

Supplementary Guidance to the City of Leicester Local Plan 2006



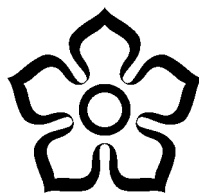
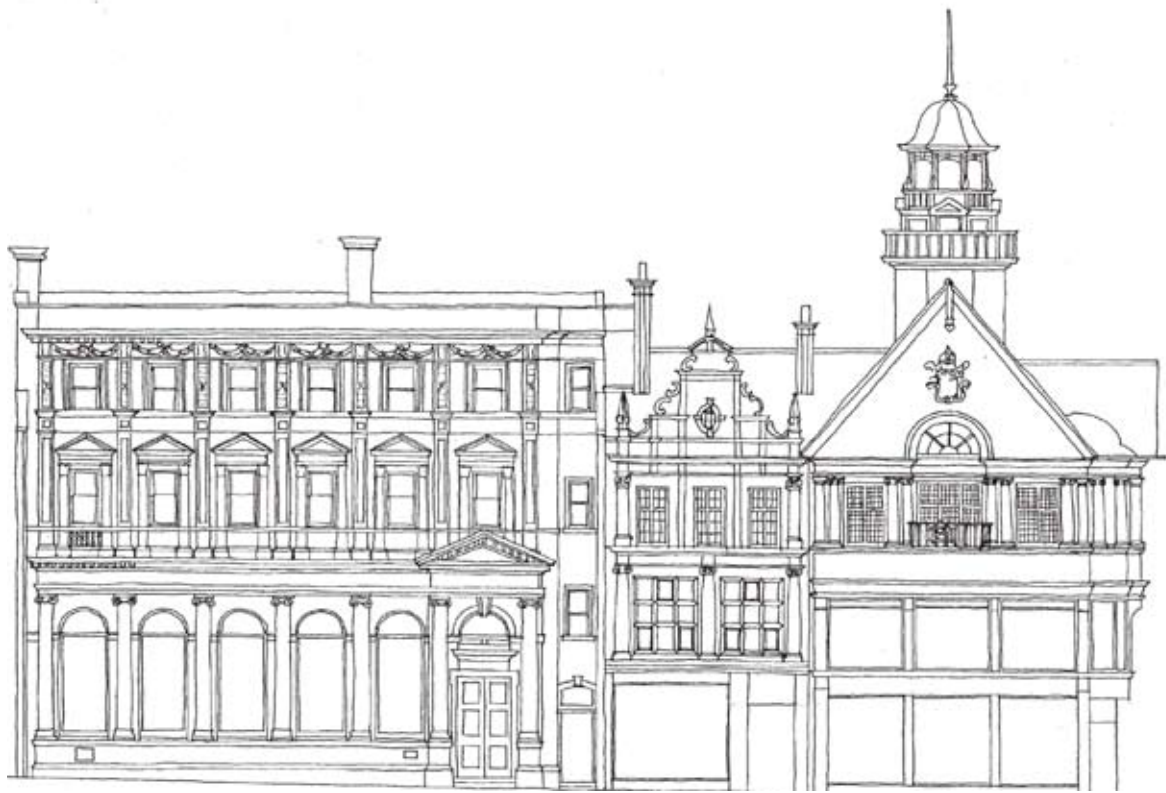
High Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal



Planning Policy and Design
Adopted October 2006

HIGH STREET CONSERVATION AREA

character appraisal



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	8
4.1	Location and setting	8
4.3	Historic development and archaeology	8
4.26	Character analysis and character zones	15
4.29	Prevailing and former uses	16
4.33	Architectural character and key buildings	17
4.49	Building materials and the public realm	23
4.56	Greenery and green spaces	25
4.57	Negative factors	25
4.60	General conditions of the area and buildings	25
4.61	Problems, pressures and capacity for change	26
5.0	Community involvement	28
6.0	Conservation Area boundary	28
7.0	Management Proposals	29
8.0	Contacts and appendices	29

List of Maps

Map 1	City of Leicester Conservation Areas	5
Map 2	Boundary of High Street Conservation Area	6
Map 3	Roman Leicester	8
Map 4	Medieval Leicester	9
Map 5	Fowler's map of 1828	10
Map 6	Ordnance Survey Map of 1885	11
Map 7	Townscape analysis	33

Appendices

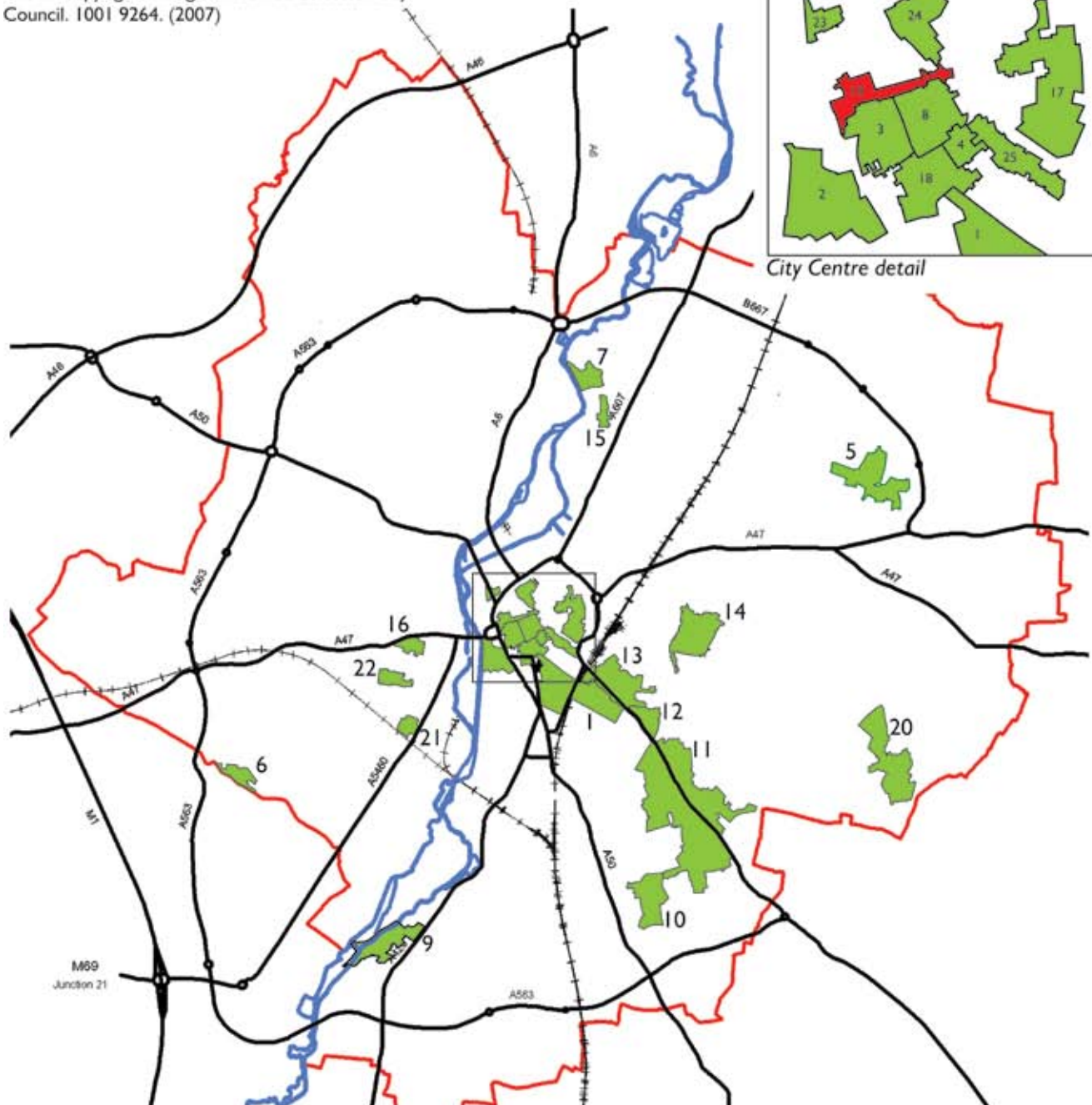
Appendix 1	List of buildings in the conservation area	29
Appendix 2	List of listed buildings in the Conservation Area	30
Appendix 3	Management and enhancement proposals	30
Appendix 5	Relevant Local Plan Policies	31
Appendix 6	Glossary of architectural terms	32

Map I. City of Leicester Conservation Areas

Crown copyright. All rights reserved Leicester City Council. 1001 9264. (2007)



