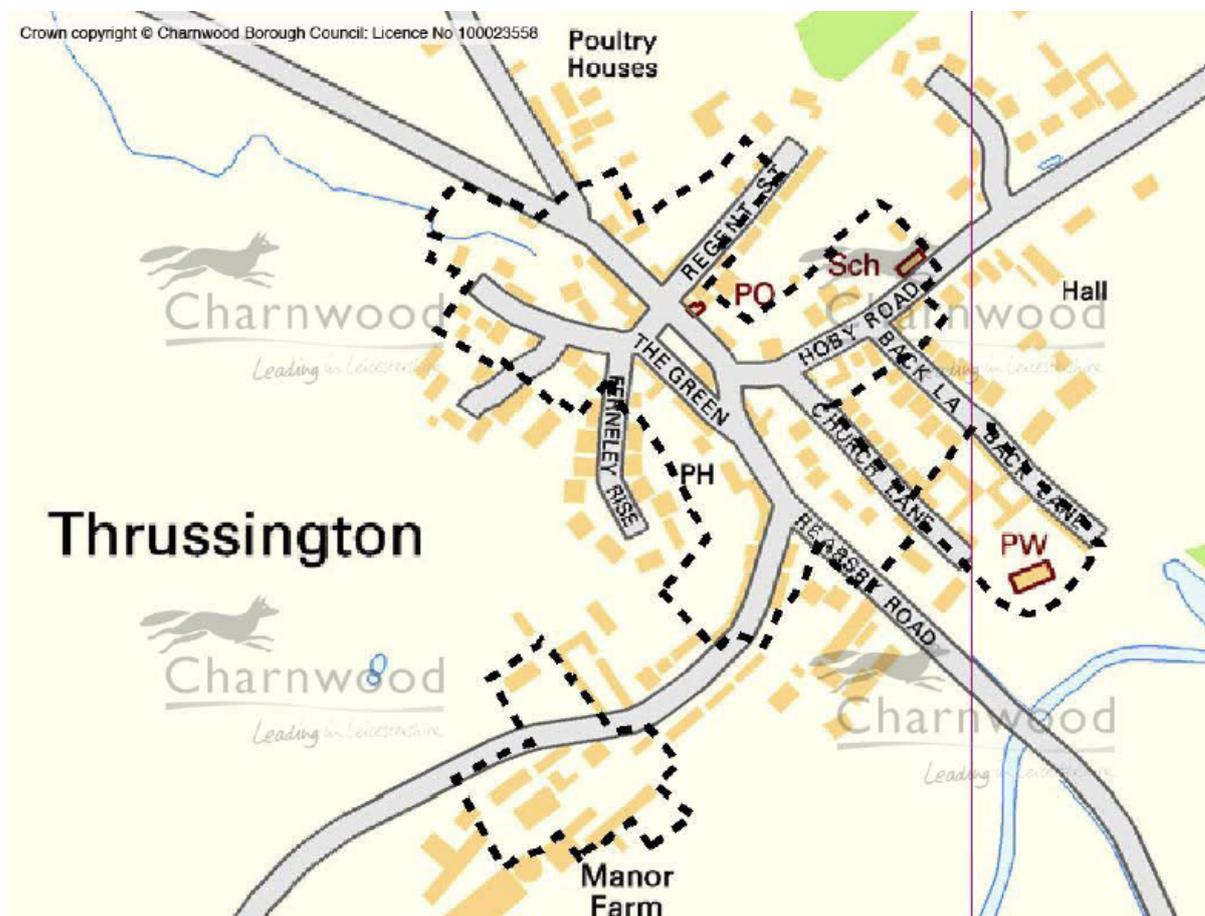




Thrussington Conservation Area Character Appraisal

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THRUSSINGTON CONSERVATION AREA **CHARACTER APPRAISAL**



Current map of Thrussington showing the Conservation Area

INTRODUCTION

Thrussington Conservation Area was designated in July 1975. The boundary incorporates the village green which was at the core of the medieval village as well as buildings from the sixteenth century through into the twenty-first. It currently covers an area of 7.4 Hectares.

The purpose of this appraisal is to examine the historic development of the Conservation Area and to describe its present appearance in order to assess its special architectural and historic interest.

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

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

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

These elements are brought together in a summary of the special interest of the Conservation Area.

The document is intended as a guide for people considering development which may affect the Conservation Area. It will be used by the Planning & Regeneration Service in their assessment of development proposals. It may, of course, be used by residents of the Conservation Area.

Planning Policy Context

The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a conservation area as ‘an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’ (Section 69). Local planning authorities have a duty to review the overall extent of designation in their areas regularly and if appropriate, to designate additional areas. The Act sets out the general duties of local planning authorities relating to designated conservation areas:

- From time to time, to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their districts and to consult the local community about these proposals (Section 71);
- In exercising their planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas (Section 72).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) outlines the Government’s intentions regarding planning policy. The NPPF emphasises sustainable development as the present focus and future legacy of planning policy. It also places responsibility on local planning authorities to assess and understand the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal by utilising available evidence and necessary expertise. This should be taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset to avoid or minimise conflict between an asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal. This understanding should not

only be used as an aid for decision making, but should take on a more dynamic role by actively informing sensitive and appropriate developments.

