

**ASHBY 'TOWN' CONSERVATION AREA
CHARACTER APPRAISAL**

**ADOPTED
AUGUST 2024**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 defines a conservation area as an area of “special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.
- 1.2. The Ashby-de-la-Zouch conservation area was designated in November 1972 and amendments to the designated boundary took effect in September 1992 and May 2002. A character appraisal was adopted in April 2001. As a result of our most recent boundary review, the conservation area has been divided into the ‘Castle’, ‘Spa’ and ‘Town’ conservation areas and the boundary has been revised further (NWLDC, 2024).

The conservation area since c.2001

- 1.3. Since c.2001 development affecting the conservation area has included the following:
 - Four detached houses off the north side of Wood Street erected c.2000-05;
 - Four terraced houses off Churchside Walk erected c.2002;
 - A mixed use building on Bath Street (‘Castlegate House’) erected c.2003;
 - A mixed use building on South Street (‘Bosworth House’) erected c.2004;
 - Two houses on Wood Street (‘Old Stone Yard’) erected c.2005;
 - A mixed use building on Derby Road (‘The Regency’) erected c.2008;
 - An extension to the ‘design block’ at Ashby School erected c.2010;
 - 32 ‘retirement apartments’ on Kilwardby Street (‘Bainbridge Court’) erected c.2014.
- 1.4. Alpha Cottages¹ (pictured) and the former Hare & Hounds PH were described as long term vacant buildings in April 2001. The properties were brought back into use c.2001 and c.2002 respectively (our references 01/01342/FUL and 02/00042/FUL).
- 1.5. Castlegate House and Bosworth House received design awards from the Civic Society in 2004 and 2008 respectively. The former Hare & Hounds PH received a commendation in 2004.
- 1.6. Since c.2001 our understanding of the conservation area has improved. Robert Hayward’s historic building survey of the conservation area was published in 2004. Robert Jones’ *Illustrated history of Market Street* and *Illustrated history of inns, pubs and ale houses* were published in 2011 and 2012 respectively. Since c.2001 there have been two archaeological investigations in the conservation area, including investigation of a “locally important” archaeological site on the south side of Kilwardby Street (Daniel, 2016).



¹ In June 2000 the local planning authority had published a development brief for the “Bath Street & Kilwardby Street redevelopment site”. The site included Alpha House, Bainbridge Court and a surface car park on Kilwardby Street. The surface car park remains a gap site (see paragraph 6.7).

Context

- 1.7. Ashby-de-la-Zouch is a parish in NW Leicestershire District. Ashby is about 15 miles S of Derby and about 22 miles SE of Nottingham.
- 1.8. The amended NW Leicestershire Local Plan (NWLDC, 2021) recognises Ashby as a ‘key service centre’, i.e. a settlement that provides services and facilities to the surrounding area and that is accessible by some sustainable transport. Because of its role as a key service centre, a significant amount of development will take place in Ashby.
- 1.9. The District Council has permitted the erection of about 1460 dwellings including 675 dwellings on land at Burton Road (13/004686/OUTM and 14/00578/OUTM) and 605 dwellings on land at Money Hill (15/00512/OUTM). The District Council has allocated “land north of Ashby” for the erection of a further 1750 dwellings.
- 1.10. For statistical purposes, England and Wales is divided into Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). Kilwardby Street is in ‘NW Leicestershire 6C’. The level of deprivation in this LSOA is similar to the national median. Three LSOAs cover the remainder of the conservation area; all three are in the 20% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country².
- 1.11. The west end of Market Street is situated at less than 125m AOD, on the Lower Coal Measures formation of sedimentary bedrock. On Moira Road the water tower is situated at about 140m AOD on the Helsby sandstone formation. The junction of Wood Street and Upper Church Street is situated at about 140m AOD on the Wingfield Flags sandstone formation.
- 1.12. The Gilwiskaw Brook flows from N to S across the settlement core. Brook Street and Union Passage follow the route of the culverted brook³.

2. Character analysis

- 2.1. The character of an area may be defined with reference to the age of its buildings and their uses past and present; the overall density, layout and landscaping of development and the scale, massing and materials of the buildings in the area.
- 2.2. Generally the conservation area boundary reflects the extent of the town c.1815-21. The ‘Hill Street’ and ‘Kilwardby Street west’ character zones contain high status development from the early Victorian period. Generally the conservation area is dominated by buildings erected before c.1884. The ‘Bath Street’ character zone is dominated by buildings erected between c.1884 and c.1923. Map 4 indicates those buildings erected after c.1884.
- 2.3. Generally the conservation area is densely developed, with buildings arranged in terraced groups and laid out to the back of the pavement. Red brick is the dominant facing material; the ‘Kilwardby Street east’ character zone is dominated by rendered buildings. Map 7 shows the facing material used on the principal elevation of each building.

