

Supplementary Guidance to the City of Leicester Local Plan 2006



Granby Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal



Planning Policy and Design
Adopted March 2007

Cover images, from the top:

128-132 Granby Street, (Blunts Shoes).

31 Granby Street.

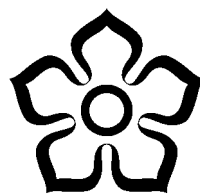
24 Granby Street, (The Turkey Cafe).

88 Granby Street, (Balmoral House).

GRANBY STREET CONSERVATION AREA

character appraisal

(Adopted: March 2007)



Leicester
City Council

contents	page	
1.0	Introduction	7
2.0	Planning Policy Framework	7
3.0	Definition of the special interest	8
4.0	Assessment of special interest	9
4.1	Location and setting	9
4.2	Historic development and archaeology	9
	<u>Character analysis</u>	17
4.17	Purpose	17
4.18	Townscape	17
4.22	Prevailing and former uses	18
	<u>Architectural character and key buildings</u>	19
4.27	Area 1 (Granby Street North)	20
4.36	Area 2 (Granby Street South) East Side	24
4.42	Area 2 (Granby Street South) West Side	26
	<u>Buildings materials and the public realm</u>	29
4.52	Building materials	29
4.54	The Public Realm	30
4.56	Greenery and green spaces	30
4.57	Negative factors	31
4.60	General conditions of the area and buildings	31
4.61	Problems	31
4.63	Pressures	32
4.64	Capacity for change	32
5.0	Community involvement	32
6.0	Conservation Area boundary	33
7.0	Management and enhancement proposals	33
8.0	Acknowledgements, contacts and appendices	34

list of maps

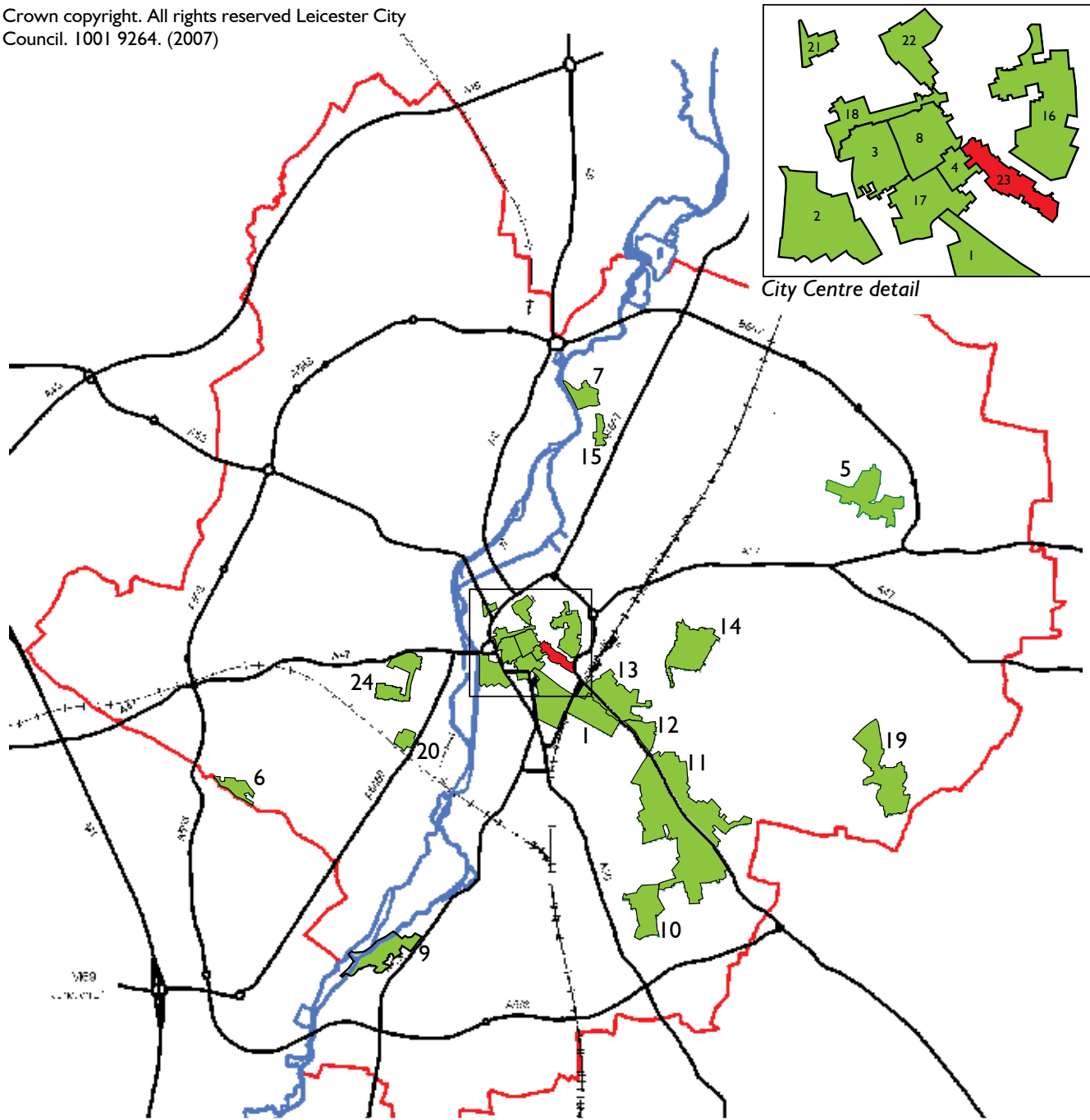
Map 1	City of Leicester Conservation Areas	5
Map 2	Boundary of Granby Street Conservation Area	6
Map 3	Robert's map of 1741	9
Map 4	Fowler's Map of 1828	10
Map 5	Ordnance Survey map of 1885	12

appendices

Appendix 1	List of buildings in the Granby Street Conservation Area	35
Appendix 2	List of listed buildings in the Conservation Area	35
Appendix 3	Management and Enhancement Proposals	36
Appendix 4	Relevant Local Plan and other Policies	37
Appendix 5	Glossary of architectural terms	38

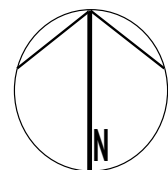
Map I. City of Leicester Conservation Areas

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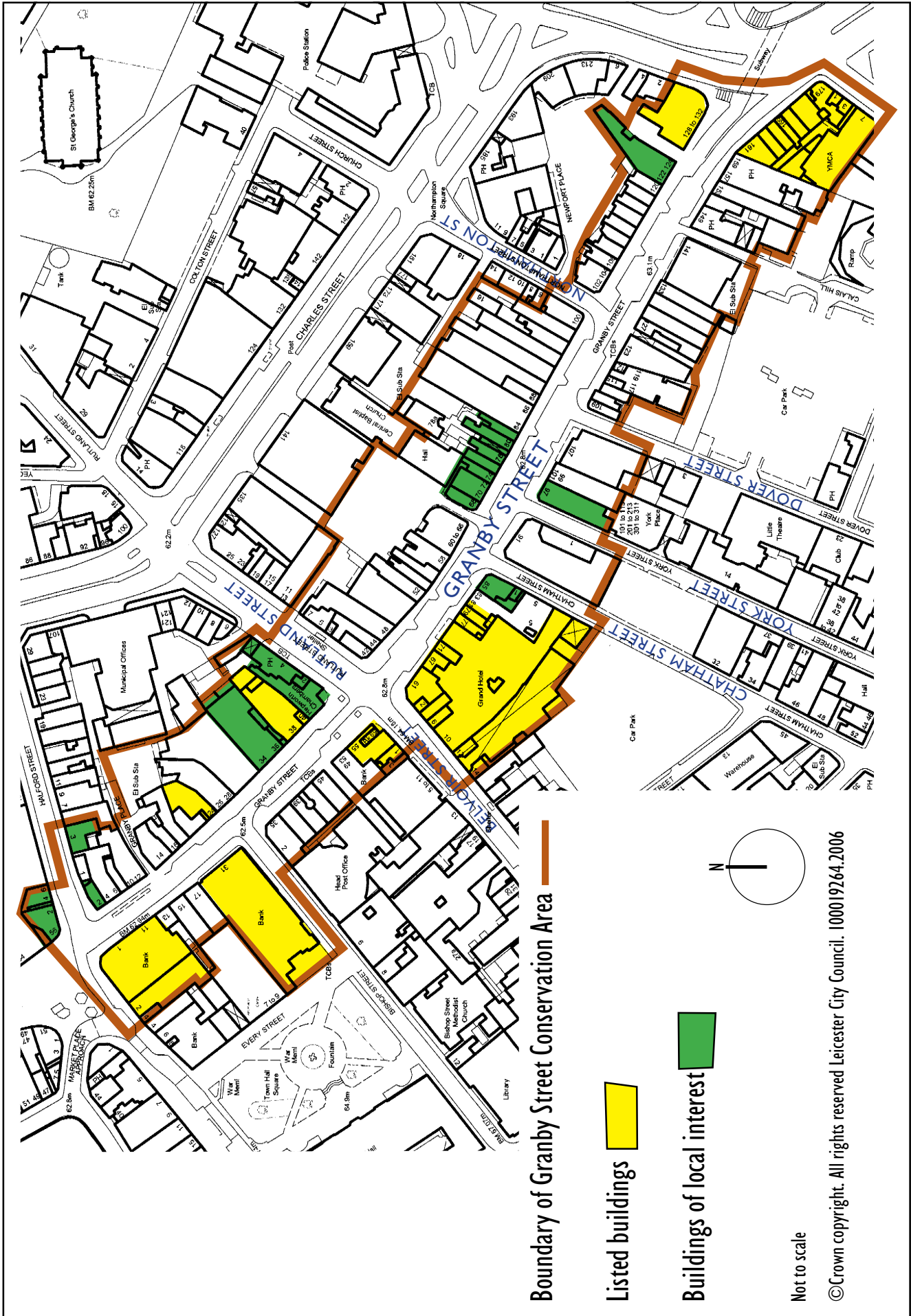
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|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. New Walk | 10. Knighton Village | 19. Evington Village |
| 2. Castle Gardens | 11. Stoneygate | 20. Ashleigh Road |
| 3. Cathedral/Guildhall | 12. Evington Footpath | 21. All Saints' |
| 4. Town Hall Square | 13. South Highfields | 22. Church Gate |
| 5. Old Humberstone | 14. Spinney Hill Park | 23. <u>Granby Street</u> |
| 6. Braunstone Village | 15. Loughborough Road | 24. West End |
| 7. Belgrave Hall | 16. St. George's | |
| 8. Market Place | 17. Market Street | |
| 9. Aylestone Village | 18. High Street | |

Listed chronologically



Not to scale

Map 2. Boundary of Granby Street Conservation Area



1.0 Introduction

1.1 A character appraisal is the first step in a dynamic process, the aim of which is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of each conservation area. It provides a basis for making decisions about an area's future and identifies, defines and records the factors that make conservation areas special. It also identifies features or problems that detract from this special quality and suggests, by means of management and enhancement proposals, the ways in which the special interest could be safeguarded or improved.

