



West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

June 2022



West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Background, Scope and Structure.....	4
3. Designation.....	4
4. Planning Policy Framework.....	4
6. Location and Setting.....	6
7. Historic Development	7
8. Prevailing and former uses	20
9. Architectural Character	21
10. Townscape	52
Views and Vistas	54
Landmarks and corners.....	55
Activity.....	57
11. Building Materials.....	57
Facing materials.....	58
Roofs.....	63
Boundary Treatments.....	65
Other materials.....	67
12. Open spaces and trees.....	72
13. Lighting and street furniture.....	73
14. The Extent of Intrusion or Damage (Negative Factors).....	75
Buildings and materials	75
Boundaries	76
Uses	77
Infill development	78
15. Neutral Areas	79
16. Capacity for Change.....	79
17. Additional planning controls	79
18. Conservation area boundary.....	80
19. Local Consultation	80
20. Management Proposals.....	80
21. Contacts.....	81
Glossary of Architectural Terms.....	82
Appendix I: Boundary Review.....	83

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

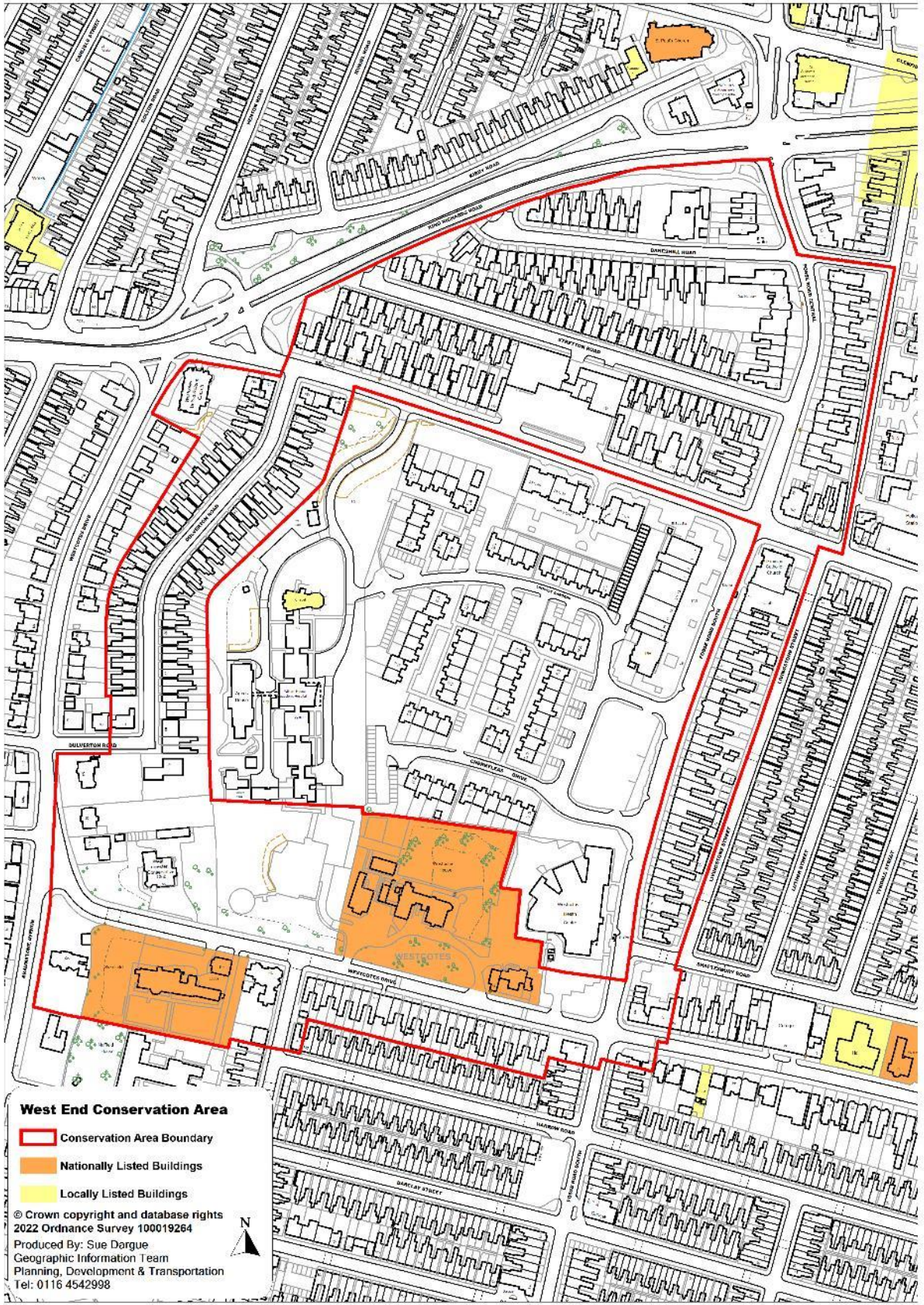


Figure 1: Map of the West End Conservation Area.

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal sets out the area's special character and appearance and how it can be preserved or enhanced. This appraisal will be used to help inform the design of any future development proposals so that they preserve or enhance the area and acknowledge its features. It is important to note that no appraisal can ever be completely comprehensive and that the omission of a particular feature, building or open space should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

2. Background, Scope and Structure

- 2.1. The City of Leicester contains twenty four conservation areas, the oldest of which were designated in 1969. This appraisal is structured to include:
 - summary of designation;
 - policy background;
 - definition of the special interest of the area via spatial and character analysis, historical development and important features.

3. Designation

- 3.1. West End Conservation Area was created in October 2008 through the amalgamation of two existing conservation areas, Daneshill and Westcotes Drive, and the addition of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, the large three storey properties at 2-70 Fosse Road South, 101-197 Hinckley Road, 184-192 Hinckley Road, the Westcotes United Reform Church and Hall. The Daneshill and Westcotes Drive Conservation Areas were designated in 1987 and 1989 respectively, covering an area of about 9 hectares (22 acres). The Conservation Area now covers an area of about 10 hectares (25 acres).

4. Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1. The concept of 'conservation areas' was first introduced by the Civic Amenities Act (1967) 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 strengthen an area's special qualities.
- 4.2. The definition remains unchanged in current legislation, set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Act places duties on local planning authorities:

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

- To identify those parts of their area that are of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as conservation areas;
 - To review past designations from time to time;
 - To prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas;
 - To 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.
- 4.3. The effect of designation means that planning permission is required for the demolition of buildings, with some minor exceptions. There are also stricter controls on changes that can be made to buildings and land, and there is some protection for trees.
- 4.4. Government policy is provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It requires the significance of heritage assets – both its historic buildings and historic areas – to be understood by local authorities and by those who propose change. Changes that cause harm to significance will only be permitted where the harm is outweighed by public benefits. Further guidance on the use of the NPPF is provided in the National Planning Practice Guidance and in guidance published by Historic England.
- 4.5. The protection and positive use of the historic environment within new development is a theme which runs through the City of Leicester Core Strategy. It is identified as a key component in spatial objectives 7 and 9. This is further strengthened in a number of policies. The Core Strategy also makes an explicit commitment to the preservation and enhancement of Leicester’s heritage in Spatial Objective 10. This is amplified in a wide-ranging policy (CS18) for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. There is a general presumption against the demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area, and the policy expects new developments and conservation-led regeneration to reflect the character and value of the historic environment. Both local and national policy puts the emphasis on the enhancement of heritage assets and positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness that should be made through new development.

5. Definition of Special Interest

- 5.1. The special interest of the conservation area results from a combination of many factors, both architectural and historic, but they can be summarised as follows:

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

- the area has a very long history, dating back to at least Roman times, and has been linked with Leicester and its abbey from at least the 12th century. Part of a large manor, the southern part of the Conservation Area was gifted to Leicester Abbey, the ruins of which lie in Abbey Park to the north-east, in the 12th century;
- the Westcotes Drive area has important historic links with the Harris family who bought the Westcotes estate in the mid-19th century. They built two houses for themselves, both of which still survive (Westcotes House and Sykefield). These links also extend into the surrounding area outside the Conservation Area such as the nearby Church of the Martyrs on Shaftesbury Road and the Westcotes Library on Narborough Road;
- the area not only has a large number of finely detailed houses, all of which are built to a consistently high quality, but also the area's two listed buildings, houses that were designed by two well-known architects of the late 19th century – S.S. Teulon (Westcotes House, also the architect for the alterations to Holy Trinity Church, Regent Road) and Ewan Christian ('Sykefield', 136 Westcotes Drive; also Church of the Martyrs, Westcotes Drive). The architectural character of the area is extremely varied and attractive and has produced a townscape that is rich in pattern and detail. The multitude of different house designs in the area means that it is much more visually diverse and interesting than most other late 19th century Leicester suburbs;
- the buildings in the Conservation Area provide a visual record of the cycles of Leicester's development over the last 150 years. The big houses (Ashton Lodge, Westcotes House and Sykefield) are evidence of the city's early growth when the wealthier classes chose to move to the 'countryside' edge of the growing town, upwind of its factories. There are also numerous examples of the sort of large terraced dwellings that were built for the upwardly mobile middle classes of the late Victorian period (Fosse Road Central and South) as well as fine examples of smaller artisan dwellings on Daneshill Road and Stretton Road that remain largely untouched.

6. Location and Setting

- 6.1. The Conservation Area lies 1.5 kilometres (just under 1 mile) west of the city centre and lies above the 63m contour line. It occupies the top of a long north-south sandstone ridge that starts to rise above the floodplain of the River Soar 700m to the east. The ground rises quite steeply from the river to its highest point at 74m above sea level outside 'Sykefield' on Westcotes Drive.

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

- 6.2. The views eastwards from the grounds of Wyggeston's Hospital, although outside the conservation area, illustrate this hilltop location particularly well. As the general plan form of the Conservation Area is one of long straight east-west streets hanging off the west side of the Fosse Road 'spine' this means that there are long views from Daneshill Road, Stretton Road and Westcotes Drive.
- 6.3. The Conservation Area is bounded by King Richards Road to the north, Harrow Road to the south, Braunstone Avenue on the west and Livingstone Road on the east side. It forms a reversed 'C' shape but open on the western side to exclude the modern developments of the Linkway estate and the 1960s Wyggeston's Hospital complex. The Conservation Area is primarily residential and is part of an inner-city residential suburb known as the 'West End'.

7. Historic Development

- 7.1. Although there is little evidence of Roman occupation in the area, it lies very close to the site of a late 3rd or 4th century Roman corridor villa that once stood near the ancient Fosse Way, between Danet's Hall and Westcotes. Known as the "Norfolk Street" or "Cherry Orchard" Villa, as its remains were first unearthed in 1783 among cherry tree roots. Its curtilage, estimated at a total of 10-12 acres of land, may well have included land now within the boundaries of the Conservation Area.¹
- 7.2. There was also a well-established Roman cemetery, which may have continued in use by the early Anglo-Saxon period, centred on Roman Street and Saxon Street, west of the River Soar, but potentially extending as far north as Braunstone Gate. Roman and Anglo-Saxon remains were found opposite the former site of Westcotes Hall, east of the Fosse Way, in November 1887.

¹ Jordan, C. (2003). The illustrated History of Leicester's Suburbs. Somerset: Breedon Books Publishing; p.141.

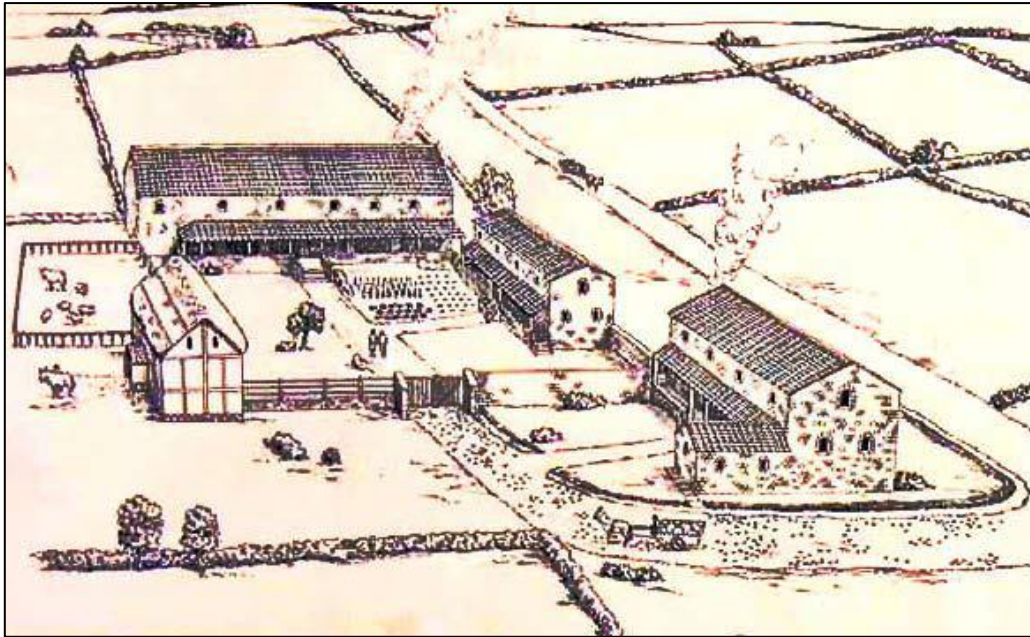


Figure 2: A reconstruction drawing of the Norfolk Street Roman villa.