Responsibility for understanding a heritage asset's significance and contribution to the local area is also placed on the applicant, bringing into greater importance the need for information relating to the historic environment. The NPPF reinforces this expectation by stating that the local planning authority should make information about the significance of the historic environment publically accessible, as well as being informed by the community.

Conservation areas are 'designated heritage assets', each containing a number and variety of elements which combine to create the overall significance of the heritage asset. Its character is formed not only of the elements which it shares with other places, but those which make it distinct. Both tangible static visual elements and intangible aspects such as movements, sounds, and smells create the atmosphere in which we experience a conservation area and shape how we use it. This appraisal describes these elements but it does not attempt to be exhaustive and the policies in the NPPF lay the duty on all concerned, including residents and prospective developers, to understand the significance of any element.

Providing a usable and accessible Conservation Area Character Appraisal to underpin and shape future decisions is now particularly important in response to the Localism Act (2011) which gives local people the power to deliver the developments that their local community wants.

Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan Saved Policy EV/1- Design, seeks to ensure a high standard of design for all new development and that the design should be compatible with the locality and utilise locally appropriate materials.

The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 'Leading in Design' reinforces the need to understand the setting and context when proposing development in a sensitive location such as a conservation area. It encourages developers to use local guidance such as Conservation Area Character Appraisals when considering their designs.

Other guidance adopted by Charnwood Borough Council

- Backland & Tandem Development Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)
- House Extensions (SPG)
- Shopfronts & Signs (SPD)

ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

LOCATION AND SETTING

Thrussington is one of a string of settlements which lies in the Wreake Valley, north of Rearsby and between the villages of Ratcliffe on the Wreake and Hoby. It is close to the Fosse Way (now the A46) and is approximately 9 miles from both Loughborough and Leicester. The Thrussington Conservation Area is interesting in that it is formed of two separate areas, excluding the twentieth century development between the core of the village and the site of Manor Farm and The Homestead on Ratcliffe Road.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Origins and Development

The first clue as to the origins of Thrussington lay in its name. The element ‘-ing’ often indicates ‘the followers or people of’ and in this case refers to ‘Thorstein’s farmstead’, rooting its origins in the Anglo-Saxon period. The use of ‘-ington’ indicates a settlement created as a whole community led by one man or family and suggests a concerted effort in clearance and building. The planned nature of the village is evident in the preservation of the village green space, with buildings built around its boundaries and along roads which lead into this space from all directions. Thrussington has also been known variously through time as Turstanetone, Thurstanton and Thirstaton.

Thrussington is noted in Domesday with Guy de Raimbeaucourt as the Lord and Tenant in Chief and consisted of thirty-seven households which was considered to be very large. Also mentioned were considerable farm lands, a sixteen acre meadow and a mill valued at eight shillings. A mill still stands in Thrussington today although it lies outside of the Conservation Area. The present building was built in the eighteenth century and ceased work in 1910.

By the fourteenth century, Thrussington was becoming increasingly prosperous due to its fertile soil and good communications. Following on from the Dissolution in 1535, the patronage of the rectory and vicarage passed by purchase in 1553 to Humphrey Coningsby and was held by his family for the next 262 years. An ale house was established in 1609 and in 1686 there was an inn for six guests.

From the mid-eighteenth century Thrussington experienced its greatest changes, as was the case for many villages elsewhere. Agriculture was the focus of the biggest change of all, the impact of which was etched out in the surrounding landscape and within the village itself. The need for more efficient farming techniques and the drive for higher levels of productivity led to the defining enclosure agreements, affecting vast swathes of the countryside and in particular the East Midlands. Prior to enclosure, Thrussington had three

very large open fields shared amongst landowners and tenants. It made little sense to build on valuable agricultural lands so farmsteads were located within the central village space. The Enclosure Act for Thrussington was passed in 1789 and divided the open fields. As well as encouraging new efficient methods of farming, enclosure also reduced many families to poverty as smaller landowners suffered in the face of high costs and the removal of common rights over waste land.

The eighteenth century saw Thrussington develop as a thriving and mostly self sustaining community. Several industries such as framework knitting established themselves within the village and there were at one time a blacksmiths, drapers, butchers, bakers, a general store and four public houses, of which two are still trading today. The River Wreake was made navigable and opened in 1797 as the Melton Mowbray Navigation connecting Melton Mowbray with Leicester, Loughborough and Derbyshire. The coal trade flourished and Thrussington had its own coal merchant operating from Wharf Cottage (also known as Tally Ho Cottage), now 21 Church Lane. The remains of a series of lock chambers along the Wreake are now the only hint of the river's past as a canal route.

As well as changing agricultural methods and developing industries, other factors also had an impact on the development of the village. Two fires devastated sections of the village in the 1740s and in 1785. This is perhaps why so many of the buildings standing today are of red brick with slate roofs, as the opportunity was taken to rebuild more substantial structures.

