach to the town from Forest Road and as one enters the one way system at Park Road.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Building uses, types and layouts

Besides the church and the chapel, the development of the area was wholly residential*. However, as the effect of the town centre expands, people have moved out to quieter areas and businesses now occupy many of the houses.

Nos 2-10 Forest Road are substantial and wealthy middle class villas of two good height storeys. There are two pairs of semi-detached and one detached villa. The buildings have a simple rectangular plan with simple ridged roofs parallel to the street. All are now used by companies such as solicitors and accountants. On the other side of the road, Nos 1- 15 are more modest villas consisting of a pair of semi-detached houses at each end with a terrace of four houses between. These buildings are also of simple rectangular plan with a simple ridged roof parallel to the road. Apart from one, they are still residential.

Further along, No 12 was a shop, now vacant, and No 14 (a Grade II Listed Building) is a double fronted simple cottage with a courtyard of outbuildings at the rear. It is residential.

* On the OS maps of 1884 and 1903 an "Icehouse" is noted close to No 14 Forest Road.

No 16 is a detached villa used as a Dentist's Surgery and No 20 is used as a Veterinary Surgery. Nos 22 - 32 is a terrace of quite modest houses of pre WWI period. Beyond them is a pair of semi-detached houses and two more or less matching 1930's detached houses which are now used as offices and stores by William Davis Ltd.

On the north side of Forest Road is a complex of rectangular four storey blocks of flats of the 1970s with shallow pitched roofs.

Key listed buildings and structures

The most important building in the Area is Emmanuel Church. It is beautifully set in an open green space with a backdrop of trees along the Wood Brook. It was built in 1835 by Thomas Rickman in a "Decorated Gothic" style, built of Derbyshire sandstone with a slate roof. The parapet of the nave has pinnacles at either end and the tower has a traceried parapet with pinnacles. The east window is very prominent above the garages of Forest Court.

The church was expanded in 1909 to create a chancel extension and vestry to the south. In 1996 there was a major project to create a new extension to provide meeting rooms and other facilities for the church. This new Church Centre won a Charnwood Design Award for Conservation, which noted that the extension is "an individual and very successful solution to the difficult problem of adding substantial new accommodation to the church".

No 14 Forest Road is also a Listed Building. In itself it is a rather unremarkable house built shortly after the church. It has recently been refurbished and looks now in good condition. Included in the Listing are some substantial brick outhouses which form a severe enclosure to Park Road as it enters the triangular junction.

Key unlisted buildings

The Church of The Resurrection, formerly a Baptist Chapel, and now known as the Deaf Church or Deaf Mission, is a modest building which stands prominently close to the road. It is of red brick laid to Flemish bond, with the gable facing the street and a small gabled porch to the side. The roof is of Welsh slate with decorated ridge tiles. The Gothic style windows and the door have stone hoods and the gables have stone copings. The windows themselves have been replaced. The main gable and the porch gable have wrought iron crown pinnacles.

Coherent groups

The villas and the terrace on either side of Forest Road between Park Road and Browns Lane form a complete street scene.

Building materials and architectural details

The Victorian and Edwardian houses are built primarily of red brick laid to Flemish bond with Welsh slate roofs. The quality villas are beautifully decorated with contrasting buff brick, stucco or terracotta which is used in quoins, bands, cornices and dentils, architraves, sills and lintels and infill panels.

The windows are timber sash and a particular feature of these villas are the semicircular arched sash windows, often in the side elevation, where it is also common to place the main entrance door. These features are found elsewhere, especially in the Victoria Street Conservation Area, in Burton Street, Park Road and Herrick Road.

Doors and windows have decorated lintels and bracketed hoods.

The Dental Surgery and the Veterinary Surgery, No 20 and No 22 Forest Road, are two quite individual buildings. The Dental Surgery has been rendered and painted cream. It has a Welsh slate roof with deep overhanging eaves. It has timber margin sash windows and semi-circular arched sashes in the side elevations. At the front there are two bay windows with a portico between. The Veterinary Surgery is of red brick laid to Flemish bond with a Welsh slate roof with terracotta ridge tiles. The windows are generally fine timber sashes though the windows in the two dormers have been replaced with upvc. The entrance in the side elevation has a Gothic style arch and the gothic theme is echoed in the carved heads to the front windows and the carved bargeboards of the dormers. At the front the windows at 1st floor have a low railing above the bay windows of the ground floor which have stone copings.