- 7.3. The Domesday Survey of 1086 mentions the manor, or 'liberty', of 'Bromkinsthorpe'. The word 'thorpe' is an old Scandinavian word meaning 'outlying farmstead or hamlet'. This suggests that the area had a relationship with some central location, most likely part of the borough of Leicester. A charter of 1599 from Elizabeth I confirms that since at least the Middle Ages Bromkinsthorpe was regarded as an integral part of Leicester, despite lying well outside the town walls and being isolated from the city proper by the River Soar. Other interpretations of the spelling suggest that it translated into Old English 'Brunskinn' thought to mean 'the farmstead or hamlet of brown skins'.²

² Jordan (2003) p.139.



Figure 3: Rural scene, recorded in the late 19th century showing the brick boundary wall to what was the grounds of Danet's Hall. The lane was later incorporated into the modern King Richard's Road.

- 7.4. The manor stretched from somewhere around what is now Imperial Avenue in the south to the Newfoundpool area in the north. Originally held by Hugh de Grentemesnil, the Bromkinsthorpe manor came into the hands of Earl Robert II (le 'Bossu' or 'hunchback') around 1118. The Earl granted parts of the manor to Leicester Abbey when this was founded by himself in 1138. The northern part of the Conservation Area, and from which Daneshill Road gets its name, was known as Dane Hills. This name could derive from the Old English word meaning 'hill by the wooded pasture', which, on the basis of the known topology at that time, seems entirely appropriate. At that time the hilly landscape would have been one of small woodlands and pasture. The whole of Bromkinsthorpe was said to comprise, in 1279, 31 virgates (about the same as in 1627), which has been estimated at about 792 acres.³

³ Billson, C. J. (1926). The Open Fields of Leicester (West, East & South). Transactions of the Leicestershire Architectural & Archaeological Society, pp.1-29. Available at: <<https://www.le.ac.uk/lahs/downloads/OpenFieldsPagesfromVolume14-1-2.pdf>> [Accessed 30th September 2021].



Figure 4: A view of the old Wyggeston's Hospital built in 1868, c.1960.

- 7.5. By the 13th century two manors existed in the area, which was subdivided into two nearly equal parts. One was Walsh's Hall, known also as Danet's Hall or Dannett's Hall, which was held by the earls of Leicester, and later the earls and dukes of Lancaster.⁴ It was located just north-east of the Fosse Road and King Richards Road junction; the houses at 26-60 Fosse Road Central and 2-70 Fosse Road South stand on what were once the Danett's Hall orchards. The first mention of the family of Walsh, or Waleys, in connexion with the area occurs in 1279, when William le Waleis is stated to have been a tenant of lands then in the ownership of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester; the Walsh family continued to be important landholders at Bromkinsthorpe until the 14th century.⁵

⁴ McKinley, R. A. (1958). The ancient borough: Bromkinsthorpe. A History of the County of Leicester: Volume 4, the City of Leicester. London: Victoria County History, pp. 380-383. Available at: <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/leics/vol4/pp380-383>> [Accessed 30th September 2021].

⁵ Ibid.



Figure 5: Dannett's Hall, n.d.

- 7.6. In 1428, a Richard Dannett was the lord of the manor. The Dannetts had been important landowners in Bromkinsthorpe during the 13th and 14th centuries and continued to hold the manor until at least 1647, thereafter in the possession of their descendants.⁶ Around 1700 the manor was acquired by John Watts, an enlightened physician who later became a clergyman, who rebuilt the hall; it is considered to have been one of the earliest houses in Leicester to be remodelled using brick. The Watts family remained the owners of the manor until 1769. Watt's Causeway (now King Richards Road) was named after them and it was a daughter of John Watts, Susannah Watts, who wrote the book "*A Walk Through Leicester*" in 1804. In 1769 it was sold to Mr Weightman; afterwards it passed in rapid succession to several owners, including Joseph Noble, a Liberal MP, who became the city mayor in 1869.
- 7.7. Unbeknown to his family, Dr Noble had died of cholera during an epidemic in Spain in 1861. In order to discover his whereabouts a Leicester detective nicknamed 'Tanky' Smith, nicknamed so because of his stove-pipe hat. was commissioned to search for him. 'Tanky' was a master of disguise and this is commemorated in one of the carved

⁶ Ibid.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

heads at his home, Top Hat Terrace at 113-119 London Road. In 1861, the Hall and its lands were sold to the Leicester Freehold Land Society for building purposes.

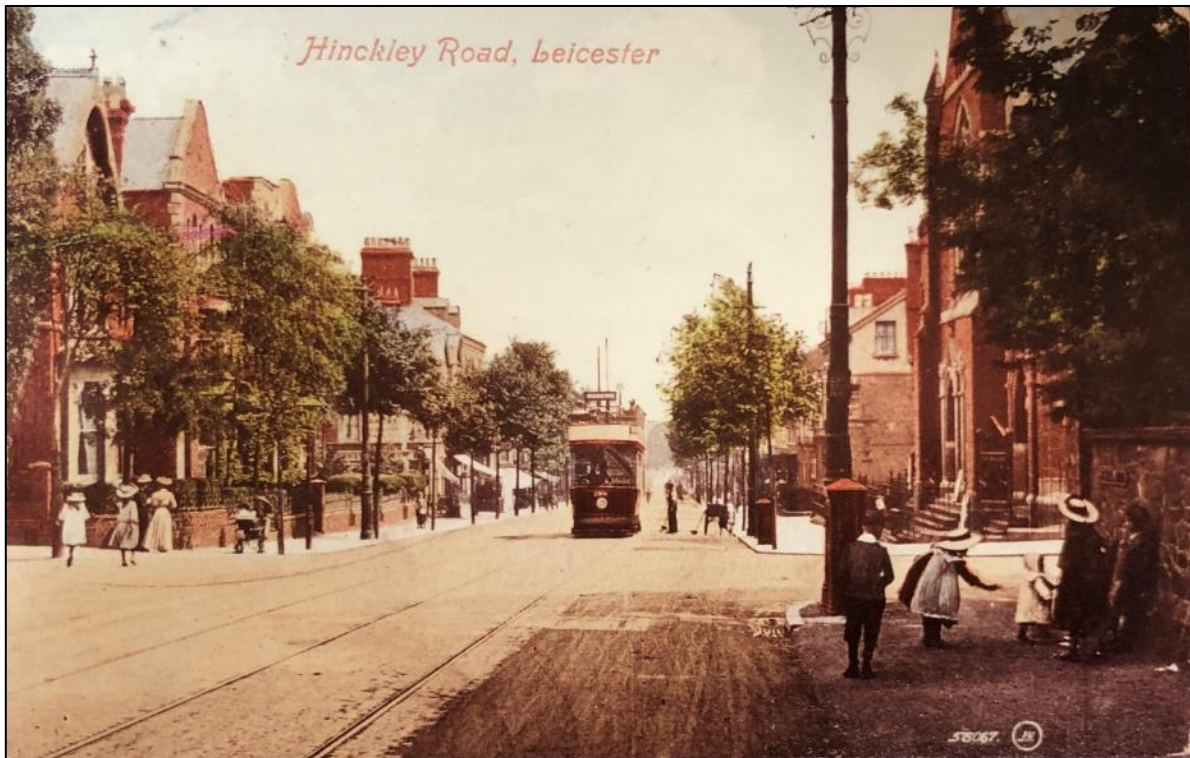


Figure 6: Hinckley Road, looking east from the junction with Fosse Road, 1909.

7.8. The second manor was ‘Westcotes’, a name that survives today. It was located outside of the Conservation Area, south-west of the Narborough Road and Hinckley Road junction, roughly on the site of Cranmer Street. For most of the Middle Ages it was held by Leicester Abbey until its dissolution in 1538. In 1538 its lands came into the possession of the Crown.⁷ The land was eventually sold to John Ruding in 1558, whose father, another John Ruding, in 1536 had leased the manor from the abbey for 81 years.⁸ One of his descendants, Walter Ruding, who became one of the proprietors of the newly formed Leicester Chronicle in 1810,⁹ built himself a country house called Westcotes Grange that stood on the site of today’s Cranmer Street and its grounds extended from Hinckley Road to Westcotes Drive. Around 1730 the main façade of the house was rebuilt in brickwork in the classical style fashionable at that time. The manor remained in the hands of the Ruding family until 1821, when it was sold to Thomas Freer, Clerk of the Peace of Leicestershire. The family is commemorated in Ruding Road on the east side of Narborough Road.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Jordan (2003), p. 144.

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Thereafter, it passed through various hands until it was bought by its last owner, Joseph Harris, around 1846. In 1886 the land was sold for building purposes.



Figure 7: Stretton Road, c.1900.

- 7.9. The westward expansion of Leicester had long been limited by the natural barrier of the River Soar with its several channels and marshy ground and also by the presence of the Danet's Hall and Westcotes Grange estates. The river crossing at West Bridge was described as "inconvenient, unsafe and a contributing cause of periodic flooding" prior to its improvement in 1841.¹⁰ The area thus remained very much on the countryside edge of the town until the middle of the 19th century with only a few large villas occupying large grounds. One of these was Danes Hill House, which appears between Fowler's Plan of 1828 and Burton's Plan of 1844. In 1881 it was occupied by William Stretton, later in the possession by of Charles Bennion, the director of Pearson & Bennion Ltd.
- 7.10. The sale of the Danet's Hall and its curtilage in 1861 marked the beginning of the suburban expansion of the city. By 1863 the land had already been built over, including the dwellinghouses along the newly

¹⁰ Elliot, M. (1979). *Victorian Leicester*. London: Phillimore and Co Ltd.

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

laid out Dannett's Street.¹¹ However, twenty years later, Daneshill Road was still only a short cul-de-sac whilst Stretton Road was little more than a tree-lined path. Development elsewhere in the Conservation Area had to wait until the sale of the Westcotes estate in 1886.

- 7.11. In 1868 a new Wyggeston Hospital with a chapel dedicated to St Ursula was constructed just outside of the boundary of the Conservation Area to the designs of T C Sorby, on land now occupied by the 1960s modern estate south-west of the Hinkley Road and Fosse Road junction. It replaced the 16th century William Wyggeston's original building sited on the Newarke, funded by William Wyggeston the Younger in 1513. It was demolished in 1966 to make way for a new hospital constructed to the designs of Gordon, White and Hood and a residential estate, which are still on site.



Figure 8: Fosse Road South, 1889.

- 7.12. When the Westcotes was sold and subsequently demolished in 1888, Samuel Harris, one of the sons of Joseph Harris, commissioned the construction of a new house in the area. The 'Westcotes Grange' ('Westcotes House') was built in the neo-Gothic style to the designs of the London-based Samuel Sanders Teulon, responsible for the remodelling of Holy Trinity Church on Regent Road. The Harris family

¹¹ Jordan (2003), p. 142

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

used some of the money from the sale of the former manor estate to fund the construction of the Church of the Martyrs in 1890, the same year that it became a separate parish; this was designed by Edward Christian, also responsible for the Grade II* Listed St Mark's Church on Belgrave Road.¹² The vicarage was constructed in 1904 to the designs of Everard and Pick. The family were also responsible for the construction of Westcotes School on the corner of Ruding Road and Narborough Road in 1862-63, at a total cost of £1,136 to the designs of Henry and Joseph Goddard, included on the Local Heritage Asset Register (LL/320).



Figure 9: Junction of Fosse Road South and Westcotes Drive, looking north, 1895.