City Centre detail



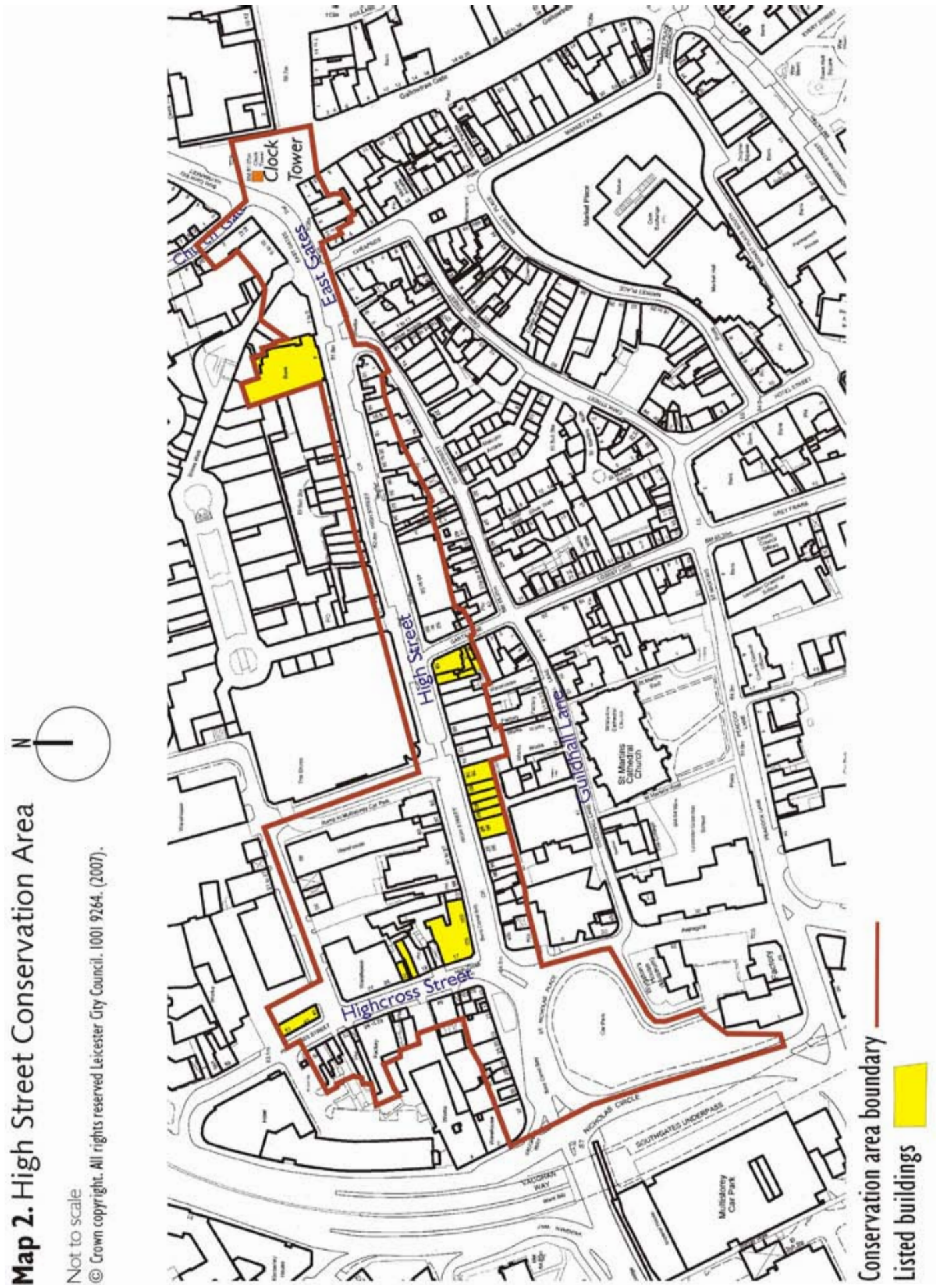
- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. New Walk | 10. Knighton Village | <u>19. High Street</u> |
| 2. Castle Gardens | 11. Stoneygate | 20. Evington Village |
| 3. Cathedral/Guildhall | 12. Evington Footpath | 21. Ashleigh Road |
| 4. Town Hall Square | 13. South Highfields | 22. Westcotes Drive |
| 5. Old Humberstone | 14. Spinney Hill Park | 23. All Saints' |
| 6. Braunstone Village | 15. Loughborough Road | 24. Church Gate |
| 7. Belgrave Hall | 16. Daneshill | 25. Granby Street |
| 8. Market Place | 17. St. George's | |
| 9. Aylestone Village | 18. Market Street | |

Listed chronologically

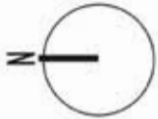


Not to scale

Map 2. High Street Conservation Area



Map 2. High Street Conservation Area



Not to scale

© Crown copyright. All rights reserved Leicester City Council. 1001 9264. (2007).

Conservation area boundary
Listed buildings

1.0 introduction

1.1 The purpose of a character appraisal is to identify, define and record the factors that make conservation areas special and to propose actions to safeguard that special interest. It also identifies features or problems that detract from this special quality and suggests ways that these could be addressed.

1.2 The survey and appraisal of the High Street Conservation Area were carried out during 2006 following the methodology suggested by English Heritage. Local people, including those who live in, work in or visit the area, were asked for their views about the area – what they liked, disliked, or think could or should be improved – so that a complete picture of the value and character of the area could be built up.

1.3 The draft Appraisal was made available on the Council's website for six weeks and, for two weeks, in the foyer of the BBC Radio Leicester building at St Nicholas Place, to ensure that it reached as many people as possible. Comments sheets and contact information were available for people to record their views by phone, fax, letter or e-mail.

2.0 planning policy framework

2.1 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 reflects 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 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 publish 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)].



Aerial view of High Street taken from the 2005 survey.

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 positive contributions 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 the special interest

3.1 There are many factors that combine to create the special interest of the High Street Conservation Area. The most notable is the high quality townscape and architecture of High Street, a product of the varied heights, designs, detailing and roofscapes of its buildings. Columns and pilasters create strong vertical rhythms with triangular and half-round gables punctuating the skyline, while continuous lines of windows at first and second floor levels form subtle horizontal patterns. Decorative stonework, terracotta and other materials are used with confidence and there are balustrades, finials, domes and spires to add further visual interest. This creates a strong sense of place and the effect is enhanced by the intense contrasts of light and shade that arise because of High Street's east-west orientation.

3.2 The special interest of the conservation area is also a product of its long history and archaeological potential. Since Roman times this area of the city has been a part of Leicester's commercial life and much remains to be discovered below ground level. Its importance is recognised by its inclusion within the city centre Archaeological Alert Area. The patterns created by the vertical divisions of building facades echo the narrow burgage plots of the medieval town. The comprehensive redevelopment of High Street at the turn of the twentieth century has created a street of high architectural quality on a scale that is not echoed anywhere else in the city. It stands as a visual record of the commercial confidence of the day. This contrasts strongly with the more modest buildings on High-cross Street where such patterns are restrained but where a visual connection with the area's older history is more easily discerned.

3.3 Finally, another measure of the special importance of the area is its six listed buildings. These demonstrate the range of differing architectural styles that help to give the conservation area its particular character. Taken together, these various aspects combine to create a special place that is worthy of special conservation area status.

4.0 assessment of the special interest

location and setting

4.1 The High Street Conservation Area is 3.2 hectares (8 acres) in size and lies in the north-west quadrant of the city centre shopping zone. It stretches along the length of



Map 3. Roman Leicester: The approximate location of High Street Conservation Area is shown encircled in brown. The line of High Street is shown coloured yellow.

High Street from East Gates to the junction with Highcross Street where it widens out to include the St Nicholas Place car park and the western end of Freeschool Lane.

4.2 Most of the conservation area lies above the 60m (200ft) contour on a river gravel terrace above the flood plain of the River Soar. From 64.6m (212ft) above sea level at the Highcross Street junction the conservation area slopes gently downwards to 61m (200ft) at its eastern end.

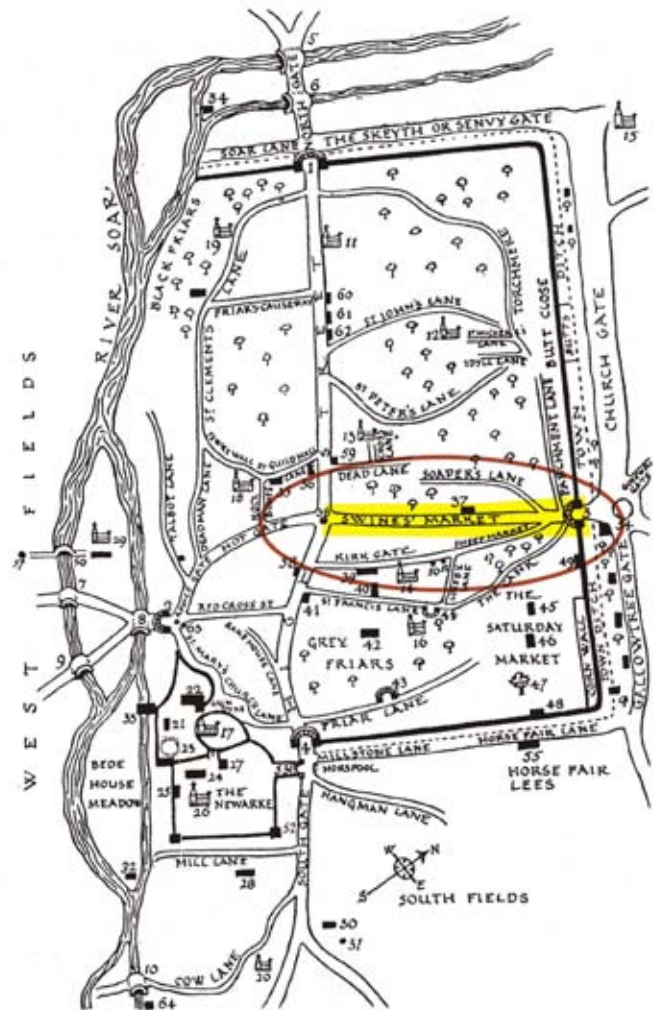
historic development and archaeology

4.3 Gravel ridges, such as that occupied by the High Street conservation area, have always been good places to build because they are raised above river flood plains and therefore less liable to flooding. It is not therefore surprising that there is some archaeological evidence of early human activity in and around the High Street area. Bronze Age artefacts have been found – such as a cremation urn found near, and bronze implements from, the High Street.

4.4 Whatever human activity there might have been during the Bronze Age or earlier, it was transient in character. There is nothing to indicate that settlement in the area was anything other than temporary camps established by hunter-gatherers or semi-nomadic pastoralists. This changed in the late Iron Age when, in the 1st century BC, a small permanent native settlement sprang up on the eastern bank of the Soar, close to where West Bridge is today.

4.5 The Romans invaded Britain in 42AD, and within a couple of years they had established control over southern England, the East Midlands and most of the West Country. Legionary fortresses were established at Exeter and Lincoln and a road was built to link the two bases. This road was the one we know today as the Fosse Way. It formed the boundary between Roman controlled Britain and the rest of the province, which still remained under the control of tribal chieftains. The Fosse Way crossed the Soar close to the native settlement. During the early decades of the Roman occupation the native settlement grew rapidly, spreading in an easterly direction, and took on the character of a frontier town. One reason for this rapid growth may have been because a Roman fort had been established between two arms of the river.

4.6 By the start of the 2nd century AD Leicester had become the capital of the Corieltavi tribe and the town became known to the Romans as Ratae Corieltavorum. To reflect this new status and its prosperity, the town was completely remodelled. Whatever street pattern had developed beforehand was completely swept away to be replaced by a regular grid pattern running roughly NE-SW and NW-SE. The Fosse Way, itself, was diverted so that it ran through the town. The whole of the conservation area lies on top of this 'new town', (Map 3 above).