² There are 34378 LSOAs in England and Wales. These are ranked by deprivation with 1 being the most deprived and 17189 being the national median. NW Leicestershire 6C is ranked 16242. NW Leicestershire 3A, 3B and 3C are ranked 29097, 29807 and 28003 respectively.

³ White (1863) says that “a new street between Market Street and the Green” was formed after 1823.

- 2.4. Generally traditional roofing materials survive; there are twice as many plain tile roofs as natural slate roofs. The 'South Street west' character zone is dominated by natural slate roofs. Non-traditional roofing materials intrude to a greater extent in the 'Upper Church Street' and 'Wood Street west' character zones. Map 8 shows the roofing material used on the principal roof slope of each building.
- 2.5. The conservation area may be considered as thirteen character zones. In this respect height and use are defining characteristics. In terms of use, four zones are characterised by retail and other 'A' class uses; three zones contain a diversity of uses while six zones are characterised by residential uses. Generally this pattern reflects the extent of the primary shopping area and the town centre. Map 5 indicates the uses of buildings.
- 2.6. In terms of height, six zones are characterised by buildings that are 2½ to 3 storeys tall; five zones are characterised by buildings that are 1½ to 2 storeys tall while two zones contain a diversity of heights. Map 6 indicates the heights of buildings.
- 2.7. The conservation area may be considered as thirteen character zones; nine zones closely reflect the general character of the conservation area. The character zones are shown on map 1 and may be described as follows:

Retail zones

- 2.8. The following four character zones are dominated by retail and other 'A' class uses. The character of each zone closely reflects the general character of the conservation area.

Market Street west

- 2.8.1. Generally buildings are arranged in terraced groups around a linear open space; some courtyard development survives. Generally buildings are three storeys tall. Most buildings are faced in red brick but a substantial minority are faced in render. The character zone contains 29 listed buildings.



- 2.8.2. Four buildings on the south side of Market Street do not contribute positively to character. In the long term there are opportunities to enhance character through the replacement of these buildings:

- **12 and 14 Market Street:** The building does not reflect the massing and materials of the character zone.
- **42 to 48 Market Street:** This large building does not reflect the scale of the character zone; it contributes negatively to views of the church tower from the west. 42 Market Street has an untreated aluminium shop front.

- **r/o 52 Market Street:** The building does not reflect the massing and materials of the character zone; the boundary treatment also contributes negatively.
- **1 Union Passage:** The single-storey flat-roofed structure to the rear of 28 to 32 Market Street does not reflect the scale and massing of the character zone.

Soft landscaping

- 2.8.3. The character zone contains garden land associated with two listed buildings; this land contributes positively to character. Garden land at 53 & 53A Market Street is bounded by a tall red brick wall. Garden land at 62 & 64 Market Street (the former Leicestershire Bank) contains mature trees.

Market Street east

- 2.8.4. Generally buildings are arranged in terraced groups and laid out to the back of the pavement. Some courtyard development survives but much was demolished c.1948-71. Generally buildings are three storeys tall. Most buildings are faced in red brick but a substantial minority are faced in render. The character zone contains 22 listed buildings. The Bulls Head PH (67 Market Street) is a grade II* listed building.



- 2.8.5. Two buildings in the character zone do not contribute positively to character. In the long term there are opportunities to enhance character through the replacement of these buildings:
- **57 and 59 Market Street:** This large building does not reflect the scale of the character zone.
 - **73 and 75 Market Street:** The two-storey flat-roofed building does not reflect the scale and massing of the character zone.
- 2.8.6. To the west of the Market Hall, flat-roofed elements do not reflect the scale and massing of the character zone. Buildings to the south west of Bakery Court were demolished after 1971. The buildings were replaced by a surface car park that does not contribute positively to character. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the demolition of the flat-roofed elements and the redevelopment of the surface car park.

Bath Street

- 2.8.7. This character zone is dominated by buildings erected between c.1884 and c.1923. Generally buildings are arranged in terraced groups and laid out to the back of the pavement. Generally buildings are 2½ or 3 storeys tall. Generally buildings are faced in red brick. The Shoulder of Mutton PH (1 & 3 Market Street) is a grade II listed building.

The Green

- 2.8.8. Generally buildings are arranged in terraced groups around an irregular open space (pictured right). Generally buildings are 1½ or 2 storeys tall. Generally buildings are faced in red brick. 8 to 12 The Green, 1 North Street and a former lamp standard are grade II listed buildings.