The terrace of houses, Nos 22-32 Forest Road, are of Red brick laid to Flemish bond with a Welsh slate roof, though the roof of Nos 28-32 has been replaced with concrete tile. There is a superb moulded dentillated course running below the eaves. The houses have double height bays which are tile hung between the storeys. The windows were originally timber sash with dentils and bracketed heads, though only those of Nos 22 and 24 remain. The doors were originally set back in a deep porch though in Nos 28-32 an additional door has been installed at the front.

No 12 Forest Road is of red brick with a Welsh slate roof which has terracotta ridge tiles and finials. The timbered gables have herringbone brick infill. The windows are of transom and mullion casements with a bay window to the front. The entrance is rather hidden to the side.

No 46 Forest Road is an Art Deco detached house of red brick laid to Flemish bond with a hipped roof of Welsh slate. It has a double height semi-circular bay with timber casement windows below a timbered gable on brackets. The staircase is lit by a tall stained glass window and the front door is set in a fine stucco doorcase.

The Huston Court flats are of pale red brick with a roof of concrete tiles.

The Forest Court flats are of buff brick with a concrete tile roof. There are deep red brick strings on one side. The windows have been greatly enhanced by hanging deep blue curtains behind every one. The effect when the sun shines is remarkable.

Local details

The Area contains some fine small details which add to the character:

- The polychromatic brickwork of the cottage attached to Browns Lane Restaurant is a delightful detail, easy to miss;
- The wrought iron crowns on the apexes of the Deaf Church;
- The gate pillars with carved capping in the wall in front of Emmanuel Church;

Parks, gardens and trees

A significant component of the character of the Area are the trees along Forest Road and the trees bordering the Wood Brook. These latter trees form an important backdrop to the built development and create a valuable habitat for biodiversity.

The two junctions of Forest Road with Park Road and especially with Browns Lane are well landscaped. The landscaping at the crossroads extends to the area surrounding John Storer House.

The Beech tree at the rear of Trinity Methodist Church is one of the finest trees in the whole neighbourhood and a landmark at the one way system.

The trees to the rear of Emmanuel Church Hall form a significant avenue along Ingle Pingle.

Biodiversity

The Conservation Area is predominantly characterised by its urban environment. It nevertheless comprises a range of features which are of value to biodiversity.

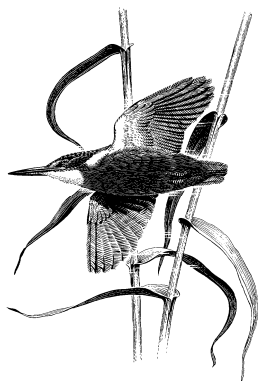
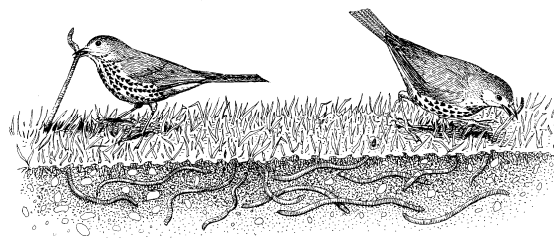
No designated sites are present but a substantial proportion of the Area contributes to the local green infrastructure network. The public footpath which follows the tree-lined Wood Brook connects with a network of pedestrian access routes pleasantly fringed by a mix of semi-natural and ornamental vegetation.

Habitats of interest within the proposed area complement those at Queen's Park, within the landscaped grounds of Ingle Pingle House and in the allotment gardens.

The proposed area itself offers a range of urban wildlife habitats, including buildings and managed green spaces consisting of the Wood Brook, mature trees, hedgerows, a small number of private gardens, small pockets of amenity grassland and planted shrubberies. This variety of habitats gives some species the combination of breeding sites, foraging resource and shelter which they need to co-exist in close proximity to high levels of human activity.

Although the Wood Brook has been heavily engineered, it still provides, with its associated tree cover, a valuable habitat and functions as a wildlife corridor enabling the movement and dispersal of species.

From early spring, birds such as the song thrush *Turdus philomelos*, a UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species, can be heard singing on top of the mature trees along the Wood Brook. The song thrush relies on parks and gardens with bushes, trees and lawns. It feeds principally on worms, snails, invertebrates and fruit, and requires good nesting cover in shrubby understorey, complemented by feeding grounds on damp grassland.



The kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* regularly commutes along the Wood Brook, flying rapidly low over water to reach the valuable feeding area at Ingle Pingle pond. The species is typical of slow moving and still water. It feeds on fish and aquatic invertebrates and is particularly vulnerable to habitat degradation through pollution and human disturbance.

Occasionally, mallards *Anas platyrhynchos* and moorhens *Gallinula chloropus* are present along the Wood Brook, although the high level of human activity must prevent them from successfully breeding there. Small garden bird species, such as the dunnock *Prunella modularis*, blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*, great tit *Parus major*, robin *Erithacus rubecula*, blackbird *Turdus merula* and woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*, can be frequently seen amid the vegetation lining the watercourse. Other bird species, such as the swift *Apus apus* and house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, which are dependent on buildings for nesting, have markedly declined within the town centre.

Some bats are closely associated with urban habitats and a few species have been recorded in the vicinity of the proposed conservation area, such as common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*. With their complex life cycle, bats need warm summer-breeding roosts and cold, secure hibernation sites, both usually found in buildings. A few species may also rely on mature trees for roosts throughout the year.

The green spaces of the Conservation Area give residents the opportunity to experience some contact with the natural world at the local level. This contributes to improving their quality of life, health and well-being.

There has been some slow erosion and degradation of the biodiversity resource locally. For instance, recent trends have seen a decline in the availability of gardens for wildlife with many front and back lawns being hard-surfaced and given over to car parking. Equally, trees have been removed, and the scrubby layers sometimes severely cut back, removing both cover and sources of food for wildlife. The remaining network of trees is still of great value to wildlife, but some of the trees are ageing and will eventually become senescent.

Detrimental features

Many of the front gardens and spaces in front of the buildings along Forest Road would benefit from some attention. There is a very wide variation of boundary treatments, brick walls, Forest stone, mock stone, dwarf walls, hedges, etc. Many front gardens have been flattened to provide hard standing for car parking with variable results. The houses themselves have, in general, a unity but the variation of boundary treatment detracts from this unity and reduces the quality of the area and its sense of place.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- Quality Victorian and Edwardian villas;
- Importance of trees along Forest Road and along the Wood Brook;
- Landmark of Emmanuel Church;
- Vistas of Emmanuel Church;
- Permeability of the space surrounding the Church and the Forest Court flats
- Diversity of wildlife especially along the Wood Brook with opportunities for contact with the natural world

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 Area.

Within the proposed Area 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 proposed 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 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 proposed 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.
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 and 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.
8. Safeguarding of protected species must be taken on board when considering planning proposals such as conversion, tree felling, housing development and other changes which may affect their roosting places, commuting routes and feeding areas.

Procedures to ensure consistent decision-making

The purpose 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 and 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 proposals

The quality of the 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, window, 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.

General condition

The proposed Conservation Area is in a reasonable condition. Many of the front gardens and their boundary walls would benefit from attention.

Possible buildings for spot listing

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

Most of the enhancements are in the province of the private occupiers and owners of the properties who could greatly help the appearance of their properties and of the Area in general by improving their front ‘gardens’ and considering the boundary treatment. Some of the front spaces have been given over to car parking, or covered with hard standing, asphalt or gravel to reduce the need for maintenance. As a necessity the use of the gardens for car-

parking and the use of hard materials to minimise maintenance cannot be criticised but the treatment is often unworthy of the building.

Proposals for developing an economic development and regeneration strategy for the area

Historic building repair grants are available from both Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council. Repair and reinstatement works to historic buildings, that make a vital contribution to maintaining and improving the character of the conservation area are likely to be eligible for grant assistance.

Strategy for the 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.

General management guidelines

- Retention and protection of mature trees.
- Replacement planting to provide the next generation of trees.
- Additional planting at key strategic points to reinforce habitat connectivity within the biodiversity network.
- Measures to help the song thrush and other birds including sympathetic hedgerow and tree management, retention of tall hedges, provision of dense leafy cover (understorey) and retention of lawns.

Monitoring change arrangements

It is planned to review the conservation area character appraisal and its management plan every five year, 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. Pursuing all actions may be seen as desirable but continued

monitoring and review will help focus the use of available resources in the most effective way.