The latter part of the eighteenth century also saw the beginnings of a proliferation of a number of non-conformist chapels in the village. The first society of Methodists in Thrussington was formed in 1798 and originally worshipped in the cottages in Back Lane. They eventually moved to the dedicated Wesleyan Chapel built in 1839 on Regent Street until 1968 when it was sold to the owners of The Hollies. The stone plaque declaring its use has been retained although the raised lettering has been removed. In 1811, a group of Methodists known as Primitive Methodists broke away from the Wesleyans and in 1818 they moved to the chapel on Ratcliffe Road, which is today in use as the local scout hut after being used as the village hall until 1961. A third chapel used by the Baptists at 15 Rearsby Road was in use from 1846 until it closed in 1865. It is now a private home although retains the name 'Old Chapel Cottage'.

Perhaps the most famous resident of Thrussington in popular culture is the animal painter John Ferneley who was born in 1782. He was the son of a wheelwright in The Green and practised his paintings on the side of wagons his father was fixing. Although he travelled much over the course of his life, he was buried in the village churchyard after his death in 1860. A blue plaque has been installed to the side of the house adjacent to the site of the former wheelwrights' yard and the recently built Ferneley Close has been named in his honour.

The boundaries of the Conservation Area are drawn to include much of what is indicated on the OS Map of 1884. The modern infill developments have been neatly severed if only on paper by forming two separate areas. Modern development however has not strayed too far from the medieval settlement and has mainly extended the village along existing roads as well as infilling along Ratcliffe Road, Church Lane and Back Lane. Twentieth century building has also necessitated a number of new roads in order to build behind original settlement lines; namely Ferneley Rise, Blacksmiths Close and Glebeland Close.

Archaeological Interest

There have been some archaeological finds close to Thrussington, although it is more widely associated with the archaeological interest of the Wreake Valley area as a whole. Iron Age pottery has also been identified and a late Stone Age flint scatter was found near Ratcliffe on the Wreake. Near to the village, a Roman coin hoard was found close to the Fosse Way, an ancient Roman road. The earthworks and buried remains of Thrussington Grange, a monastic range with associated water control features and an area of ridge and furrow are found to the north of the village. The whole of the Conservation Area lies within an area identified as one of archaeological alert, with specific interest in the area to the south-east of Manor Farm in the fields adjacent to Rearsby Road.

Archaeological potential also exists within Thrussington's historic built environment. Many of the older buildings have been adapted and altered or repaired and restored and often incorporated elements of older separate structures. Thus many of the historic buildings may conceal medieval or post-medieval remains and any works involving the disturbance of the existing fabric of such buildings would merit further investigation.

Population

The population of Thrussington has varied considerably over time. The most recent estimates by Charnwood Borough Council in 2004 place the population at 550. Historically, the parish had a much larger population, with census data for 1841 placing it at 645 inhabitants. This was a considerable increase from the Poll Tax Survey in 1377 which following the Black Death (1348-1356) placed the number of residents over the age of fourteen at just 94. This has fluctuated over time due to changing economic and social concerns (624 in 1871; 604 in 1881; 489 in 1891; 456 in 1901; 445 in 1911; 494 in 1921; 522 in 1931; 469 in 1951; 392 in 1961; 455 in 1971; 493 in 1981; 515 in 1991).

The majority of residents were historically employed in agriculture, domestic service and framework knitting. The service industry was also well represented, with occupations ranging from wheelwrights, publicans, bakers, butchers, carpenters and bricklayers recorded in the census. The framework knitting industry was a large employer of Leicestershire residents throughout

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. By 1782, nearly ninety percent of 20,000 stocking frames were found in the East Midlands, with frames being worked in 100 parishes in Leicestershire by the mid-nineteenth century. The industry began to decline as a major source of employment for the working class towards the end of the nineteenth century with the rise of mechanisation of the frames and many former framework knitters turned to the shoemaking industry, utilising existing workshops. This trend is echoed in Thrussington, with the 1901 census showing a marked increase in the number of shoemakers at 28, and a significant reduction in the number of framework knitters; 37 down to 12 in 1881.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Plan Form

Historically, Thrussington is an example of an ancient planned settlement which makes use of a green as the central space in the village and represents the historic and present core of village life. The key roads through and out of the village remain virtually unaltered, with new roads extending out from the centre to facilitate modern developments. In general, the village as it is seen today has not been drastically altered in shape, with new buildings and roads respecting the shape and plan of the historic village.

An interesting feature of Thrussington is Back Lane which runs south-east to the rear of the churchyard. 'Back Lanes' characteristically developed from the link up of old cart roads and drove roads leading from the ancient common fields and pastures to the outbuildings of farmsteads. The ancient lane here would have also given access to Thrussington and Hoby Mills to the east along the River Wreake.

The biggest change to the plan form of the village since the 1900s is the infilling of the open spaces and farmland close to the centre of the village. Over one hundred dwellings have been created since 1960 through the conversion of farm buildings and building on paddocks and gardens. Several buildings have been converted into single dwellings. The farmhouses themselves however have been retained and make distinctive features nestled between new developments. The buildings themselves are generally close to or on the roadside, with only recent buildings utilising verges or driveways to the front.

The Conservation Area represents much of the village as it was in the early 1800s. Two major fires in the 1740s and 1785 had a significant impact on the village as buildings were damaged and repaired, or lost and rebuilt. One such example of this is The Old Vicarage, which dates from c1750. A significant portion of the village developed from the mid-1700s, a result of the combination of the two fires, flourishing industry in terms of framework knitting, the canal network and agricultural developments following the 1789 Enclosure Act. Changes in lifestyles and occupations have been etched onto

the fabric and forms of the buildings as they evolved and adapted to meet new fashions and changing economic situations.

