

Wymeswold Conservation Area Character Appraisal

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WYMESWOLD CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Introduction

Wymeswold Conservation Area was designated by Leicestershire County Council in January 1974. It covers an area of nearly 25 hectares.

Wymeswold was described by John Nichols in 1800 as “a large village ... loftily elevated upon the Woulds, in a pleasing and delightful air ...” and in White’s Directory of 1863 as “a large and well built village on the banks of the Mantle rivulet.” The Conservation Area is centred on the Church of St Mary at the heart of the village and includes the original Anglo Saxon settlement, with later Georgian and early Victorian expansion. The 20th century developments in the village are mostly outside the Conservation Area.

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

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

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

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

These elements are brought together in a summary of the special interest of the Conservation Area. An assessment of the general condition of the buildings and spaces within the Area is included.

The main issues and proposed management actions are summarised. Recommendations for developing longer term management proposals for the area are suggested.

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.*

The Department of the Environment’s Planning Policy Guidance 15 on “Planning and the Historic Environment” encourages local planning authorities to pursue their duties under Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to formulate proposals to preserve and enhance conservation areas and of the need to consult widely in doing so. It also contains several policies that are relevant to conserving the character of conservation areas.

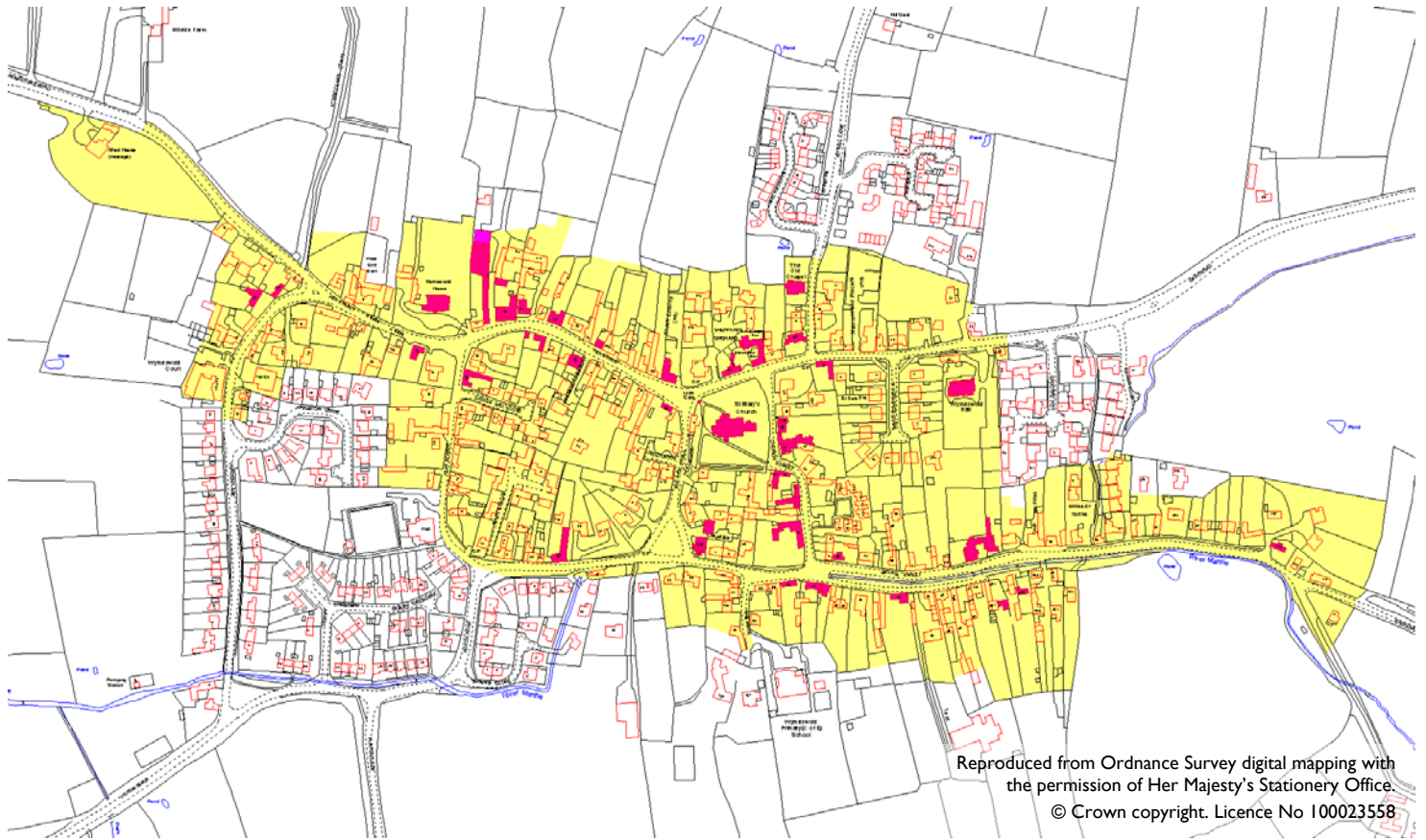
The East Midlands Regional Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy): Proposed Changes, published in July 2008, recommends that strategies should adopt an approach based upon the assessment of natural and cultural assets, the contribution that these make to local character and the impact of these assets to absorb change. *Policy 27: Regional Priorities for the Historic Environment.*