Summary of issues and proposed actions

Conservation Area Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners
Front gardens, hard standing, car parking and boundary treatments.	Encourage private owners to reconsider the front garden spaces and their boundary treatments.	CBC	

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:

Community involvement

This document was made available as a draft via the website for 4 weeks prior to submission to Cabinet for adoption. A public meeting was held in the Area so that local residents and businesses could contribute their ideas about the proposed Conservation Area. All comments and responses have been considered and appropriate amendments made to the document before it was submitted 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 and Landscape Team
Tel. 01509 634748
built.heritage@charnwood.gov.uk

Development Control
Tel. 01509 634691
Development.control@charnwood.gov.uk

Planning Enforcement
Tel. 01509 634722

Bibliography

“The Story of a Road” by Ian Keil in *Loughborough - The Millennium Story*, Echo Press, 1999

Internet Resources

<http://www.easm.co.uk/> accessed 11 November 2009 for the history of Emmanuel Church.

Acknowledgements

The Borough Council is grateful for the assistance of Dianne Meakin whose memories of her home in Forest Road have been very informative.

Listed Buildings in the Proposed Area

Statutory Grade II Listed Buildings

Emmanuel Church, Forest Road
No 14 Forest Road

Locally Listed Buildings

Blacksmiths Arms (now Liquid Spice), Wards End

General Principles for Areas of Countryside, Green Wedge and Local Separation

POLICY CT/1

Land lying outside the defined Limits to Development is variously identified on the Proposals Map as Countryside, Green Wedge and Areas of Local Separation.

Development within these areas of generally open land will be strictly controlled. Planning permission will be granted for the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for uses suitable in scale and nature, and small-scale new built development, where there would not be a significant adverse environmental impact and the proposal would:

- i) be essential for the efficient long-term operation of agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or**
- ii) facilitate the diversification of the rural economy; or**
- iii) improve facilities for recreation, or leisure uses; or**
- iv) implement strategically important schemes for mineral related uses, transport infrastructure, and for public services or utilities.**

In all cases it should be demonstrated that the proposed development could not reasonably be located within or adjacent to an existing settlement.

(See also in particular Policies CT/2, CT/3, CT/4, CT/6, CT/15)

- 6.13 National planning policy guidance emphasises the need to protect the countryside for its own sake. With the reduced dependency upon agriculture the imperative now is to enable new forms of rural enterprise to sustain the rural economy while protecting the countryside for the sake of its natural beauty, the diversity of its landscape and its ecological, agricultural and recreational value. Policy CT/1 sets out those uses that will be acceptable in principle in the countryside and will apply with other countryside policies in the plan.
- 6.14 The Structure Plan also requires the definition of Green Wedges and allows for the identification of areas of local separation as discrete policy areas quite distinct from the countryside.
- 6.15 The guiding principles within these areas of essentially open land will be to ensure that new development is small scale and does not adversely affect the appearance and character of the landscape. Wherever possible new development should be focused on towns and villages in locations which reduce travel needs and extend transport choice accessibility. Particular care must be exercised in allowing development even for so called “soft uses” such as recreation. The quality of agricultural land and the landscape character will be important considerations.

Local Separation – The Ridgeway Area of Rothley

POLICY CT/5

Planning permission for appropriate development within the Ridgeway Separation policy area defined on the Proposals Map will be granted where all the following criteria are met:

- i) the character and appearance of the countryside is not harmed;**
- ii) the separation between the residential areas and between those areas and the village of Rothley and Mountsorrel is not unacceptably reduced;**
- iii) the historic and architectural interest of the individual residential areas and their open setting in the landscape are safeguarded;**
- iv) the amenities of existing properties are not adversely affected.**

(See also in particular Policies CT/1, CT/6, H/20)

- 6.26 The Ridgeway area of Rothley is quite unique in Charnwood deriving its spacious and dignified character in a mature landscaped setting from the concepts of the Garden City movement of the early 20th Century. The area comprises three distinct enclaves of residential development separated by areas of open land from one another and from the neighbouring settlements of Rothley and Mountsorrel. The range of appropriate development is defined in Policy CT/1.
- 6.27 The residential areas are contained by the defined Limits to Development and the Borough Council is anxious to ensure that any further development within them does not damage the unique character and appearance of the area. Accordingly any development proposals will be determined within the context provided by policy H/20.
- 6.28 Clearly the residential enclaves derive their particular character from the areas of open land which surround them and the Borough Council therefore attaches considerable importance to the retention of these spaces to prevent consolidation and to resist any trend towards coalescence with the villages of Mountsorrel and Rothley. Given the particular characteristics of this area it is not considered that countryside policy alone could achieve that objective while the purpose of local separation policy is to preserve the separate identity of settlements, rather than separate communities within the same settlement. Accordingly the Council is persuaded that the historical and environmental considerations which combine to lend this area its unique character and quality justify the designation of a specific separation policy for the Ridgeway Area.

