



# Executive Committee

Tue 26 Oct  
2021  
6.30 pm

Council Chamber  
Redditch Town Hall

**REDDITCH** BOROUGH COUNCIL

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a  
difference*

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**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact  
Jess Bayley-Hill**

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## **GUIDANCE ON FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS**

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**Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic Redditch Borough Council will be applying social distancing arrangements at face-to-face meetings.**

**Please note that this is a public meeting and is open to the public to attend**

**If you have any questions regarding the agenda or attached papers, please do not hesitate to contact the officer named above.**

### **GUIDANCE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS ATTENDING MEETINGS IN PERSON**

In advance of the Committee meeting, Members are strongly encouraged to consider taking a lateral flow test, which can be obtained from the NHS website. Should the test be positive for Covid-19 then the Member must not attend the Committee meeting, should provide their apologies to the Democratic Services team and should self-isolate in accordance with national rules.

Members and officers are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings during the Executive Committee meeting, unless exempt. Face coverings should only be removed temporarily if the Councillor or officer is speaking or if s/he requires a sip of water and should be reapplied as soon as possible. As Councillors may remove their masks from time to time during the meeting, seating will be placed two metres apart, in line with social distancing measures to protect meeting participants.

Hand sanitiser will be provided for Members to use throughout the meeting.

The meeting venue will be fully ventilated and Members and officers may need to consider wearing appropriate clothing in order to remain comfortable during proceedings.

### **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE**

Members of the public will be able to access the meeting in person to observe proceedings if they wish to do so. However, due to social distancing arrangements that will be in place to ensure the safety of participants during the Covid-19 pandemic, there will be limited capacity and members of the public will be allowed access on a first come, first served basis. Members of the public in attendance are strongly encouraged to wear face masks, to use the hand sanitiser that will be provided and will be required to sit in a socially distance manner at the meetings. It should be noted that members of the public who choose to attend in person do so at their own risk.

In line with Government guidelines, any member of the public who has received a positive

result in a Covid-19 test on the day of a meeting must not attend in person and must self-isolate in accordance with the national rules.

**Notes:**

**Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when Council might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded.**

# Executive

Tuesday, 26th October, 2021

6.30 pm

Council Chamber Town Hall

## Agenda

### Membership:

Cllrs:

Matthew Dormer  
(Chair)  
Gemma Monaco  
(Vice-Chair)  
Brandon Clayton  
Peter Fleming  
Anthony Lovell

Nyear Nazir  
Mike Rouse  
David Thain  
Craig Warhurst

### 1. Apologies

### 2. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and / or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.

### 3. Leader's Announcements

### 4. Local Development Scheme (Pages 1 - 30)

### 5. Church Green Conservation Area Adoption (Pages 31 - 130)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is due to pre-scrutinise this report at a meeting scheduled to take place on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021. Any recommendations arising from this meeting will be reported for the Executive Committee's consideration in a supplementary pack.

### 6. Budget Framework Report (Pages 131 - 138)

### 7. Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 139 - 148)

There are no outstanding recommendations requiring the Executive Committee's consideration on this occasion.

### 8. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc.

To receive and consider any outstanding minutes or referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc. since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, other than as detailed in the items above.



## 9. Advisory Panels - update report

Members are invited to provide verbal updates, if any, in respect of the following bodies:

- a) Climate Change Cross-Party Working Group – Chair, Councillor Anthony Lovell;
- b) Constitutional Review Working Panel – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer;
- c) Corporate Parenting Board – Council Representative, Councillor Nyear Nazir;
- d) Member Support Steering Group – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer; and
- e) Planning Advisory Panel – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer.

## 10. To consider any urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting

## 11. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, during the course of the meeting to consider excluding the public from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:

“That, under S.100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs (to be specified) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act”.

These paragraphs are as follows:

Subject to the “public interest” test, information relating to:

- Para 3 – financial or business affairs; and
- Para 4 – labour relations matters.

## 12. Minutes (Pages 149 - 162)

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**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

**Date 26th October 2021**

**REDDITCH LOCAL PLAN UPDATE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matthew Dormer
Portfolio Holder Consulted	YES
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford
Ward(s) Affected	All wards
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	YES
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on progress of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan Review; a timetable for the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.5 production (Local Development Scheme); the opportunity to retrospectively approve consultation responses submitted to nearby authorities and to approve the Statement of Common Ground with Solihull Borough Council.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that:**

- 1) the update on progress on the Redditch Local Plan Review be noted;**
- 2) the Local Development Scheme No.7 for the production of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.5 be approved (Appendix A);**
- 3) the consultation responses provided to neighbouring and nearby authorities be retrospectively approved (Appendices B to F); and**
- 4) the Statement of Common Ground with Solihull Borough Council be approved (Appendix G).**

**3. KEY ISSUES**

**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Whilst there are no immediate direct financial implications of adopting the revised Local Development Scheme, the costs to progress the Local Plan Review through all stages of the plan-making process, including associated evidence gathering and ultimately independent examination are considerable. The allocation of financial resources for progression of the Local Plan Review has previously been considered through the budget setting process.