The primary shopping area

- 2.9. The amended NW Leicestershire Local Plan (2021) designates a primary shopping area. The designation coincides with the 'Market Street east', 'Market Street west' and 'Bath Street' character zones.
- 2.10. In 2012 and 2019 the District Council commissioned retail study updates (Roger Tym & Partners, 2012; Lichfields, 2019). In 2012 the primary shopping area displayed "generally good levels of vitality and viability"; in 2019 it "appears to be performing well". In 2012 there were ten vacant properties, "considerably below the UK average". In 2019 there were eight vacant properties.
- 2.11. The retail study updates describe the primary shopping area as "attractive"; the 2012 update noted a "high quality streetscape". In 2017 the town's evening economy achieved Purple Flag accreditation, which reflects a "clean and safe" environment.
- 2.12. The retail study updates noted "significant levels of traffic" on Market Street, although the 2019 update noted that "three pedestrian crossings are provided". The greater part of the town is subject to a 7.5 tonne vehicle weight restriction.

Shop fronts

- 2.13. Market Street and Bath Street are characterised by a mix of surviving traditional shop fronts and modern shop fronts in a traditional style. Pevsner (1984) notes a "good row of nineteenth century shop fronts inserted in Georgian houses" on the north side of Market Street including numbers 53 and 65. The District Council has adopted a supplementary planning document (SPD) 'Shop fronts and advertisements' (2019).
- 2.14. A typical shop front of the period before c.1850 would feature pilasters with capitals supporting a shallow classical frieze and cornice. The shop windows would be bowed and divided into small panes. A typical shop front of the period after c.1850 would feature

pilasters and brackets supporting a deep fascia and cornice. The shop windows would be flat and would contain plate glass. 51 and 65 Market Street contain shop fronts of the period before c.1850. Shop fronts of the period after c.1850 include:

- 16 Market Street;
- 34A Market Street (installed c.1930 for Melias Ltd);
- 53 Market Street (installed c.1880);
- 71 Market Street⁴;
- 76 Market Street (installed c.1902);
- 81 Market Street.

2.15. The SPD advises that “shop fronts should respect the materials of the building” and encourages “shop fronts constructed of painted timber”. Three listed buildings contain untreated aluminium shop fronts (28 Market Street⁵; 52 Market Street; 63 Market Street). Note also the untreated aluminium shop front at 42 Market Street.

2.16. The SPD advises that “shop fronts should respect the size of the building” and says that “as a rule of thumb the height of the fascia and cornice should be no more than one-sixth of the height of the shop front overall. The SPD advises that “shop fronts should not extend into the storey above”. The terraced group 15 to 33 Market Street contains several large fasciae. 33 Market Street has a very large fascia that extends over the first floor window sills.

2.17. The SPD encourages trough lighting “set flush to the fascia” but advises that “swan neck lights are rarely acceptable in historic contexts”. Three listed buildings feature swan neck lights; all are hot food takeaways (77 Market Street; 85 & 85A Market Street; 88 Market Street). The SPD advises that a new shop front may accommodate lighting “within or under the cornice”; 25 Market Street is an example of good practice.



2.18. The SPD advises that signs “should be considered as an integral element in the design”. It advises that “where there is no fascia, consider applying lettering to the shop window or upper floors”. At 94 and 96 Market Street fascia signs have been installed in a manner that obscures the frieze and cornice. At 50 and 84 Market Street panel signs have been attached to buildings “where there is no fascia”⁶. The SPD advises that lettering should be “painted directly onto the shop front rather than on a board which is then stuck onto the shop front”; 72 Market Street is an example of bad practice.

⁴ 71 Market Street has an unusual shop front comprising a “large angular bay” under an “enriched” frieze and cornice.

⁵ In 1978 we permitted a new shop front at 28 Market Street (our ref 78/0095/P).

⁶ In 1977 we granted permission for “taking out shop fronts and building up” at 84 Market Street (our ref 77/1166/P).

Hard landscaping

- 2.19. On Bath Street and Market Street the footways are covered with small concrete pavers. On Bath Street and the west part of Market Street there are granite kerbs, while on the east part of Market Street there are concrete kerbs. Generally courtyards do not contain hard landscaping of note, but the list entry for the Queen's Head PH refers to a "pavement surface of granite setts ... extending under the archways [sic] to Market Street".
- 2.20. Footways are covered with brick pavers on Mill Lane Mews and the north part of the Green. There are granite kerbs on the north-west side of the Green and on either side of Elford Street. A traditional brick footway survives in front of 6 Elford Street and 4 to 8 Derby Road⁷.

Non-retail zones

- 2.21. The following five character zones are in residential use or contain a diversity of uses. The character of each zone closely reflects the general character of the conservation area.

Kilwardby Street east

- 2.21.1. This character zone contains a diversity of uses. Generally buildings are arranged in terraced groups and laid out to the back of the pavement. Generally buildings are 3 storeys tall. Generally buildings are faced in render. The character zone contains 9 listed buildings.



- 2.21.2. A non-conformist chapel and school were demolished c.1985 and replaced by an access drive. In 1988 we permitted a large three-storey extension to the rear of the Fallen Knight PH (88/0059/L) and a pair of houses to the rear of Kilwardby Mews (88/0143/P). This development does not contribute positively to significance. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the redevelopment of the site.