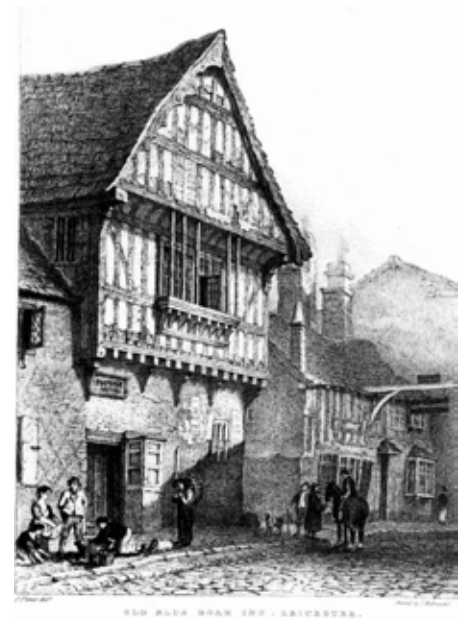


Map 4. Medieval Leicester: the approximate location of High Street Conservation Area is shown encircled in brown. The line of High Street is shown coloured yellow.

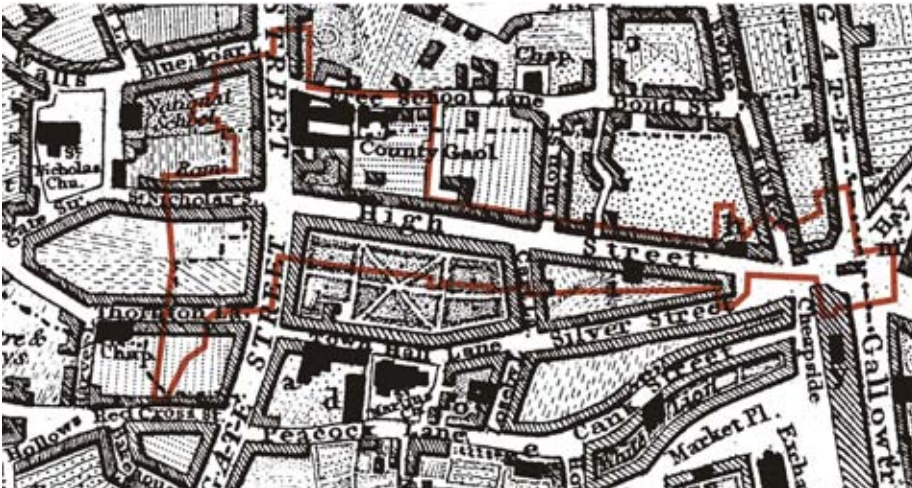
HIGH STREET CONSERVATION AREA: character appraisal



Highcross Street c. 1830 from a lithograph by local artist John Flower. The High Cross, the Town Gaol and the Old Elizabethan Grammar School are clearly visible in the centre of the picture.



The Blue Boar Inn, Highcross Street, from John Flower's lithograph of 1830 and captured just before the building's demolition in 1836.



Map 5. Fowler's map of 1828, the approximate area of High Street Conservation Area is shown superimposed.

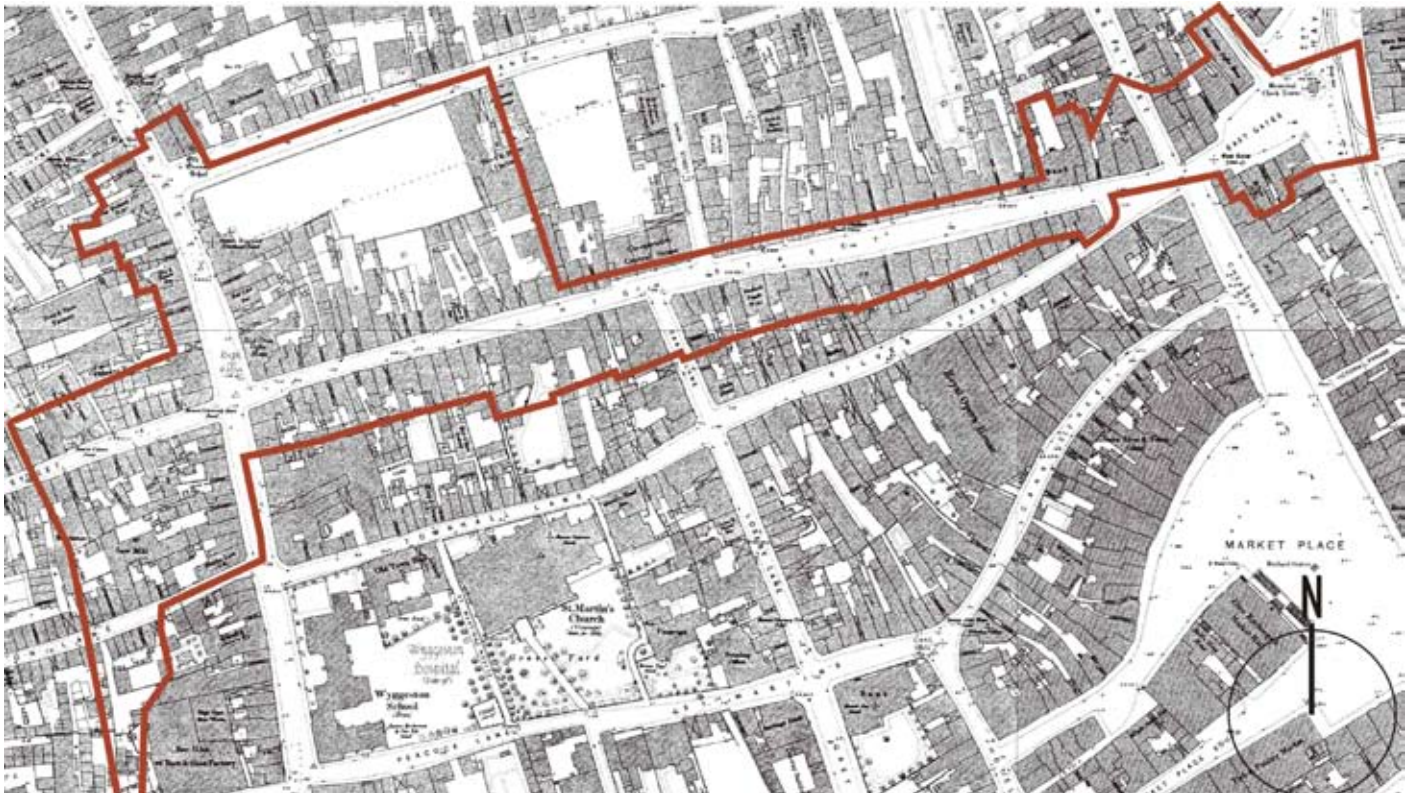


The cross of Mountsorrel granite in Highcross Street that marks the spot where the Highcross once stood.

4.7 By the end of the 2nd century, Leicester acquired its first defences – an earth rampart and ditch system with a timber palisade. By the 3rd century, stonework had replaced timber. Although no trace of the defences remains today, the line followed by the eastern wall is still evident in the pattern of the modern streets and building plots. To the north of East Gates it ran between Church Gate and New Bond Street and, on the south side, between Gallowtree Gate, Cheapside and Market Place (compare Maps 3 & 4).

4.8 Where the evidence has not been destroyed by later building works much of the Roman town remains to be discovered. However, some of the most important features of its town plan are already known. Beneath the buildings and car park on St Nicholas Place lies the most important of these, the *Forum*, a site of national archaeological importance.

4.9 The Forum was a large rectangular open space that incorporated public spaces and a market area. Evidence unearthed during excavations for the construction of the Vaughan Way underpass in the 1960s showed that the Forum had great colonnades on the east (High Street), north and south sides. The *macellum* (market) and possibly the



Map 6. The Ordnance Survey Map of 1886: The approximate area of High Street Conservation Area is shown superimposed. ©Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited. All rights reserved. 2007. Map not to scale.

basilica (law courts) were located to the north. These were also important buildings and would have consisted of the great aisled hall (for the law court), a covered market and an administrative centre. Together, these buildings define the focal point of the Roman town, its local government and commercial heart.

4.10 At the start of the 5th century the Roman legions left Britain and little is known about what happened to Leicester between that time and its emergence as a medieval town. While many of the timber-built Roman private houses would have fallen into disrepair, it is likely that the stone built Forum would have remained standing in some form for several centuries. The defences seem to have fared better, remaining sufficiently intact to be reused in the 10th or 11th century. Though the Jewry Wall is the only upstanding structure of Roman date, Roman remains survive below the ground, with deposits often surviving to a depth of several metres.

4.11 The skeleton of the Roman town survived into the Middle Ages but new streets were also beginning to develop during this period, such as the original High Street (present-day Highcross Street). From the South Gate, this road curved eastwards to bypass the Forum then joined up again with the line of the Roman road that ran to the North Gate. This became the main north-south route through the town. Another thoroughfare to emerge during this period took its east-west course somewhat to the north of that taken by the Fosse Way and carved a route through the original Roman town 'blocks' (or *insulae*). This is the modern High Street, that in the medieval period was called Swinesmarket (denoting its function as a pig market). This name is first mentioned in the Borough records in 1335-6 and remained such until at least the late 16th century. By 1610, its modern name may have been in common use (it appears on Speede's Map of that year). Pig sales were removed to the area that is now New Bond Street in 1524.ⁱ



The Lord's Place tower, the 18thc. home of the third Earl of Huntingdon. It survived until the widening of High Street in 1900.



High Street in the Edwardian years showing the newly installed tramway.

4.12 The junction of High Street and Swinesmarket became the focal point of the town and was the place where the principal markets were held on Wednesdays and Fridays. A further clue to the importance of High Street and its surroundings in the medieval period has come from the recent archaeological investigation of the St Nicholas Place car park. This revealed a dense cluster of activity dating back to at least the 13th century, by which time there was a market cross at the main crossroads. Documentary accounts suggest that this cross was covered by some kind of roofed structure, earning it the name of 'the High Cross'. This was replaced in 1577 by a circular structure supported on several columns sited slightly to the north of the crossroads. To the west of the junction (at the western edge of the conservation area) were the Common Ovens and butchers' shops (in Shambles Lane or Hot Gate (Map 4).