Local Plan Policy EV/1- Design, 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.

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 & Tandem Development
- House Extensions
- Shopfronts & Signs
- Wymeswold Village Design Statement



Current map of Wymeswold showing the Conservation Area and the Listed Buildings

ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Location and Setting

Wymeswold lies about 5 miles north east of Loughborough. The village lies in a bowl beside the shallow valley of the River Mantle, protected from some of the harsh winds that blow across the Wolds. It is one of a ring of settlements whose parishes radiate from the top of the Wolds at Six Hills which was possibly the Saxon meeting place for all the Wolds settlements. Today the village is more often seen as sitting on the A6006 which carries a great deal of heavy traffic between the motorway network to the west and the Fosse Way in the east. However, its setting in the gently rolling landscape of the Wolds is a more important influence on its character. The Jurassic hills covered with clay and loam are suited to arable farming. The hills and valleys are broad and create vistas of the distant horizons.

Local people surveyed for the Parish Plan of 2005 said that Wymeswold is a “Friendly, caring place”, an “Attractive village”, “Location near countryside and major cities”, “Large enough to provide facilities, small enough to know who lives here”, but they also said: “The main road - it’s too noisy and busy for a village”, “Loss of medical services” and “The thought of the village becoming a small town through over development”.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Origins and Development

There is evidence of people living in the area of the village from before Roman times and certainly during the Roman occupation. Fosse Way, which was a major Roman highway and may have been in use before they engineered it, lies about 2½ miles to the east. There was a settlement on the Foss called Vernemetum. However, Wymeswold is more clearly recognised as an Anglo Saxon nucleated settlement, typical of the East Midlands. At the time of the Domesday survey the village was described as having 9 ploughlands and 5 oxgangs, an oxgang being 1/8th of a ploughland, with 15 acres of meadow. The nucleated settlements were partly the result of the invention of the heavy plough which was shared amongst the farmers of the settlement. The land to the west of the village was, and is, of good mixed soil, or loam, which in 1800 was worth 30/- to 40/- an

acre. On the other side the soil was strong clay which grew wheat and beans. A mile from the village to the east the land was “very cold ... still considerably higher than the town.” The villagers who were almost all husbandmen, lived in close proximity to each other. Around the houses were large open fields which were divided into furlongs so that each person would have a measure of the good and the heavier colder land, and access to the meadows for the cattle. These strips would have been a feature of this way of agriculture which was transformed by the passing of the Enclosure Act and is now only partially visible.

Barrie Cox translates Wymeswold to be “Wigmund’s portion of the Wolds district”. Both the name and the settlement that we see today began in the mid Saxon period sometime between 700 and 900CE. In 1337 Edward III granted a weekly Wednesday market and a yearly fair to be held on the eve and day of Saints Peter and Paul, 29th or 30th June. A market cross was erected in the main road near the northern end of modern Clay Street (also known as Cross Hill). The cross is no longer there but the name lives on in the 1986 infill development of 11 houses known as Cross Hill Close. With some changes, the compact settlement lasted for a thousand years until the upheaval of the Enclosures of 1757-1759 when the open fields on which the villagers had relied as a community were parcelled up and privatised for the most part between 7 gentry, 1 esquire and Trinity College, Cambridge, with several smaller landowners. Following this division, farms began to be established outside the village envelope to be nearer their landholdings.

