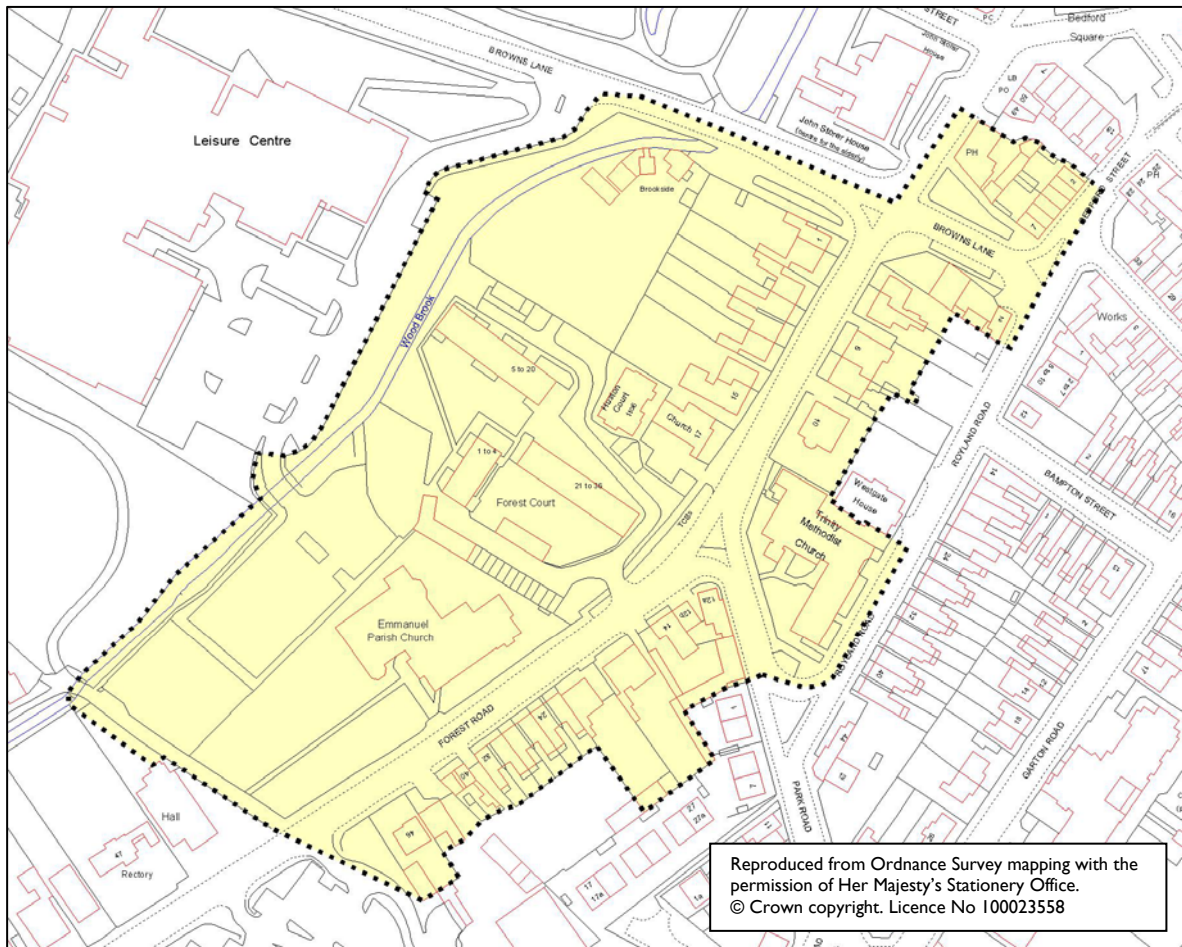


## **Loughborough Emmanuel Church Conservation Area Character Appraisal**

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## Loughborough Emmanuel Church Conservation Area



*Map showing the Conservation Area*

### **Introduction**

This document describes the special character of the area around 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 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. 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.

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

### **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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

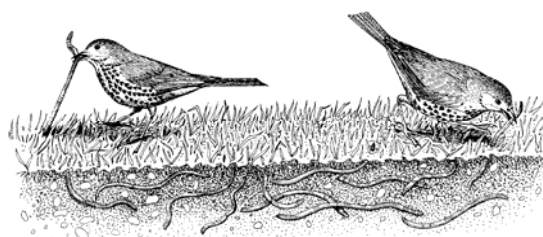
No designated sites are present but a substantial proportion of the Area contributes to the local green infrastructure network. The public footpath which follows the tree-lined Wood Brook connects with a network of pedestrian access routes pleasantly fringed by a mix of semi-natural and ornamental vegetation.

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

The 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 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 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 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 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 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**

| <b>Conservation Area Issue</b>                                     | <b>Proposed Action</b>  | <b>Lead Partner</b> | <b>Other Partners</b> |
|--|---|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 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 were considered and appropriate amendments were 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](mailto:built.heritage@charnwood.gov.uk)

Development Control  
Tel. 01509 634691  
[Development.control@charnwood.gov.uk](mailto: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 Area**

### **Statutory Grade II Listed Buildings**

Emmanuel Church, Forest Road  
No 14 Forest Road

### **Locally Listed Buildings**

Blacksmiths Arms (now Liquid Spice), Wards End