4.13 The layout of the rest of the medieval town that now forms the conservation area can be deduced from the Ordnance Survey plans of 1886 and 1887. These show that many of the properties along High Street and Highcross Street are characterised by long back-plots with relatively narrow street frontages. This is typical of a prosperous medieval high street, where the plots would have been set out in a way that provided access to the street for as many traders as possible, while also giving plenty of space at the back for workshops, dwellings and storage. On the south side of High Street, however, the layout is different because there was not the space between the road and the line of the town walls to allow for back plots.

4.14 There is documentary evidence of two buildings from the Elizabethan period. The first, Lord's Place (also known as Huntington's Tower or, in the Borough Records, 'the Great House' ⁱⁱ) originally stood just east of the centre of High Street, and parts remained until the 19th century when it was demolished as part of the High Street widening scheme. ⁱⁱⁱ Built for one of the three most powerful families in the town (the Hastings) around 1569, it probably incorporated elements of an earlier structure. Drawn and physical evidence suggests that the original mansion consisted of a two storey chamber block flanked by two four storey stone towers fronting on to High Street, with a garden and one or more ranges of buildings to the rear. Mary Queen of Scots is reputed to have stayed there in 1569 or 1586.^{iv}



Closing-down sale at the corner of Highcross Street and High Street, c. 1900 prior to the road widening scheme.



The former Florence Buildings at the corner of St. Nicholas Place and Highcross Street c1970s.



High Street in the 1960s, seen from the corner of Silver Street. The timber and copper lantern forms a striking feature to 1-3 High Street.

4.15 The other Tudor building is the Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School (also known as the Old Grammar School) which was built in 1573. Recent archaeological investigation suggests that the roof timbers originally came from the roof of the, now lost, medieval church of St Peter Ad Vincula, which used to stand on the south side of St Peter's Lane. The location of this church on Freeschool Lane was recently confirmed by archaeologists.

4.16 By the 16th century, the economic importance of the High Cross market was beginning to falter. This is evidenced by the butchers in The Shambles asking for an extension of their use of part of the Saturday Market (the present-day Market Place). In their opinion, their weekday shambles near the High Street were *'out of the way of the trading and remote from the innes and shopkeepers who are the greatest support of the market'*. By the 17th century, the increasing congestion caused by the narrow town gates and the various street markets was recognised to be a serious problem. Traffic had already started taking alternative routes around the eastern boundaries to avoid having to come through the town. By the 18th century much of the town's economic activity, particularly the coaching inns and main market, had established themselves at the eastern limits of the town or outside the old town walls on this 'bypass route' that followed Church Gate and Gallowtree Gate. This added to High Street's problems and it continued to decline.

4.17 In an attempt to improve matters, the Borough Corporation had the High Cross dismantled in 1758 and all but one column was sold. The remaining column stood until 1836 when it too was sold and relocated by its new owner to his new property, The Crescent on King Street. Although the town gates (those 'monuments to Gothic barbarism' ⁴), including the one at East Gates, were removed in 1774, neither this, nor the removal the High Cross, was enough to change the fortunes of High Street's west end. The town's centre of gravity continued to shift eastwards towards the Saturday Market. The fate of the Wednesday Market was finally sealed in a Bill dated 1883 by which the Corporation (who described it as 'a great hindrance to traffic') removed it to a permanent position in Market Place.

4.18 From 1791-2 to 1837 the County Gaol occupied a site at the corner of Highcross Street and Freeschool Lane (now the site of a former factory at 19-27 Highcross Street). It replaced an earlier prison, The Bridewell, that dated from 1614. The architect was John Johnson, the designer of the City (formerly County) Rooms in Hotel Street. A substantial part of the walls of the old prison can still be seen on the north side, and the rear yard, of 19-21 Highcross Street.



View of East Gates photographed from Lewis's tower in 1962



Looking east along High Street from the corner of Carts Lane, (c1985)

4.19 The decisive changes in the conservation area occurred in the 19th and early 20th century. During much of the 19th century Leicester expanded and industrialised and, to reflect the growing prosperity and modernising outlook, most of the remaining timber-framed buildings in the town, including (one assumes) those in High Street, were demolished to make way for new and better accommodations built in brick. One notable change in 1836 was the demolition of the ancient White Boar Inn in Highcross Street. This was the building where Richard III reputedly spent the night before the Battle of Bosworth, the inn being rapidly renamed the Blue Boar following his defeat at Bosworth Field. Its replacement was demolished in 1960, although its cellars may survive.

4.20 In 1877 Edward Shipley Ellis (the Chairman of the Midland Railway and a Quaker who supported the Temperance Movement) established the 'Leicester Coffee and Cocoa House Company'. Coffee houses became a feature of the town at the end of the 19th century, reflecting social concerns about the damaging effects of alcohol on the working man. At the peak of their growth there were 13 separate establishments in various locations across Leicester. High Street is unusual in that it has two of these buildings, one on the corner of Church Gate and the other (now occupied as a Wetherspoon's pub) at the corner of High Street and Highcross Street. These were known, respectively but not unsurprisingly, as 'The Eastgates' Coffee House and 'The Highcross' Coffee House. In 1884 a large new store for the Co-operative Society was built in High Street, although only the ornate façade now remains.

4.21 However, from 1900 the frontage line on the north side of High Street was taken back from the east end, at least as far as Huntington's Tower, and on the south side from what is now the site of 16 High Street. The buildings were demolished so that the street could be widened to accommodate the city's new tram system. The rebuilding has left a legacy of interesting and unusual turn of the century buildings such as Coronation Buildings, 7 High Street (Lloyd's Bank) and 68-74 High Street.

4.22 In the 20th century, the greatest impact affecting the conservation area was the construction of the central ring road and St Nicholas Circle in the late 1960s. This involved not only the wholesale loss of many old buildings and the medieval street layout of that part of the town but also, and most regrettably, much of the important archaeology of the Roman Forum. The intimate character of the medieval town was lost and only a fragment remains in the buildings on Highcross Street (itself severed from its northern half by Vaughan Way). One or two buildings on High Street have been redeveloped, such as the Royal Arcade and the Cameo Cinema. However, six buildings or groups of buildings in the conservation area have been afforded protection by being included on the statutory list of Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest (Grade II).



Detail of the former Co-op Department Store, now part of the Shires Shopping Centre.

4.23 During the last decade of the 20th century the redevelopment of the Co-operative Store on High Street for the Shires shopping centre could have meant the destruction of most of the north side of High Street. However, although one or two buildings were lost, as well as the ancient street called Little Lane, the developers were persuaded to retain and incorporate the grand façade of the old Co-op. The south end of East Bond Street (the medieval Parchment Lane) was also closed off as a result of the Shires scheme and through traffic, other than buses, was removed from High Street at that time.

4.24 The Shires development brought with it the hope that this would revive the fortunes of High Street as a whole, which had become a somewhat neglected backwater of the central shopping area following construction of the Haymarket Centre to the east. However, the creation of an access ramp to the Shires' multi-storey car park off High Street, rather than off St Peter's Lane to the north, effectively severed the west end of High Street from the rest of the city centre. Shops and businesses struggled to survive and buildings began to show symptoms of neglect.

4.25 However, more recently, there has been increased investment in the form of bars and restaurants and these, together with the relocation of BBC Radio Leicester to a new building on St Nicholas Place, have created magnets drawing people along High Street. For the future, developers should have completed a large extension to the Shires by the end of 2008. For the conservation area this will mean not only the removal of the High Street access ramp to the multi-storey car park but also the re-introduction of pedestrian routes from High Street to St Peter's Lane, with links to both Highcross Street and the existing central mall in the Shires. The Old Grammar School will find a new use as a restaurant and the pedestrianisation of High Street should help to create the conditions for the revival of the whole of High Street.

character analysis

character zones

4.26 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 the character and appearance of each will differ in many ways. Differences could include the style and size of buildings, their layout and the relationship between them and the spaces around them, the ways land is and was used, the condition of the built fabric and how it has adapted to change, together with less tangible matters such as sounds and smells, busyness or tranquillity.

4.27 The character of the High Street conservation area separates quite distinctly into three parts, namely the High Street itself, and the St Nicholas Place and Highcross Street areas. The appearance of these areas has changed substantially over the centuries but they have remained close to the city's shopping and commercial heart.

4.28 The High Street zone is primarily a turn-of-the-20th century creation (as described in paragraph 4.21 onwards) with many buildings dating from between 1900 and 1904. The open townscape of St Nicholas Place followed the construction of the central ring road in the late 1960s (the remaining buildings are early 20th century) and Highcross



Edwardian shops, now forming part of The Shires Shopping Centre.



The former East Gates Coffee House at 12-14 East Gates and the corner of Church Gate.



The imposing Lloyds TSB Bank, (1902-04), at the eastern end of High Street was built of Portland stone to the designs of Chatwin and Son of Birmingham.

Street is still essentially late Victorian/Edwardian. The analysis of the architectural character and key unlisted buildings (paragraph 4.33 onwards) will be made on the basis of these zones.

prevailing and former uses

4.29 From Roman times the area around what is now High Street and Highcross Street has been part of Leicester's retail and commercial life. It is not known when the present alignment of High Street became established but it could have been during the Saxon period from the 6th century onwards. However, it was certainly well established by medieval times when the St Nicholas Place area was the site of the common ovens and butchers' shambles. The Wednesday Market was held at the Highcross Street crossroads and the surrounding streets would have been a mix of homes, shops and various small trades. The sale of livestock in High Street is reflected in its medieval name, Swinesmarket (paragraph 4.12).

4.30 The twentieth century saw High Street firmly established as one of the town's premier shopping streets, a status further confirmed when it was widened and many of the sites redeveloped with purpose-built shops and flats. Although the western half of High Street is not as busy as the eastern half, it remains an important part of the city's central shopping core. The conversion of the former Temperance Movement coffee house at 103 High Street into a pub is one of the more paradoxical changes that have occurred in the area.