The industrial revolution had only a small impact on the village. It must have been too far from the major transport route in the Soar valley to make the economics viable. Nevertheless, framework knitting did flourish in the village and there is still evidence of it in Factory Cottage, No.9 Brook Street. The industrial enterprise that did exist was making cheese. The dairy on London Lane is now lost.

Of the two major developments in the village that are visible today the first occurred during the Georgian period. There is a substantial number of fine Georgian houses along Far Street, East Road and Church Street and these are now all included in the Conservation Area. The second has taken place in the 20th century, infilling orchards and gardens, and building along London Street (now Lane) and Hoton Road. Generally these are excluded from the Conservation Area.

Sociological changes took place in the mid to late 17th century with the rise of nonconformism. It is suggested that since there was no lord of the manor at Wymeswold the Church of England had less of a hold. As a result a number of chapels were built. Of these the Methodist Chapel at Queens Park is still thriving and the former Baptist Chapel on Wysall Lane is now a private residence while the Anabaptist, Primitive Methodist and Quaker meeting places can no longer be seen. Later Sunday Schools and an Infants School were built.

Archaeological Interest

The Conservation Area encompasses the Anglo Saxon and medieval settlement of Wymeswold. The historical development of the Area, which is evident in the pattern of streets, housing plots and the age of many of the properties, would suggest that there is good potential for below ground archaeology. There have been late iron age and Roman finds both within the village and in the vicinity.

Population

Early estimates of population are unreliable because the ordinary serfs and peasants were not recorded. In 1800 Nichols says that there were 170 houses with a population of 1050 inhabitants whose main occupation was husbandry of the 3000 acres belonging to the village. The population was at a peak; in the late 19th century it declined to around 500. Today the number of houses has trebled but the population has only grown to 1100 people. About 50% are in work and most of them travel to work by car outside the village to work in service industries.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Plan Form

The village of Wymeswold consists of a grid of two roads running east-west with five interconnecting routes running north-south, one of which is a footpath, The Civic, at the east end of the village. The principal road is Far Street and its continuation, East Road, the A6006. To judge by the number of important houses along it this road has been the dominant one for a long time. The other east-west road, Brook Street and Hoton Road, is quiet and rural by comparison. The north-south streets are simple village streets where the traffic is light making it possible to linger in the roadway. All the streets reflect their medieval origins, with gentle curves and some stronger bends.

The village is well connected with roads to Rempstone, Hoton and Loughborough, Burton on the Wolds, Six Hills, Fosse Way, Willoughby and Wysall.

St Mary's Church stands on a mound in the centre of the village. Though it is not visible, a spring from the mound joins the river Mantle which runs to the south of the mound. The village is compact within an elongated oblong shape.

A noticeable feature of the Conservation Area are the long narrow plots that lead away from Far Street and Brook Street. Between the houses there are several gaps, which are now often driveways, through which one can see a string of buildings. Good examples may be seen at No. 50 Far Street

Interrelationship of Spaces

There are three principal spaces within the village: the green space of the mound on which stands the church; below the mound, the junction of Far Street and The Stockwell which is known locally as The Square; and to the south of The Stockwell, Queens Park is a pleasant green space at the junction with Brook Street. To the east of the mound of the church is Church Street which is rather narrow with tight bends. These spaces are the core of the medieval village. From The Square, Far Street curves to the west and East Road rises up the hill to the east. From Queens Park, Brook Street to the west has few features but to the east the road incorporates the grassy banks of the river Mantle.