Villagescape

The village is composed of an attractive mix of buildings from the medieval to the modern. The most important area within the Conservation Area is the area of the green and its surrounding buildings.

Generally, the buildings are of two or three storey, built close together to form continuous rows and aligned parallel to the streets. Notable exceptions are Manor Farm, Bridgeland and 9 Seagrave Road which are perpendicular to the road. This positioning hints at their farming history as the associated farmland would have been to the side of the buildings, stretching out into the countryside to the rear.

The character of the village is formed by this collection of buildings representing different periods in time sitting harmoniously next to each other. There is a pleasing contrast between the more historic properties scattered between the terraced cottages.

The village makes use of interesting topographical changes which greatly contribute to its character, as well as its development over time. The Green is situated at a lower level to the surrounding area and from within this space, the built environment is visible from every angle. Roads adjoining The Green, especially Seagrave Road, Regent Street, Hoby Road and the area of The Green to the left of The Star Inn are sited so that they slope towards the central space of the green. The contrast between the two spaces is heightened by the tight, enclosed nature of the streets compared to the open green space of The Green. The exception to this is Rearsby Road where the properties backing onto Church Lane are considerably higher than the road and set back.

A distinctive feature of the Thrussington villagescape are the isolated pockets of space that have been retained as you move through the village. These include the green space to the front of 9 Seagrave Road, the green bank outside 30 & 32 The Green, the planted space to the left of The Old Vicarage by The Green and the grassy space nestled by 30 Ratcliffe Road and Manor House.

The village still possesses today some of the key characteristics that mark it out as a medieval agricultural community despite most of the existing buildings dating from the eighteenth century. The central green with farmsteads and cottages stemming out from this space is typical of a medieval farming village in this area and the extent of the green may have been greater in the past. Another feature of the medieval village is the location of the parish church at one end of the village's central space. The current church building dates from the thirteenth century but its origins are suspected to be much older.

Generally, development in the twentieth century has been respectful of the historic environment both in terms of materials and scale. Individual buildings have sprung up in the historic streets, such as 11 Ratcliffe Road and other larger developments have utilised land between buildings, such as the developments to Church Lane, Back Lane and along Ratcliffe Road which separates the two Conservation Area locations. Other developments have been focused away from historic streets, with purpose built developments located on new roads. These buildings have generally utilised the limited palette of local materials and deferred to the presence of their historic neighbours in terms of scale, massing and positioning.

Key Views and Vistas

The most important views in Thrussington are the views into and out of The Green area. This is the central space in the village both geographically and socially and some of the most important historic buildings in the village are visible from different places as you move around. Facing north-west towards Seagrave Road, the Star Inn, shops, 2-16 Seagrave Road and 9 Seagrave Road all form part of the streetscape. The triangular area of grass to the front of 9 Seagrave Road contributes to this view by exposing the attractive elevation of 9 Seagrave Road. Standing outside The Well House, the development of Thrussington over time can be seen in one view as you take in the medieval Little Thatch and expanse of the green, the Georgian Old Vicarage and the twentieth century telephone box. The view of The Green from Rearsby Road looking north-west is also important, with the terraced houses wrapped around the junction with Ratcliffe Road, the war memorial at the south-east end of The Green and Little Thatch in the distance.

The location and development of the village around one central space means that views of the surrounding countryside are limited and usually only visible along the roads looking out of the village. From the footpath that runs alongside the churchyard between Church Lane and Back Lane, there are attractive glimpses of the wider countryside in the distance with the church, 41-49 Back Lane and the trees in the foreground.

There is an important view of the church and village on the approach into the village from Rearsby Road. Standing on the bridge, the river is visible on either side with the flat area of grass to the front of the church and row of trees framing the views up across to the church and 28 Church Lane is also visible.

There are a series of views within and out of Thrussington that make use of terminus buildings to draw the eye to the end of the view. These are cleverly positioned to teasingly deflect the eye on further. For example, Manor House when viewed from the junction of Ratcliffe and Rearsby Road provides a natural conclusion to the visible stretch of the street, but its angle to the road encourages the eye to be drawn round to the right.

Landmarks

The distinctive ironstone church surrounded by swathes of green is a landmark in this red brick village.

The prominent positions of the two thatched cottages within the central space of the village are unique features within the village. In particular, Little Thatch with its prominent date markings is an iconic image of the village.

The village itself is a landmark when viewed from the surrounding countryside with the silos of Manor Farm easily identifying its location.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Building Types, Layouts and Uses

Thrussington was and remains today a vibrant and thriving community. Developing as an agricultural village, the primary uses of its buildings were to originally support and facilitate this industry. The old farmhouses are scattered along the main roads with their barns and outbuildings now often converted to residential use and new developments have been built on their former paddocks and farmland. Agricultural labourers were housed in dwellings along the streets centred around the green, rebuilt in red brick and slate in the 1800s. Agriculture is no longer the dominant employment in the village although the dairy farm at Manor Farm is still in operation.

