

**HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT  
OF ASHBY TOWN CENTRE**

**DRAFT  
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## **1. Context**

- 1.1. 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.
- 1.2. 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.
- 1.3. 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.
- 1.4. 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 country<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.5. 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.
- 1.6. The Gilwiskaw Brook flows from N to S across the settlement core. Brook Street and Union Passage follow the route of the culverted brook<sup>2</sup>.

## **2. Historic development (c.1066 to c.1923)**

### **Sources**

- 2.1. Section 5 contains a bibliography of sources. In addition the following sources have been consulted:
  - The Ordnance Survey 1:500 scale map of 1883;
  - Ordnance Survey 1:2500 scale maps of 1884, 1903, 1923 and 1971;
  - Vertical aerial photographs of c.1948.
- 2.2. Ashby was administered from 1894 to 1974 by the Ashby Urban District Council. It has been administered since that date by NW Leicestershire District Council.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> White (1863) says that “a new street between Market Street and the Green” was formed after 1823.

- 2.3. NW Leicestershire's planning registers from 1974 to present have been consulted. Planning applications determined by Ashby Urban District Council between 1948 and 1974 have been retained, but the applications are not catalogued and hence they have not been consulted.

#### **Ashby before c.1821**

- 2.4. The settlement appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *Ascebi*. The castle was much rebuilt in the late fifteenth century but the great hall retains twelfth century fabric. Similarly the church was much rebuilt in the late fifteenth century but retains early fourteenth century fabric (Pevsner, 1984).

- 2.5. Timber framing was the preferred construction technique before about 1700. Properties that exhibit timber framing include the Bulls Head PH, the Lamb Inn and 51 Market Street (pictured)<sup>3</sup>.



- 2.6. From 1760 Ashby was at the confluence of a network of turnpike roads. Bath Street, Market Street and Wood Street formed part of the Tamworth to Sawley Ferry turnpike. Leicester Road and Upper Church Street formed part of the Ashby to Leicester turnpike while Hill Street and Kilwardby Street formed part of the Ashby to Burton turnpike. A milestone outside 10 Wood Street is grade II listed.

- 2.7. Map 1 indicates the extent of the town c.1815-21.

#### **Railway development**

- 2.8. Stevens (1821) indicates a tramway<sup>4</sup> bisecting Kilwardby Street [1]. In 1874 the Midland Railway Ashby & Breedon Branch was laid out reflecting the route of the tramway; the 1884 Ordnance Survey map indicates a building on Burton Road [2].

#### **Georgian development (c.1821 to c.1837)**

- 2.9. Wood (1837) indicates that development between c.1821 and c.1837 comprised the following (please refer to map 1).

- 3) Hill House: Early C19; Wood (1837) indicates 'Hill House; Thomas Cantrell Esq';
- 4) 18 to 23 South Street and 'Priest House': Wood indicates development on the south side of South Street including 18 to 23 South Street (c.1830);
- 5) Ashby Library: A former National School erected in 1836.

<sup>3</sup> 52 Market Street, 76 Market Street and 92 Market Street are polite Georgian buildings that retain elements of timber framing. To the rear of 86 Market Street, a timber framed wing was demolished c.1980. Hayward (2004).

<sup>4</sup> Hillier (1984) refers to tramways laid out c.1799-1802.

### Early Victorian development (c.1837 to c.1884)

2.10. The OS 1884 map indicates that development between c.1837 and c.1884 comprised the following (please refer to map 1).

- 6) Greenhouse: The OS 1:500 map of 1883 indicates a greenhouse;
- 7) Church of the Holy Trinity: Designed by Henry Isaac Stevens and erected c.1838-40;
- 8) 1 to 21 Burton Road and 11 to 27 Derby Road: Long terraces of houses<sup>5</sup>;
- 9) Lorne Terrace: A long terrace of houses<sup>6</sup> erected c.1837-77;

2.11. “The property of the late Robert Thornley esq” was sold by auction in 1846. The OS 1884 map indicates the following development:

- 10) ‘Highfields’: Hagar’s Directory (1849) refers to John Johnson of ‘High Field’;
- 11) Shrubbery Terrace etc.: Hagar’s Directory (1849) refers to the terrace;
- 12) 53 to 67 Burton Road and 4 to 16 Hill Street: Short terraces of houses.