7.13. The other grand dwellinghouse on Westcotes Drive, 'Sykefield', was built for Fredrick William Harris to the designs of Edward Christian about the same date. Otherwise, Westcotes Drive attracted a number of the city's leading industrialists and professional people; for example, the 'Art Nouveau' style Bradgate House at 136 Westcotes Drive, on the corner with Sykefield Avenue, which was built for John Russell Frears, the biscuit manufacturer, in 1902 to the designs of Charles Kempson. By 1900 Joseph, William and Henry Harris (Chairman of Directors of the first garden City of Letchworth), grandsons of Joseph Harris had set up a limited company known as the 'Westcotes Estate' which sold

¹² Jordan (2003), p. 144-145.

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

land in the area for building in small plots.¹³ In 1900 the company purchased 'Birds Nest Farm' located the north of Westcotes, in the area of New Parks. In 1936 the City Council used compulsory powers to purchase the land at the end of the Westcotes estate so that by the early 1940s the Westcotes estate ceased to exist and the Harris family's connection with Leicester was brought to an end.

- 7.14. By the turn of the 20th century the road pattern in the Conservation Area had been established. Beyond the sale of the aforementioned estates, the expansion and development of the area was fuelled by the development of local transport infrastructure and improvements to the river crossing. The flood prevention scheme began in 1876 and saw the widening and deepening for the river, and rebuilding of the West Bridge in 1891.¹⁴ The Great Central Railway opened in 1899, with tramways laid along Narborough Road, Hinckley Road and Fosse Road Central soon thereafter.



Figure 10: Junction of Fosse Road and Hinckley Road, 1894.

- 7.15. A number of roads in the area have been named after major historic figures, such as Norfolk Street, including several well-known Protestants – Livingston, Cranmer and Latimer. Daneshill Road and

¹³ North, S. (2012). Change and Development in the West End, Leicester, from 1881. Available at: <<http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll3/id/20/>> [Accessed 30th September 2021].

¹⁴ Ibid, p.4.

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Stretton Road (named after William Weston Stretton who gave the land for St Paul's Church) were almost fully built-up by 1893, whilst most of the houses on Fosse Road South had been built by 1897. The houses at 88-134 Westcotes Drive were built between 1903 and 1907. The Westcotes United Reform Church was built as the Congregational Chapel to the designs of Langley & Baines in 1906. It was once the most successful Congregational Church in terms of membership in the city, advancing from 97 members in 1916 to 186 in 1966.¹⁵ The Hall was added in 1922 to the designs of Baines & Provis, demolished c.1990.

- 7.16. Dulverton Road was built up from 1896 onwards for the Leicester House & Land Society, with houses constructed to the designs of Draper & Walters. Westcotes Lodge was added to the westernmost portion of Westcotes Road in 1896, constructed for the shoe & boot manufacturer J G Chattaway to the designs of M Cox. The Harris family sold Westcotes Lodge in 1915. In 1950 the house was converted into the West Leicester Conservative Club, a use in which it remains. The pair of detached villas at 22-24 Fosse Road South were constructed in 1897 to the designs of Everard & Pick for Henry Flude.

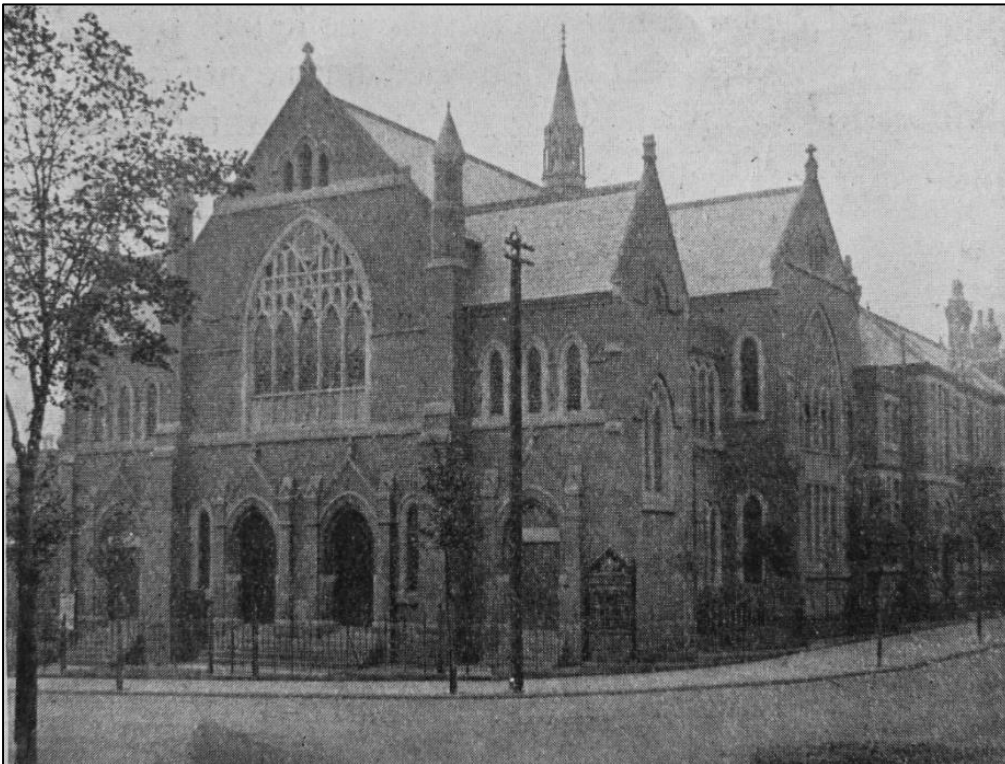


Figure 11: Hinckley Road Primitive Methodist Chapel, 1907.

¹⁵ Rimmington, G. T. (2007). Congregationalism and Society in Leicestershire and Rutland 1916-1966. *Transactions of the Leicestershire Architectural & Archaeological Society*, 81 (2007), pp. 137-152. Available at: <[https://www.le.ac.uk/lahs/downloads/2007/2007%20\(81\)%20137-1352%20Rimmington.pdf](https://www.le.ac.uk/lahs/downloads/2007/2007%20(81)%20137-1352%20Rimmington.pdf)> [Accessed 30th September 2021].

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

- 7.17. In 1898 the Primitive Methodist Chapel and attached schoolrooms opened on the junction of Hinckley Road and Fosse Road South, constructed to a total cost of £10,200. In 1902 it was described in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by R Hind as “*a striking example of a successful suburban church*”.¹⁶ The Annual Primitive Methodist Conference was held here in 1927, after it became the primary church of the Leicester Second circuit. In 1966 it was amalgamated with King Richards Road Methodist Church.
- 7.18. By the early 20th century, the area featured a number of schools and educational facilities. One of them was the private girls’ school run by Miss Ada Ward at 193 Hinckley Road. Another private kindergarten was run by Misses Andrews at 90 Fosse Road South, an elegant Queen Anne Revival red brick property.¹⁷ In late 1920s it was converted into the Fosse High School established by Ethel and Eveline Neale, who previously operated a private school at 58 Fosse Road Central, which closed around 1990.¹⁸
- 7.19. By the 1920s most development in the area was complete and the Conservation Area had become a well-established part of the densely built up ‘west end’ of the city. The west was, in fact, the most active area of new building between 1885 and 1914.¹⁹ Following World War II, the make-up of the population of the West End changed substantially, with a newly established immigrant community, including many born in the USSR. Ukrainians became particularly well-established in the area. Orthodox Catholic Ukrainians first held services at the Church of the Martyrs, before purchasing the Primitive Methodist Church in 1969, still in use as the Ukrainian Catholic Church of The Ascension of Our Lord.

¹⁶ Hind, R. (1902). Hinckley Road Church, Leicester. Primitive Methodist Magazine, 73 (1902). Available at: <https://d35wuyehavsdko.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/cms/1/1902_Hinckley_Road_Leicester.pdf> [Accessed 30th September 2021].

¹⁷ Jordan (2003), p. 145.

¹⁸ Jordan (2003), pp.145-146.

¹⁹ McKinley, R. A. (1958). The City of Leicester: Social and administrative history since 1835. A History of the County of Leicester: Volume 4, the City of Leicester. London: Victoria County History, pp. 251-302. Available at: <<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/leics/vol4/pp251-302>> [Accessed 30th September 2021].



Figure 12: Methodist Chapel, since converted into Ukrainian Catholic Church, 1898.

- 7.20. During the late 1970s the West Bridge Stage II road improvement scheme, focussed on accommodating traffic growth through the development of a new network of distributor roads, separated the Daneshill area from Westcotes. The impact on the character and urban pattern of the area was substantial, made possible through the extensive use of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) in the early 1970s, which allowed for the “outworn terraces” in the area to be demolished. This was despite strong local campaigning to save the historic stock on the western side of the city centre.
- 7.21. By the 1980s many properties in the Conservation Area, like other large houses in and around the inner city, had been converted into bed-sits, hostels and other forms of multiple occupation. Recognising that such accommodation was often of very poor quality it became Council policy to secure, as far as possible, improvements to this kind of housing. The Daneshill Housing Improvement Zone, declared in 1989/90, formed part of that programme. One of the primary aims of the programme was to encourage the replacement of small non-self-contained units to larger self-contained flats. In 1991 the area was included in the City Challenge Bid, further highlighting the scale of the problem. Whilst substantial improvements were achieved, the area continued to suffer from insensitive conversion and poor-quality housing stock. To tackle the issue, an Article 4 Direction restricting the

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

permitted development rights for conversion of dwellinghouses into Houses in Multiple Occupations (HMO) was introduced in 2014.

8. Prevailing and former uses

- 8.1. The West End Conservation Area developed as a residential suburb in the late-Victorian and Edwardian period, providing accommodation for the expanding, primarily middle class, population of the city. It remains a primarily residential area today.



Figure 13: Westcotes Drive during the Edwardian period.

- 8.2. While most of the larger houses have been converted into flats, the smaller houses largely remain in use as single family homes. On Westcotes Drive, Westcotes House is now used by the National Health Service, with a separate Assessment Centre in the grounds; 'Sykefield' is now a care home facility. Westcotes Lodge, at the corner with Braunstone Avenue is now in use as the West Leicester Conservative Club.
- 8.3. Otherwise, a number of the private schools and nurseries which served the area in the early and mid-20th century have since been converted back into residential uses, including 193 Hinckley Road, 90 Fosse Road South and 15 Fosse Road Central. However, there are two newer children's nurseries at 140 Westcotes Drive and 1 Daneshill Road. Along Hinckley Road, a few shops, hostels, bed & breakfasts and care homes can be found among the residential accommodation that otherwise dominates the area.

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

- 8.4. There are two churches in the area with active congregations, the Ukrainian Catholic Church & Hall on the corner of Hinckley Road and Fosse Road, and the Westcotes United Reform Church at the western end of the Conservation Area.



Figure 14: Turret House, built as a house in 1880s, now in use as Estonian Community Centre, 1980s.

9. Architectural Character

- 9.1. Despite some unifying characteristics, not least the fairly uniform age and repetitive styles and detailing, the Conservation Area is not homogeneous. To reflect the differences in character across it, the Conservation Area has been split into three distinct character areas for the purposes of this character appraisal. These are presented below.

Daneshill

- 9.2. The character of the Daneshill area is markedly different from the rest of the Conservation Area in scale and design but it maintains the same terraced form of development. The area comprises mainly large three storey villas set back on their plots from the street, giving the area an 'airy' feel, built in a wide range of styles, with many ornate decorative features on their red, gault and polychrome brickwork façades.



Figure 15: The streetscene of Fosse Road Central, showing the elaborate Dutch gable at numbers 42-48. The frontages follow the bend in the highway, creating a picturesque vista.

- 9.3. Rich detailing is a particular feature of the Fosse Road Central properties, where the building line follows the subtle curve of the road. The curvature brings the architectural features of the frontages into visual prominence, adding to the visitor's appreciation of the craftsmanship. Trees along the highway soften the urban landscape, animating the views throughout. In the case of the classically detailed and attractive short terrace at 9-11 Fosse Road Central and 1 Daneshill Road, formerly the Westburn Terrace, they create a lush setting to these dwellings. The most prominent feature of these houses are the sizeable chimney stacks with buff clay chimney pots that pierce the local skyline; the dogtooth string course and cornice, original sash windows and the oriel windows to the northern gable are also noteworthy. These houses are fronted by a pierced red and gault brick boundary wall which curves onto Daneshill Road and is matched by the boundary at number 15-17. The side elevation of the terrace has regrettably failed to escape insensitive modern interventions, with all original windows since replaced by poorly proportioned uPVC casements.
- 9.4. The terrace at numbers 26-42 comprises of two distinct groups of vernacular revival and gothic revival dwellings. The first pair at 26-28

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Fosse Central ('The Elms') is higher than the abutting houses, creating a successful punctuation mark in the streetscene. These buff brick frontages are decorated with eclectic detailing, including keystone stone lintels, moulded bargeboards to prominent gables and staggered brick cornice, with a somewhat awkwardly positioned singular oculus to the side bay. The domestic revival properties at 30-36 ('Gainsborough Villas') show slight differences in design to the abutting pair, but similarly feature canted bays, gables with finials and keystone lintels, and are read together as a cohesive group. Beyond is a row of heavily stylised lower dwellinghouses with prominent and distinctive 'bell' gables, constructed c.1869-76 as the 'Albert Terrace'. These houses feature polychromic brick decorations, intricately detailed 'tympanum' decoration at first floor level at numbers 42-48 and moulded, keystone doorway surrounds.