Other industries also had an impact on the building types and development of the village. Framework knitting was a key employer in the latter half of the nineteenth century and many houses were altered to accommodate the frames and to create the necessary light levels. Little evidence of this industry can be seen in the form of the buildings today, save the sloped extension to 40 The Green which was the location of a cobbler until as late as the 1940s. Many of these buildings were demolished in the nineteenth century and new buildings built in their place. The extension to The Star Inn to the Seagrave Road side was built in 1963, replacing a building recorded as a shoemakers shop in 1790.

The service industry was well represented in Thrussington and it was historically a very self sufficient community. Several butchers, bakers and drapers were found in the village in the nineteenth century and at one time, four public houses could be found of which two – The Blue Lion and The Star Inn – are still in existence. An enlarged window at the front of The Star Inn indicates the previous use of that section of the building as a grocers and general store. A bakery was housed at the corner of The Green with Regent Street until the 1960s and this area now boasts a hair and beauty studio next to the recently restored village store. This echoes the historic centre of village life in this location.

There has been a strong community in Thrussington for many years, with the former chapel on Ratcliffe Road used as a village hall for many years until the result of much fund-raising led to the building of the current village hall in 1961.

Today Thrussington is primarily residential, with a small number of businesses located within the village.

Key Listed Buildings and Structures

The Church of the Holy Trinity (Grade II*) lies deliberately to one end of the main hub of the village as was intended from medieval times. The first mention of a church in Thrussington is 1247 but it probably has much earlier origins; the cross above the south nave door is believed to be Saxon and there is evidence of earlier foundations. The main portion of the church was built between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries and was much restored in 1877. It is of ironstone with a Swithland slate roof and Pevsner described the character of the church as one of “pleasing decay” on account of the weathering of the ironstone.

Manor House (Grade II), part of the Manor Farm complex, is one of the principal buildings of the village and has been named variously through time as Thrussington Hall and The Hall House. The present building dates from the 1700s, possibly 1716 as indicated in the brickwork of the nearby dovecote. It is of red brick with a granite rubble stone plinth and a Swithland slate roof. The original entrance to the house has been moved from the centre of the wall away from the road due to the building of an additional wing c1800. The decoration in the coursing and relieving arches above the windows of the first floor are notable details.

Opposite Manor Farm on Ratcliffe Road are the eighteenth century Homestead and its nineteenth century garden wall (both Grade II). The Homestead’s contribution to the streetscape of Thrussington is minimal as it is set back from the road with trees and a lawn area. It is of red brick with a Swithland slate roof and various arrangements of sash windows. It has been subject to various alterations and additions. The garden wall however frames the approach into and out of the village.

At the entrance to the village from the north, 9 Seagrave Road (Grade II) is a prominent prospect as one of only two houses in the village to have retained its thatched roof. A whitewashed brick cottage, it is thought to date from the eighteenth century with earlier origins. It has had later additions, namely a rear wing and bow windows to the front.

An iconic building fronting The Green, Little Thatch (Grade II) stands out in the streetscape with its thatched roof, whitewashed brick and eyebrow dormers. The date ‘1723’ is boldly marked out in the brickwork.

The Hollies (Grade II) stands at 1 Seagrave Road and was the farmhouse for the former Holly Tree Farm. A prominent building at the junction of Seagrave Road, Regent Street and The Green, it is primarily eighteenth century with some Victorian additions. The left of the front elevation was originally a single storey with an upper floor added c1900 and this can be seen clearly by the divided roof. Bricked in windows are in evidence to the front elevation.

On the site of one of the casualties of the village fire in the 1740s, The Old Vicarage (Grade II) dates from the 1750s; its red brick Georgian frontage heightened by a parapet concealing its Welsh slate roof.

Bridgeland (previously Bridge Farm) (Grade II) is perhaps the oldest dwelling in the village, with an unproven date of 1427. It is certainly sixteenth century but has however been extensively altered over time, with its wattle and clay infill panels replaced with red brick and a Welsh slate roof in place of thatch now dominates the building and gives it a charming unbalanced look. A small part of the brickwork is laid in a herringbone pattern.

In contrast to the majority of the listed buildings in Thrussington, 41-49 Back Lane are small workmen's cottages. Early nineteenth century, they are of whitewashed render and Welsh slate roof and are good examples of vernacular buildings representing the social and economic times and needs that led to their building. Although tucked away down the narrow Back Lane which runs parallel to the main roads of the village, they occupy a prominent position across the churchyard.

Key Unlisted Buildings

The Star Inn is important due to the contribution it makes to both the streetscape and as a visible reminder of the history and development of the village. The pub itself has been a feature of the village since the eighteenth century and bears evidence of the development of the village over time, with its enlarged window from its use as a shop and its extension built on a previous shoemaker's workshop.

2-16 Seagrave Road are unique within the streetscape of Thrussington as a series of terraced dwellings that are of a more polite design than other terraces on The Green and Ratcliffe Road. There is a good level of retention of historic features to the building and the archway through to the back of the building has been retained.

21 Church Lane is based on an eighteenth century farmhouse with modern extensions to the rear. The building is important for its associative value as the home of the coal merchant John Stinson who traded near the bridge on Rearsby Road and represents the connection of Thrussington with the wider industries of the time.