Lower Church Street

- 2.21.3. This character zone contains a diversity of uses. Generally buildings are arranged in terraced groups and laid out to the back of the pavement. Generally buildings are 2½ or 3 storeys tall. Generally buildings are faced in red brick. The character zone contains 13 listed buildings.



⁷ The principal elevations of 4 to 8 Derby Road address Elford Street.

Upper Church Street and Wood Street west

2.21.4. These character zones are in residential use. Generally buildings are arranged in terraced groups and laid out to the back of the pavement; some courtyard development survives. Generally buildings are 1½ or 2 storeys tall. Generally buildings are faced in red brick. Non-traditional roofing materials intrude to a greater extent in these character zones.

2.21.5. The 'Upper Church Street' character zone contains 7 listed buildings. The milestone outside 10 Wood Street is a grade II listed building.



2.21.6. 17 Wood Street was erected after 1923. It does not contribute positively to character; it does not reflect the layout of the character zone. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the replacement of the building.

Wood Street east

2.21.7. This character zone is in residential use. Generally buildings are arranged in terraced groups and laid out to the back of the pavement; some courtyard development survives. Generally buildings are 2½ or 3 storeys tall. Generally buildings are faced in red brick. Non-traditional roofing materials intrude to a limited extent but note their impact upon the terrace 56 to 62 Wood Street. The character zone contains 9 listed buildings.



Other zones

2.22. The following three character zones are in residential use or contain a diversity of uses. The character of each zone does not closely reflect the general character of the conservation area.

South Street west

2.22.1. This character zone is in residential use. It contains a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced buildings laid out behind shallow forecourts. It contains a diversity of building heights. Generally buildings are faced in red brick. Generally roofs are covered with natural slate but note the use of concrete tile at 'Loudoun Court'. 'Ivanhoe Terrace' is a grade II listed building.

2.22.2. To the west of the former Police Station, a short terrace was demolished after 1923. The terrace was replaced by a surface car park that does not contribute positively to character. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the redevelopment of the site.



2.22.3. Front gardens at 'Ivanhoe Terrace' contribute positively to character. Gardens are bounded by a mix of palisade railings and privet hedges. 'Loudoun Court' offers an opportunity to enhance character through the introduction of similar boundaries.

Kilwardby Street south

2.22.4. This character zone contains a diversity of uses. Generally buildings are arranged irregularly. The zone contains a diversity of building heights and facing materials. The Church of the Holy Trinity and Hendon House are grade II listed.



2.22.5. To the west of the 'Old Bank', buildings were demolished after 1923. The buildings were replaced by a surface car park that does not contribute positively to character. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the redevelopment of the site. In 2017 the District Council permitted the erection of a three-storey building containing a mix of uses (our reference 17/00430/FUL).

2.22.6. Holy Trinity churchyard contributes positively to character. The front of the churchyard is bounded by a low stone wall. The entrance is flanked by a pair of Corsican pines and the approach to the church is defined by an avenue of pollarded limes. These trees are subject to a tree preservation order (TPO).

2.22.7. To the east (ritual north) of the church headstones have been laid flat and inscriptions are obscured. Better presentation of the headstones would enhance the character of the conservation area. Generally land to the north (ritual west) of the church appears to have been cleared of headstones; some tombs survive.

Kilwardby Street west

2.22.8. This character zone is in residential use. It contains high status development from the early Victorian period. It contains a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses laid out behind shallow forecourts. Generally buildings are two storeys tall. The zone contains a diversity of building heights and facing materials. Non-traditional roofing materials intrude to a limited extent but note their impact upon 'Shrubbery Terrace'. 26 and 26A Kilwardby Street are grade II* listed.



2.22.9. Garden land at the 'Mansion House' and 'Glenridding' contributes positively to character. Garden land at 44 Kilwardby Street contributes positively to character.

2.22.10. Since 2017 we have received three informal enquiries regarding the development of garden land in this character zone. Generally the garden land contains development constraints including trees that contribute positively to significance. In 2019 we received an application to develop garden land at 26 Kilwardby Street, adjacent to the conservation area boundary (19/00101/FUL).

Hill Street

2.22.11. This character zone is in residential use. It contains high status development from the early Victorian period. Generally buildings are laid out irregularly. Garden land at 2 to 4 Hill Street contributes positively to character. Garden land at 4 Hill Street contains mature trees. Generally buildings are 1½ or 2 storeys tall.



2.22.12. Generally buildings are faced in red brick beneath plain tile roofs. 1 Hill Street was erected after c.1700 but retains "earlier features". It is faced in render, with elements of timber framing and rubble stone, beneath a thatched roof. 1 and 3 Hill Street are grade II listed buildings; curtilage structures associated with 'Larach Beag' are also grade II listed.