The Ridgeway Area of Rothley

POLICY H/20

Within the Ridgeway Area of Rothley as defined on the Proposals Map, proposals for infill dwellings, and other development requiring planning permission, will not be granted unless they are in keeping with the unique, spacious and dignified residential character of the area having regard to all of the following criteria:

- i) the siting, design and layout of the development;**
- ii) the shape and size of plot for any proposed new dwelling;**
- iii) the need to protect privacy and residential amenities;**
- iv) the need to protect existing trees;**
- v) access and parking arrangements;**

(See also in particular Policy CT/5)

- I.178 The Ridgeway Area of Rothley is a remnant of an uncompleted early 20th century garden suburb development. It is an attractive local feature of historic and architectural interest.
- I.179 Specific policy guidance, as included in the adopted Soar Valley Local Plan, has been successfully applied over the past 20 years to control development proposals within the individual housing areas. This guidance has strong local support.
- I.180 It will be applied to ensure that all development proposals requiring planning permission such as houses, large garages and other buildings and structures are carefully assessed and only permitted where they would be in keeping with the traditional, spacious and dignified character of the residential areas. Proposals for tandem development would not be in keeping with the unique character of the area, and are unlikely to be permitted.

Rothley Ridgeway Conservation Area

Responses to the Proposal to Designate and to the Draft Appraisal

A Public Meeting was held at the Rothley Centre on 25th November 2009. 81 people attended. At the end of the meeting by a show of hands all those present except 2 were in favour of designation. Letters have been sent to other stakeholders including statutory undertakers and one response has been received from Natural England.

	Respondent	Issue	Response
1	Conversation with Terry Shepherd, Rothley historian	Clarification of the history and status of the Temple Estate.	Document amended.
2	Email from Robert Young, local resident	Area should include Swithland Lane from Gipsy Lane to the boundary with Mountsorrel.	Some of the properties at the north end of Swithland Lane are significant and it is considered that this area should be included. Document amended.
3	Email from Kay Dakin, local resident	Gipsy Lane is mis-spelled	Document amended.
4	Email from Charles White, local resident	Concern over short notice of public meeting and advertising of consultation.	Experience has shown that one weeks notice of the date of the meeting generates a good attendance. Mr White was present at the public meeting. The consultation was advertised in the Rothley Post.
5	Email from Tony Lee-Elliott, local resident	Not enough time to consult on proposals. Local residents are strong enough to oppose development without the need for Conservation Area status.	The consultation period began on 18 November 2009 for a period of 6 weeks. Majority opinion does not support the view that self policing is effective any more.
6	Comments at Public Meeting	Why has an out-of-date map been used?	The 1:25,000 map was last revised in 1999 and is the

			clearest way to understand the whole area.
7		Many vociferous complaints about permissions having been given recently to several developments which are not in keeping with the character of the area. Inappropriate developments quoted include: demolition of existing houses; rebuilding; over extension of existing houses; and building of garages in the front gardens.	Noted.
8		What are the benefits and disbenefits of designation?	This was explained at the public meeting and is described in the appraisal.
9		Can any control be imposed on the installation of electric gates?	This could be achieved through an Article 4.2 Direction.
10		Will Conservation Area status have any effect on Council Tax?	No.
11		Self policing by common sense is not effective any more.	Agreed.
12		Everybody is very concerned to care for the village. We are confused and upset by what is being allowed to happen today. We want to stop the outrageous development. We feel our democratic rights are not being respected.	Confirms the need for Conservation Area status.
13		The Area should be extended to include the fields North East and South West of The Ridings	These fields are open arable land which is distinctly different to the character of the proposed conservation area. The landscape quality of