Bank House, 13 The Green occupies a prominent position raised above the roadside as The Green curves to the left of The Star Inn. It's imposing three

storey façade and cream render increase its prominence as it is surrounded by red brick buildings. It was built by Thomas Ferneley, the elder brother of John Ferneley in 1803.

Coherent groups

The Old Vicarage with its impressive architecturally polite front elevation forms a pleasing contrast with the charm of the timber framed Bridgeland. The juxtaposition of the two buildings in the same location is testament to the different social, economic and cultural effects of the passing centuries on Thrussington which have shaped the architecture of the village.

The junction of Rearsby Road and Ratcliffe Road provides an attractive group of terraced dwellings, all to a similar scale but varying in design and interest.

Building Materials and Architectural Details

Walls

The most common materials within the Conservation Area are red brick and both Swithland and Welsh slate.

Red brick is the dominant building material within the Conservation Area although its red colouring is sometimes obscured by its painting in white or cream. Notable brick buildings are Manor Farm and The Homestead on Ratcliffe Road, The Hollies on Seagrave Road, The Old Vicarage on Hoby Road and terraced cottages dotted around The Green. Brickwork is typically laid in Flemish bond, with several examples utilising lighter headers and a slightly orange hued bricks. This is quite a distinctive effect and is evident throughout the village; 1, 2 & 3 The Green, 15 The Green, 30 The Green, 2-16 Seagrave Road, 1-9 Ratcliffe Road, the Scout Hall on Ratcliffe Road, 31 Ratcliffe Road, 2-4 Rearsby Road, the School, 9 Hoby Road and the former Wesleyan Chapel on Regent Street.

In some cases, the red of the brick has been concealed by its being whitewashed such as 9 Seagrave Road and Yew Tree Cottage. Buildings of roughcast render are also relatively common throughout the Conservation Area, with notable examples including 32 The Green and 41-49 Back Lane. The blend of the red brick, whitewashed brick and painted render all contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

Two buildings within the Conservation Area display their historic origins with visible timber framing. The most prominent example is Bridgeland which has had the original wattle and daub infill replaced with brick nogging. The other example is 40 Ratcliffe Road which forms part of the Manor Farm complex which has visible timber framing with brick infill to its right end.

Many buildings make use of a rubble or brick plinth in contrast to the main building material. The Hollies and Bridgeland are notable examples. The only

building to be constructed entirely of a different material is Holy Trinity Church which is of ironstone and stands apart from its red brick neighbours.

Roofs

The primary roofing material in Thrussington historically was thatch with the shops, The Star Inn and The Well House all being thatched in the 1890s. Today however, only two examples of this material remain; Little Thatch and 9 Seagrave Road.

Slate is now the most visible roofing material, with the majority of the buildings within the Conservation Area having roofs of either Swithland slate, Welsh slate or sometimes both. Swithland slate with its distinctive diminishing courses and greenish hue can be found on buildings ranging from the twentieth century 11-12 The Green to the Manor House. The Hollies makes use of a Swithland slate roof to the front which was re-laid at the time of further Victorian adaptation and Welsh slate to the rear.

Further evidence of the re-roofing of properties in Thrussington can be found by looking at the brickwork. Often walls were raised in order to accommodate the different structural requirements of the heavier slate roofs from thatch to slate. The Star Inn has visibly different brickwork above the upper floor windows, hinting at the thatched roof that was replaced.

Chimneys throughout the Conservation Area are usually brick, to a relatively simple design with an arrangement of one, two or four pots common.

Doors and Windows

There is no one dominant type of window throughout the Conservation Area as most buildings have a mix of sash and casement windows, usually with either vertical or horizontal sashes to the front and casement windows to the side and rear elevations.

Interestingly, three light Yorkshire sliding sashes are relatively common throughout the Conservation Area. These can be found at numerous properties including The Star Inn, 9 Hoby Road, 2 Rearsby Road and Bridgeland. Unusual examples exist at 36 Ratcliffe Road where the three light sash windows to the ground floor only open at the lower half of the central light.

The typical vertical sliding sash windows are common, with the imposing elevation of the Old Vicarage displaying large twelve pane examples to the ground and first floor. The Hollies has two storeys of four nine pane vertical sash windows, where the glazing bars interestingly divide them into narrow, wide, narrow panes.

Mullion and transom windows also occur in a few buildings within the Conservation Area. The most obvious examples of timber mullion and transom windows can be seen in the front elevation of 28 Church Lane and the side elevation of The Hollies on Regent Street.

Decorative windows are a prominent feature of the principal elevation of the Thrussington C of E Primary School with a six light stone mullion and transom window with intricate lattice work either side of the projecting wing. The gable end of this wing also features two large sash windows side by side and a decorative round window.

Many windows within the Conservation Area have been altered, either historically or in recent years. There are hints of old shop windows at both The Star Inn and 40 The Green and the bow windows to 9 Seagrave Road are twentieth century additions. More recent window alterations are often more obvious, with some historic windows replaced with uPVC windows.

There has been a good retention of original doors and associated features within the Thrussington Conservation Area. Generally these are of a simple design with minimal ornamentation to doors throughout the village. The four panelled doors to 2-16 Seagrave Road are particularly important given the group value of the whole building. There are several examples of rectangular overlights with dividing bars, including 2-16 Seagrave Road and The Old Vicarage. There is also a bracketed canopy to The Hollies. 30 The Green has an interesting blank arch above the door with further cornice and entablature details.