4.31 The buildings on St Nicholas Place date from the late 19th/early 20th century up to the 1940s and retain their commercial functions at street level. However, the site now occupied by the public car park on St Nicholas Place was, until the 1960s, a densely built up area of narrow streets dating from medieval times (see Map 3). The



The High Street elevation to the Royal Arcade designed in a simple Classical style typical of the 1930s.



Interior of the Royal Arcade - the original shop fronts still survive largely intact.



High Street looking east from close to the corner of Highcross Street.

car park gives no indication that here lay the heart of the Roman town, the Forum. Streets such as Thornton Lane, Redcross Street, Hotgate, Bakehouse Lane and Harvey Lane contained a jumble of houses (some of medieval origin) and tiny housing courts. A multitude of different uses would also have been found such as shops, public houses, chapels, a boot and shoe factory, an iron works, a saw mill and diverse other trades. These were swept away when the inner ring road was built, creating the Southgates Underpass and St Nicholas Circle. The area is now dominated by vehicles, particularly at weekends, when there are long queues for the nearby multi-storey car park in the Shires.

4.32 By contrast, the Highcross Street area is a relatively quiet backwater, although in medieval times Highcross Street was the town's main street. It would have been busy with traders and customers using the shops, the open-air market at the crossroads or even attending a public hanging outside the Town Gaol on the corner of Freeschool Lane (or Dead Lane as it is shown on 17th and 18th century maps). Today only a few of its Victorian shops and pubs remain. The Old Grammar School fell into disuse in the early 20th century and was later variously occupied as a warehouse and taxi booking office. Only two industrial buildings now remain, one converted to residential use, the other to warehousing.

architectural character and key buildings

Buildings that are considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area are shown in **bold**. If a building is not included this should not be taken to indicate that it does not make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area.

High Street

4.33 As mentioned earlier, the demolition at the turn of the 20th century of most of



A fine tiled advertisement panel above what was once T.E Butler's chemist shop at 60 High Street.



A domed corner tower styled like a lighthouse at the corner of Carts Lane and High Street.

HIGH STREET CONSERVATION AREA: character appraisal

the buildings on High Street to facilitate its widening provided opportunities for redevelopment that were accepted with confidence by the architects of the time. The result is 'as fine an example of a turn of the century commercial street as can be found in any provincial town in Britain'. The buildings create two continuous street elevations that display fascinating variations on a theme of red brick, glass, stone dressings, ornamental gables and slate roofs, occasionally interspersed by a stone or terracotta façade. The architectural theme of the street is one of imposing, well-detailed, three or four storey buildings specifically designed as shops and often with large additional display windows at first floor level. They are designed in the fashionable 'commercial' styles of the day, with Gothic and neo-classical themes predominating. The architectural mood is also 'rather jolly' ^{vii} many buildings displaying quirky or eye-catching features. Several of the buildings are listed.

4.34 Despite the rebuilding, the High Street still displays some of its medieval characteristics. Building facades are narrow reflecting medieval 'burgage' plots. If buildings occupy several 'plots' their facades have been broken up into narrow vertical bays to echo the medieval plot divisions. In addition, buildings are of varied heights, with differing gable treatments, rooflines and decoration. This also serves to reflect the street's historic character and to create an interesting townscape.

4.35 High Street has survived almost intact for two reasons. First, most of the buildings were built at a time of prosperity and within a limited time span. Second, this part of the town drifted out of the economic mainstream as the retail centre of gravity moved eastward around the new Haymarket development. Of the late nineteenth century buildings on High Street the 30m long frontage of the former Co-op department store at **53-71 High Street** presents the longest unified architectural statement in the street. Built in 1884 with Classical references in red brick, it has brick pilasters, stone window surrounds, moulded brick and stone stringcourses, carved stone panels and triangular and segmental pedimented gables. Clearly built in two phases, the second phase at 61-71 nevertheless uses the same materials, architectural themes and proportions.

4.36 At the eastern end of the conservation area, and built only one year later than the Co-op store, is **12-14 East Gates**, one of the 13 coffee houses belonging to the Leicester Coffee and Cocoa House Company which were built in Leicester. Designed



The former Coronation Buildings at 76-88 High Street date from 1902-04.



Dating from 1895, this imposing building at the corner of High Street and Highcross Street was originally a coffee house and built to the designs of Edward Burgess, it is now the High Cross public house.

by Leicester architect Edward Burgess and built in 1885 in what J W Banner called 'Nuremburg Gothic' style^{viii} it is an elegant rendered brick building with mock half-timbering to the top floor and large oriel windows at first floor level. Closer inspection reveals carved timber Atlantes and caryatids on the window centre posts together with ornate pendants hanging from the corners of the second floor jetties and timber foliate strapwork designs in the gable pediments. The large original round-arched windows of the ground floor have long been lost, although a gesture is made to them by the design of the present shopfront.



Skyline architectural details to the north side of High Street..

4.37 Beyond the shop by Simpson and Hardy at **8 East Gates** is another 'lavish piece of Edwardian commercialism'^{ix} at **6 East Gates**. Faced in terracotta, it was built in 1903 on the east corner of East Bond Street and now forms the east side of the main entrance to The Shires. Its upper two storeys have a wealth of ornament, including bull's-eye and round windows and a corner tower feature topped with a tall copper spike. At the western side of the Shires entrance is Stockdale Harrison's 'Grand Clothing Hall' of 1903 at **1-3 High Street**. A complete architectural contrast to its terracotta neighbour, this presents an imposing painted timber façade to the street. Designed, like its neighbour at 6 East Gates, to make an important corner 'statement' it also has large shop display windows at both ground and first floor, with a deep fascia above. The second storey is more ornate with a central curved balcony and single and paired Ionic timber pilasters dividing the window openings. The central window is set in a deep recess beneath a round arch below a big decorated gable. There are two further gables on the side elevation with a copper half-dome sitting over the curved corner feature. An out-sized octagonal timber and copper lantern crowns the whole building.



The Irish Menswear store at the corner of Silver Street and High Street was built 1895 and designed by the local architectural practice of Goddard and Company.

4.38 The adjoining property, **5 High Street**, is a further example of the area's Edwardian commercial architecture, this time in brick and stone with a big Dutch gable that has stone finials and an 'oeil-de-boeuf' oval window. Its neighbour at **7 High Street** (Grade II listed) is Chatwin & Son's Classical style bank in Portland stone with giant Ionic columns to the ground floor elevation and Corinthian columns, flat pilasters and pedimented windows at first floor level. Below the eaves is an elaborately carved frieze.

4.39 The corner of High Street with Silver Street is marked by another fine shop to the design of a well-known local architectural practice, Goddard & Co. Built in 1895 in ornate style **8-10 High Street** is now occupied by Irish Menswear. As with most of the shops on High Street the ground floor shopfront is no longer entirely original. The upper floors are faced in high quality moulded terracotta with flat and round pilasters at intervals along the façade and the building's steeply pitched roof that is broken by five unusual lunette dormers and surmounted by an open-sided lantern. The roof sweeps

HIGH STREET CONSERVATION AREA: character appraisal



Carved stone porch lintel to numbers 29-35 St. Nicholas Place.

over the second storey where the decoration includes a series of rather plump caryatids in the form of angels with open wings. The upper two storeys of the four storey building at **12-14 High Street** (1901) have paired double height shallow bays with finely moulded leadwork panels and deep overhanging eaves.

4.40 Between the new infill at 9-17 and 21 High Street **19 High Street** has been designed with a double-height shopfront. The design of the original first floor windows is a smaller scale version of the ground floor windows that used to grace 12-14 East Gates. A carved date plaque from 1900 decorates the centre of its gable above the central small-paned casement windows. From **25-29 High Street** the roofline is enhanced by more decorated gables – at number 25, a simple triangular pediment and at 27-28 an elaborate Dutch-style gable. Both have date cartouches from 1900 and are decorated with stone quoins, and stringcourses.

4.41 At **35-39 High Street**, the buildings date from 1902 and 1903 and again have steeply pitched gables facing the street. Number 35 has rusticated columns decorating the large first floor windows. **43-51 High Street** is more flamboyant with 5 bays separated by five-sided stone pilasters, stone bay windows to the first floor, the whole topped off with a brick and stone parapet pierced by five tall dormers. The buildings are known as Huntington Tower Buildings, after the medieval "Lord's Place" that used to stand on the site. Its history is recorded on a plaque at number 45. A small red brick Victorian Gothic building at **85 High Street** marks the last part of High Street beyond the rotunda of the present Shires shopping centre. The French chateau-style roof above third floor level is a particularly attractive feature. The group of five buildings at **87-101 High Street** are a mix of different heights and styles. They include strong horizontal emphasis, rusticated first floor pilasters and oversailing eaves at number 87-89 (The Litten Tree), columns and rusticated window surrounds at number 91-95 and an odd semi-circular gable at number 97.

4.42 Between 16 and 50 High Street many buildings have been altered or replaced, notably 28-30 High Street (1950s) and 34 High Street (1931). The four storey building at **20-26 High Street** dates from 1884 and its design themes of square brick pilasters and pedimented gables have been echoed in the new infill at 9-17 High Street opposite. The 20



Decorative wrought iron gate, Carts lane.



Above and right: Details from the newly restored Old Elizabethan Grammar School, Highcross Street.



Moulded faience decoration at second floor window height of 76-88 High Street, (former Coronation Buildings).

vertical emphasis and square metal windows at **36-38 High Street (Royal Arcade)** make an interesting contrast to the last remaining part of the former Cameo Cinema of 1910 at **40 High Street** which has a finely moulded façade, 'Electric Theatre' emblazoned in a panel in the gable and a truncated pyramidal slate roof behind topped off with a large golden ball. The corner of Carts Lane is defined by **52-56 High Street** (1903), a three storey building with large windows to ground and first floors and built in alternating panels of brick and stone.