			this area is adequately protected by Policies CT1 and CT5 of the Local Plan.
14	Letter from Mr Harrington, local resident and former Rothley Tree Warden	Development allowed to take place because of absence of Conservation Area. Concern over damage to trees by inconsiderate activity by statutory undertakers and farmers	Agreed. Protection of trees by control of any work to trees is part of the restriction imposed by conservation area status.
15	Letter from Mr Toone, local resident	Strong support for conservation Area which should be designated without delay to prevent any further loss of character. Suggestion that the Area should include the fields between Swithland Lane, The Ridgeway and The Ridings, and the fields east of The Ridings.	Agreed. These fields are open arable land which is distinctly different to the character of the proposed conservation area. The landscape quality of this area is adequately protected by Policies CT1 and CT5 of the Local Plan.
16	Email from director of Great Central Railway	Confirming understanding of implications of designation.	Noted.
17	Email from Mrs Gent, local resident	Support the proposal. Developments have taken place in the last 5 years which are totally inappropriate.	Noted.
18	Email from Rothley Parish Council	In agreement with area as studied being designated. Suggest an Article 4.2 Direction to restrict PD rights with respect to doors, windows, chimneys, porches, rooves, hedges, external painting	Noted. Decision on whether to impose any Article 4.2 Direction will require further assessment and resources. Note that restrictions regarding hedges cannot be imposed by planning control. Rothley Temple Estates still have restrictive covenants on many properties including

			hedges, however, they are finding it increasingly difficult to enforce.
19	Email from Peter Finch - Rothley Parish Councillor	In agreement, except that more recent properties be excluded. Urges Article 4.2 direction to protect the hedges, especially on The Ridgeway.	Certain areas of recent development have been excluded. Document amended. Unfortunately, hedges are not defined as development and therefore cannot be restricted. Rothley Temple Estates still have restrictive covenants on many properties which includes hedges, however, they are finding it increasingly difficult to enforce.
20	Email from Ian Geary, local resident	Support the proposal - find ways to ensure the preservation of the open land.	The fields are open arable land which is distinctly different to the character of the proposed conservation area. The landscape quality of this area is adequately protected by Policies CT1 and CT5 of the Local Plan.
21	Letter from M & J Rigby, local residents	Support the proposal. Include the whole triangle.	The fields are open arable land which is distinctly different to the character of the proposed conservation area. The landscape quality of this area is adequately protected by Policies CT1 and CT5 of the Local Plan.
22	Email from Peter Haythornthwaite, local resident	Support the proposal. Concern about lighting at Golf Club. Concern about planting of Cypress hedge at Westfield Farm boundaries.	Noted. Concerns passed to Planning Enforcement Team to investigate.

23	Email from Lynne Bailey, local resident	Support the proposal. Some new development out of character with the area - looks more like Leicester Meridian Business Park!	Confirms the need to designate the Area so that development can be guided to enhance the character.
24	Email from Alan Mortimore, local resident	Support the proposal. Concern over management of trees and proliferation of road signs.	Noted. Tree works will be controlled. Consideration should be given by the Highway Authority to appropriate signage.
25	Email from Steve Woolley, local resident	Clarification of boundary.	Clarified in response to Mr Woolley.
26	Email from Mr Parker, local resident	Objection to the inclusion of No 23 The Ridings and the strip of parkland to the north of Westfield Lane on the grounds that agricultural practice is already controlled.	The house and parkland are intrinsic to the character of the conservation area. Agricultural operation will be unaffected by conservation area status. There will be additional controls to the residential property and to the trees. Document unchanged.
27	Meeting with Andrew Bamber, agent for Rothley Temple Estates	No objection. Designation will help to maintain the character of the area.	Noted.
28	Email from Natural England	Supporting the proposal	Noted.

Loughborough Emmanuel Church Conservation Area Responses to the Proposal to Designate and to the Draft Appraisal

A Public Meeting was held at John Storer House on 3 December 2009. 28 people attended. Letters have been sent to stakeholders including statutory undertakers but no responses have been received.