2.22.13. Garden land to the west of 1 and 3 Hill Street contains a shelter belt formerly associated with 'Highfields'. The shelter belt contributes positively to significance⁸.

3. Setting elements

3.1. To the south the conservation area adjoins the 'Castle' and 'Spa' conservation areas, which will be the subject of future appraisals. Proceeding clockwise from the 'Spa' conservation area, the elements that comprise the setting of the conservation area may be described as follows (please refer to map 2).

West of the conservation area

3.2. The west side of the conservation area is bounded by a mix of traditional and modern developments as follows:

- a) Trinity Close: Detached houses erected in the grounds of Hill House c.1963-67⁹;
- b) Tower Gardens: Detached houses erected on the site of 'Highfields' c.1971-73;
- c) 7 to 11A Hill Street: Two pairs of semi-detached houses erected c.1923-48;
- d) Burton Road: Victorian and later development including the Council School and Primitive Methodist Chapel;
- e) Trinity Court: Between Burton Road and Kilwardby Street, modern development including 4A Hill Street, Trinity Court (c.1975) and a supermarket (c.1985).

3.3. Victorian development on Burton Road makes a neutral contribution to setting. Generally modern development makes a negative contribution.

3.4. Tower Gardens and Trinity Close are subject to tree preservation orders (TPOs). Land at 1 to 4 Trinity Close contains a roadside boundary wall and a shelter belt formerly associated with Hill House. These features contribute positively to setting; the wall is grade II listed.

North of the conservation area

3.5. The north side of the conservation area is bounded by sites that were redeveloped after 1923. The sites make a neutral or negative contribution to setting. The sites are as follows:

- f) Elford Street: Two semi-detached houses erected c.1923-48 and a 'dwelling and two flats' erected c.1976;
- g) Mill Bank: 27 houses in terraces and semi-detached pairs erected in 1964;
- h) North Street (north side): A factory erected c.1984, a health centre erected in 1974¹⁰ and a surface car park laid out c.1948-71;
- i) North Street (south side): Development including a club, a mixed use development ('Huntingdon Court') and surface car park.
- j) North Street (east side): Three houses erected c.1948-71;

⁸ In 2022 a tree fell onto 1 Hill Street during a storm. Leicester Mercury (21 February 2022) *Tree crashes onto thatched Ashby house ... as Storm Franklin leaves its mark.*

⁹ A tree preservation order (TPO) was made in 1963. In October 1964 the contractor was "starting to build" (Burton Observer & Chronicle, 15 October 1964). The latest advertisement for the 'Aurora' house type ("a large three bedroomed detached house") appears in the Burton Observer & Chronicle, 20 July 1967.

¹⁰ In 2017 the District Council obtained prior approval to demolish the health centre (17/00205/DEM).

- k) Wood Street (north side): Four detached houses erected c.2000-05 and a detached house (65 Wood Street) erected c.1923-71.

- 3.6. The access drive between 55 and 57 Wood Street offers a glimpse into countryside (pictured). This glimpse illustrates the historic relationship between the settlement core and the surrounding countryside. The District Council has permitted the erection of 605 dwellings on land at Money Hill (15/00512/OUTM). The master plan indicates that the access drive would be retained as a “pedestrian link” bounded by hedges.



East of the conservation area

- 3.7. The east side of the conservation area is bounded by modern development as follows:

- l) Nottingham Road and Wood Street: Three semi-detached pairs erected c.1923-48;
- m) Lockton House: Early C19; Wood (1837) indicates ‘The Hollies; Thomas Dewes Esq’;
- n) Design block: A ‘design block’ at the Girls’ Grammar School erected in 1971;
- o) Leicester Road: Five houses erected c.1923-48 and a detached house erected c.1971-74.

- 3.8. Lockton House makes a positive contribution to setting. The houses erected c.1923-48 make a neutral contribution while modern development makes a negative contribution.

South of the conservation area

- 3.9. The south side of the conservation area is bounded by traditional and modern development as follows:

- p) Surface car park etc.: A surface car park and detached house laid out c.1923-71;
- q) ‘Priest House’ and 18 to 23 South Street: A detached house and a terrace (pictured) erected in the early or mid-nineteenth century;
- r) Telephone exchange etc.: A telephone exchange¹¹ erected c.1962 and four detached houses erected c.1923-71.



¹¹ The Burton Observer & Chronicle, 13 September 1962, refers to “plans for an automatic telephone exchange building in South Street”.

3.10. The 'Priest House' and 18 to 23 South Street are grade II listed and they contribute positively to setting. Generally the modern development makes a negative contribution.