Figure 16: The gault brick frontages of dwellinghouses at number 32-34 Fosse Road Central, enhanced by vegetation to front gardens.

- 9.5. The southern end of the east side of Fosse Road Central is marked by the pared-down Queen Anne style red brick façades of 50-54 Fosse Road Central, the latest addition to this section of Fosse Road Central, with unique terracotta panelling to the two-storey bays, and the Italianate buff brick elevations, with stone dressing in the form of balconies, moulded surrounds with integrated half-columns, as well as glazed tiling to the overhanging cornice supported on paired brackets, at 56-60 Fosse Road Central. The front walls and railings at 26-60 are replacements, funded by the Council in the 1980s, with most of the original pier caps re-instated.



Figure 17: A detail of the first-floor bay to what was originally 'Dane Hill Villa' showing some of the red and white polychrome brickwork, characteristic of a number of buildings in the Conservation Area.

- 9.6. On the west side of the street, a very unusual and finely detailed pair of Italianate villas from circa 1856 can be seen at 15-17 Fosse Road Central ('Dane Hill Villas'). Fronting these dwellings and sweeping around the corner at 2 Daneshill Road, the pierced red and gault brick boundary wall with blue polychrome detailing, makes a strong architectural statement in the streetscene. The original front boundary wall complements the colour and design elements of the Gothic Revival frontages of number 15-17 which are otherwise animated by tall sash windows set in segmental and semi-circular arched openings, deeply overhanging eaves and moulded brick cornice. The later addition of a

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

porch detracts from the balanced asymmetry and original design intention of this group.



Figure 18: The polychrome brick and stone facades of 21-23 Fosse Road Central, adding to the local distinctiveness

9.7. At 19-27 Fosse Road Central, constructed at a later date c.1890, the colour theme changes back to red brick with stone dressing. These buildings are in a somewhat unconventional yet recognisable Domestic Revival style with mock Tudor gabled dormers, complete with mock timbering, stone bays (canted and flat) to the ground floor, and a large first floor window set in elliptical keystone surround, framed by gault brick spandrels and flat pilasters. The name panels above arched doorways and stylised finials are other attractive additions to the streetscene.



Figure 19: The original doors and porches at 33-35 Fosse Road Central.

- 9.8. The domestic revival terrace at 29-37 Fosse Road Central survives fairly intact, including bays complete with timber casements, paired pedimented dormers supported on moulded brackets, original glazed timber doorways with leaded fanlights recessed under a continuous canopy and weather-tiling with alternate rows of rectangular and scalloped tiles. These finely detailed three storey houses make a strong impression on this prominent junction, adding to the appreciation of the Conservation Area.
- 9.9. Daneshill Road and Stretton Road climb up the ridge westwards away from Fosse Road Central. A large number of original chimney stacks with corbel detailing remain, as do many original terracotta chimneypots. Welsh slates and red terracotta ridge tiles still dominate the local roofscape, with red brickwork, stone and timber dominating the frontages. However, whilst there is notable visual unity between the two, these individual streets have quite different characters.



Figure 20: Fine Victorian villa properties on Daneshill Road.

- 9.10. Daneshill Road is shorter than Stretton Road and the houses are generally plainer. As approached from Fosse Road Central, Daneshill Road is framed by the pierced red and gault brick boundary wall with blue polychrome detailing, with two storey red brick houses with stone dressing beyond. The dwellinghouse at number 2 Daneshill Road is an amalgamation of multiple additions and invasive alterations. The classically detailed elevations constructed in chequered pattern Flemish bond are the earliest remnant of what was once known as the Ruding Villa (1884 OS Map), with the finely detailed corner tower added at a later date. The modern extension to the rear is a bland addition to the mid-19th century building, with poorly replicated cornice detail and distinct brickwork set in stretcher bond.
- 9.11. The former Arundel House (now Ashton Lodge Care Home) at 3 Daneshill Road was constructed around the same time as Ruding Villa, set within landscaped gardens with attached stables and outbuildings. These were the only dwellings constructed on site by 1886 (OS Map 1886-88) that fronted onto what was then the Dane Hill Road. Despite significant extensions to the rear, the original dwellinghouses survive fairly intact, with keystoned segmental arches, semi-circular bay and an off-centre tower to its rather imposing frontage, with original coach and cobbled carriageway with a large walled garden to its left-hand side. Its multiple chimneystacks add further interest to the local skyline.

9.12. Other dwellinghouses beyond were constructed after the road was extended c.1892 as commissioned by Leicester Real Property Co Ltd. These red brick terraced houses extend westwards along a fairly straight line until a sudden bend at number 50, closing the view onto Kirby Road beyond. The two pairs of semi-detached houses at 8-14 Daneshill Road are of particular note, with double height bays, tile-hanging and sham half-timber details, big dormers, original timber sashes and moulded brick detailing above the round arch brick porches. Beyond the plainer three-storey terrace at 16-22, there is a long row of finely detailed two-storey artisan houses with ground floor canted bays, staggered cornices, classical stone dressing and recessed doorways under arched vestibules. The last two dwellings of this group at 40-42 Daneshill Road present modest variations in detailing, including the addition of buff brickwork banding. The terrace at 44-56 Daneshill Road echoes some of the detailing at 8-14 Daneshill Road and is also decorated with double height bays and gabled dormers with mock timbering. The deep horizontal stone bands are an unusual feature for such relatively small houses, adding interest to the streetscene.



Figure 21: Decorative moulded brick detailing to the angled bay of 33 Stretton Road (Rose Villa).

9.13. On the north side of Daneshill Road, the houses at 13-33 have large splayed ground floor bays, round arched porches with pilasters and hoodmoulds, gault brick bands and corbelled eaves. Most retain their original sash windows with eight light upper sashes. The houses at 13-23

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

also feature vernacular revival dormers with mock timbering, bargeboards and curved finials, found elsewhere on the street.

- 9.14. Stretton Road has stronger vertical rhythms and is generally more decorative than Daneshill Road. Noteworthy is the level of original timber windows still in situ. As in Daneshill Road, terraces are broken up into many groups of different designs. The consistent and attractive terrace pattern is, however, broken up by the modern infill development at 125 Hinckley Road, which introduces a highly discordant element into the street scene. Trees have been planted in an attempt to soften the impact but fail to convincingly screen the rear elevation.



Figure 22: Detail of 1 Stretton Road, showing 'barley-sugar' twists to the corner mullions of the splayed bay windows.

- 9.15. The entry into the area is framed by two-three storey red brick dwellings, fronting onto Fosse Road Central, yet with side elevations of much visual interest, including leaded glazing, oriel dormer, dominant chimneystacks and stone surrounds. Beyond, worthy of special note are the houses at 1-7 and 11-13 Stretton Road. The former have big ground floor bays with lead roofs, large first floor triple light windows and sham

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

timbering and moulded bargeboards to gables, crowned by terracotta ridge tiles and matching finials. Original coloured encaustic tiles can still be spotted under the semi-circular porches, with two original glazed doorways still in situ. The latter is a 'one-off' symmetrical pair of considerable architectural interest with very finely moulded and detailed splayed bays with 'barley-sugar' twists to the corner mullions, a name plaque ('Avondale Villas 1893') in a brick roundel with a hoodmould and carved end-stops, a decorative brick eaves course and hoodmoulds with keystones and end-stops over the porches. The big double height bay windows at 9 Stretton Road help the house to stand out from its neighbours, as does its large, red clay tiled hipped roof over the double height splayed bay and leaded glazing. Uniquely, this terrace retains most of its original windows, with some well-proportioned replacements (number 13).



Figure 23: The house at 51 Stretton Road, with a Venetian window to gable and hanging tiles to full height canted bay.

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

- 9.16. Beyond are other paired groups of two storey houses at 21-29, 31-33 and 35-49 Stretton Road, each of which have distinctive features such as neat timber door canopies, double height bays with moulded stone lintels and faceted hipped roofs at 21-29, moulded brick name plaques at 31-33 and elaborate moulded eaves cornices and stone lintels at 35-49, the latter having hoodmoulds and carved end-stops. Worth noting is the similar but still distinct singular house at number 17, with double-height bay windows and 'paired' cornices.
- 9.17. The largest houses on the north side of the street are at 51-61 and 69-81 Stretton Road. These two groups are in the Domestic and Tudor Revival styles with big gables, two and three storey high bayed windows and elaborate chimneys. The former have Venetian windows at second floor level with weather tiling (alternate rows of rectangular and scalloped tiles) to bays; the latter are exuberantly decorated with sham timber framing and pargetting. At the end of the terrace a hexagonal corner feature with a turreted roof adds further interest. Regrettably, two of the full height bays in this group have been unsympathetically rebuilt, having neither the correct detailing, window proportions, number of lights nor sham timber framing.



Figure 24: Sham timber framing and pargetting at number 81 Stretton Road.

9.18. The houses on the south side of Stretton Road are much less elaborate and more consistent in style, massing and detailing. The two-storey row at 2-22 Stretton Road retains many original period features, such as decorative eaves courses, carved stone lintels, name plaques and bay windows with original 'shouldered' upper sashes at numbers 12-22. Also noteworthy are the pierced terracotta ridge tiles, original glazed doors (20 and 22). At 24-32 Stretton Road the dwellings rise in height and gain in prominence, with double height bays with faceted hipped roofs and small panes in the upper sashes, tall corbelled chimneys with vertical projecting ribs and flat canopies supported on moulded timber brackets. Beyond Johnstone's (125 Hinckley Road) there are two elegant groups of houses at 34-40 and 42-74 Stretton Road with corbelled eaves, staggered chimneystacks with clay chimneypots, canted bays, blue brick banding, moulded stone hoods above paired doors set back in

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

round-arched porches. The coloured glazing at 62 Stretton Road adds a unique accent in the streetscene.



Figure 25: Large dwellinghouses on Hinckley Road, raised in relation of the street, prominent in the local streetscene.

9.19. Hinckley Road is of a different character altogether. Apart from the short section of Arts and Crafts dwellings around the junction with Dulverton Road, it lacks the plainer two-storey artisan houses common on Stretton Road and Daneshill Road. Instead, this relatively busy traffic artery is dominated almost exclusively by red brick three-storey terraces at an elevated position to the highway, set behind brick or stone boundary walls. There is a variety of detailing to the properties along Hinckley Road that add considerable interest to the townscape and architectural character of the area.



Figure 26: Prominent red brick dwellings at 109-123 Hinckley Road.

9.20. The north-east of the Hinckley Road and Fosse Road junction is marked by a red brick, stone dressed dwelling with a shopfront to the ground floor. Despite the loss of original windows and slates to the roofscape, the original detailing, such as the bracketed eaves detail, stone bands and pointed surrounds contribute to the architectural interest of the building. At numbers 101-105 is a short symmetrical terrace of a contemporary date. The frontage is exquisitely detailed, including pedimented surrounds with moulded cornices and pilasters, Venetian windows to top, intricate cornice returns, stone quoins and elegant paired doorways with eight light fanlights set under a classically

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

detailed porch to the slightly projecting central bay. Unfortunately, the pointed gable at number 101 has since been insensitively rebuilt in mismatching brickwork, with the intricate detailing removed.



Figure 27: Danes Hill House at 125 Hinckley Road, constructed in the first half of the 19th century.

9.21. Domestic Revival styles prevail on the north side of Hinckley Road, west of the Fosse Road junction, with mock timbering, tall chimney stacks, double height bays and weather tiling animating the streetscene. Beyond the heavily detailed side elevation of 37 Fosse Road Central, where leaded lights, elaborate chimneystacks and a selection of well-proportioned timber sash and casement windows contribute to this superbly detailed dwelling, of note are the tile hung bays, bargeboards and finials of 109-115 Hinckley Road. Modern alterations have since

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

eroded some of the group legibility and architectural interest of the terrace, including the recent overhaul of the timber windows at Westcotes Rest Home (113-115 Hinckley Road); a single example of the finely detailed canopy supported on carved brackets now survives. The plot at 125-143 Hinckley Road breaks the terraced pattern of the streetscene, creating an adverse intrusion into the Conservation Area. The only building of interest on site is the Gothic Revival Dane's Hill House, an early 19th century detached house. Whilst altered, losing its tall chimneys and chimneypots as well as its original roof covering, and insensitively located at the back of a surface level car park, it makes an eminent and important addition to the area.