1.2 The Granby Street area has been part of the Council's conservation area review programme since 2005 but its priority was re-evaluated in June 2006 following concern about the potential loss of an important, but unlisted, building on the corner of Rutland Street. The Granby Street Conservation Area was designated on the 21st June 2006,

1.3 The survey and appraisal were carried out during 2006 following the methodology suggested by English Heritage. To ensure that a complete picture of the value and character of the area can be built up local people, including those who live in, work in or visit the area, will be asked for their views about the area, such as what they like or dislike about the area, and how they think it could or should be improved.

2.0 Planning Policy Framework

2.1 The protection and/or preservation of historic environments are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to the country's cultural inheritance, economic well-being and quality of life. Public support for conservation areas as places that give identity to people and communities is well established. National legislation and regional guidance reflect this.

2.2 The concept of 'conservation areas' was first introduced into national legislation in 1967 in the Civic Amenities Act which defined 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". It is not the purpose of a conservation area to prevent change but to manage change in ways that maintain and, if possible, strengthen an area's special qualities.

2.3 Current legislation is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This places a duty on local planning authorities to declare as conservation areas those parts of their area that they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest [s.69(1)]. It also imposes on them a duty to review past designations from time to



Aerial view of Granby Street Conservation Area from the 2005 survey



A close up of the bearded Viking figure-head to 68-74 Granby Street.

time [s.69(2)]. Conservation area status also means that there are stricter controls on changes that can be made to buildings and land including the need for planning permission to demolish a building or part of a building, strengthened controls over some minor forms of development and the automatic protection of all trees.

2.4 The Council has a further duty to formulate and prepare from time to time proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas [s.71(1)]. The Council must also pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas when determining planning applications for sites within such areas [s.72(1)]; see (section 6 and Appendix 3 below).

2.5 The City of Leicester Local Plan contains a range of conservation policies (see Appendix 5) to ensure that the most important parts of Leicester's built environment are protected and enhanced. There is a general presumption against the demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area. These policies help to ensure that new developments and conservation-led regeneration reflect the character and value of the historic environment.

3.0 Definition of Special Interest

3.1 The following appraisal will show that the special interest of the Granby Street Conservation Area is a product of several factors. First, it has a large number of city centre scale buildings of considerable architectural quality that create an area of high townscape value. Secondly, there is a general consistency of brick and carved stonework across the conservation area, occasionally highlighted by modern buildings that also continue the brick and stone theme, albeit using 'modern' brick colours and Portland stone. Thirdly, the area has seven listed building in an interesting range of commercial architectural styles and fashions that span the years between the mid-19th and the early 20th centuries, comple-



Granby Street photographed around 1900 by the crossing of Belvoir Street/Rutland Street. Just to the left of the tram is the General Post Office building and beyond the Midland Bank building of 1870.



Two of the biggest losses to Granby Street have been the Britannia Works (left), with its statue of Britannia and the adjacent Temperance Hall, (centre). Both were demolished in the 1960s.

mented by a further 15 buildings of local architectural and historic interest.

3.2 The special interest of the area is also a product of how the conservation area has functioned through its two centuries of life. Developed as a main arterial road early in the 19th century, Granby Street remains an important highway as well an integral part of the commercial and social life of the city. Its buildings remind us of the era of 19th century prosperity and civic pride and the growth, and changing face, of leisure pursuits.

4.0 Assessment of Special Interest

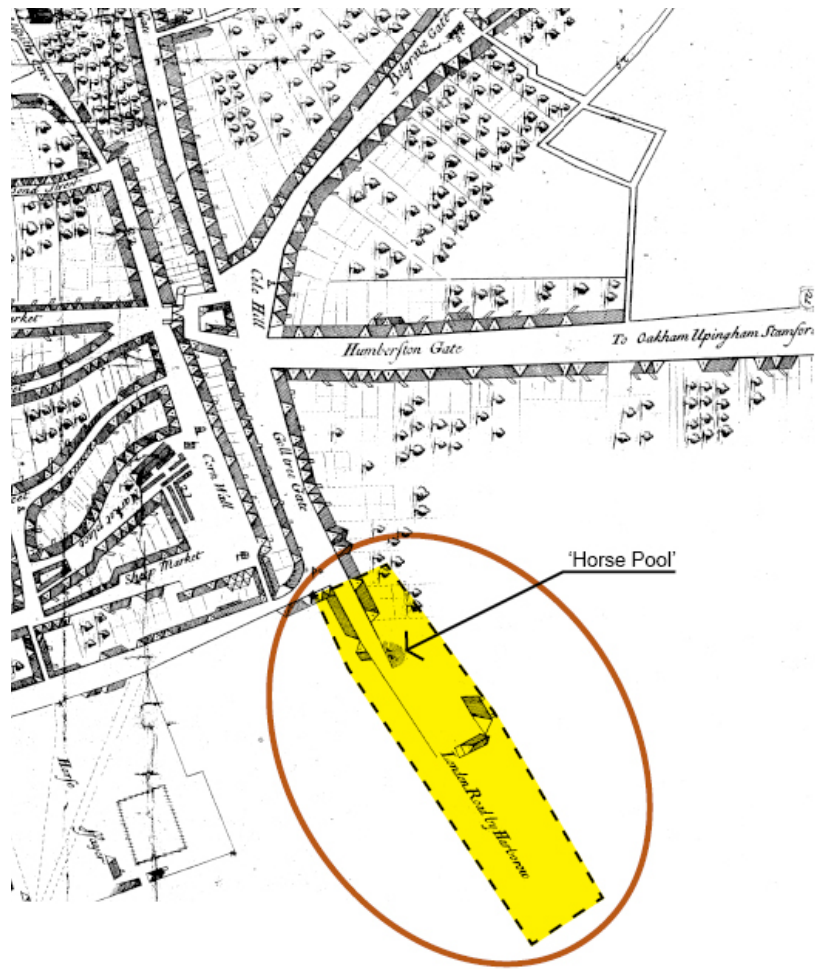
Location and setting

4.1 The Granby Street Conservation Area is on the south side of the city centre. It includes buildings on each side of Granby Street only, so its shape is long and thin, stretching south-eastwards for about 0.5 kilometre from its junction with Horsefair Street (and the Town Hall Square Conservation Area) to its junction with Charles Street in the south. It is generally flat, lying on a sand, gravel and boulder clay river terrace at around 62.5m above sea level, but rising at the southern end towards the mudstones of the Triassic period and the Jurassic shales of the London Road ridge.

Historic development and archaeology

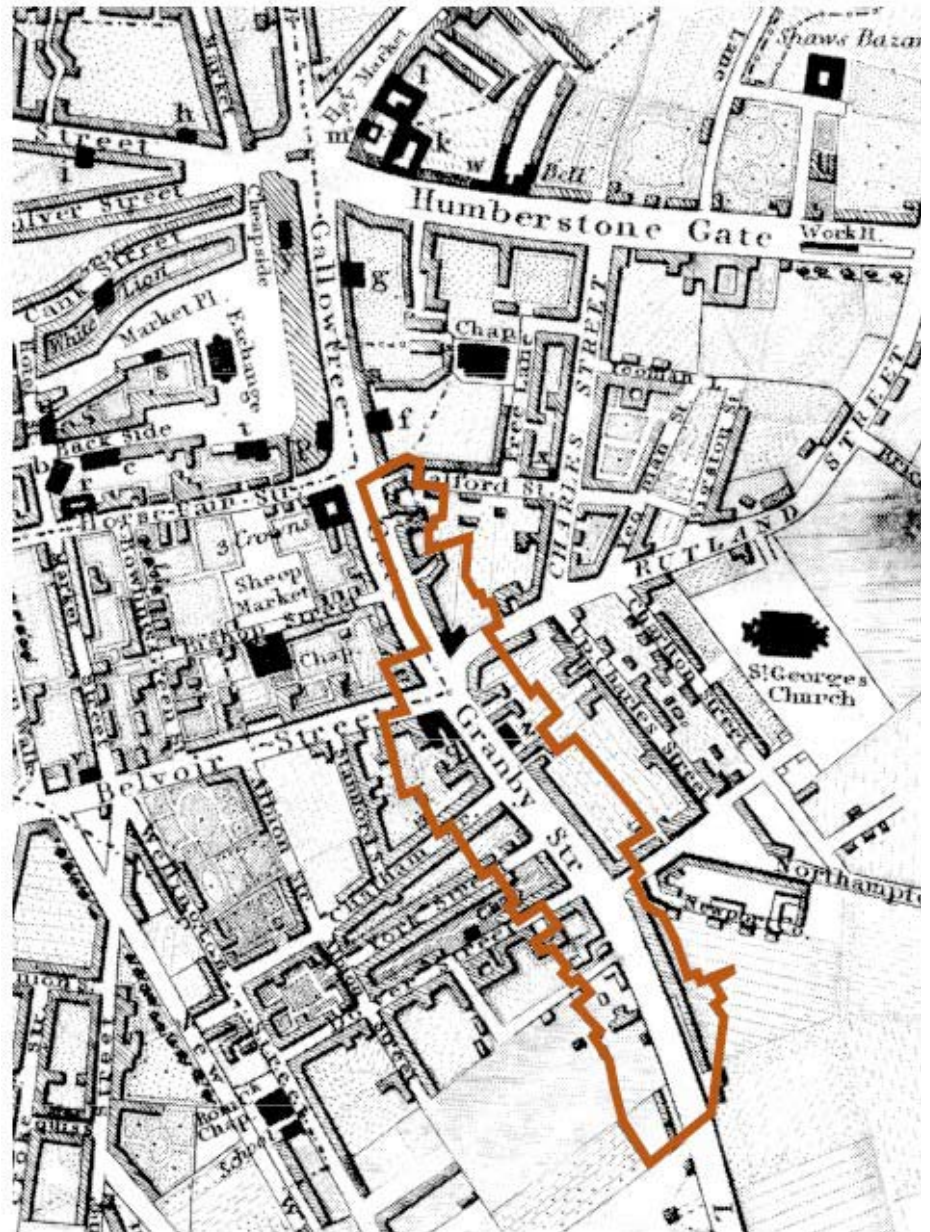
4.2 Granby Street, at its northern end, lies just outside the line of the defences of Roman and medieval Leicester. A Roman cemetery is believed to lie somewhere east of today's Gallowtree Gate and parts could therefore lie under the north east end of Granby Street. A track would probably have followed the walls on the eastern side along the line of present-day Gallowtree Gate and thence to Granby Street and one certainly ran south from the town up the (London Road) hill to the gallows that were sited near the present-day entrance to Evington Footpath. An edition of Speede's map from 1610 shows buildings on what would become Granby Street and a 'cockpit' close near what is now the site of the Turkey Café.