4. Views and landmarks

4.1. The conservation area enjoys views of five principal landmarks, all of which (excepting the Church of the Holy Trinity) are outside the conservation area. From west to east they are as follows:

- The former **Water Tower** (pictured right) is a landmark in views looking west along Kilwardby Street. On the south side of Kilwardby Street the view is framed by a shelter belt of trees formerly associated with Hill House. The shelter belt is subject to a tree preservation order (TPO).
- The tower of the **Church of the Holy Trinity** is a landmark in views looking west along Market Street¹². The church nave is obscured by 2 to 6 Bath Street (the 'Old Bank' et al) and an alteration to the roof of this building may affect the view substantially. Note the positive contribution made by mature trees beyond.
- The grade II listed **RC Church of Our Lady of Lourdes** (pictured right) is a landmark in views looking west along South Street. On the south side of South Street the view is framed by mature trees at Rawdon House.
- The grade II* listed **Loudoun Monument** is a landmark in views looking south along Bath Street. Note the positive contribution made by mature trees at Rawdon House.
- The tower of the grade I listed **Church of St Helen** is a landmark in views looking east along Kilwardby Street¹³. Note the positive contribution made by mature trees beyond. Note the negative contribution made by 42 to 48 Market Street.



¹² The list entry notes that the spire was dismantled c.1899.

¹³ Pevsner (1984) notes that "Market Street runs north of the church and castle, so that neither building plays a part in the urban scene".

4.2. 3 Lower Church Street closes the view east along Market Street and the view south along North Street¹⁴. The gable end of the 'Old Stone Yard' is prominent in the former view. The Shoulder of Mutton PH closes the view north along Bath Street. The view east out of the Green does not benefit from a terminating feature (i.e. there is a 'space leak').

4.3. A mature sycamore closes the view south along Hill Street. The tree is subject to a tree preservation order (TPO). A semi-mature tree closes the view north along Lower Church Street and west along Wood Street.

4.4. 55 Wood Street (pictured right) is a prominent feature at an 'entrance' to the conservation area. The building is situated at the brow of a hill. It is three storeys tall and laid out to the back of the pavement; adjacent buildings are two storeys tall and laid out behind shallow forecourts.



4.5. The access drive between 55 and 57 Wood Street offers a glimpse into countryside. This glimpse illustrates the historic relationship between the settlement core and the surrounding countryside. The District Council has permitted the erection of 605 dwellings on land at Money Hill (15/00512/OUTM). The master plan indicates that the access drive would be retained as a "pedestrian link" bounded by hedges.

5. Opportunity areas

Claridge Place

5.1. Properties including a 'coal yard' were demolished c.1978-81 and replaced by 28 flats. The flats are laid out behind shallow forecourts and introduce soft landscaping in a manner that does not reflect the 'Green' character zone. The flats are arranged in large blocks with unbroken eaves and ridge lines; they do not reflect the diverse height and massing of buildings in the 'Green' character zone.



5.2. 5A Brook Street was erected in 1979 (our ref 79/0672/R). It is subservient in scale to the principal building (5 Brook Street) but it does not reflect the height of buildings in adjoining character zones.

¹⁴ 1 Lower Church Street was demolished for road widening c.1923-71.

- 5.3. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the replacement of these buildings. The replacement buildings should reflect the layout of the 'Green' character zone. They should reflect the diverse height and massing of buildings in that character zone.

Derby Road

- 5.4. Properties were demolished c.1906 for the Burton & Ashby light railway; public conveniences were erected c.1923-48. Further properties were demolished piecemeal after 1948 and replaced by shops.



- 5.5. The public conveniences are laid out behind a shallow forecourt and they introduce soft landscaping in a manner that does not reflect adjoining character zones. They do not reflect the height of buildings in adjoining character zones. Land at the Shoulder of Mutton PH makes a neutral contribution to character but 'hoop top' railings are uncharacteristic.

- 5.6. 'Bath Street Corner' does not reflect the massing and materials of buildings in adjoining character zones. It is a 'cross wall' structure with a shallow pitched roof. 11 Market Street makes a neutral contribution to character but the previous character appraisal notes the "extensive blank façade" addressing Derby Road.

- 5.7. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the replacement of these buildings. The replacement buildings should reflect the character of the adjoining 'Bath Street' and 'Market Street west' character zones. They should be laid out to the back of the pavement; the opportunity to recreate the historic street layout should be explored. They should be faced in red brick. They should offer active frontages to each street elevation.

The Farm

- 5.8. Properties were demolished c.1948-71. The site contains a large amount of soft landscaping that does not reflect adjoining character zones. The soft landscaping is dominated by cotoneaster and laurel while 47 & 49 Wood Street is bounded by a privet hedge. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the redevelopment of the site.



- 5.9. New buildings should reflect the adjoining 'Upper Church Street' and 'Wood Street east' character zones. New buildings should be laid out to the back of the pavement; they may reflect traditional courtyard development. They should be faced in red brick. They should reflect the diverse heights of buildings in the adjoining character zones. Redevelopment would offer an opportunity for the investigation of below-ground remains.