Figure 28: Dwellinghouses at 171-175 Hinckley Road, with half timbering to canted bays.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

9.22. To the west of Johnstone's, insensitive interventions are also noticeable at 117-123 Hinckley Road, including the weather-boarded bays, mismatching uPVC windows and incongruous dormers. Nonetheless, the colonnaded canopy, weather tiling, keystone surrounds, stone dressing and moulded chimneystacks collectively add to the architectural merit of this attractive and prominent group. At 157-163 Hinckley Road, the symmetrical Victorian terrace retains much of its original detailing, including the decorative fish-scale tile-hanging to dormers, staggered brick cornice, pierced terracotta ridge tiles, bracketed eaves detail to bays, stone name plaque to centre ('Hilltop 1892') and polychromatic keystone brick and stone archways over doors with radial fanlights, which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

Dulverton Road

9.23. Past the plainer three-storey terrace at numbers 165-169 ('Aberdale House') is the symmetrical group of finely detailed domestic revival properties at 171-175 Hinckley Road with finely detailed eaves (including blue brick headers and egg-and-dart detailing) and mock timber-framing to bays (weatherboarding at number 169) and dormers (weatherboarding at number 175) which add further visual interest and pattern.



Figure 29: Dulverton Road, looking south.

9.24. On the opposite side of the road, at the entry onto Dulverton Road, the simple Edwardian detailing at numbers 184-188 adds a quiet dignity to

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

this busy highway. This symmetrical group is fronted by a low-lying blue brick wall, with canted bays and integrated canopies to front. On the opposite corner of the gateway, the properties at 190-192 Hinckley Road are more ornate, each with a pair of two-storey bays set under an octagonal 'tower' crowned with finials, with overhanging eaves detail supported on flat brackets. The Westcotes United Reform Church is an intricately detailed Edwardian building, with ornate stone dressing and a prominent Diocletian window set over a wide segmental archway.

- 9.25. Dulverton Road rises sharply away from Hinkley Road, with the buildings following a noticeable curve in the highway. The curvature reflects the line of trees that existed prior to the construction of the street, which from the mid-19th century marked the boundary of the Wyggeston Hospital's land and is still notable today. This format contributes to an attractive townscape, where a strong horizontality created through consistent two storey high, matching chimneystacks, string courses and bay windows is interrupted by few gables and dormers throughout. There is a strong sense of place achieved through the consistency of design, mass and quality, enhanced by a near complete set of brick front boundaries.



Figure 30: The frontage of the dwellinghouse at 82 Dulverton Road, with some original joinery still intact.

9.26. The consistent architectural features of the integral artisan houses, most of which were built between 1896-1898 to the designs of Draper & Walton for the Leicester House and Land Society, such as blue brick accents, segmental arched windows, stone dressing, dog tooth corncing, collectively contribute to the special character of the area, complimentary to the rest of the Conservation Area. The two pairs of houses at 16-22 are an exception, with matching gables, tall chimneystacks and weather tiling to the upper portion of the frontage, constructed c.1900 to the designs of Harding and Toppott.

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

- 9.27. Notable residents included the aunt of the writer D H Lawrence and Sir Samuel Faire JP, the first treasurer of the Leicester Boys' Club, established in 1896. During World War II, the members of the Dulverton Road War Land Association communally cultivated a site in Westcotes Drive, whilst the 5th Leicester Scouts made their contribution by growing vegetables on a smaller site nearby.

Fosse Road South

- 9.28. Similarly, to Hinckley Road, Fosse Road South is a busy traffic route, where vehicles have a considerable impact on the environment. During the late 1980s the terrace was cleaned, and front boundary walls were replaced, which has created a clearly defined boundary between the private and the public realms, whose consistency and quality is unmatched elsewhere in the Conservation Area. This augments the regularity of the three-storey red brick houses on the east side of the highway, which follow the subtle curve of the road. There are eight separate symmetrical pairs of houses, eight buildings of individual designs and two groups of short terraces, making this one of the most diverse and decorative parts of the Conservation Area. They form a terrace that incorporates a wide variety of vernacular revival styles, with numerous big gables, tall chimneystacks and dormers animating the skyline. Most of the dwellings were constructed in the first few years of the 20th century and have since been converted into flats.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal



Figure 31: Gothic Revival windows to the side elevations of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, constructed in 1898 as the Primitive Methodist Chapel.

9.29. At the northernmost end of the street stands the Ukrainian Catholic Church, constructed in 1898 in red brick in the Gothic style, with large stone Perpendicular-style windows with panel tracery and narrow lancet windows, sham flat buttressing, gables with finials and an 'onion' dome rising above the south end of the roof, a recent addition to the local skyline. The adjoining Hall is plain in comparison, with decoration restricted to an elaborate tall chimney, stone banding, leaded stained glazing and moulded brick detailing below the pointed arches of the Fosse Road South entrance and flanking window.



Figure 32: The eclectic vernacular revival houses at 6-8 Fosse Road South, with rich decoration to frontages.

9.30. The vernacular revival houses at 6-8 Fosse Road South combine mock Tudor decoration with Gothic detailing in the form of pointed arches over porches and a shallow jetty feature with mock timbering at second storey level. The painted brickwork is unfortunate, exacerbated by a poor maintenance regime and external cabling. The adjacent pair of houses at 10-12 Fosse Road South is decorated with tall set of dormers topped with ball finials, bracketed overhanging eaves and keystone semi-circular arches over porches with carved name plaques above. The splayed stone bays with heavy entablature and intricately glazed original timber doorways complete with rectangular fanlights add further interest to the streetscene and mark these dwellings as uniquely attractive in its context. The less adorned adjacent dwelling nonetheless presents features of interest, including the glazed doorway with fanlight

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

(matching that at numbers 10-12), full height bay, shallow bracketed oriel window with leaded glazing and distinctive steep dormers with moulded bargeboards.



Figure 33: The carved name plaque at 10 Fosse Road South, above a stylized keystoned archway topped with a stylized shell.

- 9.31. The red brick houses at numbers 16-20 are of distinct designs, decorated with stone quoins, fish-scale weather tiling, canted bays, mock timbering and pedimented porches; nonetheless, all three properties feature gabled dormers, which punctuate the roofline. The glazed tiling at the entrances to 18 and 20 Fosse Road South is of particular merit, adding further colour and texture. The three-storey neo-Georgian building at 22-24 Fosse Road South is a commanding punctuation in the local streetscene. The attraction of its nearly intact façade derives from the restrained use of decoration, in the form of keystoned segmental window arches, elongated sash windows denoting the piano nobile, bracketed eaves with elegant modillion detail and shaped cast iron hoppers.
- 9.32. The Arts & Crafts style pioneered by Norman Shaw is evident in the design of 26-28 Fosse Road South. The continuous timber balustrade, arched porches supported on Tuscan columns, Venetian windows, jettied dormers with roughcast rendering and sophisticated canted oriel windows at first storey level all contribute to a unique visual experience provided by this attractive group. These stand in an interesting contrast with their equally attractive and exuberantly detailed Vernacular

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Revival neighbours at numbers 30-32, where decoration is provided in the form of leaded lights, scalloped weather tiling to two-storey bays and the jettied dormers above, topped with curved finials, shallow pedimented oriel windows supported on brackets and pedimented doorway surrounds with keystone radial fanlights and corbel detailing. The plainer vernacular revival houses beyond (34-52 Fosse Road South) are nonetheless an attractive addition to the streetscene. The egg-and-dart clay eaves detailing (numbers 34-36), moulded and carved name plaques, fish-scale tiling, mock timbering, keystone archways, full-height bays, elaborate chimneys and prominent gables all contribute to the local distinctiveness of this red brick Edwardian terrace, where most original timber windows survive.

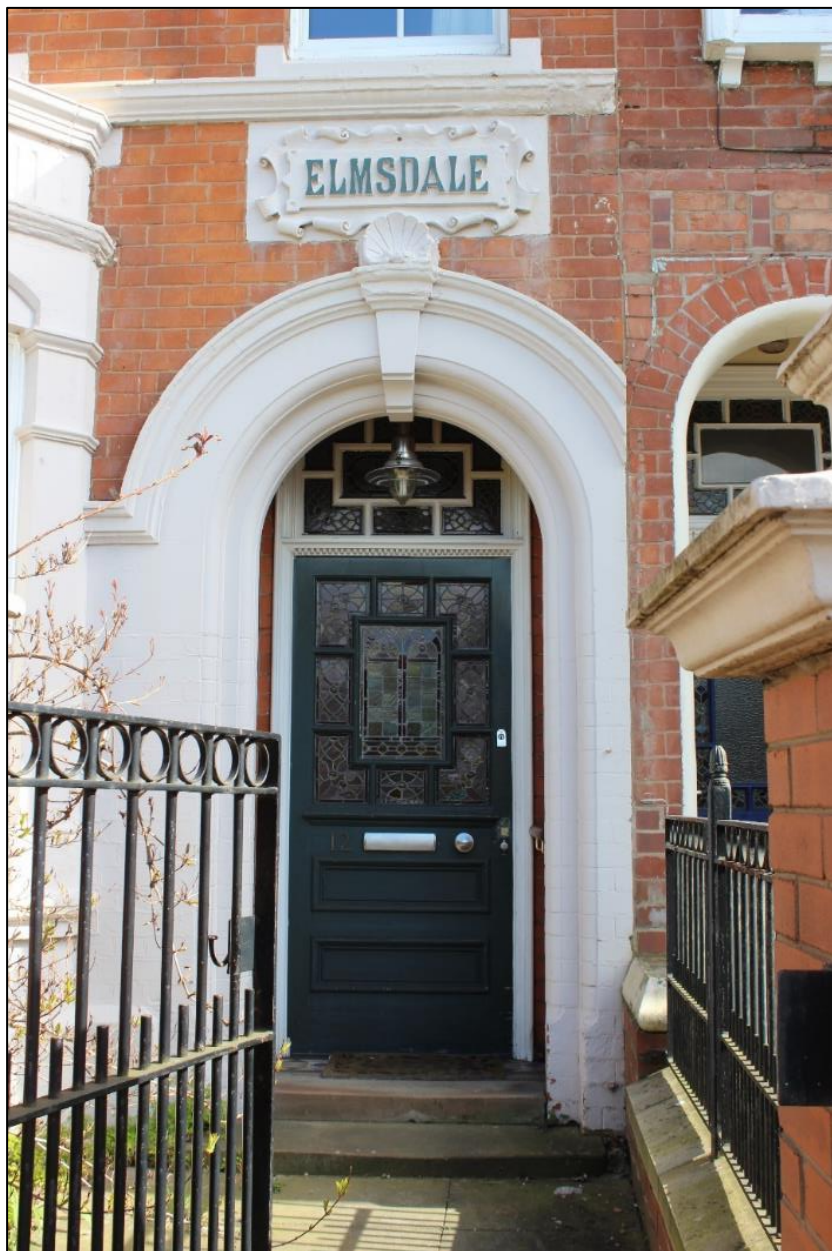


Figure 34: The highly decorative original doorway at 12 Fosse Road South, set in an elegant stone archway.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal



Figure 35: The three-storey neo-Georgian building at 22-24 Fosse Road South, with original tall sash windows under keystone arches.



Figure 36: The elaborately detailed villas at 30-32 Fosse Road South, adding to the local distinctiveness.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

9.33. At 54 Fosse Road South the sham timber-framing and tile hanging is complimented by uniquely detailed bay with shallow pedimented oriel window on curved brackets. The houses beyond, at numbers 56-60 replicate the pattern of coved eaves detail, sham timbering to dormers, full-height bays, pedimented shallow oriel windows and keystone arched porches with moulded name plaques above. Beyond there is a group of matching vernacular revival houses at 62-68 Fosse Road South with paired centrally placed front doors in recessed wide porches. The corner property, 70 Fosse Road South, has an elegant canopy supported by wrought iron and curved timber brackets. The complete boundary, dwarf red brick wall with railings, sweeps around the corner onto Shaftesbury Road and compliments the group.