Townscape

In general the streets are rather broader than their medieval origin might suggest, though early photographs also show them broad. The broad character is enhanced by variability of the enclosure. In some places the houses stand directly at the back of the pavement creating a strong enclosure. These houses are generally of two storey, some with their gables end on, some with the ridge parallel to the street. However, although these houses may stand directly on the street they do not follow any particular line. Some are set slightly back, some forward. Some are raised up to follow the topography. Within this Medieval pattern there are many fine Georgian houses, usually of three storeys, usually set back from the pavement with a small front garden, sometimes with a boundary wall or railing. The Victorian developments have larger front gardens protected by substantial walls and hedges. 20th Century infilling is also set well back from the street.

A feature of the village are the simple rural style signposts.

Key Views and Vistas

The curving streets offer several views and changes of interest. The approach into the village along Rempstone Road offers a rural feel with scattered red brick buildings amongst the hedges and trees, which is then contrasted by the more urban feel to the villagescape by views along Far Street

Landmarks

The tower of the Church of St Mary on its mound is the landmark of the village, being visible across the housetops and in gaps between houses from many places.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Building Types, Layouts and Uses

There is a range of buildings in the village. Besides the church and the two remaining chapels, they are generally either 2 storey vernacular cottages or 3 storey Georgian houses. The cottages may be small, consisting of two bays or they may be extended to several bays, often as a result of combining more than one cottage. The houses may be single or double pile. There is evidence of commercial use, such as small shops on Brook Street and the remnant of the post office beside 24 Church Street. There is also some evidence of industrial use. There are some Victorian single storey buildings such as the Old School, No. 55 Far Street and No. 11 The Stockwell. The buildings in general have a simple elongated rectangular plan, sometimes parallel to the road, sometimes at right angles to it. In the latter case the buildings and their associated extra cottages, out houses and barns stretch along the side of a long narrow strip.

Much of the character of the Conservation Area is derived from the harmonious blending of simple rectangular shapes with simple ridged roofs.

Key Listed Buildings and Structures

There is a wealth of listed buildings in Wymeswold. The full list is given on page 16. They include most of the Georgian houses which with their 3 storeys stand above the older vernacular cottages and the newer 20th century properties. Also included are the Lych Gate to the church and a K6 telephone kiosk on The Stockwell. The most important building for the visual aspect of the village is the church of St Mary, listed Grade I.

Key Unlisted Buildings

Nos. 42-44 Brook Street is an important terrace of buildings marking a change in the shape of the street from broad to narrow.

Coherent groups

The north side of Far Street from No 25 to No. 17 forms an excellent village group.

Nos. 2 & 4 The Stockwell are a well loved beauty spot in the village, a popular place for artists, particularly with the combination of the lime trees on Queens Park and the church tower. The position of No.2 The Stockwell, raised on its grassy bank is enhanced by the white picket fence together with the red painted front door under its ridged canopy. Further along the street, the floral bank of No. 4, the brick and tile bus shelter, the seat and telephone box (which is Listed Grade II) complete the tranquil street scene below the mound and the church.

The houses of Church Street, from Nos. 3 to 26 create an enclosed village street.

Nos 40 to 44 and Nos 50 to 58 form a significant group at the narrowing of Brook Street. Together these create a distinctive piece of townscape.

Building Materials and Architectural Details

There is remarkably little decoration of the houses, either in the brickwork or in the detailing of window heads, quoins or sills. Chimneys are similarly simple. The character of the Conservation Area is derived from the harmonious blending of the simple rectangular house forms, with simple rooves, and their settings relative to each other and to the street.

Walls

Most buildings in the village are now of brick. There are only a few surviving examples of timber frame, such as No. 3 East Road and the eaves of No. 23 Brook Street. Elsewhere the timber framing is only evident internally, in ceiling beams and joists. The brick is a mellow brownish-red, laid to Flemish bond but not to create the distinct pattern of header and stretcher. Notable exceptions are the fine diaper work on No. 12 Far Street and the patterned flemish bond of the Methodist Chapel at Queens Park and at No. 106 Brook Street. The brick may be painted or rendered with a rough plaster. Many houses stand on a granite or mixed river rubble stone plinth, occasionally a brick plinth. There may be some simple brick string courses and occasionally there are dentil cornice details at the eaves or gables.