South Street east

- 5.10. Properties were demolished c.1948-71; a club (now 'Legion House') opened in 1966. Legion House does not reflect the layout, massing or materials of adjoining character zones. Its layout does not reflect traditional court development. It has a shallow pitched roof, a deep roof span and a complex roof shape. It is faced in brown brick with a non-traditional roof covering.



- 5.11. To the rear of 76 Market Street, single-storey flat-roofed garages do not reflect the scale and massing of adjoining character zones. To the rear of 92 Market Street, a large flat-roofed building does not reflect the scale and massing of adjoining character zones. 'Castle Flats' and 'Castle House' make a neutral contribution to character.
- 5.12. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the redevelopment of the site. New buildings should reflect the adjoining 'Market Street east' and 'Lower Church Street' character zones. They should be laid out to the back of the pavement; they may reflect traditional courtyard development. They should be faced in red brick. They should be 2½ or 3 storeys tall.
- 5.13. 26 & 27 South Street were erected before 1884. This building contributes positively to character.

Wood Street central

- 5.14. On the north side of the street, 29 Wood Street was demolished and replaced c.1948-71 by a 'depot'. On the south side of the street, a garage was erected c.1923-48. 16 to 20 Wood Street were demolished in 1960. In all respects the development does not reflect adjoining character zones.



- 5.15. In the long term there is an opportunity to enhance character through the replacement of these buildings. The replacement buildings should reflect the character of the adjoining 'Upper Church Street' and 'Wood Street west' character zones. They should be laid out to the back of the pavement; they may reflect traditional courtyard development. They should be faced in red brick. They should be 1½ or 2 storeys tall.

6. Other opportunities

Development opportunities

6.1. We have identified thirteen opportunities to enhance the character of the conservation area through the redevelopment of modern buildings (please refer to map 3).

6.2. On the north side of Kilwardby Street [a] a non-conformist chapel and school were demolished c.1985 and replaced by an access drive. In 1988 we permitted a large three-storey extension to the rear of the Fallen Knight PH (88/0059/L) and a pair of houses to the rear of Kilwardby Mews (88/0143/P). This development does not contribute positively to significance. Replacement buildings should reflect the character of the 'Kilwardby Street east' character zone.



6.3. To the west of the Market Hall [b], flat-roofed elements do not reflect the scale and massing of the character zone; demolition would enhance character. Buildings to the south west of Bakery Court were demolished after 1971. The buildings were replaced by a surface car park that does not contribute positively to character. Replacement buildings should reflect the character of the 'Market Street east' character zone.

6.4. We have identified four development opportunities in the 'Market Street west' character zone, as follows. In each case the replacement building should reflect the qualities of the character zone.

c) **12 & 14 Market Street:** The building does not reflect the massing and materials of the character zone. A shallow pitched roof addresses Market Street and a flat roof addresses South Street. The rear elevation contains non-traditional facing materials (pictured right).



d) **1 Union Passage:** The single-storey flat-roofed structure to the rear of 28 to 32 Market Street does not reflect the scale and massing of the character zone.

e) **42 to 48 Market Street:** This large building does not reflect the scale of the character zone. It is 'double width' (i.e. it occupies two traditional plots). It is more than three storeys tall and it has a deep roof span. 42 Market Street has an untreated aluminium shop front.

- f) **r/o 52 Market Street:** The building does not reflect the massing and materials of the character zone. It has a shallow pitched roof and a deep roof span. It uses non-traditional facing and roofing materials. The boundary treatment also contributes negatively and in the short term there is an opportunity to enhance character through its replacement.

6.5. We have identified two development opportunities in the 'Market Street east' character zone, as follows. In each case the replacement building should reflect the qualities of the character zone.

- g) **57 & 59 Market Street:** This large building does not reflect the scale and massing of the character zone (pictured). It is 'double width' (i.e. it occupies two traditional plots) and it is more than three storeys tall. It has a flat roof.



- h) **73 & 75 Market Street:** These two-storey flat-roofed buildings do not reflect the scale and massing of the character zone.

6.6. 17 Wood Street [i] does not reflect the layout of the 'Wood Street west' character zone; it is set back behind a front garden. A replacement building should be laid out to the back of the pavement.

6.7. The conservation area contains two gap sites (please refer to map 3). In the long term there are opportunities to enhance character substantially through the development of these sites. Each gap site offers an opportunity for the investigation of below-ground remains. The sites are as follows:

- j) **South Street west:** A building was demolished after 1923 and replaced by a surface car park. A replacement building should reflect the character of the South Street west character zone.

- k) **Kilwardby Street south:** Buildings were demolished after 1923 and replaced by a surface car park. Replacement buildings should reflect the character of the Kilwardby Street south character zone. In 2017 the District Council permitted the erection of a three-storey building containing a mix of uses (our reference 17/00430/FUL).