Figure 37: The intricate original tiled decoration on the inside faces of the porches at 46-48 Fosse Road South.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

- 9.34. One of the most unusual and attractive buildings in this part of the Conservation Area is 90 Fosse Road South, which was used as a school from the late 19th century to around 1996. Now in use as flats, this Queen Anne Revival red brick building is decorated with tall windows set in keystoned segmental arch surrounds, with a large round arched window topped with a projecting moulded hood with dentilled detail and a canopied porch supported on squat Tuscan columns flanked by splayed full height bays to frontage. The stone dressing and overhanging eaves detail continue onto the plainer side elevation, dominated by the prominent chimneystack.



Figure 38: The Queen Anne Revival property at 90 Fosse Road South, positioned on a prominent corner in the Conservation Area.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Westcotes Drive

9.35. The character of Westcotes Drive is varied, and markedly different from the rest of the Conservation Area. The extensive grounds of Westcotes House on the north side of the road means that the area is built to a much lower density than the surrounding streets, dominated by turn of the 20th century terraced housing. The street forms something of a quiet backdrop to the traffic-heavy Fosse Road corridor, where numerous mature trees create a ‘green’ and ‘airy’ environment, providing contrast, texture, colour and shade. Westcotes Drive rises steeply westwards from Fosse Road South along a straightforward trajectory. The skyline is punctuated by tall deciduous trees, turrets, gables and chimneystacks, adding to the visual interest and local distinctives of its townscape. Chimney stacks, dormers and bay windows add interest and rhythm on the south side of the street.



Figure 39: The two storey dwellinghouses at Westcotes Drive, creating a picturesque streetscene.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

- 9.36. The eastern gateway into the area is marked by the green curtilage of the Westcotes Health Centre and the red-brick semi-detached house at 84 Westcotes Drive. The latter does echo its more ornate and unique neighbour at 90 Fosse Road South, with splayed bays, segmental arched windows, flat roof dormers, stone banding and a canopy supported on curved brackets. The opposite corner is occupied by commercial premises at number 54, with splayed and rounded bays, an ornate porchway supported on squat columns and rendering to top, with mock quoins effect.



Figure 40: The original moulded joinery and stained glazing at 96 Westcotes Drive.

- 9.37. Beyond, the townscape divides sharply in character between the west and east side. To the west of the highway, a two-storey vernacular revival brick terrace fills most of the frontage between Fosse Road South and Sykefield Avenue. This group was built as a series of pairs between 1903 and 1907 in a variety of different designs but with consistent use of render to upper storeys. Built on a gently rising slope, these houses accommodate attractive detailing, including coloured and leaded glass, moulded semi-circular framing to windows, triangular oriel windows supported on moulded brackets (104-106 Westcotes Drive), chequer patterned stucco detailing (130-132 Westcotes Drive) and weather tiling. The staggered roof lines, pierced clay ridge tiles, chimney stacks and dormers add further quality and interest to the townscape.
- 9.38. The corner of Sykefield Avenue is dominated by one of the most striking Edwardian houses in Leicester, Bradgate House at 136 Westcotes Drive.

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

This unique house in the Art Nouveau style was built in 1903 to the design of Charles Kempson for John Russell Frears. The highly unusual and eclectic elevations are decorated with moulded gables, elaborate chimneystacks, arched keystoned doorway with quoins, staggered windows, oriel window supported on sizeable moulded brackets and full height bays. Despite its long-term vacancy and progressing deterioration, it remains an attractive and architecturally arresting addition to the Conservation Area. The adjacent Sykefield (c.1880) by Ewan Christian is set behind a tall panelled brick wall with piers, which is nationally listed in its own right, and a line of deciduous trees beyond. The characteristic features of this attractive Domestic Revival villa are its tall chimney stack, hipped dormers, expansive slate roofs and the octagonal central tower to rear. The attached lodge echoes the main house by its use of red brickwork with ashlar dressing and Cumberland slate. Its private landscaped grounds add further interest to the Conservation Area and compliment the Grade II Listed building. Its detached neighbour at 140 Westcotes Drive is an inter-war house since converted into a nursery, amply set back from the highway.



Figure 41: The unique brick and stone decoration at the corner of the Art Nouveau Bradgate House.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

9.39. On the opposite corner of the junction is the Westcotes Lodge, now West Leicester Conservative Club. This attractive late 19th century Domestic Revival villa echoes its grander neighbour (Westcotes House) in the use of Swithland slates, deep red brickwork and stone dressing. Its asymmetrical elevations present an octagonal corner tower feature, jettied gable with sham half-timbering, a wide segmental arched entrance porch with a deeply recessed doorway and many of its original timber framed windows. Around the corner at 57-59 Westcotes Drive is a pair of red brick vernacular revival inter-war dwellings complimented by their lush green setting. Overhanging eaves and tall chimneystacks are a common feature to both. The dwelling at 55A Westcotes Drive is a mid-20th century addition to the Conservation Area, screened by deciduous trees and fencing.



Figure 42: The tower of the Westcotes Lodge, an attractive addition to the Conservation Area.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

9.40. Past the new extension to Wyggeston's Hospital is the Gothic Revival Westcotes House, constructed c.1888 to the designs of S. S. Teulon. It is hidden behind a screen of large trees, accessed by a curved tarmac driveway. Its steeply pitched roofs, elaborate chimneys, purple and blue brick façades are thus only glimpsed beyond the small Gothic Lodge at the east entrance. The lodge and attached stables complement its grand neighbour by the elaborate use of matching brickwork, including the pointed-arch detail above windows and at eaves level, stone dressing and the addition of elaborate chimneystacks, a weathervane and a gabled dormer. The infill development is unfortunate and undermines the quality and visual allure of these outbuildings, which were originally separated.



Figure 43: Westcotes House, with its elaborate elevations with blue brick and sandstone dressing, and complex roofscape, topped with a lead clad turret with a weathervane.

10. Townscape

10.1. The visual quality stems from the inherent variety and quality of the area's building stock and its dynamic topography, which have produced a townscape that is rich in pattern and detail, with houses built to a consistently high quality. Whilst the scale and massing of most buildings, dominated by two and three storey terraces, is similar, the architectural treatment, design and detailing are visually diverse, ranging from

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

plainer Domestic Revival artisan houses to grand Gothic Revival villas. The majority of properties survive relatively intact, retaining most of their original architectural features, adding to the area's local distinctness and providing a visual record of the cycles of Leicester's development over the last 150 years.

- 10.2. The layout of buildings is also an important factor in the area's townscape. The buildings on the west side of Fosse Road Central are amply set back from the road and help to give this street a less constrained feel, whilst the large houses with landscaped grounds on the north side of Westcotes Drive create an impression of space reminiscent of country estates, which contrasts strongly with the terrace opposite. The buildings on the west side of Fosse Road South are set well back from the road and this brings the houses on the east side into greater prominence, equally adding to the area's sense of space. Overall, the conservation area has a general feeling of spaciousness that is unusual in the West End, as is the quality and volume of the green infrastructure. The tall mature trees across the Conservation Area, with an evident concentration on Westcotes Drive, add colour, texture and seasonal interest.



Figure 44: Dulverton Road, with houses following its sweeping westwards curve.

Views and Vistas

- 10.3. From the top of Fosse Road Central the road visually narrows from the open junction with King Richards Road, following a westwards curve downhill towards Hinckley Road. The terraced properties at numbers 26-48 come into prominence, with finely detailed elevations complemented by eminent gables and tall chimneystacks that animate the skyline. This is counteracted by the lush vegetation opposite. The gateways onto Stretton Road and Daneshill Road are framed by dignified period houses complete with boundary treatments that sweep around the corner.
- 10.4. Westwards along Stretton Road, the view is onto the green swathe along Kirby Road. Rising steeply away from Fosse Road, the elevation then turns downhill to meet King Richards Road; throughout, decoration and architectural detailing add much visual interest. On Daneshill Road, the view onto Kirby Road is blocked by the curved western end of the terrace at numbers 50-56 and the mature trees beyond. Eastwards, the view is onto the St George's Tower, framed by deciduous foliage.
- 10.5. Along Hinckley Road, there are fine views from the ridge-top eastwards and downhill to the city centre, while the views downhill to the west are more open, a result of the construction of the King Richards Road dual carriageway. Although many of the houses west of the Danes Hill House have lost original windows and doors, they are nevertheless an important visual group, balancing the larger, more ornate properties at the eastern end.



Figure 45: Fosse Road South, with its attractive Victorian and Edwardian dwellinghouses fronting onto this gently curving street create an attractive streetscene, enhanced by the deciduous street trees.

- 10.6. Beyond the ornate Ukrainian Catholic Church, the character of Fosse Road South is determined by well-crafted terraced houses set behind shallow forecourts. These follow the subtle curve of the road, so that the terrace is gradually revealed as a series of sequential views that add particular interest to the townscape. Chimney stacks, attic dormers and gables punctuate the skyline while trees add texture and seasonal interest.
- 10.7. Along Westcotes Drive, the lush setting of the 19th century villas and tall mature trees elevates the local townscape and views throughout. This is replicated and enhanced at the junction with Braunstone Avenue, where the detached inter-war dwellings echo the setting and the 'grand' impression of its older neighbours. The high brick boundary wall to Sykefield adds interest to the view up Westcotes Drive from the junction with Braunstone Avenue.

Landmarks and corners

- 10.8. The large Edwardian red brick Westcotes United Reform Church is an important landmark in this part of the city. To the east, the Ukrainian Catholic Church provides another eminent punctuation mark along the highway, emerging above the local roofline.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal



Figure 46: The red brick Westcotes United Reform Church with sandstone dressing stands on a prominent junction at the edge of the Conservation Area.

10.9. The two Grade II Listed buildings in the area, Sykefield and Westcotes are prominent beacons along Westcotes Drive, despite their recessed position and well screened setting. To a lesser extent, this is also the case with the Leicester West Conservation Club at number 55, where glimpses of its fine elevations elevated in relation to the main highway contribute to its landmark status. The corner Art Nouveau Bradgate House is the single most prominent corner property along Westcotes Drive, which magnifies its inventive quality and design.



Figure 47: The building at 90 Fosse Road South is a prominent and attractive historic corner property.

10.10. The junction of Fosse Road and Westcotes Drive is dominated by the finely detailed Queen Anne Revival former school at 90 Fosse Road South that extends all way up to Shaftesbury Road, and is visually counterbalanced by the open lawn to curtilage of Westcotes Health Centre opposite. Up the road, the finely detailed corner properties at the junction with Hinckley Road provide a fine gateway to Fosse Road Central.

Activity

10.11. The Conservation Area has varying levels of activity across it, being a result of differential access arrangements and land uses. Hinckley Road and Fosse Road South are busy traffic arteries connecting to the inner ring road (King Richards Road). This is a direct result of the urban redevelopment of the last quarter of the 20th century, which dramatically transformed the north portion of the area. Stretton Road, Daneshill Road and Dulverton Road form ancillary highways to these primary arteries, with lower level of traffic, but are nonetheless heavily influenced by a steady influx and presence of vehicles. Westcotes Drive provides a quiet backdrop to the rest of the Conservation Area, offering a more pedestrian friendly environment throughout.

11. Building Materials

11.1. The diversity of the area is reflected though the variety of materials used throughout, integral to the area's building stock and used as part

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

of the public realm. The varying finishes, colors and textures contribute to a dynamic townscape with much visual interest.



Figure 48: The red brick pointed archway to the side elevation of the Former Primitive Methodist Chapel, with moulded clay tiling to top.

Facing materials

- 11.2. Most buildings in the Conservation Area are constructed of brickwork. The dominance of red and orange bricks is evident, throughout all character zones. However, the texture, hue and finish of the brickwork varies significantly across the area. The difference between the orange brickwork at Cromford House (1897) at 20 Fosse Road and the deep red brickwork at the Queen Anne Revival house at number 22-24 is striking. The transition between numbers 7 and 9 Stretton Road is much more delicate but nonetheless notable, whilst the modern extension at the rear of 2 Daneshill Road showcases perfectly how mismatching bond and hue can unduly affect the streetscene.



Figure 49: Woodgate House at 37 Fosse Road Central is constructed of the common Leicester red brickwork, with hanging tiles commonplace throughout the Conservation Area.

11.3. Otherwise, buff brickwork dominates Fosse Road Central, used as both primary and supplementary (19-27 Fosse Road Central) facing material. The side gables at number 36 and number 60 reveal that buff brickwork has been used almost exclusively to construct the frontage, confirmed by a walk along Norfolk Street. Similarly, the top portion of the rear elevation of the otherwise buff brick Danes Hill House showcases a patchwork of materials, including historic red chequered brickwork. Blue brickwork appears in the form of banding (Dulverton Road) and accents to surrounds, corners and cornicing, as in the case of the semi-detached house at 1 Daneshill Road or at Westcotes House.