4.3 In the 16th century the main route from Leicester to London was via Highcross Street and Southgate Street through the heart of the old town. However, during the late 16th and early 17th centuries, the preferred route to London gradually changed to follow what we now know as Gallowtree Gate and Granby Street then west along Belvoir Street and Welford Road to Market Harborough and London. John Speede's map of 1610 calls it 'The London Way'.



map 3 Roberts' map of 1741. The approximate location of Granby Street Conservation Area is shown edged in brown.

4.4 This change was due to several factors. First, an additional gate (on the site of Market Place Approach) had been opened up some time in the 16th century through the south-east corner of the town walls that, by providing better access to the market place, attracted more traffic to this part of the town. Second, many unlicensed markets, fairs and inns were becoming established around the site of today's Clock Tower and Haymarket (a 'no-man's-land' where land ownership and tax rights were in dispute between the Borough Corporation and the owner of the nearby East Fields). These acted as further magnets, drawing people and business away from the old town. Third, and perhaps most importantly, it was becoming increasingly difficult for coaches to use the old coach road - the town gates were narrow and the streets were becoming increasingly congested. A route around the old town along Sanvey Gate, Church Gate and Gallowtree Gate was therefore much easier, but the consequence was the further migration of commerce away from the ancient heart of the town around Highcross Street and High Street. Contemporary maps such as Stukeley's of 1722 thus show many buildings outside the town walls on both sides of 'Goltre Gate' (Gallowtree Gate) and also on the corner of Horsefair Street ('Milston Lane').



map 4 Fowler's Map of 1828. The approximate location of Granby Street Conservation Area is shown edged in brown.

4.5 The precedence of Gallowtree Gate and Granby Street as the main route from Leicester to London was confirmed in 1726 when they were improved by the Turnpike Trust. The Three Crowns Inn, Leicester's most famous coaching inn, was opened in that year and continued to operate until 1870, when it was demolished to make way for the National Provincial Bank (now the NatWest). Although further development along Granby Street did not take place immediately, Roberts' map of 1741 clearly shows the new turnpike as well as buildings on Granby Street close by its junction with Horsefair Street. It also shows the 'horse pool' that was used by the grooms at the nearby Three Crowns Inn for watering and washing horses. To the north of the pool, on the site now occupied by the Turkey Café building, a small thatched inn called 'The Jolly Miller' stood in a grove of trees with the main Post Office opposite. A series of coaching inns also developed in Gallowtree Gate and Granby Street and these flourished until the coming of the railways in the mid-19th century.

4.6 Granby Street seems to have been named around the end of the 18th century, and Susannah Watts, in her book 'A Walk Through Leicester' (1804), mentions it and remarks that "many ranges of buildings...have...been here erected within the last fifteen years". Bishop Street (named after the Alderman William Bishop who owned the land) was laid out in 1809 and Belvoir Street (named for the Duke of Rutland who owned land in the area) followed in 1812. The 'Barley Mow' at the corner of Calais Hill marked the southern limit of Leicester but the first map reference to Granby Street is on Fowler's map of 1828. Named after the Marquis of Granby, a professional soldier and son of the Duke of Rutland, the map shows that Granby Street was well built-up as far as Northampton Street. By the last quarter of the 19th century it had become an important commercial, industrial and leisure location with shops, houses, offices, hotels, factories and other services mixed together to create what early photographs show to be a bustling and successful street.

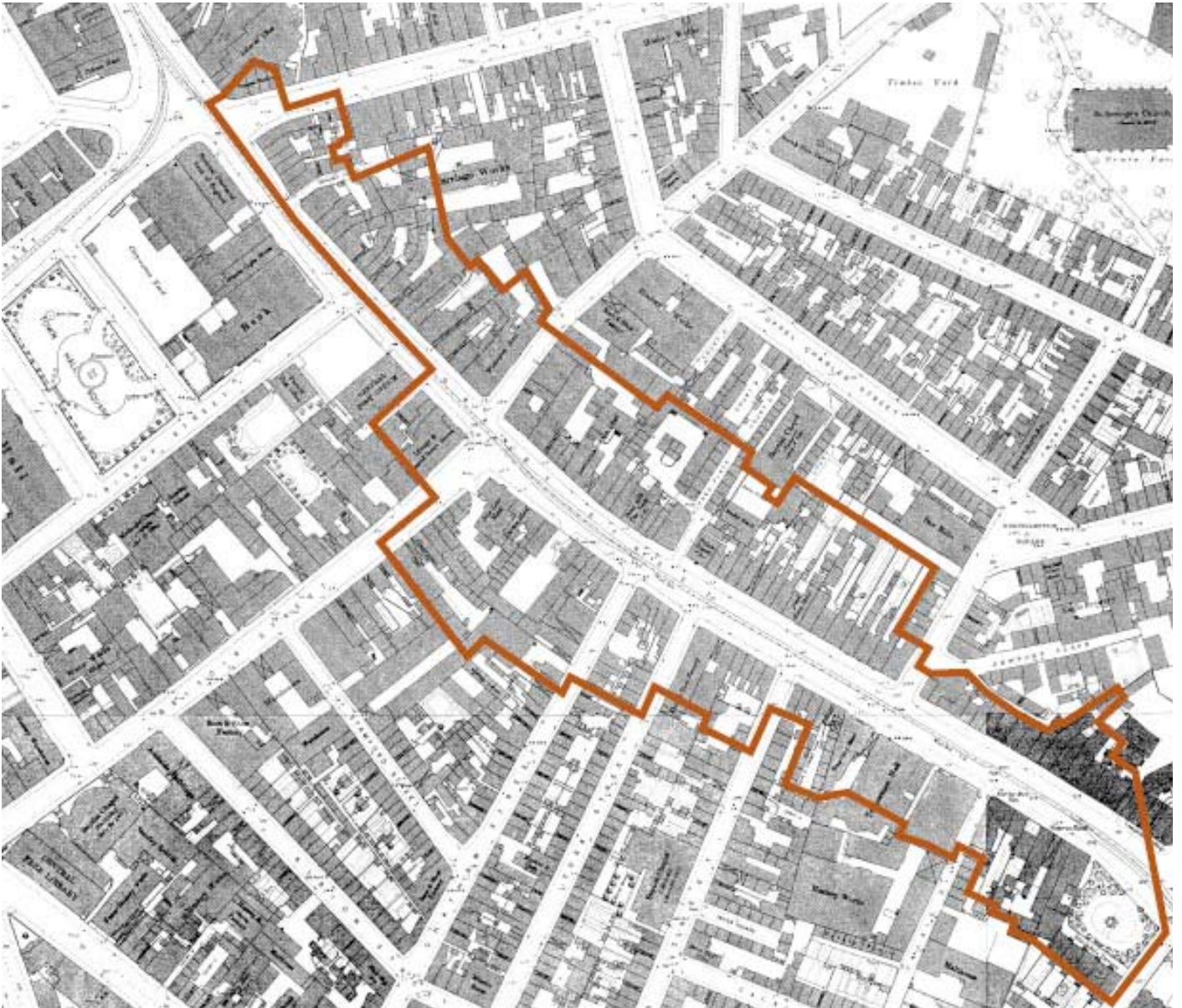


A view of William Flint's General News Room of 1838, this was certainly Flint's finest building but was unfortunately lost when Granby Street was widened in 1897/8.

4.7 Granby Street owes its many fine and important buildings to the 19th century, reflecting Leicester's industrial success and civic pride. At the north end, two banking houses – the National Provincial Bank (now the NatWest building) and the Leicestershire Bank (now occupied by HSBC) – vied with each other in 1870 to erect buildings that would properly reflect their importance. The result is that we now have a classical revival style stone and white brick building on the southern corner of Horsefair Street



The former Victoria Coffee House at 38 & 40 Granby Street, dates from 1888 - the year of the Queen's Jubilee, and hence the name. The architect was Edward Burgess.



map 5 The Ordnance Survey Map of 1886: Granby Street Conservation Area is shown superimposed. Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited. All rights reserved, 2009. Map not scale.

and an exuberant French Gothic building in red brick and stone on the north corner of Bishop Street. The corner of Halford Street is defined by a red brick, red sandstone and terracotta building, possibly of around the same date. Nearby, the Victoria Coffee House of 1888, with its tall conical roof, lanterns and turrets, can still be seen at 38-40 Granby Street with the former Wellington Hotel, another classical revival building in pale brick and stone, next door.

4.8 Granby Street was also the location of Victorian Leicester's Post Office(s). There had been a small post office on the corner of Granby Place before the service removed to Halford Street. However, in 1846, the Borough Corporation was authorised to build a new post office and chose a site close to the Granby Coffee House, today the site between the HSBC and NatWest Banks. This small classically styled building remained, enlarged from time to time, until Granby Street was widened in 1868, when a new building was erected on a site halfway between Bishop Street and Belvoir Street (previously the location of the Corah family's hosiery warehouse, which itself moved out to new premises, St Margaret's Works). This building was of a rather severe Italianate design but was replaced in 1885 by a building in the Gothic style, echoing the French Gothic



A close-up of 'Balmoral House', 88 Granby Street; it dates from 1873 and was designed by local architects Shenton and Baker

style of its neighbour, the Leicestershire Bank. Finally, in 1935 this last building was demolished, and the Post Office removed to its present site in Bishop Street. The site left vacant is now occupied by the shops and offices at 35-47 Granby Street.