### Late Victorian and Edwardian development (c.1884 to c.1923)

2.12. The OS 1903 map indicates that development between c.1884 and c.1903 comprised the following (please refer to map 1).

- 13) 4 to 54 Burton Road and 1 to 6 Holywell Cottages: Houses erected c.1884-1903;
- 14) 31 to 37 Burton Road: Houses erected c.1884-1903;
- 15) 43 to 51 Burton Road: A semi-detached pair of houses erected c.1884-1903;

2.13. The OS 1923 map indicates that development between c.1903 and c.1923 comprised the following (please refer to map 1).

- 16) Primitive Methodist Chapel etc.: Chapel erected in 1906; adjoining pair of semi-detached houses erected c.1903-23;
- 17) Council School: Opened in January 1911 (Hillier, 1984).
- 18) 9 to 47 Nottingham Road: Semi-detached houses<sup>7</sup> erected c.1903-23.

2.14. A limited number of properties were erected within the settlement core during the period c.1884 to c.1923. Two of these properties are grade II listed. They are Prince William House on Lower Church Street and the former Leicestershire Bank on Market Street (pictured).



<sup>5</sup> The former New Inn (1 Burton Road) was erected in 1870. Jones (2012).

<sup>6</sup> The Derby Mercury (18 April 1877) refers to Robert Timms of 30 Lorne Terrace.

<sup>7</sup> Note a date stone of 1904.

### 3. Redevelopment (c.1923 to present)

#### Selected modern development c.1923-74

3.1. Development between c.1923 and c.1974 included the following (please refer to map 2).

- 19) Telephone exchange etc.: On the south side of South Street, a telephone exchange was erected c.1948-71; four detached houses were erected c.1923-71;
- 20) Surface car park etc.: On the south side of South Street, a surface car park and a detached house were laid out c.1923-71;
- 21) Leicester Road: On the north side of the street, five houses were erected c.1923-48; a sixth house was erected c.1971-74;
- 22) Design Block: In 1971 a 'design block' was erected at the Girls' Grammar School (Hillier, 1984);
- 23) Nottingham Road and Wood Street: On the north side of the street, three semi-detached pairs were erected c.1923-48;
- 24) 7 to 11A Hill Street: Two pairs of semi-detached houses erected c.1923-48.
- 25) Burton Road: On the south side of the street, three detached houses were erected c.1923-71; a fourth house was erected c.1971-74<sup>8</sup>.

#### Selected modern development c.1974 to present

3.2. Development since c.1974 included the following (please refer to map 2).

- 26) Trinity Court: In 1975 we permitted 'erection of 19 dwellings' (our refs AU/4468 and 75/0141/P);
- 27) Supermarket: In 1985 we permitted a 'single-storey supermarket' (our ref 85/0282/P)<sup>9</sup>;
- 28) Council School: In 1982 the County Council permitted two 'temporary' classroom blocks (our ref 82/1026/C)<sup>10</sup>. In 2006 the County Council permitted their demolition and the erection of two 'temporary' classroom buildings (LCC ref 2006/0533/07)<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> 39 Burton Road ('Glenholme') was described as 'practically new' in 1931 (Leicester Evening Mail, 6 June). In 1989 we permitted 'erection of a dwelling' at 41A Burton Road (our ref 89/0118/P).

<sup>9</sup> 27 Burton Road was erected before 1974. In 1974 we permitted a 'new bungalow' at 1 Trinity Court (our ref 74/0414/P).

<sup>10</sup> Note 'temporary mobile classroom' (our ref 93/0198/C).

<sup>11</sup> Retained under LCC ref 2011/0412/07. Note 'classroom building' (LCC ref 2017/0010/07).

### Selected infill development

- 3.3. Map 2 indicates the extent of infill development in the settlement core since c.1923.
- a) Trinity Close: Detached houses were erected in the grounds of Hill House c.1963-67;
  - b) 'Trentham Close': A detached dwelling<sup>12</sup> erected c.1923-56;
  - c) Huntingdon Court: Houses, shops and craft workshops were erected c.1980-84<sup>13</sup>;
  - d) North Street (east side): Three houses were erected c.1948-71;
  - e) Wood Street (north side): Four detached dwellings were erected c.2000-05<sup>14</sup>;
  - f) 65 Wood Street: A detached dwelling was erected c.1923-71.