4.43 The other corner of Carts Lane is marked by A E Sawday's shop for T E Butler, **58-60 High Street** (Grade II listed). This is a stone building with Art Nouveau detailing, columns, pilasters, swags of flowers and foliage and a decorative lead panel featuring a pestle and mortar inscribed 'estd. 1840'. The corner of the building curves into Carts Lane and is topped by its most prominent feature, a part-glazed dome that rises above attic level. Two panels of highly decorated glazed tiles at second floor level on the High Street elevation serve as advertisements for the original owner's chemist business. Its neighbour at **62 High Street** is a visual contrast in red brick with stone detailing, five pentagonal pilaster at the first and second storeys, four large windows with semi-circular windowheads along the first floor façade and a triangular pediment over the two middle bays.

4.44 Another unique building can be found at **68-74 High Street**. Four storeys tall in red brick with highly original terracotta decoration around the windows, this symmetrical and well-detailed Edwardian Baroque group adds to the vibrancy of High Street's architectural quality. It makes an interesting contrast to its Dutch-style neighbour at **66 High Street** (1901) and the Gothic façade of **85 High Street** opposite.

4.45 Elsewhere along High Street are other interesting and unusual buildings, not least the highly original **Coronation Buildings** at **76-88 High Street**, designed and built by Arthur Wakerley in 1902-04 (Grade II listed). Its listing description refers to it as a 'rare and well preserved example of an Edwardian commercial property'. It is one of Leicester's few 'Art Nouveau' style buildings and this 'jolly piece of commercial vulgarity' is a celebration of



Pargetting to the former Highcross Coffee House at 103 High Street.



Remains of the old prison wall at 19-21 Highcross Street.

HIGH STREET CONSERVATION AREA: character appraisal

Empire in faience and white brick. Despite the damage to the ground floor by the insertion of modern shopfronts, the building retains its original decoration and patterns elsewhere. Particularly memorable are the second storey frieze with its countries and animal symbols, the pastel-coloured faience columns and strapwork balustrades at third floor level and the great barrel vaulted roof over the central section. The building creates an interesting visual contrast with its Classical-style neighbour, **90-92 High Street**. Another former bank, now a bar and restaurant, this is a two storey building faced in rusticated stone on the ground floor façade with stone columns, stringcourses, a projecting cornice supported by brackets and a segmental pediment above.



The Old Grammar School, Highcross Street.

4.46 Two buildings at the west end of High Street help to create a strong sense of arrival and could also be said to represent the values of Victorian Leicester. On the right is **104 High Street**, built in the Classical style that was considered appropriate for a bank (its original use). Above the deep rusticated masonry ground floor the first floor is faced in red brick with stone window surrounds and the Welsh slate hipped roof is broken by three dormers. On the left, at **103-5 High Street** (Grade II listed), is High Street's second coffee house. Also designed by Edward Burgess it dates from around 1895. It has Doric columns flanking its canted corner entrance and square projecting double height bay windows with small paned sashes and pargetted panels beneath. A lead and timber cupola sits above the corner in a central position on the red clay tiled roof.

St Nicholas Place

4.47 Only a few buildings are left in the St Nicholas Place area as a result of the construction of the inner ring road in the 1960s (para. 4.22 refers). While it is now more open than High Street and 'greener' in comparison, it is dominated by traffic, the majority queuing to enter the Shires car park. The buildings that occupy the north side, **13-37 St Nicholas Place**, are of a uniform three storeys in height and generally date from the first half of the 20th century. Each one is of a different design but a consistent window line runs across the façade, tying the whole together. The new **BBC Radio Leicester** building at 9 St Nicholas Place echoes the red brick and stone theme of High Street.



Eighteenth century brickwork at 21-23 Highcross Street.



The western end of High Street, with to the right, number 104, formerly bank premises and directly opposite, number 103-5 built as a coffee house to the designs of Edward Burgess.

Highcross Street

4.48 The scale of both the buildings and the street width changes in Highcross Street. Two late 19th century factories buildings are exceptions to the generally small scale of the street which owes its character to the later 18th and early 19th centuries. The factories do not, however, detract from the street scene which is varied, unassuming and simply detailed. The 500 year age span of the buildings reflects the area's long history. The oldest building is the late 16th century **Old Grammar School** (Grade II listed), a random rubble stone building with small framed mullion windows and a steeply pitched roof. Nearby, and also Grade II listed, is **21-23 Highcross Street**, one of Leicester's few remaining 18th century buildings (the date 1712 is formed in bricks between the first floor windows). The former factory at **25-27 Highcross Street** is a plain 3½ storey red brick building with a rhythmic façade broken by 5 piers and oversailing eaves supported on slender brackets. Of the remaining buildings, only **54 Highcross Street** stands out – a late 19th century 3 storey brick building with an original shopfront and simple stone window heads with central keystone features.

building materials and the public realm

brick and clay

4.49 The predominant material in the conservation area is brick. It occurs in a variety of tones and shades of red from the hard orange red of 25-27 Highcross Street to the dark red-purple at 5 High Street. The oldest brick building is at 21-23 Highcross Street and is built of bricks that are paler and smaller than the mass-produced Victorian bricks found elsewhere in the area. The texture of bricks varies across the conservation area; some are smooth-faced, others have a sand-faced or hand-made finish. Other brick colours are rare - pale buff at 9-17 High Street and white bricks at Coronation Buildings. In some cases, brickwork has been painted, obscuring the colour and texture of the bricks. This is most apparent at 66 High Street where the bold maroon and white colour scheme stands out. Red clay roof tiles are a feature of 103 High Street

stone

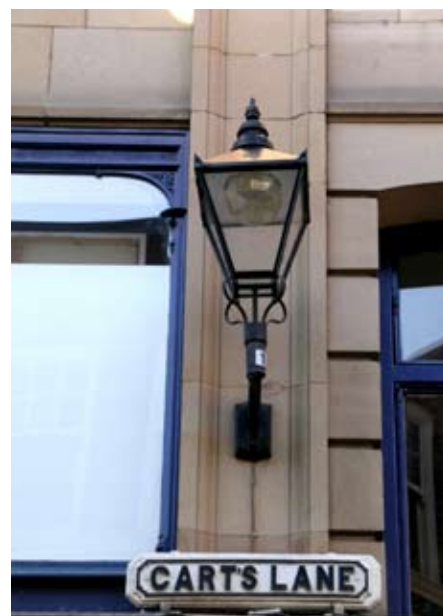
4.50 A few buildings, such as 7 and 58 High Street, are faced entirely in stone (sandstone and granite with Portland stone respectively), but generally stone is used for decoration. Stone columns, windows and windowheads, quoins, brackets, stringcourses, copings, pilasters and pediments can be found in large numbers, carved or plain, across the conservation area. The granite Ionic columns along the ground floor façade of Lloyds Bank at 7 High Street are particularly fine examples of the decorative use of stone. The random rubble of the Old Grammar School is the oldest example of a stone building in the area. Pitched roofs in the conservation area are generally of Welsh Slate but one or two buildings have stone (probably Swithland) slate roofs, for example, the Old Grammar School and 68-74 High Street.

faience and terracotta

4.51 The High Street conservation area is particularly well endowed with these special materials. The best example is Coronation Buildings at 76-88 High Street where coloured, moulded and highly decorated faience is used across the whole front façade.



Lloyds TSB bank premises at 7 High Street, constructed from Portland stone in the Classical style.



A traditional cast metal street sign at the corner of Carts Lane and High Street.



Terracotta and copper materials used at 10 East Gates

HIGH STREET CONSERVATION AREA: character appraisal

On the adjoining building to the east terracotta is used in a highly decorative manner around the windows, across the second storey as stringcourses, around the dormer windows and as a parapet balustrade. Terracotta can also be seen at 10 East Gates where it is used as a decorative material to face the whole upper floors.

metals

4.52 Copper and lead are used to decorate domes, lanterns and spires. It is particularly visible around the East Gates entrance to the Shires where a copper-clad dome, lantern roof and spire have also taken on the green verdigris appearance of weathered copper. Lead is used as coverings to domes at 12-14 East Gates, 58 High Street and 103 High Street and the prominent barrel-vault roof of Coronation Buildings. Decorative leadwork panels can also be seen at 10 High Street. One or two properties have slender projecting metal brackets supporting guttering eg. 87 High Street and 25-27 Highcross Street, and others have metal framed windows – notably 25-27 Highcross Street and Royal Arcade, 36-38 High Street. An original cast iron frame shopfront can be seen at 54 Highcross Street but many modern shopfronts are of brushed or colour-coated aluminium.

timber

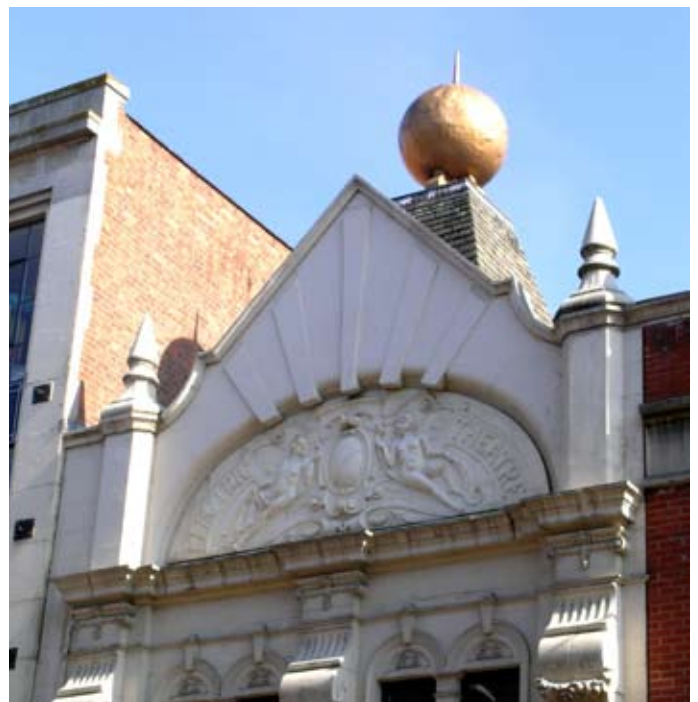
4.53 Timber is still the material of choice in the conservation area for windows, doors, eaves brackets, and some shopfronts. Many properties retain their original timber sash windows with their original small panes in the upper sash and these make important contributions to the visual environment, creating additional rhythm and pattern.