4.9 In 1897/8 Granby Street was widened again and several buildings date from that time, such as the elaborately decorated stone-built News Room at the corner of Belvoir Street. This replaced what may have been the finest building by local architect, William Flint, the Greek revival 'General News Room' of 1838. In contrast, the opposite corner is occupied by the red brick and stone Grand Hotel of 1898, which itself replaced the former Blue Lion coaching inn, the Carlton Hotel and the Conservative Club. Its large ballroom was originally a cinema, the King's Hall, and was entered from Belvoir Street but, after several changes of name, it closed in 1928, possibly owing to the high cost of updating the equipment to cater for the new 'talkies'. In 1881, the corner of Rutland Street and Granby Street was the location of Leicester's first telephone exchange.

4.10 Granby Street is associated with the well-known 19th century Leicester figure, Thomas Cook, the travel pioneer, a leading member of the Temperance Society and a lifelong teetotaler. It was at his instigation that two of the town's most important temperance buildings were constructed - the Temperance Hotel and the Temperance Hall, both built in 1853. The former was managed by Cook's wife, Marianne and, despite severe alterations to the ground and first floors both inside and out, the building that stands at 123 Granby Street is still recognisable. Immediately adjoining the hotel on the south side was the Temperance Hall (advertised as the 'New Music Hall'). This was the largest concert hall in the city, with a seating capacity of 1800, until the opening of De Montfort Hall in 1913, and the first building in the town to be supplied by water from the new Thornton Reservoir. It had an imposing stuccoed classical façade with three large windows separated by Corinthian style columns, the whole topped off with a big triangular pediment. Many famous people performed there – Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, Jenny Lind, Charlie Chaplin – but with the decline of the Temperance Movement it was eventually sold and converted into a cinema, ending its days as the Essoldo. It was demolished in



An image from around 1920 showing the hustle and bustle of Granby Street.



The Britannia Works at the corner of Calais Hill and Granby Street just prior to its demolition in 1962.

1960 to be replaced by a modern office block (127-133 Granby Street).

4.11 The same fate befell the Britannia Hosiery Works which adjoined the Temperance Hall to the south. This large imposing brick and stone classical revival factory and warehouse probably dated from around 1870-80 and made a very strong contribution to the architecture and townscape of the street. Its loss, and that of the Temperance Hall, is a matter of some regret today. However, one small Victorian Gothic factory remains at 88 Granby Street. This is Balmoral House, built in 1873 to the designs of Shenton and Baker (who also designed the Water Board offices on Bowling Green Street) and, together with the small warehouse at 97 Granby Street, is typical of the way in which small-scale industrial premises existed in Victorian Leicester alongside houses and shops.

4.12 Despite these losses the twentieth century has, nevertheless, contributed several interesting buildings to the conservation area. The most unusual is the Turkey Café, an eccentric design that is faced with coloured Royal Doulton ceramic tiles. It was designed by one of the city's best-known architects, Arthur Wakerley, and built in 1901. It is perhaps not surprising that the first occupant was J.S.Winn as, between 1895 and 1900, Wakerley's office had been above Winn's 'Oriental Café' in the Market Place. Another 20th century building worthy of note is the Grade II listed 128 Granby Street (Blunt's Shoes), an example of the Art Deco style popular in the 1930s (others can be seen at 35-47 and 42-44 Granby Street). Built on a site cleared in 1931 for the construction of Charles Street, Nathan Hunt's new up-market furniture shop in Portland stone with green glazed roof tiles was very fashionable. The



Above: Two views of the Art Deco building at 128-132 Granby Street; it was originally Harris' Furniture Store as can be seen in the top picture dating from the 1960s. The corner building is now occupied by Blunt's Shoe shop.

current owners have kept the original pale green colour scheme for the windows and external metalwork. The shallow curved façade of its five storey neighbour at 124-126 Granby Street marks this as an Arts and Crafts building dating from the turn of the 20th century but the YMCA building of 1901 on the corner of London Road and East Street is, by far, Granby Street's grandest 20th century building.

4.13 A comparison of the maps of 1886 and the present day shows how the character of the street has changed from a mixture of houses and gardens, shops, pubs, workshops, leisure and industrial uses to the more densely built up commercial and retail uses of today. Small shop and residential units (such as between Chatham Street and York Street) have given way to large purpose-built shops, such as the old Maples store at 91 Granby Street. Similarly, the old Waggon and Horses pub and stables, along with tiny cottages on Dover Street, were redeveloped in the mid-20th century and the cramped housing courts on Alfred Place have been demolished to form car parks. One of the biggest changes is at the corner of Granby Street and London Road. Here the smart houses of Stockdale Terrace (named after the local architect Stockdale Harrison whose father lived at number 17) were demolished to make way for the YMCA building.

4.14 During the latter part of the twentieth century Granby Street was affected by many changing trends, but most particularly those of industry, shopping and traffic. From being a busy shopping and industrial location, Granby Street became a secondary shopping location following investment in the Clock Tower area. Large Victorian factories such as the Britannia Works became increasingly unviable as cheap foreign goods competed with Leicester's traditional markets. There was little recognition in the 1960s of the architectural value or potential of such buildings and without the protection of listed building status, and before the advent of conservation areas in 1967, their demolition and replacement was probably inevitable. Thus the Temperance Hall, the Britannia Works and others, such as the Victorian Gothic shop and warehouse of the Institution for the Blind at 50 Granby Street, were demolished and replaced by shops and offices of uninspired designs. For cinemas, it was a similar story and Leicester lost many of its cinemas during the 1960s. One of the casualties in the conservation area was The Picture House at 13-17 Granby Street, (demolished in the late 1970s).

4.15 During the latter half of the 20th century Granby Street, like all other roads in the city, saw a substantial growth in the number of vehicles using it. It was a main route feeding into the city centre, a major bus route and the main vehicle and pedestrian link to the railway station. The closure of Gallowtree Gate to vehicles in the 1980s required changes to traffic circulation within and around the



Top: A view of the Turkey Café taken in the early years of the 20th century and above: a close up of the brightly coloured tiling.



The range of architectural styles along Granby Street is exceptional. Here at the corner of Chatham Street the chosen style was Flemish, adjoining is the Grand Hotel with its varied skyline.

city centre, particularly the diversion of non-essential traffic away from the narrow city centre streets. Granby Street was made one way northwards with pavement extensions and parking bays introduced to narrow the road and calm traffic speeds. A central ring road was also planned, with the City Council favouring a route that would take it south of the railway station so as to maintain direct pedestrian links between it and the city centre. However, this could not be secured and the central ring road was built north of the station, with a pedestrian subway providing access to the station. The subway was unpopular with pedestrians and a traffic light-controlled surface level crossing had to be installed a few years later.

4.16 The last decade of the 20th century and the first years of the 21st have seen other changes in the city centre of which the most obvious is the growth in investment in regeneration schemes. While most of the Granby Street Conservation Area is not directly affected, it is close to two of the main regeneration areas. The Cultural Quarter sits 200m to the north and is the focus of arts-based, leisure and housing projects. The area between Dover Street, Northampton Street and East Street is part of the new Business Quarter, the 'Office Core'. Aspirations for this area include, amongst other things, softening the barrier of the ring road and the establishment of direct links with the station, providing the highest quality environmental improvements to the public realm, creating an enhanced setting

for conservation areas and buildings of architectural and historic interest and re-orienting the main entrance to the railway station towards Charles Street and Granby Street. The car park site to the rear of the 1960s office buildings at 127-141 Granby Street has been identified as a potential office development site

Character Analysis

Purpose

4.17 The aim of conservation area designation is the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of an area of architectural or historic interest. However, each conservation area is different and character and appearance will differ in many ways. The style and scale of the buildings may be different, as well as their layout and relationship to each other and the spaces around them. They may have adapted to changes in fashion or use in different ways and their character may be influenced by less tangible factors such as sounds, smells, busyness or tranquillity. It is important, therefore, that the different characters as well as the physical appearance of each conservation area is defined and described in order that informed decisions can be made about any future changes to the built form or the uses of buildings.

Townscape

4.18 Generally, the distinctive character of Granby Street Conservation Area is created by its good quality, city centre scale buildings and architecture which scale down from the large public buildings north of the Grand Hotel to the shops and offices south of York Street. Brick and stone predominate but a variety of other building materials are used for decoration, a combination that adds interest, colour, and texture. The street is busy with people and vehicles; the south end is softened by trees. Building heights are generally 3 and 4 storeys, occasionally rising to 5 or 6 storeys. Windows, sills, stone bands and stringcourses create horizontal patterns while bay windows and double height windows emphasis vertical rhythms. The townscape is notably enhanced at the junction with Belvoir Street and Rutland Street, an important visual 'hinge', whose corners are framed and addressed by large well-designed buildings that reinforce the importance of the space. The view south from Rutland Street towards the railway station is very effectively 'closed' by the Elizabeth House tower block, while the Clock Tower terminates the view north at the junction with Gallowtree Gate.

4.19 Topography also plays a part in creating the area's character, particularly the approach down the London Road hill from the south. From here the entrance to Granby



The Leicester YMCA at the corner of East Street and the building opposite, Blunts Shoes are two large contrasting buildings that frame the approach to Granby Street from London Road.

Street is framed by two large and contrasting buildings (the YMCA and 128 Granby Street), while the view further into the street is obscured until it is actually entered. The buildings at each end of Granby Street also form 'gateways', each of which creates a 'sense of arrival'. A subtle bend part way along Granby Street obscures views in both directions, inviting further exploration.

4.20 The character of an area is also a function of how it is viewed and used. In the case of the Granby Street Conservation Area it is an important pedestrian link to the railway station and is the main bus route into the city centre from the south. It bustles with people en route to or from the railway station, work or shopping, while the bars, restaurants, fast food outlets, shops, offices, flats, a large hotel and art gallery provide a variety of local destinations. As the main feeder road into the city centre from the south, traffic levels on Granby Street are high at peak times. This is particularly noticeable at the Grand Hotel where the distance between buildings decreases and building heights increase. With pavements also being narrower here pedestrians and vehicles are brought into much closer contact.

4.21 The conservation area divides, in terms of appearance, architecture and primary function, into two 'sub-areas' – the area from the Grand Hotel northwards, and the area to the south. The appraisal will therefore address the architectural character and key buildings of each area separately as Area 1 (Granby Street North) and Area 2 (Granby Street South).

Prevailing and former uses

4.22 The growth and development of Granby Street has already been described in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.16. This shows how the area developed southwards from, and as an extension to, the Gallowtree Gate coach road and turnpike to become a densely built up area filled with shopping, industrial, business and leisure uses during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. It was also then one of the city's principal shopping streets and was a key link on foot or tram between the city centre, the railway station and the suburbs of Highfields and Stoneygate.