Details

Interesting brickwork features occur in numerous properties in Thrussington. The herringbone brick pattern to several panels of the brick infill of Bridgeland is notable, as is the use of the same pattern in the gable end section of the School above the main feature window to the front elevation. Raised string courses are visible on the front elevation of The Old Vicarage. The farmhouse of Manor Farm utilises strong decorative arches in the elevation visible from Ratcliffe Road. 39 The Green has a prominent course of egg and dart moulding above the ground floor windows, a unique feature within the Conservation Area.

There are several examples of brickwork indicating the previous form of buildings. Most notably is The Hollies and connected building. The Grade II listed outbuilding, now forming part of The Hollies on Seagrave Road was previously used as a coach house, as indicated by the brickwork arch detail. To The Hollies itself, several cases of blank windows exist where previous windows have been removed, possibly in response to the window tax during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Several buildings, including The Old Vicarage and Bridgeland, have remains of cellar windows now bricked up.

The series of terraced cottages 21-27 Ratcliffe Road are interestingly raised above ground level, with individual sets of steps to each front door.

There are interesting features to the front of 30 The Green where two detailed brick walls project perpendicular to the elevation. The tops of these are gently curved and finished with coping stones.

A number of properties retain the historic boot scrapers which are set into the brickwork adjacent to doorways, such as those visible at 2 & 4 Seagrave Road.

There is a small post box in the front wall of 29 The Green.

Several plaques and date stones are visible, proclaiming past uses and associations or marking the date of construction. 15 The Green is thought to contain elements of the original house of the Ferneleys. It is this property where a plaque to commemorate John Ferneley has been installed. The stone plaque indicating the existence of the Wesleyan chapel on Regent Street is still evident in the wall of what has now been incorporated into The Hollies. There is a stone tablet visible to the front elevation of 15 Ratcliffe Road. The reference to W&J Derby is due to the building of 19-31 Ratcliffe Road by William Derby c1854. Perhaps most prominently is the date marking of '1732' to the front elevation of Little Thatch.

Many of the pavements throughout the Conservation Area retain their granite edging. Interestingly the granite is in varying sizes as you move around the Area, with the granite edging to the pavement along Hoby Road smaller and shallower than those found along Seagrave Road.

Biodiversity, Parks, Gardens and Trees

The grass snake *Natrix natrix*, a species associated with wetland habitats, has been recorded off Church Lane, an indication that the River Wreake is within close range of the Conservation Area. This harmless snake is listed as a species of principal importance (UK Biodiversity Action Plan species).

There is not a significant amount of open space in the Conservation Area other than The Green and many buildings are built on to the street, reducing the number of green verges or front gardens. The wider landscape of the surrounding countryside is often not visible from within the village although there are pleasing occasional glimpses through gateways or across buildings. The only other significant green space within the Conservation Area is the land to the front of The Homestead which is mainly obscured from view by the wall and trees.

Whilst not significant in terms of area, the isolated small spaces dotted about the village are significant in terms of their contribution to the feel of the space as well as to the distinctiveness of the village itself.

There are a number of trees within the Conservation Area to the front of properties, along streets and on the green. Several trees are protected with Tree Preservation Orders, including the Scot's pine close to The Old Vicarage and the group TPO relating to the trees to the boundary of 4 Rearsby Road.

A number of footpaths interweave through the Conservation Area, mainly as ways to cross streets. These include the two between Church Lane and Back

Lane and the footpath between Seagrave Road and The Green. These possibly reflect historic access routes between roads and farmsteads. There is also a footpath which extends east out of the Conservation Area at the end of Back Lane.

Detrimental Features

The most visually intrusive detrimental feature of the Conservation Area is the amount of car parking around The Green. Although necessary, the views, ease of use and appreciation of The Green and the surrounding area is hindered by the presence of numerous cars in the space.

The open expanse of the Blue Lion car park whilst providing valuable car parking spaces is a weakness in terms of the established character of the streetscene.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The main contributions to the special character of Thrussington Conservation Area are:

- the use of a limited palette of materials throughout the village; generally restricted to brick either whitewashed or left untreated, Welsh slate and the distinctive local Swithland slate;
- the space of The Green, its associated buildings and uses and its connection to the village as a whole;
- the survival of a high level of historic fabric and details, from several buildings with medieval origins to the timber windows and interesting brickwork of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries;
- the variety of the buildings within the village, from the impressive and dominant Manor Farm and The Old Vicarage to the thatched cottages around The Green and the red brick terraces;
- the ability to clearly read and understand the history and development of the village in the architecture, form, layout and use of the village today.

CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

General Principles

The above Appraisal should be used to inform and guide development decisions. 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 Conservation Area.

Within the Conservation 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 the NPPF, the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan, Leading in Design and other SPD 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:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- The appraisal has identified the types of materials that characterise the Conservation Area and where possible they should be used to help alterations respect that established character.
- 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.
- 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 Conservation Area. Unauthorised development can often be damaging to that character.

Taking proactive action can improve the appearance and character of the Conservation 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 enforcement of 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.

General condition

The Conservation Area is in a good condition. A number of detrimental features have been identified in the appraisal.