Figure 50: The buff brick properties at 42-48 Fosse Road Central, with stylized Dutch gables and stucco detailing.

11.4. The use of external render and painting of brickwork is also common. Whilst in some cases such external treatment contributes to the local distinctiveness and adds interest to the streetscene (86-134 Westcotes Drive), some comparable modern interventions have had an adverse impact on a number of buildings, eroding their architectural interest and imposing an undue maintenance burden (6-8 Fosse Road South, 9 Stretton Road). The late 19th century buildings in the Tudor Revival style at the west end of Stretton Road have an unusual example of pargetting in the plasterwork between the sham timber framing of the upper floors. Otherwise, there is a clear difference between the smooth render and the roughcast render, used at turn of the 20th century buildings in the 'Norman Shaw' vernacular style, adding texture and variation to the local streetscene. The chequered pattern at 130-132 Westcotes Drive is also worthy of note.



Figure 51: The mock half-timbering at Westcotes House (Conservative Club).

- 11.5. Many Vernacular Revival houses feature timber detailing to frontages, in the form of sham-timbering, bargeboards (125 Hinckley Road and 20-26 Fosse Road Central), curved brackets (19-27 Fosse Road Central) or balustrades (26-28 Fosse Road South). Otherwise, timber porches (29-37 Fosse Road Central, Danes Hill House) can be spotted throughout the Conservation Area.
- 11.6. Stone dressing is also common, in the form of ornamental name plaques (especially along Fosse Road South), quoins (101-105 Hinckley Road), banding (Westcotes United Reform Church), balconies (56-60 Fosse Road Central), surrounds and porches (101-105 Hinckley Road). The carved heads to the corner tower at 2 Daneshill Road are unusual

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

additions to the streetscene, as is the eclectic Edwardian dressing of Bradgate House. The dressed frontages of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the United Reform Church feature a rich collection of stonework, including carved keystones, exaggerated banding and ornate tracery.

- 11.7. Otherwise, the frontages of both the artisan houses and the more dominant Vernacular Revival villas commonly feature weather tiling, in the form of fish-scale, scallop or alternate red clay tiles. Unfortunately, PVC panelling has been used to replace sections of render, sham-timbering and weather tiling to some dwellings (117, 121 and 169 Hinckley Road), to the detriment of the area's townscape.



Figure 52: The carved stone and timber architraves, arches, brackets, pediments and name plaques at 32-34 Fosse Road South, original to these properties.

Roofs

- 11.8. The roofscape of the area's building stock is dominated by Welsh slate. Where slates have been replaced with modern concrete tiles / pantiles, the differences in colour and texture are obvious, such as at 44 Fosse Road South, and 125 Hinckley Road, detracting from the character and cohesion of the area. Westcotes House features Swithland slates, while Sykefield and 55 Westcotes Drive present Cumberland slate hipped roofs, which are unique for the area. Whilst red clay dormer finials, ridge tiles and tile hanging are common, red clay roofs are rare, present at 6-8 Fosse Road South, 30-32 Fosse Road South, 9 Stretton Road and 136 Westcotes Drive (Bradgate House).
- 11.9. Lead clad dormers at 90 Fosse Road South are also unique in the area; most original dormers are clad with materials to match the original roofscapes, and thus reflect the Welsh slate domination. Modern dormers, majority of which are located to the rear of the houses, are clad in a variety of materials and finishes, including felt, concrete, and clay.



Figure 53: The Cumberland slate hipped roofs at the Grade II Listed Sykefield.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

11.10. Whilst elaborate chimneystacks at Bradgate House, 37 Fosse Road Central, Sykefield and Westcotes House are important architectural features in their own right, the less ornate red brick chimneystacks that otherwise punctuate the skyline of the Conservation Area have a collective importance. These highlight the rhythm of the houses, and add interest to the local streetscene, augmenting the local distinctiveness of the Conservation Area; this is arguably most notable along Dulverton Road. In most cases, the original yellow and red chimney pots survive. These come in a variety of shapes and forms – including the crowned pots along Stretton Road (numbers 11-13 and 38), Hinckley Road (number 157-163) and Fosse Road South (numbers 34-36).



Figure 54: The clay roofs of Bradgate House, with a prominent quoined chimneystack.

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

11.11. Finials are also common, including clay, stone, metal and timber examples. The intricately carved examples at 42-48 Fosse Road Central that crown the Dutch style gables are some of the finest examples in the area. Otherwise noteworthy is the galvanized steel onion dome crowning the Ukrainian Catholic Church, topped by a metal cross, as well as the multiple lead clad turrets, lead finials, slate gables and dormers of the Westcotes House, which also features a number of ornate weathervanes, replicated at the attached lodge.



Figure 55: The metal weathervane on the top of the gable of the Westcotes Hospital Lodge, echoing the example to the main building of the Grade II Listed complex.

Boundary Treatments

11.12. The vast majority of the boundary treatments are low-lying brick walls, with stone dressing. The walls along Fosse Road Central and Fosse Road South have been rebuilt in the 1980s, to the benefit of the local streetscene. Some of the more ornate examples include the pierced mixed brick boundary at the corner of Fosse Road Central and Daneshill Road, where the use of blue, buff and red brickwork creates a feature of much visual and architectural interest. The significance of the tall, panelled brick wall with ashlar dressing and gate piers with pyramidal

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

ashlar caps with sizeable ball finials at Sykefield has been acknowledged by its designated status. Otherwise, some of the front boundaries along Fosse Road Central retain their original coping stones and pier caps, re-used when these were rebuilt in the 1980s, including the ornate examples at 6-12 Fosse Road Central. Otherwise, blue brick copings are common. Along Hinckley Road, locally sourced granite was used to construct a series of boundary walls, many of which still survive. The most impressive is the wall at the south side of the highway, a remnant of the former Wyggeston Hospital.



Figure 56: The Grade II Listed brick walls and gate piers to Sykefield.

11.13. Whilst free-standing railings are less common, they are an integral feature of the reconstructed boundary walls along Fosse Road Central and Fosse Road South, making an occasional appearance along other highways, where mild steel dominates. To screen and separate the residential streets of Daneshill from the dual carriageway, a boundary

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

has been constructed from red engineering brickwork with steel railing panels, set alongside a few trees. Otherwise, there is a particularly unusual cast iron gate with barley sugar twist posts at 53 Westcotes Drive (Westcotes House Lodge) and remnants of the once common cast iron gates along Daneshill Road.

- 11.14. Boundary treatments make an important and positive contribution to the character and streetscene of the Conservation Area, particularly where original features survive. They are not only attractive features in themselves, but they help to define public versus private space, create a sense of enclosure and provide a pleasant setting for the area's building stock.



Figure 57: The reconstructed modern front boundary walls with railings along Fosse Road South, with some of the original capping stones retained.

Other materials

- 11.15. Despite notable past alterations, a considerable number of the original timber windows of the area's Victorian and Edwardian building stock survive. The Diocletian windows along the west side of Westcotes Drive and the full set of tall sash windows at 22-24 Fosse Road South, represent some of the finest examples of their kind in the Conservation Area.
- 11.16. Stained glazing is also common throughout the Conservation Area. The two leaded coloured glass stairwell windows at 37 Fosse Road Central,

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

facing onto Hinckley Road, are intricately glazed, somewhat reminiscent of its ecclesiastical neighbour. The complete set of stained glazing at 30-32 Fosse Road South is of particular interest, complimenting the elaborate pedimented timber doorways with all finials that frame the original solid paneled timber doors. Otherwise the stained glazing set in timber frames at 38 Fosse Road South and the stained panes at 32-38 Daneshill Road and 62 Stretton Road animate the streetscene. The contribution of the stained glazing to the character of the area is therefore quite pronounced.

- 11.17. Leaded metal windows are a surviving feature of Sykefield House, the Ukrainian Catholic Church and Westcotes House, where they sit alongside the original timber units. Less ornate modern examples are present to the rear of Bradgate House, matching the date of the two-storey extension.



Figure 58: The stained-glass leaded windows at 30 Fosse Road South, set in intricately moulded joinery.

11.18. Whilst a great number of original windows survive, poorly proportioned uPVC (plastic) windows are also common. These have not reproduced the fine mouldings and balanced designs of the originals. As a consequence, the appearance of the properties affected has been damaged, to the collective detriment of the Conservation Area. Moreover, as notable by inspecting the frontage at 17 Daneshill Road, even timber framed windows can cause harm if of inadequate design, proportions and quality.



Figure 59: The timber and stone portico supported on Tuscan columns and the original solid timber door with circular glazing.

11.19. From the original doorways that survive in the area, the ornate ledged examples at 10-12 Fosse Road South are extraordinary elaborate, complemented by their original fanlights. The original examples at 7 and 33 Stretton Road similarly add considerable interest and quality to the local townscape. Unfortunately, incremental alterations have since eroded the legibility of some of the original doorways along Daneshill Road, Stretton Road, Dulverton Road and Fosse Road in particular (such as at 8 Fosse Road South); these highways are otherwise punctuated by a diverse array of less and more sensitive replacements in timber, composite and plastic.

11.20. Elsewhere, coloured floor tiles on garden paths or in porches (29-37 Fosse Road Central and 1 Stretton Road) can be found in many locations, adding colour and pattern into the local streetscene. There are also large glass and aluminium shopfronts on either side of 125 Hinckley Road, with well-proportioned timber shopfronts at 107 Hinckley Road and 54 Westcotes Drive.



Figure 60: The original doorway with glazed timber panels at Cromford House, 20 Fosse Road South.

11.21. Whilst some cast iron water goods survive, including at Bradgate House and 22-24 Fosse Road South, or the Grade II Listed Sykefield House (recognisable by their square sections), most have since been replaced by modern uPVC examples, lacking the detailing and quality of the originals.

11.22. Roads and footpaths in the Conservation Area are generally laid to tarmac and standard concrete paving slabs. Diorite kerbstones, a distinctive Leicester feature, and granite cobbles can still be seen in the carriage drive at 3 Daneshill Road. Otherwise, Mountsorrel granite kerbstones are common along most highways. Granite cobbles reappear as a complimentary feature along Westcotes Drive. Other floorscape materials include tactile paving and grey and pink pavers.

12. Open spaces and trees

12.1. There are no public open spaces in the Conservation Area, but certain areas are rich in greenery. Westcotes Drive is complimented by lush vegetation, in the form of mature trees, tall hedges and landscaped lawned areas. Evergreen trees, limes and beech predominate with fine collections of conifers, beech, lime, pines, yew and holly at Westcotes House and the Conservative Club. The two beech trees at the west end of Westcotes Drive are of particular merit, as are the limes and sycamores at the junction with Fosse Road South; all are protected by the Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Mature trees also punctuate Fosse Road Central, Fosse Road South and Hinckley Road, creating attractive and seasonal patterns of colour, shade and foliage.



Figure 61: The planting and trees in front gardens animate the area, adding further visual interest.

West End Conservation Area Character Appraisal

- 12.2. Groups of trees reinforce the separation between the residential streets of Daneshill and the inner ring road. However, at the west end of Stretton Road and Hinckley Road these trees, under-planted with shrubs, are small and of poorer quality. The composition at Daneshill Road is somewhat more successful, spilling into the green 'corridor' along the south side of King Richards Road, with a winding public footpath at the east end.



Figure 62: The mature trees along Westcotes Drive add colour, shade, and character to the area.

13. Lighting and street furniture

- 13.1. Street lighting is provided predominantly by standard Council steel lamp columns. There are several sets of traffic lights on Fosse Road South and Hinckley Road, and a traffic calming raised table at the Westcotes Drive/Sykefield Avenue junction.
- 13.2. The King George VI post pillar box at the east end of Daneshill Road adds merit to the Conservation Area. A GR post pillar box opposite 6 Braunstone Avenue is also of interest, being earlier in date. Some of the original cast iron street plaques survive, including at the junction of Fosse Road South/Shaftebury Road, Fosse Road South/Westcotes Drive and Fosse Road Central/Daneshill Road. Regrettably, most have

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

since been replaced by modern sheet aluminum street signs, which dominate. Cast iron Conservation Area roundels are present to most entry points, helping communicate the historic significance of the area.

- 13.3. Otherwise public furniture is scarce, reflecting the area's lack of formal public open spaces. There are a few timber benches to the landscaped areas at the King Richards Road/Fosse Road and King Richards Road/Hinckley Road junctions, a number of concrete bollards, pedestrian barriers, standardised local authority bins and standardised bus stops.