### Selected demolition

- 3.4. Map 2 indicates the extent of demolition in the settlement core since c.1923. All of the properties demolished were depicted on the OS 1884 map.

- g) Highfields: The Highfields Hotel was demolished c.1971-73 and replaced by thirteen detached houses ('Tower Gardens')<sup>15</sup>.
- h) 'Boreham Lodge': Properties were demolished and replaced by a detached house<sup>16</sup>.
- i) Bath Street and Derby Road: 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 (pictured right) and a 'mixed use building'<sup>17</sup>;
- j) Elford Street: Properties were demolished c.1923-48 and replaced by two semi-detached houses. Kenilworth Terrace was demolished c.1976 and replaced by a 'dwelling and two flats' (our ref 76/1928/P);
- k) Claridge Place: Properties including a 'coal yard' were demolished c.1978-81 and replaced by 28 flats<sup>18</sup>;
- l) Health Centre: Properties were demolished c.1974 and replaced by a health centre (Hillier, 1984)<sup>19</sup>;



<sup>12</sup> Leicester Evening Mail (4 April 1956) refers to Brian Wheeler of Trentham Close, a mechanical engineer.

<sup>13</sup> In 1980 we permitted the erection of two houses (our ref 80/1040/P). In 1983 and 1984 we permitted the erection of shops and craft workshops (our refs 83/0617/P and 84/0590/P);

<sup>14</sup> 45 and 45A Wood Street erected c.2000 (our ref 00/00731/FUL); 55a Wood Street erected c.2002 (our ref 02/01265/FUL); 39a Wood Street erected c.2005 (our ref 04/00247/FUL).

<sup>15</sup> In 1971 the hotel was "to go to make way for a luxury estate" (Burton Observer, 4 February 1971). Houses at Tower Gardens were advertised for sale from 1973 (Leicester Daily Mercury, 16 June 1973).

<sup>16</sup> The Atherstone News, 13 October 1967, refers to "an attractive architect-designed residence known as Boreham Lodge, Moira Road".

<sup>17</sup> 'Bath Street Corner' erected before 1971; 11 & 13 Market Street erected c.1986 (our ref 86/0101/P); 'The Regency' erected c.2008 (our ref 08/01324/FULM).

<sup>18</sup> Our ref 78/1315/D. The flats were erected in 1981 (information from NWLDC Resident Housing).

<sup>19</sup> In 2017 the District Council obtained prior approval to demolish the health centre (17/00205/DEM).

- m) North Street (north side): Properties including the Volunteer Inn were demolished c.1948-71 and replaced by a surface car park;
- n) North Street (south side): Properties were demolished c.1948-71; the OS 1971 map indicates a club;
- o) North Street (west side): Properties including 36 North Street were demolished c.1971-74;
- p) Machins Business Centre: 29 Wood Street was demolished and replaced c.1948-71 by a 'depot';
- q) Wood Street (south side): Properties were demolished c.1923-48 and replaced by a garage. 16 to 20 Wood Street were demolished<sup>20</sup> in 1960;
- r) 'The Farm': Properties were demolished c.1948-71.
- s) South Street east: Properties were demolished c.1948-71; a club<sup>21</sup> (now 'Legion House') opened in 1966.
- t) Castle House: Properties were demolished c.1987 and replaced by an office (our ref 87/0655/P).

#### **4. Below ground remains**

- 4.1. Map 3 indicates an archaeological alert area. Within this area, it is likely that evidence of medieval and post-medieval settlement will survive below ground. Of the eight developments carried out in the historic settlement core since 2001, only two were subject to archaeological investigation.
- 4.2. Investigation on the north side of Wood Street identified "insubstantial" archaeological remains comprising "a late post-medieval pit and ditch" (Farnworth-Jones, 2006). Investigation on the south side of Kilwardby Street identified a site of "local archaeological importance". Investigation identified medieval remains representing "boundary definition and limited activities associated with settlement occurring on the periphery of the town". "No definite remains of domestic structures" were identified and the report suggests that "the site was used for horticulture and waste disposal rather than habitation" (Daniel, 2016).

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<sup>20</sup> Demolition order held at Ashby Museum.

<sup>21</sup> Burton Observer & Chronicle, 30 June 1966.



## 5. Bibliography

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