4.23 However, the primary functions and importance of the street changed during the latter half of the 20th century. This was the time when the industrial buildings, the area's three cinemas and the concert hall were falling out of use. The buildings they occupied became unfashionable or out of date and, not being protected in any way by designation as listed buildings, were demolished to make way for offices. With the redevelopment of the Haymarket area, Granby Street continued to lose its importance in the shopping hierarchy



Number 1 Granby Street was designed in the classical revival style. The stone work is particularly fine with a strong horizontal rhythm created by the large stone console brackets and the stone cornices at first and second floor levels.



The impressive public entrance to the NatWest bank premises at the corner of Granby Street and Horsefair Street.

and became a secondary shopping location. The provision of short-stay on-street parking as part of the city centre traffic improvements in the 1980s was partly designed to boost shopping in the street. More recently, however, the fortunes of Granby Street have begun to rise. Still primarily an office and shop location, the increase in the availability and popularity of city centre living (such as the flats in the News Room, 1 Belvoir Street, the warehouse and office conversions at 97 and 135-141 Granby Street) has attracted more local residents, leisure uses such as cafes and bars, as well as small supermarkets.

4.24 Granby Street's function as the main route out of the city centre has also ceased in response to measures designed to minimise the impact of traffic in the city centre. It became one way northwards in the 1980s as part of the traffic management scheme that included the pedestrianisation of Gallowtree Gate; at that date it was resurfaced and redesigned to provide pavement extensions and street trees. In the 21st century, continental-style street cafes are now becoming a feature of the street and it is becoming busy again. There are few vacant buildings or shops.

Architectural character and key buildings

4.25 There are six listed buildings on Granby Street and a further twelve that are included on the draft list of buildings of local interest (see Map 2). The buildings are an eclectic mix of architectural styles dating from the 19th through to the 20th century. The buildings, and how they contribute to the character, appearance and quality of the conservation area, are described in detail below.

4.26 In the text buildings that make positive contributions to the character and appearance of the conservation area are shown in **bold**. Reference to 'the local list' indicates that, although a building is not included in the statutory list of buildings of architectural or historic



'Imperial Buildings' at 2 - 4 Halford Street



Number 2 Granby Street features a very fine oriel bow window

interest, it is of sufficient local interest to be included in the draft, non-statutory, local list.

Area 1 (Granby Street North)

4.27 The junction of Granby Street with Horsefair Street and Halford Street is one of the two 'gateways' to Granby Street. Each of the three buildings on the junction is a focal point and landmark framing the narrow entrances to Granby and Halford Streets. Two of the buildings are in a classical revival style and one in the Queen Anne revival style. The grandest building is **1 Granby Street** (NatWest Bank and Grade II listed) which is built in pale yellow brick with stone dressings with a finely detailed curved corner defining the entrance. Strong horizontal rhythms are created by window sills, cornices and their large decorated console bracket supports, stone bands and a balustraded parapet (now sadly devoid of the decorative urns that used to stand on top of the parapet piers). There are keystones above the second floor windows, small carved motifs above the first floor windows, rusticated quoins at each end and around the corner entrance which also has a shallow balustraded balcony supported by very large console brackets to emphasise its importance. The corner entrance not only adds to the architectural character of the conservation area but also to the busy character created by people and their activities.

4.28 On the opposite corner, **2 Granby Street** is a much simpler building but, again, it addresses the junction well with a feature oriel window (with original curved and glazed sashes) at first floor, stone quoins and a subtly curved and rendered façade to Halford Street. Beyond, and offering an interesting visual contrast, is the stone-built and locally listed **3 Halford Street**. The busy façade of this building has five-sided pilasters, Tuscan columns on the inner faces of its recessed first floor balcony, a bull's-eye window in the middle of a centrally placed pediment and ball and crown finials at parapet level. On the north-east corner is the interesting 'Imperial Buildings', **2-6 Halford Street**, a four and a half storey red brick, red sandstone and terracotta property that adds another element of colour and decoration to the junction. This unusual building is on the local list and has a wealth of detail; windows have a red sandstone mullions, transoms and surrounds, with carved stone pilasters and bands between. Strong horizontal patterns are created by the moulded stone stringcourses between each storey and the dormer windows above the fourth floor have round-arched windows, cornices and pedimented gables supported by scrolls.

4.29 The small group of buildings at 4-18 Granby Street have all been refaced and make little contribution to the architectural quality of the area. Beyond, however, there are several buildings of different sizes, designs and decoration that are important to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Two early 20th century neo-Classical buildings in brick and render, **22 and 26-28 Granby Street**, enclose the most unusual



The Turkey Café was built to the designs of Arthur Wakerley in 1901. The exotic Turkish/Persian style moulded and glazed terracotta was made at the Doulton Pottery in Lambeth.

building in the conservation area, **The Turkey Café, 24 Granby Street**. The three buildings, despite their different designs, maintain strong horizontal patterns – the windows are all at the same level, as are the parapet lines, while the vertical rhythms of brick and render at 22 Granby Street contrast with and emphasise the patterns on the Turkey Café. The plain façade of 26-28 Granby Street acts as a foil for its more decorative neighbours, highlighting their architectural details. The Turkey Café itself is a Grade II listed building designed by the well known local architect, Arthur Wakerley, and built in 1901. Its cast iron frame is clad in brightly coloured matt-faced carraraware tiles by Royal Doulton. Unique in Leicester, it was restored in 1984 when the then occupiers, Rayners Opticians, commissioned Hathernware Ceramics of Loughborough to re-make and install the Moorish-style arch over the shopfront and the two turkeys on either side of the entrance.



4.30 Beyond 26-28 Granby Street, building heights increase to four storeys. The purpose-built shop at **30-32 Granby Street** is built in dark red bricks with a large double height shopfront. A moulded cornice runs across the whole façade between first and second floors, above which are five sash windows with segmental arches and moulded keystones, five plain sashes at third floor level and a deeply overhanging eaves cornice. Adjoining it on the south side is **34-36 Granby Street**, a neo-Classical building in pale yellow bricks with stone detailing such as quoins, window surrounds, segmental arched pediments on scrolled brackets over the first floor windows and a horizontal stone band above. The eaves cornice is supported on small paired brackets (modillions) and the second and third floor windows retain their original sashes. Unfortunately, the very deep shopfront fascia breaks up the rhythms of the façade but the building retains sufficient merit to warrant its inclusion in the local list of buildings of architectural or historic interest.



Two views of the extraordinary former banking premises at 31 Granby Street. It is listed Grade II star and dates from 1870 and was designed by the notable local architect Joseph Goddard.

4.31 The former **Victoria Coffee House, 38-40 Granby Street** is the next building on this part of the street. It is Grade II listed and was designed by another local architect, Edward Burgess, and built in 1888, one of the twelve temperance movement coffee houses in Leicester in the late 19th century. It is one of the few stone buildings in Granby Street and its highly decorative facades combine large windows, horizontal bands, stone quoins, Doric columns, splayed upper floors with octagonal and round turrets and topped off by a prominent tiled conical roof crowned by a wooden lantern.

4.32 On the west side of Granby Street the site of the three storey Granby Coffee House and its successor, The Picture House, have been replaced by a two storey building

in dark red-brown brick, 13-17 Granby Street. It makes some architectural concessions to its neighbours – horizontal brick bands above shopfront level to link with the stone bands on 1 Granby Street and an eaves line that coincides with decorative elements on 1 and 31 Granby Street – but the scale and massing are generally out of proportion with its surroundings. Its design failings are perhaps emphasised by its neighbour to the south, the bank at **31 Granby Street**. Grade II listed and dating from 1870, it was designed by the local practice of Goddard & Paget. This large elaborate structure is a city centre landmark, in red brick with stone decorations in a flamboyant French Gothic style with a Venetian entrance. The Granby Street façade has three large Gothic windows with polished pilasters and pointed arches built in alternating brick and stone. Entrance is obtained at the corner with Bishop Street via a single storey porch with big pointed arches, a decorated balustrade over which rises a large bow window and pyramidal roof topped by a railing. The windows anticipate the Art Nouveau style and are filled with flowing forms in coloured glass and there are terracotta panels filled with bird shapes close to eye level above and behind the original railings. The banking hall ceiling is open to show the decorated timber roof structure.

4.33 The buildings in the next block, **35 to 55 Granby Street**, date from the 1930s or the late 1890s. The three storey 1930s shop and office building at 35-47 is faced in Portland stone and, despite some inappropriate shopfronts, is a well-designed feature whose restrained materials and decoration enhance the street. The former bank at **53 Granby Street** also dates from this time and has a well-proportioned Portland stone façade divided in two by a shallow balcony above a large round-arched double height entrance. The



Granby Street/Belvoir Street corner is dominated by the tower of the Ramada Jarvis Grand Hotel. The architects may have been inspired by the churches of Sir Christopher Wren.



Part of the Belvoir Street elevation of the Ramada Jarvis Grand Hotel showing the three round-arched windows to the first floor ballroom/function room.

rusticated stonework at ground floor level give a feeling of solidity while the projecting eaves cornice and balcony create interesting shadows.

4.34 The Belvoir Street junction is marked by four buildings that differ from each other markedly in style, colour and decoration. However, they have each been designed to acknowledge and address this important space in some way. On the north corner the locally listed former Wellington Hotel (now **Hepworth Chambers**), **2-4 Rutland Street**, does this in the form of a curve that has more highly decorated windows and rusticated stone piers. At the former **News Room** on the west side, **55-59 Granby Street & 1-3 Belvoir Street**, the corner feature is a coved and

rusticated curve with a segment of a dome at second floor level. The **Ramada Jarvis Grand Hotel, 61-79 Granby Street and 2-14 Belvoir Street**, on the south corner again marks the junction with a curved façade but adds paired columns to each floor surmounted by a two-stage stone domed cupola. The east corner is the plainest building but it too acknowledges the importance of the junction with a splayed corner and simple geometric decoration.