	Respondent	Issue	Response
1	Comments at public meeting	Include Trinity Methodist Church on the grounds that while it is not necessarily architecturally important but it is a significant building in the area.	Boundary now includes Trinity Methodist Church. Document amended.
2		Exclude "Brookside" Browns Lane and its garden because it has little of intrinsic value. Exclude strip of land adjacent to the access road to the leisure centre - the planting is new.	The original buildings of Brookside were part of the historic development being a smallholding in the 19 th Century. The new planting and trees are becoming a significant part of the character of the area. They make a strong contribution to the wildlife habitat - see appraisal from Biodiversity officer below. Document unchanged.
3		Include Emmanuel Church Hall - the trees in the garden of the hall are significant.	Boundary has been amended so that the trees are included but not the hall which has little architectural value. Any development on this site would have to be considered in terms of its relationship to the Grade II listed church. Document amended.
4		Include Nos 2-7 Bedford	Agreed. This terrace forms a

		Street as they are of historic value.	block with the Blacksmiths Arms and the boundary now includes the terrace. Document amended.
5		Objection to designation because of increased planning controls on businesses.	Businesses do not have the permitted development rights accorded to householders Therefore, demolition of buildings is the only significant additional control on businesses in a conservation area.
6		Objection to designation because of additional control on householders, particularly when the status quo has successfully protected the area.	Evidence indicates that this situation is changing. Recent relaxation of permitted development rights for householders could lead to significant alterations undertaken without planning permission that would affect the character of the area.
7		Proximity of John Storer House to both Queens Park and proposed Emmanuel Church. Why is it not included?	While the position of John Storer House in the townscape is of undoubted importance, the architecture of the building is of insufficient value to include in either area.
8		Setting around Emmanuel Church which covers a fair proportion of the proposed conservation area is already protected because the building is listed.	Agreed, and the conservation area will protect a larger area and the landscape setting of the church.
9		Are sites outside the conservation area affected by additional controls?	No additional controls would be imposed by designation but any planning application would be judged

			in relation to the setting adjacent to a conservation area.
10		Are not most of the trees already covered by Tree Perservation Orders?	No.
11		The beech tree at Trinity Methodist Church is very significant - it should be protected.	Agreed - the tree should be protected and is part of the reason that Trinity Methodist Church is now included.
12		Designation of the area is very important because it offers security to householders by knowing that the character of the neighbourhood would be protected.	Noted.
13		Support for designation from several users of the Deaf Mission church.	Noted.
14	Email from member of Emmanuel church	History of Emmanuel Church	Document amended.
15	Phone call from resident	History of Forest Road	Document amended.
16	Email from Clive Hilton, member of Emmanuel church	Include Church Hall, include (former) Rectory, include Trinity Methodist Church, do not exclude Brookside.	Noted. The church hall is considered of insufficient value to include (the trees to the rear are included). The impact of alterations to the hall will be assessed principally on the relation to the listed church. The Rectory is beyond the hall and therefore detached from the area. Trinity Methodist

			Church and Brookside are included.
17	Letter from Civic Trust	Fully in favour of proposal and that the area warrants designation distinct from Victoria Street. Suggestion that boundary extends to west side of Roylands Road to include Trinity Methodist Church and remove ambiguity.	Boundary amended.
18	Email from Deaf Mission Action Group (DeMAG)	Fully supportive of proposal, it is at the right time to prevent possible erosion of the character by speculative development.	Noted.
19	Email from Hans Butler, member of DeMAG	Include trees within church hall area, include Brookside, consider enhancement of whole area bordering the brook.	Boundary amended.
20	Appraisal from Biodiversity officer	Special character of the area is enhanced by the wildlife especially along the Wood Brook, with its opportunities for contact with the natural world; Include Brookside, include area of trees at entrance to William Davis; Control pollution in the Wood Brook; Improve connectivity for wildlife at the bridge between the car parks	Document amended.
21	Letters from Mrs Sbitany	Brookside has no architectural or conservational value.	The original buildings of Brookside were part of the historic development being a

		<p>Land to the rear of Nos 1-15 Forest Road should be excluded as they cannot be seen from the road, have no significant trees and residents should have the freedom to do what they want in their own back garden.</p> <p>What is the relevance of including the car park to the rear of Nos 13 & 15?</p>	<p>smallholding in the 19th Century.</p> <p>It is better to include the entire boundary of a property for consistency and coherence. There will be no additional controls over development in the rear gardens.</p> <p>The rear land is included for consistency and coherence.</p>
22	Email from Derwent Living	<p>Supportive of proposal. Derwent Living are likely to make an application to rebuild the Forest Court flats to upgrade them to current standards.</p>	<p>From discussions with Derwent Living it is understood that their thinking to rebuild the flats will be consistent with the aims of designating the Conservation Area.</p>