Figure 63: One of a number of surviving cast iron street plaques in the West End Conservation Area.

14. The Extent of Intrusion or Damage (Negative Factors)

Buildings and materials

14.1. The greatest erosion of character in the Conservation Area has been through the incremental replacement of original features. Article 4 Directions were first introduced in October 1991 to cover most residential properties of the former Daneshill Conservation Area and the Westcotes Drive Conservation Area. Their specific purpose was to protect important architectural details of the area's historic building stock. They generally fulfilled their purpose of controlling changes to the front facades and maintaining the symmetry and architectural detailing but on Fosse Road South and Hinckley Road, where no Conservation Area or Article 4 Direction controls had been applied at the time, incremental change over the years has led to the replacement of many original windows and front doors in plastic, to the detriment of the local townscape.



Figure 64: The plastic (uPVC) door recently installed at 58 Stretton Road failed to preserve the character of the historic property and replicate the quality and design of the original door.

14.2. In particular along Hinckley Road and Fosse Road South, a considerable number of plastic uPVC windows have been installed. The fine detail and

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

balanced proportions of the originals, integral to the design to Victorian and Edwardian dwellings, have thus been lost. Some of the original doors have also been lost, in many cases replaced by distinctly inferior uPVC and composite examples. Even in areas long covered by the Article 4 Direction, there are examples of unfortunate modern replacements, including the glazed door at 22 Stretton Road or the plastic windows at 1-3 Daneshill Road. Otherwise, the modern timber framed windows at 36 Fosse Road Central clearly failed to account for the detailing and design of the original, surviving next door.

- 14.3. Loss of character has also been the result of repainting of brick elevations, perfectly illustrated by the one-off examples at 35 Stretton Road and 6-8 Fosse Road South, recladding of bays (4 Fosse Road South, 117 and 121 Hinckley Road, 102 Westcotes Drive) or overhaul of the original slates (bay at 38 Fosse Road Central). The inconsiderate rebuilding of the frontages at 71-73 Stretton Road has had an ever more significant adverse impact on the local character and streetscene of the Conservation Area.

Boundaries

- 14.4. Front boundaries are a consistent feature throughout the Conservation Area, where most houses are recessed from the highway. Fortunately, many of the original front boundaries remain, or otherwise have been sympathetically rebuilt or replaced (such as 26-60 Fosse Road Central). However, in some cases these have been either removed, such as in the case of 23 Fosse Road Central – to provide car parking, or insensitively replaced. This has created something of a fragmented streetscene along Westcotes Drive and Dulverton Road in particular. Aside from the adverse impact on the local townscape, the removal of boundary treatments has since resulted in increased rubbish dumping to these sites where boundaries are missing, exacerbating the impact.



Figure 65: The removal of boundaries along Stretton Road has harmed the appearance of the townscape. The fly-tipping and rubbish exacerbate the negative impact on the streetscene.

Uses

- 14.5. Historically, the area has suffered from inappropriate residential conversions. In many cases, the excessive subdivisions of dwellings have resulted in the loss of original features, lack of maintenance of the historic building stock and poor-quality accommodation. The increased refuse demand has contributed further to the deterioration of the local townscape and loss of garden spaces and planting to the front of houses.
- 14.6. To tackle the issue, the Daneshill Housing Improvement Zone was declared in 1989/90. Whilst substantial improvements were achieved, the area continued to suffer from insensitive conversions and poor-quality housing stock. To go further, in 2014 an Article 4 Direction restricting the permitted development rights for conversions of dwellinghouses into Houses in Multiple Occupations (HMO) was introduced. This means that full planning permission is now necessary to convert a family dwelling into an accommodation housing three or more unrelated individuals. This has since prevented further erosion of

character of the Conservation Area through excessive and inappropriate subdivisions.



Figure 66: The rear of the properties at 125-137 Hinckley Road is in poor condition, with a tarmacked driveway and poor-quality fencing.

Infill development

14.7. Whilst the area remains dominated by Victorian and Edwardian building stock, much of the infill redevelopment that took place during the later 20th century was not contextually responsive and has left buildings and spaces that detract from the character of the area. The surface level carpark and commercial units at 125-137 Hinckley Road, flanking the central Danes Hill House, are a case in point. The adverse effect is exacerbated by the inadequate maintenance of curtilage and discordant fencing to the rear elevation. The garages north of the Fosse Road Central/Hinckley Road junction are comparably unsightly, creating a dissonant break in the otherwise cohesive and high-quality streetscene. Otherwise, the infill dwellinghouse at 80 Dulverton Road and the modern extension at Bradgate House lack the quality and design calibre of its historic neighbours.

14.8. On a smaller scale, the extension to 2 Daneshill Road presents a mixture of poorly proportioned features and unconvincing pastiche

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

design, clad in mismatching stretcher bond brickwork. An infill extension that has connected the formerly detached stables and lodge to Westcotes House is particularly undesirable considering the curtilage Grade II Listed status of these buildings.

15. Neutral Areas

- 15.1. There are some areas of more modern development that have a broadly neutral impact on the historic form of the Conservation Area, such as 1A Sykefield Avenue or the corner house at 84 Dulverton Road.

16. Capacity for Change

- 16.1. As an area of the town that was 'built out' over 100 years ago, with few obvious sites with potential for new development, the capacity for change within the West End Conservation Area is relatively modest. The designation of a conservation area does not however provide a block on any development within its boundaries. The area has changed considerably since it was first built and the renovation and reuse of properties by new owners and businesses is to be welcomed as a means for ensuring the continued vitality of the area as a mixed residential suburb. Change must not however come at the expense of degrading the character and scale that makes the area special, and alterations to properties need to be sympathetic to their context.

17. Additional planning controls

- 17.1. The Council adopted an Article 4 Direction for the former Daneshill Conservation Area and the Westcotes Drive Conservation Area in October 1991. This removed permitted development rights in these areas so that planning permission was required for certain works to the external aspects of the residential properties included in these areas.
- 17.2. In 2014, the Council also adopted an Article 4 Direction (HMO), which provides additional restrictions on the conversion of existing dwellinghouses along Westcotes Drive, Fosse Road South and Sykefield Avenue.
- 17.3. The Council will explore the introduction of a more comprehensive new Article 4 Direction covering the Conservation Area, which would limit the scope of permitted development rights in the area. This would be limited to a geographical areas where its introduction is considered necessary to protect the local amenity of the area. A robust justification will be prepared, alongside a solid evidence base.

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

17.4. For more information please consult the draft West End & St Paul's Conservation Area Management Plan.

18. Conservation area boundary

18.1. The Council is required to review the boundaries of conservation areas 'from time to time' and to consider changing them as appropriate. Prior to this review in 2021, the last review was undertaken in 2008.

18.2. In 2008 it was decided then that Dulverton Road did not merit inclusion in the Conservation Area. However, it has since been identified as at immediate risk from insensitive alterations and inappropriate conversions. Whilst the street has more limited architectural interest, it is integral (historically and architecturally) to the rest of the Conservation Area. The uniformity of its finely detailed artisan houses and the notable elevation of the sharply winding street create a townscape of much interest. Thus, Dulverton Road was included in 2021.

18.3. The only other changes in 2021 include the rationalisation of the boundary to Westcotes House and at Westcotes Health Centre and inclusion of the 'green pocket' north of Daneshill Road.

18.4. A detailed boundary review can be found in Appendix I.

19. Local Consultation

19.1. An earlier draft of this Character Appraisal document was published for public consultation from 8 October 2021 to 22 November 2021. This final version has been produced with the benefit of the comments received during that consultation.

20. Management Proposals

20.1. A separate Conservation Areas Management Plan for West End Conservation Area and the St Paul's Conservation Area has been produced. This sets out proposals and actions to preserve and enhance the special character of these conservation areas. It is available to view at: www.leicester.gov.uk/planning-and-building/conservation/

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

21. Contacts

- 21.1. For further information on this, or other, conservation areas you can contact the Council's Building Conservation Officers by phone, letter or e-mail at the following addresses:

Conservation Team
Planning Department
City Hall
115 Charles Street
Leicester
LE1 1FZ

T: 0116 454 1000

E: planning@leicester.gov.uk

Information on all conservation areas is available on the Council's website: www.leicester.gov.uk/planning-and-building/conservation

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

Glossary of Architectural Terms

ashlar	smooth faced masonry blocks laid horizontally
bargeboard	a timber board fixed at projecting gable ends of roof, usually carved
bracket	an architectural, decorative or structural, member, projecting from the wall
canted	having splayed sides
corbel	a weight-carrying bracket projecting from a wall, e.g under a balcony
cornice	horizontal projecting section at the top of a building or wall
eaves	the part of a roof that projects horizontally beyond the side of the structure it covers
fanlight	a window over a door
finial	a formal ornament at the apex of a gable or spire
fishscale	a pattern created by overlapping the semi-circular edges of decorative tiles or slates
hood mold	projecting molding over an arch or lintel
keystone	capstone; a wedge-shaped stone at the apex of an arch
lancet	a slender, pointed window
mock half-timbering	timber applied externally to suggest a timber framed building
oculus	a circular opening in the center of a dome or in a wall
pargetting	decorative plastering applied to internal or external walls
pediment	a low-pitched gable shape over a door or window
pilaster	rectangular element of vertical masonry which projects slightly from the wall; resembles a flat column
polychrome	decoration created by the use of coloured bricks or stone
portico	a structure consisting of a roof supported by columns at regular intervals
segmental arch	a very shallow arch
stringcourse	a continuous decorative horizontal band projecting from a wall and usually molded
tile-hanging	a covering of overlapping rows of tiles on a vertical surface
Tuscan column	simple, unadorned shaft that rests on a simple, unadorned base and has a simple, unadorned capital
Venetian window	a window comprised of three parts - a central window with semi-circular arch with pilasters on each side and two side windows with flat arches

West End Conservation Area
Character Appraisal

Appendix I: Boundary Review

Proposed Change	Issue	Consideration	Recommendation
Include Dulverton Road	A late 20 th century highway lined with vernacular revival artisan housing, cohesive in design throughout. At immediate risk of insensitive development.	The character, architecture and date of the terraced houses make it integral to the rest of the Conservation Area. None of the houses are of exceptional significance. Townscape is of much visual interest.	Include in the Conservation Area.
Remove car park fronting 127-143 Hinckley Road and 125-131 Hinckley Road	Surface level car park and modern properties to curtilage of the Danes Hill House at 125 Hinckley Road.	The site does not add to the character of the conservation area but created the immediate setting / curtilage of the Danes Hill House	Retain in the Conservation Area.
Include 'green pocket' north of Daneshill Road	A 1970s throughfare green space at the edge of the inner ring road	Created a green edge to the Conservation Area, important contribution to the setting of the Wesburn Terrace at 9-11 Fosse Road Central. Site of the former Infant Orphan Asylum.	Include in the Conservation Area
Include 10-24 Fosse Road Central (St Paul's Terrace and Holly Hayes)	A cohesive short terrace of c.1880 houses and a pair of villas.	A late Victorian Gothic Revival terrace and a pair of Vernacular Revival villas. Heavily altered, with car parking to front. Poor condition, quality comparable to other dwellings in the CA. Abutting the St Paul's Conservation Area	Not to include in the Conservation Area.
Include 11-31 Norfolk Street	Terrace of artisan houses constructed c.1880, looking	Arundel Street is dominated by surface level car	Not to include in the Conservation Area.

West End Conservation Area

Character Appraisal

and 1-3 Arundel Street	onto the modern estate across the highway. In date and design comparable to other dwellings in the Conservation Area.	park and modern garages. Norfolk Street is an incomplete late Victorian terrace of limited architectural and townscape merit.	
Westcotes Health Centre (inc. curtilage) and curtilage of Westcotes Maternity Hospital	The boundary of the Conservation Area does not correspond with the existing curtilage of Westcotes Health Centre and the Grade II Listed Westcotes Maternity Hospital.	There are mature trees (several TPO) at the corner of Westcotes Drive and Fosse Road South.	Rationalise the Conservation Areas boundary to include the whole curtilage of Grade II Listed building.
Include 6 Braunstone Avenue, 1-17 and 6 Sykefield Avenue, 163-165 Barclay Street (inc. Nuffield House)	A mix of Edwardian terraced houses with fine detailing, a modern care home developed set in lush, landscaped grounds, and a detached inter-war property.	Of limited historic and architectural merit, with terraced housing akin to Westcotes Drive terrace. Some intricate original detailing. Mature trees already protected by TPOs. Some scope for redevelopment at Nuffield House.	Not to include in the Conservation Area.