Roofs

The most common roofing material is Welsh slate but there are roofs of thatch, Swithland slate, plain clay tile, red clay pantile, and latterly concrete tile. There is an outstanding example of Rosemary tiles on the Old School, No. 47 Far Street to create a fish scale pattern. These tiles are also used on the roof of the Grade II Listed Lych Gate on the other side of the road. The echo from one to the other is a good example of using a special material or style to make a distinctive statement.

The red clay pantiles are a particular feature of Wymeswold. Good examples are at No. 43 Far Street, the rear buildings of No. 39 Far Street, No. 33 Far Street, The Manor House - No. 19 Far Street and No. 14 Clay Street.

Roof shapes are almost all simple ridges: with fairly plain chimney stacks at each end or between bays. Eaves are modest, though there are exceptions. Dormers are a historical feature of the old thatch roofs but otherwise are rare and more often to be seen in 20th century houses. Also noticeable by their general absence are porches and door canopies on some of the larger houses in the village. On the whole examples of simple canopies can be seen such as at No. 2 The Stockwell.

Doors and Windows

Traditionally, windows are vertical sash windows in the more important houses and yorkshire horizontal sliding sash windows in the cottages.

There are good examples of vertical sash windows at Wymeswold House, The Manor House - No. 19 Far Street, No. 55 London Lane, the ground floor of No. 25 Far Street, the first floor of The Three Crowns, No. 26 Church Street, Nos. 15 & 17 Church Street, No.3 Church Street, the front of The Dower House - No. 77 Brook Street and No. 79 Brook Street.

Examples of yorkshire sashes may be seen along the side of No. 50 Far Street, Nos. 37 & 39 Far Street, above the butchers - No. 31 Far Street, No. 106 Brook Street, Quaker Cottage - No. 71 Brook Street, the two storey part of No. 3 Church Street, No. 40 Brook Street and No. 59 London Lane, facing Rempstone Road.

There are also casement windows in the cottages. Historically these are flush casements, such as the upper windows of No. 25 Far Street. Mostly they have been replaced with storm casements which may be acceptable in the vernacular cottages but where they are used to replace sash windows the effect is to damage the character of the individual house and the historic character of the Area as a whole.

Regrettably, there are also uPVC replacements, some of which have paid scant attention to the detail of the windows they have replaced, thus greatly damaging the character of the house and the street.

A tradition in the Area is the use of projecting mullion and transom windows, such as at Nos. 12 and 21 Far Street and No. 22 Clay Street.

There is one example of Victorian diamond pattern metal casements at the Old School, No. 55 Far Street.

Whatever the style of window they are generally multi-pane. Furthermore, in the vernacular cottages and buildings there is frequently a mix of window styles, with either one style on the ground floor and a different style on the first floor, or one style for the façade with another style at the sides or rear.

The finer Georgian houses have flat rubbed brick window heads while the cottages often have a segmental relieving brick arch.

Other details.

Traditional granite kerbs are found at the edge of many of the conservation area's pavements and make a significant contribution to the character of the streets and lanes of the village.

Parks, Gardens and Trees

There are three public green spaces within the Area. The churchyard is a pleasant area of grass standing above the street with a yew tree, some smaller flowering trees and a row of lime trees lining the path from The Stockwell to Church Street. It contains many Swithland slate gravestones. Queens Park is a triangular area of grass and lime trees at the junction of The Stockwell and Brook Street with a smaller area of grass with a seat on the south side of Brook Street. To the east along Brook Street is a long linear strip of grassy banks, with

willow trees and daffodills in the springtime, through which the river Mantle flows. This was an improvement carried out in the mid 20th century. Before, the river simply flowed in a depression in the street and regularly caused a problem when it flooded. Brook Street is further enhanced by broad grass verges for much of its length.

Elsewhere in the Area, the former orchards and gardens have almost all been developed, leaving only the private gardens of Wymeswold House at the west end and Wymeswold Hall at the east end, both of which are well screened from the road and public view by high walls and mature trees.

Biodiversity

The River Mantle which flows across the Conservation Area has been notified as a Local Wildlife Site. Local Wildlife Sites are non-statutory sites of high ecological interest and often the best examples of important habitats which sustain species of conservation interest.