6.8. The 2001 character appraisal noted buildings and land of “poor visual quality”. Since that date three of the identified buildings and three of the identified gap sites have been redeveloped; generally this development has made a positive or neutral contribution to significance. The developments are as follows:

- Four terraced houses off Churchside Walk erected c.2002;
- A mixed use building on Bath Street (‘Castlegate House’) erected c.2003;
- A mixed use building on South Street (‘Bosworth House’) erected c.2004;
- Two houses on Wood Street (‘Old Stone Yard’) erected c.2005;
- A mixed use building on Derby Road (‘The Regency’) erected c.2008;
- 32 ‘retirement apartments’ on Kilwardby Street (‘Bainbridge Court’) erected c.2014.

Landscaping opportunities

6.9. Front gardens at ‘Ivanhoe Terrace’ contribute positively to character. Gardens are bounded by a mix of palisade railings and privet hedges. ‘Loudoun Court’ offers an opportunity to enhance character through the introduction of similar boundaries.



6.10. At Holy Trinity churchyard, headstones have been laid flat and inscriptions are obscured. Better presentation of the headstones would enhance the character of the conservation area.

Materials and details

6.11. Non-traditional roofing materials intrude to a greater extent in the ‘Upper Church Street’ and ‘Wood Street west’ character zones. These character zones offer an opportunity to enhance character through the reinstatement of traditional roofing materials.



6.12. The use of render or the use of a non-traditional roofing material may appear more jarring where it is used on part of a terrace or on one half of a symmetrical pair. On this basis the ‘Upper Church Street’ character zone offers four opportunities for enhancement:

- 1 to 7 Leicester Road (pictured);
- 9 to 23 Leicester Road;
- 1 to 5 Upper Church Street;
- 38 to 48 Wood Street.

6.13. The remainder of the conservation area offers five opportunities for enhancement:

- ‘Shrubbery Terrace’, 32 to 42 Kilwardby Street;
- 78 & 80 Market Street;
- 38 North Street and 7 Wood Street;
- ‘Loudoun Court’, South Street;
- 56 to 62 Wood Street.

Shop fronts

6.14. Market Street and Bath Street are characterised by a mix of surviving traditional shop fronts and modern shop fronts in a traditional style. Other shop fronts offer an opportunity to enhance character:

- Two listed buildings contain untreated aluminium shop fronts (52 Market Street (pictured); 63 Market Street).



- The terraced group 15 to 33 Market Street contains several large fasciae. 33 Market Street has a very large fascia that extends over the first floor window sills.
- At 94 and 96 Market Street fascia signs have been installed in a manner that obscures the frieze and cornice (pictured below). At 50 and 84 Market Street panel signs have been attached to buildings “where there is no fascia”.
- Lettering should be painted directly onto the shop front rather than on a board which is then stuck on; 72 Market Street is an example of bad practice.
- Three listed buildings feature swan neck lights; all are hot foot takeaways (77 Market Street; 85 & 85A Market Street; 88 Market Street).



7. Problems and pressures

7.1. Traffic makes a neutral to negative contribution to character. The 2012 retail study update said that “Market Street is congested” and “the presence of vehicle is strong [sic]”. It said that traffic noise is “often notably audible” and this detracts from “the environmental quality of the centre”. The 2019 update agreed that “Market Street can get busy with road traffic”, although “three pedestrian crossings are provided”. The retail study updates noted the wide pavements on either side of Market Street.

- 7.2. A pressure to maintain or increase the amount of parking may conflict with the desire to redevelop gap sites in the conservation area (see paragraph 6.7). Adjacent to the primary shopping area, in 2017 the District Council permitted a mixed use development on the site of a surface car park (our reference 17/00430/FUL).
- 7.3. Since 2017 we have received three informal enquiries regarding the development of garden land in the 'Kilwardby Street west' character zone. Generally the garden land contains development constraints including trees that contribute positively to significance.

Condition of buildings

- 7.4. In 2018 and 2019 the District Council and volunteers from Ashby Museum surveyed about 300 traditional buildings in the conservation area. More than 90% were found to be in good condition. The 'Market Street west' and 'Kilwardby Street east' character zones were found to contain concentrations of buildings in fair or poor condition.

- Three listed buildings in the 'Market Street west' character zone were found to be vulnerable (20 Market Street; 47 Market Street; 50 Market Street). The terraced group 43 to 49A Market Street (pictured right) was found to be in fair condition¹⁵.
- The former Fallen Knight Hotel and 16 and 18 Kilwardby Street were found to be vulnerable. In 2019 the District Council permitted alterations to the buildings to form three 'town houses' and eight apartments (our reference 18/00286/FULM).



¹⁵ In April 2021 the local planning authority refused to grant planning permission for the demolition of an outbuilding at 49 Market Street but acknowledged that there was "clear and convincing justification for immediate remedial works" (21/00373/FUL).

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