4.35 Architecturally these four buildings are all different. Hepworth Chambers is a three storey yellow brick neo-Classical building with decorative stone eaves brackets, window surrounds, stone bands and quoins. It is included in draft local list. The recent loss of its original sashes, and the aggressive cleaning method used on both elevations, have both altered the appearance of the building and damaged the stonework, to the detriment of the building and its environs. The News Room is Grade II listed and dates from 1898. It was designed by Goddard & Co and its exuberantly carved and decorated stonework has three window bays to each elevation, Ionic columns and pilasters, friezes, cupolas, domes, arched dormer windows and carvings of the nine Muses between niches with shell decoration. The corner is rounded at first floor level with a segment of a dome at second floor level. The left hand end of the Belvoir Street elevation is topped by a stone domed cupola. The Grand Hotel dates from 1896 and 1898 and was designed by Cecil Ogden and Simpson and Harvey in a "Franco-German Renaissance" style while the Belvoir Street frontage and the corner extension were designed by Amos Hall. Typical Leicester orange-red bricks contrast with white stonework on facades whose strong horizontal rhythms are set by long lines of windows separated by stone bands. The hotel's entrance canopy is placed in centre of the Granby Street elevation and is further defined by three storey high stone bays that are crowned by ornate gables and turrets with tent-shaped roofs. The Belvoir Street elevation boasts a very large pediment, octagonal domed turrets and three large round-arch windows. The east corner building is, in contrast, very simple with Portland stone facades broken by double height windows that are separated by black



At the corner of Granby Street/Belvoir Street the former General Newsroom was designed in the Baroque style - a popular choice of architecture for large public buildings at the end of the 19th century.



Detail of entrance to former General Newsroom, Belvoir Street.

panels decorated with bronzed zig-zag pattern. Simple fluting also decorates the parapet and the façade at first floor level.

Area 2 (Granby Street South) East side

4.36 Most of the buildings on the east side of Granby Street are three storeys in height, with taller buildings tending to be on the west side, such as those at 31 and 91 Granby Street. Alterations have been made to most buildings over the years but many still make positive contributions to the character and appearance of the street. Within the three storey group of buildings between 44 Granby Street and Alfred Place, there are, however, only a few that make a positive contribution to the conservation area. Those worthy of note are **48, 60 and 62-66 Granby Street**. The first of these, 48 Granby Street, has a smooth rendered façade, scored to look like stone jointing, two round arched first floor windows, square second floor windows and two horizontal bands at parapet level. Occupying a narrow plot, 60 Granby Street is built in yellow bricks with classical detailing and two dormer windows with segmental pediments and square balusters to the parapet. The refacing of the ground floor in dark buff rustic-finish bricks detracts from the appearance of the building. The corner of Granby Place is marked by 62-66 Granby Street which is built in orange-red bricks with decorative stonework, tall first floor windows with a wide relieving arch detail above and a splayed corner feature.

4.37 The block at 68-100 Granby Street comprises buildings from the late 19th and first decades of the 20th century, some of which are on the draft local list of buildings of architectural or historic interest (68-82 Granby Street). Dating from 1902, **68-74 Granby Street** is a symmetrical three storey building with an attic storey formed by two large centrally positioned dormers. The stonework on its brick facade is decorated in a somewhat eclectic style combining elements of Gothic, Queen Anne, Jacobean and Arts and Crafts (this last most obvious in the elevation to Alfred Place). Helmeted and bearded Vikings decorate brackets above the central shopfront fascia while the dormers are supported by small flying buttresses, with finials and scrolls, and the Dutch-style dormer gables have finials on either side. Even its tall chimneys are decorated with horizontal stone bands and angled bricks. Its neighbour, **76-82 Granby Street**, in contrast, is in the Domestic Revival style in orange-red brick with stone dressings. There is mock half-timbering, decorated timber bargeboards on the two dormers, which have big gables supported on stubby brackets,



Numbers 76-82 Granby Street at the corner of Alfred Place combines a range of architectural styles and features a series of decorative carved brackets supporting the stone fascia.



Only the upper, top two floors of Thomas Cook's Temperance Hotel at 123 Granby Street remain intact. Both the shopfront and first floors having been altered drastically. Beyond can be seen the large Portland stone building that was originally the Maples furniture store, built in the 1950s.

a concave eaves cornice and stone window mullions, transoms and surrounds. The façade next door at 84-86 Granby Street is a recent addition to the street frontage, with bricks and windows replacing the mosaic tile cladding that used to face this 1960s shop. While still lacking the pitched roof that would have added further interest to the environment, the design nevertheless acknowledges the scale and materials of the surrounding buildings.

4.38 **Balmoral House, 88 Granby Street** was designed by Shenton & Baker and dates from 1873. It is the only Renaissance Gothic building in Granby Street and was originally built as a boot and shoe factory. It is placed gable-on to the street and its name is picked out in Gothic-style lettering in a tiled frieze over the first floor windows. Above are four lancet windows with hoodmoulds and a small round window, reminiscent of the rose window of a church. The original pillars on either side shopfront can still be seen and add further interest to the building.

4.39 Beyond the City Gallery at 90 Granby Street is a three storey block of much altered 19th century shops at 92-100 Granby Street. Some classical revival details such as a dentilled eaves cornice, some moulded window surrounds, quoins and lintels supported on scrolled brackets remain but otherwise the buildings have lost their original architectural integrity. The small shop on the corner with Northampton Street, **100 Granby Street**, was refaced in brick with rendered panels probably in the 1920s or 1930s and is typical of the rather severe designs of the time.

4.40 The façade of 102-104 Granby Street on the opposite corner is now hidden behind metal cladding but the last group of buildings has much of interest. **106-108 Granby Street** is built in brick and stone, with the centre sections of each bay projecting slightly forward to add interest and articulation to the façade. There are shallow curved bay windows at first floor level, decorative stone bands and pilasters, a projecting eaves course and ornamental gables above the second floor windows. The yellow clay chimney pots are original as is the 'bull's-eye' window, complete with original glazing bars, that can be seen in the centre of the right hand gable. Its twin to the left has been bricked up. The next group, **108-120 Granby Street**, is much plainer and has been subject to some alterations, notably the loss of original windows at 114, 118 and 120, some rather over-large shop fascias and the painting of a façade at the right hand end. However, their fourth floor hipped dormers, segmental window arches and decorative brick eaves cornice add interesting shapes and rhythms to this part of the conservation area.

4.41 The last two buildings on this side of Granby Street are of particular note. The four storeys of **122-124 Granby Street** is an interesting example of the Arts and Crafts



Number 97 Granby Street dates from the last quarter of the 19th century.



Detail of 151 Granby Street showing the original decorative sign above the first floor windows. The building is designed in the Arts and Crafts style and dates from the 1900s.

GRANBY STREET CONSERVATION AREA: character appraisal

style of the turn of the 20th century and is included on the local list of buildings of architectural or historic interest. It is built in pale red bricks with buff coloured tiles cladding the gently curving facade that contains the first, second and third floor windows. The lower part of the mansard roof sweeps down from two gabled dormers to form deeply overhanging eaves. The moulded lead rainwater pipes and hopper-heads are original. The unfortunate gap site on its south side is the consequence of a fire in 1977 which resulted in the loss of the last remaining 'step houses' of 1861 (so-called because they had steps leading to the front doors). The last building on this side is **128-132 Granby Street**, a Grade II listed building, which was built as a high class furniture store in the 1930s to the designs of Symington, Prince and Pike. It is in the Art Deco style in Portland stone with green glazed roof tiles, bronze plaques and decorative ironwork. The façade is symmetrical about the curved corner with windows grouped in blocks separated by four giant pilasters with dark-coloured capital features. Taken together with the YMCA opposite and 122-124 Granby Street, these buildings form an important group framing the main entrance to the city centre from the south.

Area 2 (Granby Street South), West side

4.42 The west side of Granby Street has experienced the most change in the 20th century. Its buildings are generally larger (four storeys or more) and occupy wider plots. The skyline is more varied and there is, from Chatham Street southward, less use of ornament. There is also considerably more vertical rhythm to the street façade than that of the east side.

4.43 The plots from **83-85 Granby Street** adjoin the large ornate Grand Hotel and date from the late 19th century. The façade of the three storey building at 83 Granby Street is timber with large windows across the upper floors. The window mullions and transoms are finely moulded with fielded panels and carved Jacobean-style pilasters at each end. A triangular pediment with a central round window faces the street and continues the theme of gables and dormers set by its neighbour, the Grand Hotel. The theme is taken up again at **85 Granby Street**, another red brick building with stone used to pick out the centrally placed windows and dormer. Decoration is restrained, with square stone pilasters, moulded stone stringcourses, carved rectangular stone cartouches between the windows and a pedimented stone gable rising above the dormer. Brick and stone wrap sharply round the Chatham Street corner, leading the eye around to a façade that echoes that of the front elevation.

4.44 The next block is occupied by a large 1930s five plus attic storeyed building, **91 Granby Street**. It presents a marked contrast to its



YMCA, detail of winged figures at first floor level.



179 Granby Street, (part of YMCA). East Street corner of building showing entrance detail in green glazed tiles.



A detail of the moulded terracotta bird shapes and decorative ironwork to 31 Granby Street.

neighbours, not only in its scale and massing but also in its use of materials and it is an important piece of 'punctuation' in the street. The facades, splayed at the corners on each side, have large areas of pale buff bricks, broken at second and third floor level by tall window openings with stone surrounds. The mezzanine floor is picked out in stonework and green slate is used to clad the shopfront at fascia level. The building presents symmetrical facades to Granby Street, Chatham Street and York Street with moulded lintels above, and railings across the base of, the tall window openings. These are balanced by square and dormer windows in the top two floors, the dormers projecting through the green tiled roof behind the parapet.

4.45 The three buildings at **97-107 Granby Street** are an interesting mix of 19th and 20th century building types. The first, 97 Granby Street, is a small Victorian factory building from the last quarter of the 19th century. Its builders have used simple architectural details to emphasise its presence in the street such rusticated stone quoins at each end and on either side of the curved corner to York Street. Two plain stone bands run horizontally across the façades and the window openings have segmental gauged brick arches above and round-edged bricks on either side. Decorative elongated stone keyblocks have been added above the second floor windows, linking up to a projecting eaves cornice decorated with pale yellow/white dog-tooth bricks, clay tiles and paired moulded stone brackets. The adjoining property probably dates from the middle of the 19th century. It would have been a shop with living accommodation in the upper two storeys, and is therefore built to a domestic scale with lower floor heights and smaller windows than its neighbour to the north. Few original building features remain, other than the right hand sash windows.



One of the two replacement "Turkeys" produced by Hathernware Ceramics of Loughborough for the 1984 restoration of the Turkey Café.