Possible Boundary Changes of the Conservation Area

The present boundaries of the existing Conservation Area incorporate the principal areas of special historic and architectural interest within the village. However following the survey, it is suggested that consideration be given to the following minor amendments:

Converted Barns adjacent to The Homestead, Ratcliffe Road

Part of the original Homestead complex, the converted barns are of red brick and lie close to the road. Several original features are still visible, including perforated honeycomb brick ventilation panels and their historic interest has been recognised by their inclusion on the Local List. They positively contribute to the character of the Area both visually and in terms of echoing the agricultural past of the village.

The land to the rear of 9 Seagrave Road, including the stretch of wall to 1 Old Gate Road

The prominent red brick wall stretching from the rear of 9 Seagrave Road to 1 Old Gate Road naturally extends the character of the Conservation Area beyond the boundary as it is currently drawn. Altering the boundary to incorporate 1 Old Gate Road would represent a more logical distinction of where the character of the area shifts.

The street and associated verges, Ratcliffe Road

At present, the Conservation Area is drawn to exclude the recent infill development. Whilst the buildings would not make a significant contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, the rising planted verges and walls that form their front boundaries are an important feature within this area of the village and contribute to the character of the Conservation Area as a whole. Their inclusion within the Conservation Area boundary would also afford them a degree of protection in terms of possible future alterations.

Proposals for spot listing

In carrying out the Appraisal none of the buildings within the Conservation Area were identified for “spot listing”, i.e. considered for inclusion on the list of statutory listed buildings. However it may be appropriate to investigate the potential for listing additional buildings in the future.

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

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

Strategy for the management and protection of important trees, greenery and green spaces

The Local Biodiversity Action Plan (Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan) sets out the Borough Council’s priorities for conservation of habitats and species within Charnwood and details the actions required to bring about a reversal in their decline. Not only should habitats and species of principal importance (UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species) be retained and protected, but opportunities to restore or enhance such habitats and populations should be taken.

Many species are protected by wildlife legislation. Where protected species may be present, appropriate surveys and assessments should be carried out to ensure that development or management proposals will not have a detrimental effect. Mature trees will eventually senesce and decline. Without the provision of the next generation of trees to replace existing mature trees, the wildlife resource and visual quality of the Conservation Area may be affected in years to come.

The Landscape Character Assessment (2012) contains a structured evaluation of each landscape area within the Borough and details the Council’s commitment to achieve high quality sustainable development proposals which will protect, conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Borough’s landscape and reinforce local distinctiveness. This Assessment should be utilised to inform and guide development decisions in conjunction with guidelines for the built environment.

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.

Monitoring change arrangements

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
Boundaries of the Conservation Area	Review the Conservation Area focusing on: <u>Converted barns, Ratcliffe Road</u> <u>The land to the rear of 9 Seagrave Road to 1 Old Gate Road</u> <u>The street and associated verges, Ratcliffe Road</u>	Charnwood BC	
The removal of the cast iron posts to the footpath between Back Lane and Church Lane	Investigate the opportunities for reinstatement of the cast iron posts.	Thrussington PC	LCC Highways
Listing of additional buildings within the Conservation Area	Identify and compile a list of buildings to be considered for listing and submit to English Heritage for consideration.	Thrussington PC	Charnwood BC

Developing management proposals

Various historical, cultural and commercial forces 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

vitaly important, both in attracting investment in the area itself, and in the encouragement of initiatives to the benefit of the wider community.

Community involvement

This document will be made available as a draft via the website for 4 weeks prior to submission to Cabinet for adoption. A public meeting will be held in the Area so that local residents and businesses may contribute their ideas about the Area. All comments and responses will be considered and appropriate amendments made to the document before it is submitted to Cabinet.

Advice and Guidance

The Borough Council 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, alterations and extensions and suitable materials.

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Internet Resources

'Thrussington' at <http://www.leicestershirevillages.com/thrussington/>
[Date accessed: 14th October 2012]

'2004 Parish Population Estimates' at
<http://info.charnwood.local/C7/Planning%20Policy%20Services/Document%20Library/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fC7%2fPlanning%20Policy%20Services%2fDocument%20Library%2fCensus%20and%20Community%20Data&View=%7b84299B87%2d2681%2d4A15%2d98A9%2d2847B7C6D708%7>
[Date accessed: 5th November 2012]

LISTED BUILDINGS IN THRUSSINGTON CONSERVATION AREA

All are listed at Grade II, with the exception of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Church Lane which is listed at Grade II*

Back Lane

Nos. 41-49

Church Lane

No. 24, Old Hall Farmhouse

No. 28, Church Farm

No. 24 & 48, Barn and outbuildings

Beasley Tombs at Churchyard of the Holy Trinity

Hoby Road

No. 1, Bridgeland (previously Bridge Farm)

No. 2, The Old Vicarage

Ratcliffe Road

No. 36

No. 40 & 42, Manor House and cottage, Manor Farm

No. 63, The Homestead and garden wall

Dovecote at Nos. 38 & 40

Seagrave Road

No. 9

No. 1, The Hollies including former Wesleyan Chapel
Outbuilding at Unit 1 Wellco site, now forming part of No. 1

The Green

No. 43, Little Thatch

War Memorial