other materials

4.54 A few other materials can be found in the conservation area, some more unusual than others. The pargetting that decorates the panels of the bay windows at 103 High Street is unique in Leicester and a concrete-framed and finished building from the 1931 (36-38 High Street) butts up against the wide grey, green and beige tile-clad 1950s façade of 28-34 High Street. Stucco and render can be seen at 18 and 40 High Street. Plastic window frames have been inserted in some buildings to their detriment, although their use in the new BBC building on St Nicholas Place is appropriate.

the public realm

4.55 Roads are laid primarily to black and red tarmac and the pavements are of the concrete slab, grey pavers or square yellow slab variety. Many red granite kerbstones can still be seen. Bus lanes are marked in red and most roads are yellow-lined for



High Street's varied skyline. From the top: The Coronation Building, the former Cameo Cinema and 1-3 High Street, (built as the 'Grand Clothing Hall' in 1903).

parking and loading control. Chicanes help to control traffic speeds and also designate the restricted bus and service access zones. Street lighting is mounted on buildings and there are a series of double hanging basket poles and large square litter bins. A tall CCTV camera pole is sited on the corner with Gallowtree Gate. There are also fingerpost-style pedestrian direction signs, bus shelters and pedestrian guardrails. Generally, floorscape and street furniture has been installed in an uncoordinated way, so that there is no unifying colour, material or design theme. Pavements are narrow, cluttered and uneven and, together with the traffic levels, create an unpleasant and unwelcoming pedestrian environment at High Street's western end.

greenery and green spaces

4.56 The conservation area has no parks or formal green spaces. However, shrubs and whitebeam, cherry, rowan and similar trees have been planted in St Nicholas Place in the surface level car park helping to soften and screen it. The pavement area outside 17-25 St Nicholas Place has a mix of whitebeam, alder, maple and plane and these have some group value. All trees are in Council ownership but none are notable or outstanding.

negative factors

4.57 The most intrusive element in the conservation area is traffic. As the main access ramp into the Shires multi-storey car park brings private cars 100m into the conservation area. Cross-city bus routes also use High Street and the combination of cars and buses makes the western end of the conservation area less attractive to pedestrians.

4.58 There are also many poorly-designed shopfronts that are out-of-proportion with the buildings of which they form part. Many fascias are too deep in proportion to their width and this detracts from the distinguished and well-proportioned upper storeys. Combined with unsuitable materials or poor maintenance, such shopfronts actively detract from the architectural quality of the conservation area.

4.59 Vacant or poorly-maintained upper floors also detract from the quality of the conservation area. Not only does this represent an under-use of resources it can also engender an impression of neglect. This, in turn, can lead to pressure for unnecessary and inappropriate change and replacement. It can also make an area less attractive to visitors or investors, leading to further neglect.

general condition of the area and building

4.60 The buildings and the public realm in the eastern part of the conservation area, being the busiest and the location of the main entrance to the Shires shopping centre, are generally well kept. However, the condition of the ornate timberwork at 12-14 East Gates is a cause for concern. Beyond the Silver Street junction, the south side of High Street is marked by uneven, dirty narrow pavements with several bus shelters that restrict free pedestrian flow. This side of the street also has a number of vacant shops and upper storeys which further degrades the appearance of the area. Of particular concern is the condition of Coronation Buildings, a Grade II listed building. Many of the faience details

require urgent specialist repair or replacement. There may be a case for seeking grant funding to ensure the proper repair and improvement of the building.

problems, pressures and capacity for change

problems

4.61 The greatest townscape problem in the conservation area is the surface level car park at St Nicholas Place. This detracts significantly from the character and appearance of the conservation area and makes no contribution to its townscape value. It is an unsuitable use for such a large prime city centre location and draws vehicles through and across sensitive historic locations. However, redevelopment of the site would be extremely difficult because of the presence of its (nationally important) archaeology (the Roman forum).



BBC Radio Leicester building seen from St. Nicholas Place Car Park.

4.62 Since the construction of the first phase of the Shires shopping centre and the associated closure of the Co-op store (formerly the main shopping destination in High Street) the west end of High Street beyond Carts Lane has become distanced from the rest of the central shopping core. This has tended to show itself in the problem of lower standards of maintenance, poor shopfront design, shop vacancies and short-term leases rather than the improvements that had originally been hoped the Shires would produce. The cumulative effect of neglect and poor shopfront design is particularly apparent at Coronation Buildings.

4.63 The large volume of vehicular traffic that penetrates into High Street is also a major issue and could be one of the reasons why pedestrians are not attracted in any numbers to the west end. It may be that, as Leicester's shoppers and visitors have become used to traffic-free streets, they are unwilling to travel to parts of the city centre that do not provide this. The poor condition of the public realm has already been noted and its unattractive appearance could be another reason why the west end of High Street has a comparatively low shopper footfall.

pressures

4.64 Pressures on the conservation area could derive from two main sources – first, the expansion of the Shires shopping centre and second, development of the Waterside regeneration area to the north and west.

Shires expansion

4.64.1 Whilst it is hoped that the Shires expansion will increase interest and investment in the area, this could lead to pressure for changes to the rest of the area's buildings. It has already been noted that design and detailing of these buildings, both individually and collectively, make positive contributions to the character and appearance of the area. It has also been noted that some shopfronts detract from the architectural integrity of buildings of which they form part. It is therefore important to ensure that there is no wholesale loss

of original features (such as windows and shopfronts) and that alterations are appropriate in scale and materials.

waterside

4.64.2 The Waterside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (adopted 2005) sets out a detailed planning framework to guide development of the Waterside area, the boundaries of which include the west end of High Street and St Nicholas Place. The SPD identifies the High Street/Highcross Street area as the centre and focus of activity in the historic town. It is also identified as “a key connection and springing point between the retail core and the Waterside” and an important pedestrian “decision point” for the area’s waterside and heritage locations (the Cathedral, the Jewry Wall museum, Castle Gardens and the Victorian heritage area close to All Saints Church). The St Nicholas Place car park has been identified as an opportunity for low rise development that needs to incorporate a visually striking element to act as a landmark for vehicles and pedestrians.

capacity for change

4.65 There is a need for investment in the public and private realms of the conservation area to resolve the environmental issues described above. The Shires extension and the Waterside regeneration proposals may prove to be the catalyst for such changes. They will certainly have significant physical impact on both the character and the appearance of the conservation area and it is important that the design, detailing and scale of developments (from new buildings to shopfronts) preserve and enhance that character.

4.66 The planned pedestrian link into the Shires and the refurbishment and re-use of the old Grammar School as the focus of a new pedestrian square could do much to improve the attractiveness of Highcross Street and Freeschool Lane to new businesses. Despite the need to maintain servicing access for commercial properties, albeit during restricted hours, the planned removal of cars and buses from High Street to Freeschool Lane and the Mansfield Street area will do much to enhance the quality of the environment. The removal of the present vehicle access off High Street into the Shires car park will provide the means to restore the built frontage to, and pedestrian access from, High Street at this point.

4.67 The Shires development has also created the stimulus for improvements to the appearance and quality of the public realm. The first part of a programme of works across the city centres - the ‘Streets and Spaces’ project – will involve the replacement of street surfaces and street furniture in High Street with new materials and designs. These are designed to co-ordinate with the rest of the city centre and to display the buildings and the spaces between them to their best advantage. Grey granite and dark slate will predominate at the east end, with granite and granite setts defining the shared surface west of Carts Lane.

4.68 For the private realm, there may be a case for establishing grant funding to encourage good design solutions and to secure the repair and restoration of important architectural elements such as the faience of Coronation Buildings. A Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (or similar) may be appropriate.

4.69 The capacity of the St Nicholas Place car park to accommodate new development is less clear. Its archaeological importance has already been established, as has the nature, depth and vulnerability of these remains. Any development proposal will therefore need to show clearly how the archaeology will be preserved in situ.

5.0 community involvement

5.1 The draft Character Appraisal and Management proposals was made widely available - on the Council's website, at the exhibition at the Council's Offices and at the public meeting on August 9th. There were no objections to the Appraisal's conclusions or to the suggested enhancement proposals. Two concerns emerged - the impact of the pedestrianisation of High Street on trade, and the continuing deterioration of Coronation Buildings. The former is being addressed by the Council through its 'Streets and Spaces' project, the latter has been incorporated into Appendix 3.

6.0 conservation area boundary

6.1 Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that the Council reviews the boundaries of its conservation areas from time to time. This has been done as part of this appraisal and two amendments to the boundary of the High Street Conservation Area are proposed.

St Nicholas Place

6.2 The site now occupied by the new BBC Radio Leicester building has a frontage to both Guildhall Lane and St Nicholas Place. The Council feels that it would be more appropriate to include the whole of the BBC building in the Cathedral Guildhall Conservation Area and that the boundary should be amended accordingly.

The Clock Tower

6.3 The Clock Tower is a listed building and is therefore protected in its own right. However, it is a key landmark at the east end of, and an integral part of the view down, High Street. It should therefore be included within the boundary of the conservation area.



St. Nicholas Place Car Park



New residential development forming part of the Shires expansion, rear of Highcross Street.

7.0 management proposals

7.1 Conservation areas are complicated places that derive their special character from the interaction of many different elements. They are therefore particularly vulnerable and sensitive to change. However, the intent of conservation area designation is not to prevent change. The Council recognises that conservation areas have to evolve and adapt to meet changing demands and commercial pressures. By declaring conservation areas the Council demonstrates that these particular parts of its area are important heritage assets where it intends to manage change carefully so that new developments and alterations contribute positively to the character or appearance of such areas.

7.2 In the High Street Conservation Area there are a significant number of unlisted buildings that retain much of their historic character and that make positive contributions to the character and appearance of the conservation area. There is therefore a general presumption against the demolition of any buildings that make such contributions.

8.0 acknowledgements, contacts and appendices

8.1 We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this document either by writing, telephoning, visiting the exhibition or attending the evening meeting.