The river supports a population of water voles *Arvicola terrestris*, a species protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The water vole is also a species of principal importance, recorded in Section 41 of the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006, and listed as a priority species in the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan.



Water vole

Species, such as the broad-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton natans*, water starwort *Callitriche stagnalis*, water crowfoot *Ranunculus aquatilis*, water-plantain *Alisma plantago-aquatica* and water-cress *Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum*, are among the range of aquatic plants associated with the river. Together with its tributaries, the river functions as a wildlife corridor which links the Conservation Area to the wider countryside.

Within the Conservation Area, numerous bat roosts of the common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* have been recorded in a wide range of buildings. All bat species and their roosts are legally protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. Advice must be sought from Natural England for any work which may affect bats and their roosts.



Cowslip

The Conservation Area comprises a large number of trees, with some significant clusters of mature trees. The trees form part of the local biodiversity network which provides a connection from the village to the hedgerows at the rural edge. These networks are important to local species, enabling them to feed, commute and disperse.

The Conservation Area is adjacent to Wymeswold Meadows, which have been notified as a Local Wildlife Site on the strength of their grassland plant community. The Meadows comprise 3 fields which support declining plant species, such as cowslip *Primula veris*, black knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and spiny restharrow *Ononis spinosa*. The Meadows are owned and managed as traditional pastures by the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust. It is an invaluable asset to the Wymeswold parishioners.

Detrimental Features

The heavy traffic which rumbles through the village is a frequent source of complaint. It creates a great deal of dust and vibration.

New developments in the Conservation Area such as at Bramley Close, are examples of uncertainty about the characteristics of the village. These new houses introduce an imagined rustic vernacular style with complex roofs, dormer windows, variegated brick with decorative strings, over-decorated chimneys and windows of a shape not normally associated with the simple vernacular style of the majority of buildings within Wymeswold.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

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

- The setting in the Wolds, relatively isolated from neighbouring settlements;
- The way in which the village sits in a depression within the gentle rolling landscape;
- The broad and curving nature of the village streets, in particular the continuous flow of buildings along Far St;
- The mound, the church and the landmark of the church tower;
- The wealth of fine Georgian three storey houses;
- The setting of the river Mantle in a green strip within Brook Street with many willow trees;
- The fine townscape of a combination of houses, styles and ages;
- The harmonious blending of simple rectangular building forms with simple ridged roofs.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

General Principles

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

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

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

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

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

7. Applicants for planning permission must provide a meaningful “Design & Access Statement”, to explain the design decisions that have been made and to show how proposed alterations relate to their context. A detailed analysis of the locality should demonstrate that there is a full appreciation of the local streetscape and how it has developed, including prevailing building forms, materials and plot ratios.

Procedures to Ensure Consistent Decision-Making

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

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

Enforcement Strategy

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

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

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

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

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

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

Article 4 Direction

The quality of a conservation area is often threatened by the cumulative impact of numerous small changes to many buildings. Terraces that once displayed integrity of design through the use of matching features such as doors, 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

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

To maintain the character of the Conservation Area, it is most important to maintain the nature of the townscape as described above and in particular the simple rectangular building shapes with simple ridged rooves. Any new development should ideally use a mellow yellowish red brick laid to Flemish bond but not

creating any distinctive pattern of alternating header and stretcher. It may be acceptable to use a roughcast render. Care should be taken in specifying reclaimed brick to avoid significant variations in the colour of the brick that would give a random and mottled appearance.

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

Buildings at Risk

It is the intent of the Borough Council to take necessary action to secure repair & full use of any buildings at risk. At the moment most of the Listed Buildings in Wymeswold are in good condition.

The proximity to the busy highway of Tudor Thatch, No. 2 East Road, gives cause for concern. This is reputed to be the oldest building in the village. Heavy lorries pass within inches of the property and have sheered away the little thatch porch. The only protection is a single concrete bollard and a sign about 50 metres away requesting high sided vehicles to use the middle of the road. This is hardly ever observed. Consideration should be given to protecting this ancient cottage at the expense of slowing down the traffic, even reducing the traffic flow to one way alternate working.