4.46 The south end of this short block is the large white bulk of the former Maples furniture store at **107 Granby Street**. Built in the 1950s it has a deep canopy over the entrance, five floors clad in Portland stone slabs and a very large central recess facing Granby Street that contains the metal framework of the first to third floor windows, each of which are separated by six projecting metal 'fins'. Above this are eight short horizontal flagpoles and the shadows left by the bronze letters spelling out the 'Maples' name and reminding passers-by of the building's history. Above this are a projecting cornice and the top floor windows lining through with those below. Above another shallow cornice there is a low parapet hiding the flat roof.

4.47 Numbers 109 and 111 Granby Street are small two storey Victorian buildings that have been substantially altered and are of little architectural merit. The adjoining office and shop building at **115-121 Granby Street** towers over them and is another example of Granby Street's 1930s architecture. Portland stone is used again as a facing material and the group of six long thin windows lighting the first and second floors introduce strong vertical rhythms into an otherwise undecorated façade. Taken together with the Maples



Window detail showing the flowing forms and fine coloured glass at the former bank premises, 31 Granby Street,

GRANBY STREET CONSERVATION AREA: character appraisal

shop and number 91, this side of Granby Street displays a completely different architectural character from the east side, and one that is more firmly rooted in the 20th, rather than the 19th century.

4.48 The last remaining 19th century building in the 109-141 Granby Street block is the former Temperance Hotel at **123 Granby Street**. Built in 1853, the façade was symmetrical about a tall recessed central feature with a round arch and rusticated long-and-short stonework framing the outside. The first floor window had a small curved balcony that acted as a canopy over the main entrance. Only the upper (round arch) part is now visible, the first floor windows with their triangular and segmental pediments having long been replaced by a full width window at first floor level and a large shopfront at ground floor. The rusticated quoins can still be seen up each side of the façade. The office buildings at 127-141 Granby Street were built in the 1960s and introduce further strong horizontal rhythms into the townscape that are at odds with the surroundings. The blank façade of the Dover Street elevation of 141 Granby Street looms over nearby buildings.

4.49 Neither the name, the **Barley Mow (149 Granby Street)**, nor the present appearance of the building, date from the establishment of this use on this site. In the 1850s it was the Nag's Head and its three storeys, as was common on Granby Street at that time, had a more domestic scale and appearance. By 1886 it had become The Barley Mow but the present façades probably date from the first quarter of the 20th century – a sort of neo-classical style with a stuccoed and painted finish with long quoins down the corners, moulded window surrounds and two eye-catching moulded, painted and gilded name plaques to the front and side elevations. From the Barley Mow, the buildings step up in height to the tall three storeys of 151-159 Granby Street. **Unicoat House, 151 Granby Street**, is an early 20th century building in an Arts and Crafts style in red brick with its original tall, narrow sash windows at second floor level and a finely lettered name sign in glass over the first floor windows. The building is decorated with stone bands, square pilasters, a moulded stone sill below the second floor windows and decorative cartouches in place of capitals on the pilasters at first floor level. The original shopfront fascia brackets and decoration remain in situ but the modern shop fascia below is overly deep and out of scale. On a similar scale and with a full width first floor window **153 Granby Street** retains its original splayed shopfront and is crowned by a tall gently curved parapet.

4.50 The Victorian Gothic style Fox and Tiger public house next door at **157-159 Granby Street** adds more interest to this block. At first floor level there is a central window with two splayed bay windows with hipped roofs on either side, each decorated with pilasters with foliate capitals, shouldered arches with dentil mouldings and mock brackets supporting the eaves courses or, in the case of the central window, a cornice. The second floor windows are less elaborate but are made a feature of the façade by



One of the two moulded and painted signs to the Barley Mow Public House at 149 Granby Street.



Green glazed tiles, Portland stonework, bronze panels and steel window frames are used to great effect at 128 - 132 Granby Street.

being placed in recessed openings and by the use of segmental and round arches with projecting lintels supported by mock brackets. The rather bold colour scheme chosen by the current occupiers picks out the outlines of the window mouldings and the quoins on the corners of the building. A moulded eaves course with small brackets completes the decoration.

4.51 The last building in the conservation area is the Grade II listed late (1898-1901) Victorian Baroque **YMCA** that occupies the plot **1-7 East Street & 161-179 Granby Street**. This very large brick and Ketton stone building is a key landmark at the entrance to Granby Street and, with the Art Deco building opposite, creates an impressive gateway into the city centre proper. With purpose-built shops on the ground floor the building has two quite different facades. The Granby Street elevation, as the most important, is on a somewhat monumental scale, having a first floor clad in stone and nine giant stone columns dividing the facade into bays. There are gables, balustrades, dormers, ornamental chimney stacks, steeply pitched stone slate roofs, keystones and sculptures representing, among other things, Architecture, Sculpture and, possibly, the Continents. The building curves round into East Street and the corner is decorated with more columns, a shell-like feature over the door and the original dark green glazed tiles to the shopfront. The East Street façade has less decoration but nevertheless contains two large ground floor windows with decorative transoms, two oriel windows above and matching dormers at roof level. Unfortunately, the original windows have all been replaced in plastic.



Part of the former General Newsroom designed by Joseph Goddard and dating from 1898. This replaced William Flint's building of 1838, (see page 28).



Detail of the stone cupola to the Ramada Jarvis Grand Hotel.

Building materials and the public realm

Building materials

4.52 The Granby Street Conservation Area displays a wide variety of building materials but the most common are brick and stone. Red and orange-red bricks predominate but there are several buildings (some quite large such as 91 Granby Street) in pale yellow, buff or 'white' bricks and one in a modern dark red-brown brick. Limestone is generally the material used for decoration on brick buildings, although a distinctive red sandstone is used on the corner of Halford Street and Gallowtree Gate. The next most common material is Portland stone, the material of choice in the 1920s and 1930s. Other facing materials are marble, polished granite, slate, render and stucco, concrete, glazed tiles (Turkey Café) and

one example of external metal cladding. Roofs, where visible, are generally clad in Welsh slate, but there are a few examples of red clay tiles (78-82 Granby Street), stone slates and glazed clay tiles. Where modern shopfronts have been installed they are generally made of colour-coated aluminium.

4.53 Other materials can also be seen but tend to be used for decoration. These include coloured glass in leaded windows (HSBC building on the corner with Bishop Street, 2-6 Halford Street), cast iron railings (HSBC) and applied metalwork (38, 42-44, 53, 84-86, 91, 97, 107, 119 and 128-132 Granby Street, 3 Halford Street), lead sheet (13-17 Granby Street) and moulded clay tiles (97 Granby Street). Most windows are constructed in timber, although plastic can be found on several buildings. Timber is used in shopfronts and also for decoration, as at 76-84 Granby Street (bargeboards, mock half-timbering). Large areas of plain glazing occur generally in modern buildings such as 91 and 127-141 Granby Street.

The public realm

4.54 The Granby Street Conservation Area is located inside the city's central ring road and is an important traffic artery feeding buses, delivery vehicles and cars into the central shopping and office zones. Granby Street therefore has large numbers of traffic control and direction signs, as well as telecom and traffic signal control boxes, CCTV camera poles and mobile phone masts, all of which contribute to a rather cluttered appearance, particularly at the Rutland Street/Belvoir Street junction. Granby Street was made one way northwards in the 1980s and the south part was redesigned and resurfaced to incorporate parking bays separated by pavement extensions. The road surface is black tarmac with red granite chippings south of Rutland Street and grey granite to the north. A green cycle lane was installed in Granby Street North in 2005. Street lighting is mounted on buildings.

4.55 The rest of the public realm consists of a wide variety of materials and colours, giving parts of the area, notably the main road junctions, an unsightly and uncoordinated appearance that does not enhance the conservation area. There are yellow and grey concrete paving slabs, red granite and grey concrete and clay kerbs, grey, red and yellow block pavers as well as red and grey 'blister' paving units. Pavements are cracked, broken or stained in many places, further impoverishing the visual environment.

Greenery and green spaces

4.56 One of the benefits of the 1980s traffic management scheme on Granby Street was the planting of eight lime trees in the pavement extensions along the east side of the road. Whilst the trees will not grow to forest size, they nevertheless have positive amenity value in the street scene. However, this environment is stressful and this has affected the trees' vigour and they are showing symptoms of stress such as low growth rate and some scale insect infestation.

Negative factors

4.57 There is only one site whose negative effect on the conservation is sufficient to detract seriously from the character and appearance of the conservation area :

- the vacant site between 124 and 128 Granby Street.

'Gap sites' create unsightly breaks in otherwise completely built-up street scenes. In the case of Granby Street, the gap at the south end has existed for nearly 30 years and has never been the subject of a planning application for infill development. This is an unsatisfactory position, particularly in view of the architectural value of the buildings on either side.

4.58 Elsewhere on Granby Street there are other issues that are of some concern :

- the condition and appearance of the public realm;
- the modern shopfronts that have overly-deep fascias or whose proportions or design otherwise do not complement the buildings of which they form a part (34-36, 52-58, 80-82, 106-124, 83, 87, 151 Granby Street);
- the use of plastic to replace original timber and steel windows;
- the visible evidence of structural/drainage problems or poor building maintenance (54-56, 96, 109-111 Granby Street);
- the refacing or painting of facades (such as 10-12, 50, 5, 90, 102-4 and 120 Granby Street);
- vacant upper floors generally;

4.59 Most of these can be resolved satisfactorily during improvement, alteration or other refurbishment works, the details of which would be subject to the compliance with conservation area policies in the Local Plan. The use of plastic replacement windows requires planning permission but many may have been installed without permission. However, not all would, or could, justify action being taken to restore the windows to their original appearance and action cannot be taken if the replacement windows have been in place for more than four years.

General condition of the area and buildings

4.60 The external condition of the area and its buildings is generally good, although some buildings require works such as timber repairs or repainting, particularly from first floor level upwards. This good condition is probably due to the continued importance of the street in the city centre shopping and leisure hierarchy as well as its low vacancy levels. The unsatisfactory appearance of pavements, the unco-ordinated surface treatments and the cluttered signage have already been noted in paragraph 4.55 above.

Problems

4.61 There are few problems in the conservation area but, of these, the one in most need of resolution is the gap site adjoining 124 Granby Street. Originally occupied by a

three storey shop and house, this site has long required redevelopment. Many shop-fronts, fascia advertisements and facades are also in need of improvement.

4.62 Elsewhere, the uncoordinated appearance of the public realm is an issue that needs to be resolved. Co-ordinated street furniture and well-laid attractive surfaces would make a substantial difference to the townscape.