8.2 If you need any further information on this, or other conservation areas you can contact the Council as follows:

- Conservation and Nature Team, Planning Policy and Design, Regeneration & Culture, Leicester City Council, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester, LE1 6ZG,
or
- FAX 0116 2471149,
or
- e-mail at conservation@leicester.gov.uk, or
- on the Council's website at [www.leicester.gov.uk/conservation areas](http://www.leicester.gov.uk/conservation%20areas)

appendix I : list of Buildings in the conservation area

Carts Lane	Nos 8-10 (even), 1
Church Gate	No.2
East Gates	Nos. 6-14(even), 1-5 (odd), Clock Tower
Freeschool Lane	30, 40
High Street	Nos.8-34 (even), 40-56 (even), 58-104 (even), 1-19 (odd), 25-51 (odd), the Shires, 85-105 (odd)
Highcross Street	Nos. 52-54 (even), 60-76 (even), 17-27 (odd), 43-45 (the Old Grammar School), 43-51
Royal Arcade	Nos. 3, 4, 5
St Nicholas Place	Nos. 9, 13-27 (odd)
Silver Street	1

appendix 2 :

list of listed buildings in the conservation area

Carts Lane
High Street
Highcross Street

Nos. 8-10 (with 58-60 High Street)
Nos. 58-60 (evens), 76-86 (Coronation Buildings), 7 (Lloyds Bank), 103-105 (odd)
Nos. 21-23 (odd), 41-45 (Old Grammar School)

appendix 3 :

management and enhancement proposals

location

conservation area generally

enhancement proposal

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 control further change in the conservation area. There will be a presumption against the demolition of buildings in the conservation area, together with a requirement that new development and changes of use within or adjoining conservation areas must preserve or enhance the conservation area. See Appendix 5 for details of Plan policies; **on-going**
2. Undertake a comprehensive photographic survey to establish baseline information for managing change; **short term**
3. The need for road signage and yellow lines needs to be carefully considered in the context of the sensitivity of the historic environment and their appropriateness to the planned investments in new street surfaces; **on-going**

High Street

1. The Council will apply Local Plan Policies BE10 (Shopfront Design), BE11 (Shopfront Security) and BE13 and BE14 (Advertisements) to ensure that alterations to the design and appearance of shopfronts, and the upper floors of the buildings to which they relate, enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area; **on-going**
2. Identify properties where shopfronts or other architectural features could be improved or restored and seek grant funding to target and encourage improvements; **short term**
3. Consider application for a HERS (Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme) or equivalent to fund grants for restoration of architectural features and other improvements to buildings and shopfronts; **short to medium term**
4. Urgently seek the repair and restoration of Coronation Buildings; **short term**

St Nicholas Place

1. Seek the permanent development of the site in accordance with the SDG; **medium term**

Short term : 1-3 years

medium term : 3-5 years

long term : +5 years

appendix 4 :

relevant policy documents

subject

the plan strategy

policy no.

PS01

details

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

SPA03

SPA04

Enhancement of the physical environment, accessibility,
Offices for financial and professional services
Food and Drink uses

built environment

archaeology

BE01

BE02-05

BE06-07

BE08

BE10-14

BE22

BE21

BE24

Preservation of the City's Archaeological Heritage

Listed Buildings

Conservation Areas

Buildings of Local Interest

Shopfronts, Security and Advertisements

Outside Lighting

Noise

Telecommunications Equipment

appendix 5 :

glossary of architectural terms

Atlantes

carved figures of men or half-men used as columns to support architectural features

oeil-de-boeuf window

'bull's-eye' window usually elliptical with four keystones

cartouche

a carved element resembling paper or parchment with rolled ends or corners, usually containing carved decorations or names

caryatids

sculptured female figure used as a column to support architectural features

cornice

horizontal projecting section at the top of a building façade

cupola

a dome or turret on a roof apex

faience

a form of glazed and decorated pottery tiling

frieze

a decorated band along the upper part of a wall

jetty(ies)

the projection of an upper storey outward over the one below

keystone

the central wedge-shaped stone at the top of an arch that locks the arch in place

lantern

a small turret with openings crowning a roof or dome

oriel window

a bay window that projects out from the first floor of a building

pargetting

exterior plasterwork usually modelled to represent foliage or figures

pediment

a low pitched gable shape over a window, door or façade

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

rusticated

of a column – square blocks which interrupt the shaft at regular intervals
of a wall – chamfered-edge masonry blocks with very deep joints facing the ground floor elevations of a building

segmental

having a very shallow arched top

strapwork

carved ornamentation consisting of interlaced flat bands that look like straps

stringcourse

a continuous decorative horizontal band projecting from a wall and usually moulded

swag

decoration carved to resemble a draped flower garland or fabric

Endnotes

i *Victoria History of the Counties of England*, Vol. IV, University of London, 1985

ii Community History Newsletter, Issue 38, Leicester City Council, 1985

iii Throsby (1791) - 'In it stood Lord's Place, now New Buildings: a fine turret of this noble building is remaining, but it has lately been covered with brick'; Watts (1804) - 'A lofty hexagon turret, whose top is glaz'd for the purpose of a prospect seat... It has a winding staircase of stone, with a small apartment on each storey, and is now modernised with an outward coating of brick'. An inscribed plaque giving a brief history of the Tower was removed to Newarke Houses Museum following demolition. Another can be found at 43 High Street.

iv Banner J. W., *Discovering Leicester*, Leicester City Council, 1991

v Leicester Journal, 9 April, 1774

vi Extract from Conservation Area Declaration report to Leicester City Council Planning Committee, May 1989

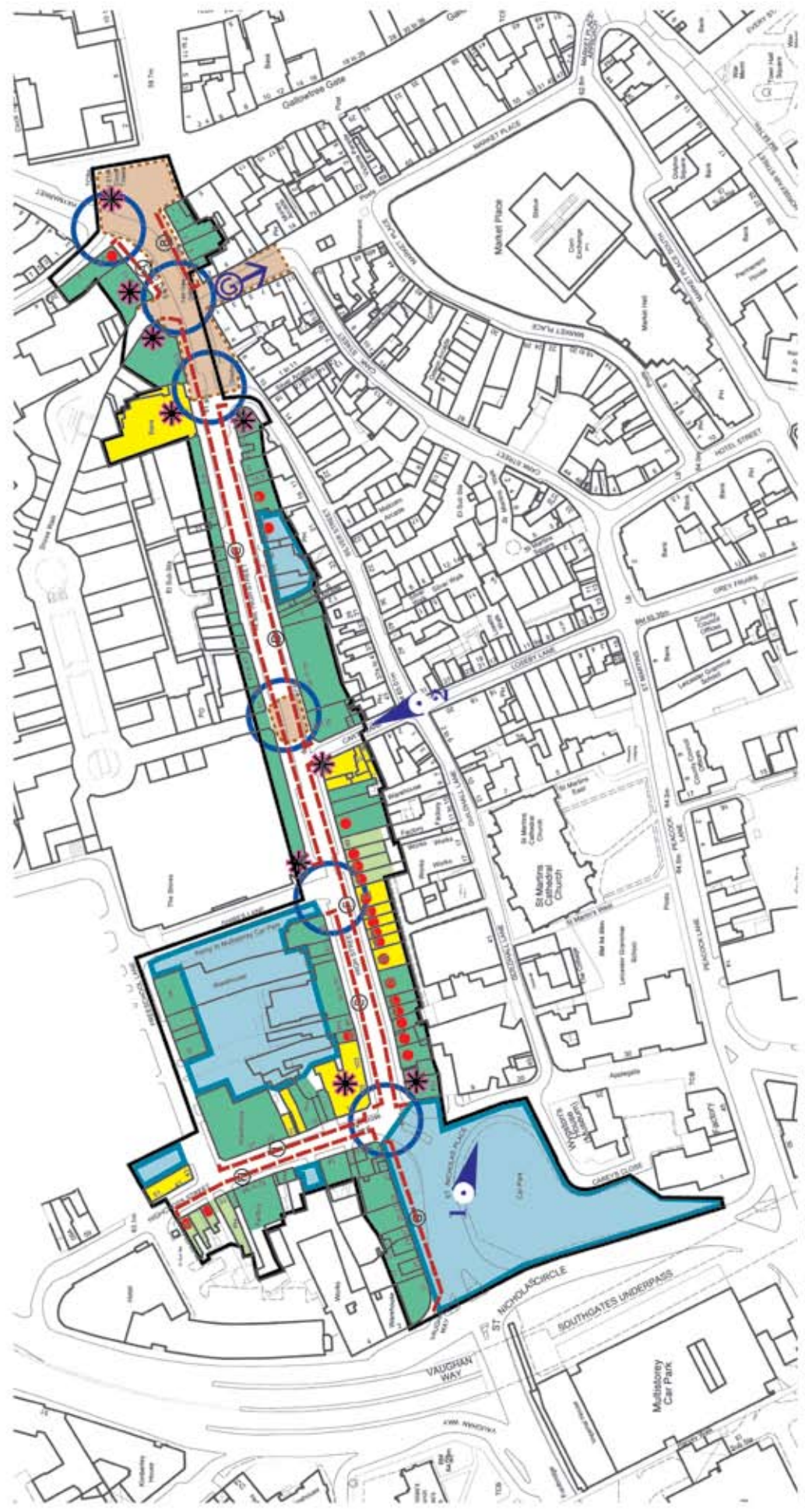
vii Taylor, M., *The Quality of Leicester*, 2nd ed., LCC, 1997

viii Banner, J W, *Discovering Leicester*, LCC, 1991

ix Gill, R, *Walks Through Victorian Leicester*, Leicester Victorian Society, 1994

x Banner, J W, *Discovering Leicester*, LCC 1991

Map 7 High Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved Leicester City Council. 1001 9264. (2008)

- Listed Buildings
- Buildings of local interest
- Buildings that make a positive contribution to the conservation area
- Buildings or sites that detract from the character of the conservation area
- Landmarks
- Important rhythmic facades and skylines [A - J]
- Important pedestrian spaces
- 1. Important view to Leicester Cathedral
- 2. Important view down Carts Lane
- G. Glimpse of the Market
- X. Pedestrian/vehicle conflict zones
- . Shopfronts in need of improvement