Review of the Conservation Area Boundary

The present boundaries of the existing Conservation Area incorporate the principal areas of special historic and architectural interest within the village. The appraisal has not identified any need to change the boundary.

Possible Buildings for Spot Listing

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

Enhancement Opportunities

The appraisal has not identified any particular part of the Area which would benefit from enhancement.

Proposals for Economic Development and Regeneration

Historic building 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 may be eligible for grant assistance.

Management and Protection of Biodiversity

Threatened species and habitats can be 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.

The Local Biodiversity Action Plan sets out the Borough Council's priorities for conservation of a variety 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 be retained and protected, but opportunities maximised to restore or enhance such habitats and populations.

Monitoring Change

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

Consideration of Resources

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

Summary of Issues and Proposed Actions

Conservation Area Issue	Proposed Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners
Loss of wrought iron lantern overthrow to churchyard entrance.	Reinstatement of lantern and overthrow.	St Mary's PCC	Charnwood BC Leics CC
Protection of Tudor Thatch, 2 East Road, from further damage by heavy traffic.	Investigate the possibility of additional traffic control.	Leics CC	
Possible loss of granite kerb stones.	Establish an agreement with Leics CC Highways to retain granite kerb stones.	Charnwood BC	Leics CC Highways Parish Council

Developing Management Proposals

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

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

- 1 Review how the Council's adopted 'Shopfronts & Signs' guidance and the adopted Wymeswold Village Design Statement are being used.
- 2 A policy regarding the co-ordination of the placing of all permanent items within the streets needs to be formulated. The opportunities to renew, redesign, re-site, eliminate or combine existing street furniture are substantial. Similarly there is a need to look at traffic signs and highway markings with a view to their rationalisation. The appropriateness of the existing street lighting and the scope to introduce imaginative lighting schemes, including the illumination of key buildings, also merits examination. Guidelines could be set out in a public realm manual.
- 3 The production of heritage trail leaflets to increase community awareness and appreciation, including the encouragement of tourism, should be considered. This might involve interpretation material, plaques or similar for key sites and buildings.

Community Involvement

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

Advice and Guidance

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

Contacts: Conservation & Landscape Team
Tel. 01509 634748
built.heritage@charnwood.gov.uk

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

Planning Enforcement
Tel. 01509 634722
Development.control@charnwood.gov.uk

Bibliography

Dave Dover, "Wymeswold in Black and White", 1997

John Nichols, "History and Antiquities of the County of Leicestershire", Vol 3, 1800

Barrie Cox, "The Place Names of Leicestershire", 2004

A Portrait of Wymeswold, Past and Present, Wolds Historical Organisation, 1991

Internet Resources

www.wymeswold.com (accessed 2 July 2008)

www.leics.gov.uk/wymeswold.pdf (accessed 7 July 2008) giving census 2001 information

www.hoap.co.uk/who/index.htm (accessed 2 July 2008) website of Wolds Historical Organisation giving a wealth of articles, information and photographs

www.natural-england.org.uk/conservation/wildlife-management-licensing/species/bats.htm

Statutory Listed Buildings within Wymeswold Conservation Area

All Grade II Listed except the Church of St Mary which is Grade I.

Brook Street	Methodist Chapel The Dower House No. 27A Little Thatch, No. 53 No. 58 Nos. 64-66 Craddock Cottage, No. 74 No. 79 No. 108 Rose Cottage, No. 113 No. 124
Chapel Bar	Sunday School
Church Street	No. 3 No. 7 No. 11 Nos. 15-17 No. 24 Barn at Nos. 24-26 Nos. 26-26A
Clay Street	No. 22
East Road	Pump inside Public House, Hammer & Pincers Public House Wymeswold Hall Tudor Thatch, No. 2
Far Street	Church of St Mary Lychgate to Church of St Mary Three Crowns Public House Wymeswold House, Nos. 9-11 No. 12 No. 16 The Manor House, No. 19 Barns to rear of Manor House No. 21 No. 22, previously White Horse Public House No. 25 No. 33 No. 49 No. 52 No. 55
London Lane	No. 55 No. 57
The Stockwell	K6 Telephone Kiosk
Wysall Lane	The Old Chapel