Pressures

4.63 As has been noted in para. 4.16 above Granby Street is part of the Office Quarter and close to the Cultural Quarter. Future redevelopment and regeneration could increase substantially the number of people living, working and visiting the Granby Street area. As these areas develop Granby Street could come under pressure for change, such as redevelopment, or more bars, restaurants, offices, residential uses etc.

Capacity for change

4.64 Conservation area status does not preclude change. Redevelopment or other physical alterations to the environment are to be expected over time in an urban environment. However, it is a prerequisite that any proposals that will result in change must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. Designs need, therefore, to take account of the existing character of the area, its architecture, scale and massing, its building materials and proportions. Policies in the Local Plan are designed to ensure that such account is taken.

4.65 In the Granby Street Conservation Area there is one vacant site within the conservation area, the appropriate redevelopment of which needs to be encouraged. A much larger site, the car park behind 127-141 Granby Street, is also a potential redevelopment area which could, either directly or indirectly, affect the conservation area. In the case of the poor shopfronts and signage mentioned above, conservation area status would provide the justification for seeking better designs that would be more in keeping with the scale and proportions of the buildings to which they relate.

4.66 The appraisal has already noted the poor appearance of the public realm and its need for improvement. Works are currently under way to improve the shopping streets around the Shires (now, Highcross Quarter) shopping centre, the Lanes and Gallowtree Gate. Similar improvements will be made to Granby Street in the short to medium term (Appendix 3 refers).

5.0 Community involvement

5.1 The draft Character Appraisal was made available on the Council's website, in the Customer Services Centre at the Council offices in New Walk Centre and in the Central Reference Library on Bishop Street. Officers set up an exhibition for two weeks in a central location, publicised by a Press Release and sent letters to all occupiers in the conservation area (and agents/owners/other interested parties where they were known).

All views expressed during the consultation period were reported to Cabinet when the

Appraisal was considered for adoption as supplementary guidance to the Local Plan. The report included details of how the views expressed by people in writing, by phone or at the exhibition had been taken into account in the preparation of the Appraisal and its Management and Enhancement proposals.

6.0 Conservation Area boundary

6.1 The conservation area boundary was first defined to include only those buildings fronting onto Granby Street that were not already within a conservation area. Buildings on side streets were included if they had at least one elevation to Granby Street, while the building known as 3 Halford Street was included because of its architectural character and proximity to 1-3 Halford Street. The modern block at 13-17 Granby Street was excluded because of its position between the two banks at 1-11 Granby Street and 31 Bishop Street, both of which are in the Town Hall Square Conservation Area.

6.2 However, the main facades of the two banks front onto Granby Street and they are also important landmarks in the area. The shops at numbers 35-51 (recently included in the Town Hall Square Conservation Area) also have their main facades onto Granby Street. In view of this, it would be logical to include them. The boundary has therefore been amended. The modern block at 13-17 Granby Street makes little contribution to the architectural character of the conservation area but has been included in view of its position between 1-11 and 31 Granby Street.

7.0 Management and enhancement proposals

7.1 Conservation areas are complicated places that derive their special character from the interaction of many different elements. They are therefore vulnerable and sensitive to change, particularly if that change is the result of the accumulation of a series of small changes that, taken individually, make little impact. However, the intent of conservation area designation is not to prevent change and the Council recognises that such areas need to adapt and evolve to meet changing needs and demands. By declaring conservation areas the Council indicates that these are the particular parts of its area that are important heritage assets and that it intends to manage change in these areas carefully so that all new developments and alterations can contribute positively to their character and appearance. The application of the Local Plan policies on listed buildings and conservation areas are therefore the primary management tools.

7.2 Within conservation areas there is also a general presumption against the demolition of buildings that make positive contributions to the character or appearance of their areas. In the Granby Street Conservation Area these include the significant number of unlisted buildings of local architectural or historic interest, as well as others that are of townscape importance (**Map 6**).

7.3 Proposals for the management and enhancement of the conservation area are set out in Appendix 3, and include important changes to the public realm as part of the Council's on-going Public Realm Strategy for the City Centre.

8.0 Acknowledgements, contacts and appendices

8.1 The Council would like to thank all the people who contributed to the writing of this report, including members of the public who visited the exhibition in October 2006 and submitted their comments.

8.2 If you would like further information on this, or any other conservation area you can contact the Council as follows :

- Conservation Team, Planning Policy & Design, Regeneration and Culture, Leicester City Council, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester, LE1 6ZG
- On Leicester (0116) 252 7217
- By Fax Leicester (0116) 247 1149
- E-mail conservation@leicester.gov.uk
- On the Council's website at www.leicester.gov.uk/conservation_areas and search under 'Conservation Areas'

Appendix 1: List of buildings in the conservation area

Belvoir Street	Nos. 1, 3, 2-14 (even)
Bishop Street	No. 2
Chatham Street	Nos. 1, 5
East Street	Nos. 1, 3, 7
Gallowtree Gate	No. 56
Granby Street	Nos. 1-17 (odds), 31, 35-55 (odd), 61-85 (odd), 91, 97-107 (odd), 109-141 (odd), 149-179 (odd), 2-40 (even), Hepworth Chambers, 42-66 (even), Hall at rear of Charles Street Baptist Church, 68-100 (even), 102-124 (even), 128-132 (even)
Horsefair Street	No. 2-4
Halford Street	Nos. 1, 3, 2, 4-6 (even)
Rutland Street	Nos. 3-7 (odd), 2-4 (even)
York Street	No. 1

Appendix 2: List of listed buildings in the conservation area

Belvoir Street	1, (The News Room)
East Street	Nos. 1-7 (odd)(YMCA)
Granby Street	Nos. 1-11, 31, 55-59 (former News Room), 61-79 (Grand Hotel), 161-179 (YMCA)
	24, 38-40, 128-132 (Blunts Shoes)
Horsefair Street	2

Appendix 3: Management and enhancement proposals

Location	Enhancement Proposal
Conservation area generally	<p>1. National legislation and Local Plan policies – the City Council will make use of the powers afforded it by national legislation to encourage appropriate forms of development and will apply the policies set out in its Local Plan to encourage good design in the conservation area. There will be a general presumption against demolition of buildings in the conservation area and a requirement that any development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>Delivery : On-going</p> <p>2. Undertake a comprehensive photographic survey to establish baseline data for assessing and monitoring change</p> <p>Delivery : Short term</p>
Granby Street	<p>1. Encourage a sympathetic permanent development for the vacant site adjoining 124 Granby Street</p> <p>Delivery : On-going</p> <p>2. Identify buildings where improvements to shopfronts or other features could be made to restore the appearance, design and proportions of the elevations.</p> <p>Delivery : Short term</p> <p>3. Seek grant funds for the improvement of shopfronts and other architectural features</p> <p>Delivery : Medium term</p> <p>4. Undertake improvements to the public realm, including surfaces, lighting, street furniture and coordinated signage (traffic and other)</p> <p>Delivery : Granby Street North 2008 Granby Street South medium term</p>

Appendix 4: Relevant policy documents

Subject	Policy No.	Details
The Plan Strategy	PS01	a) the creation of an improved city centre.... b) conservation and enhancement of the City's buildings.....
Special Policy Areas		
Retailing within the Central Shopping Core	SPA01	Enhancement of the physical environment, accessibility,
Retailing within the Central Shopping Core	SPA03	Offices for financial and professional services
Retailing within the Central Shopping Core	SPA04	Food and Drink uses
Built Environment		
Archaeology	BE01	Preservation of the City's Archaeological Heritage
	BE02-05	Listed Buildings
	BE06-07	Conservation Areas
	BE08	Buildings of Local Interest
	BE10-14	Shopfronts, Security and Advertisements
	BE22	Outside Lighting
	BE21	Noise
	BE24	Telecommunications Equipment
Other policies		
Supplementary Planning Guidance	Office core (2004)	Area Strategy Guidance for the Office Core adjoining the railway station
Supplementary Planning Guidance	A3 Class uses in the City Centre (2003)	Policies for acceptable densities of Food and Drink uses in the Central Shopping Core

Appendix 5: Glossary of architectural terms

baluster	upright support for a balcony or railing
balustrade	a series of short posts or pillars supporting a rail
bargeboard	projecting board placed against the outside incline of the roof of a building, often used decoratively
bracket	a small piece of stone or other material supporting a weight eg eaves bracket [console or scroll bracket – in the form of a scroll]
bull's-eye window	elliptical window, usually with four keystones
canted	having splayed sides
capital	the head or crowning feature of a column
cartouche	a carved element resembling paper or parchment with rolled ends or corners, usually containing carved decorations or names
cornice	horizontal projecting section at the top of a building or wall
cupola	a dome on a turret or roof
dentil	a small square shaped block, usually one of a series, creating a tooth-like pattern
fielded panel	timber panel with a flat raised central part that is thicker than the edges
finial	a formal ornament at the apex of a gable or spire
foliate	carved to resemble leaves
frieze	a decorated band along the upper part of a wall
gauged brick	fine, precise brickwork used for arches
half-timbering	the external visible timbers of a timber-framed building (or mock half-timbering where timbers are applied externally to create the impression of half-timbering)
hoodmould	a projecting moulding over a door or window designed to throw rain off the face of the building
keystone	the central wedge-shaped stone at the top of an arch that locks the arch in place
lancet	a slender pointed arch window
lantern	a small turret with openings crowning a roof or a dome
lintel	a horizontal beam bridging an opening
mansard	a double-sloped roof, the lower part being more steeply pitched than the upper
mullion	the vertical post between the panes of a window
oriel	a curved bay window projecting out from an upper floor
parapet	a low wall along the edge of a roof
pediment	a low pitched gable shape over a door or window
pilaster	a shallow column attached to, and slightly projecting from, a wall
quoin	dressed stones laid up the external corners of buildings, usually in alternating large and small blocks
relieving arch	an arch built above an opening to redistribute the weight of the wall above
rusticated	of a column – square blocks which interrupt the shaft at regular intervals of a wall – chamfered edge masonry blocks laid with very deep joints
segmental arch	a very shallow arch [of a bay window – a very shallow curved bay]
shouldered arch	a decorative frame to a window or door where the vertical member curves just below the top and then returns to the vertical to meet the lintel
stringcourse	a continuous decorative horizontal band projecting from a wall and usually moulded
stucco	a cement-type render used for facing external walls
tile-hanging	a covering of overlapping rows of tiles on a vertical surface
transom	the horizontal dividers between window panes