**Legal Implications**

You do not need to number the pages in your report – this is done automatically when it is included in the agenda pack.

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- 3.2 Under regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) local planning authorities must review Local Plans at least once every 5 years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community.
- 3.3 The Local Development Scheme is produced under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The legislation states that Councils must prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme specifying:
- the Local Development Documents (LDDs) which are to be Development Plan Documents (DPDs);
  - the subject matter and geographical area of each Development Plan Document;
  - which Development Plan Documents (if any) are to be prepared jointly with one or more other local planning authorities;
  - any matter or area in respect of which the authority has agreed (or propose to agree) to the constitution of a joint committee; and,
  - the timetable for the preparation and revision of the Development Plan Documents.
- 3.4 The Localism Act 2011 removed the requirement to submit the LDS to the Secretary of State. It is however important for Councils to continue to publish up-to-date information on the progress of Local Development Documents. The Borough Council thus has flexibility to decide how best to present this information to the public, although as a minimum Planning Practice Guidance states that the LDS should be published on the Council's website.

**Background / Service Implications****Update on progress of the Redditch Local Plan Review**

- 3.5 The Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 was adopted in January 2017. Under regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) local planning authorities must review local plans, at least once every 5 years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community. The National Planning Policy Framework reiterates the requirement that policies in Local Plans are to be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary (paragraph 33).
- 3.6 During October/November 2020 authority was granted though Executive and Full Council (see Background paper) for Officers to begin work on reviewing the BORLP4 and to consider the need for a new plan. Since then, work has been progressing in assessing whether the existing policies in BORLP4 are still fit for purpose and procuring the necessary evidence to support revised policies, for example a Housing and Employment Development Needs Assessment, in

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addition to preparing a suitable timetable (Local Development Scheme No.7) which sets out the timescales for the production and consultation on the revised plan.

- 3.7 Planning Advisory Panel is due to take place on 20<sup>th</sup> October to consider the emerging themes for the Local Plan and the LDS.

Local Development Scheme No.7 (Appendix A)

- 3.8 The previous Local Development Scheme (LDS) was adopted by the Borough Council in July 2016. This new LDS (Appendix A) is required to update the programme of preparing and consulting on strategic planning documents, whilst continuing to reflect the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It must be stressed the LDS only addresses the timescales for the revised Local Plan, the content of that review will be considered in subsequent reports.

Consultation responses provided to nearby authorities (Appendices B to F)

- 3.9 Several responses have been prepared by Officers in response to other Local Authority consultation periods including to Birmingham City Council, the Black Country, South Staffordshire and South Warwickshire (see Appendices B to F). Many of the responses fall under the Duty to Co-operate and therefore require Member approval through the Executive Committee and Full Council. Communication with neighbouring and nearby authorities to produce Local Plans is on-going.
- 3.10 The responses listed at Appendices B to F were written in consultation with the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services and the Portfolio holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships before being submitted to the respective authorities.

Statement of Common Ground with Solihull Borough Council (Appendix G)

- 3.11 Solihull Borough Council are currently mid-way through their Examination in Public for the Solihull Local Plan. As part of the documentation for the Plan Review authorities are required to prepare Statements of Common Ground to outline where agreement can be sought between authorities. Communication with Solihull has been on-going and at present only a draft version of the Solihull and Redditch SoCG has been submitted to the Examination, as Redditch did not raise any concerns over the level of unmet housing need Solihull was prepared to accommodate from elsewhere within the Housing Market Area. The Duty to Cooperate sessions of the Examination have already taken place, with no further issues raised. However, before the close of Examination Solihull Borough Council require a signed off version to be submitted. This is attached for consideration and approval at Appendix G.

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**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.12 The revised Local Development Scheme allows customers to easily identify opportunities to be involved in Local Plan production.
- 3.13 The Local Plan Review will be accompanied by an Equalities Impact Assessment.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 The update to the adopted BORLP4 is essential now due to the risks posed of not having an up-to-date plan in place and national policy requirements.
- 4.2 A Local Development Scheme is essential to set the overall programme and identify how strategic planning documents will be managed and progressed.
- 4.3 Without an up-to-date Local Development Scheme, development plan documents at independent examination could be found unsound due to the Council failing to comply with a statutory duty contained in the Localism Act 2011.

**5. APPENDICES**

Appendix A - Redditch Local Development Scheme No.7  
Appendix B – RBC response to Birmingham City Council (March 2021)  
Appendix C – RBC response to Black Country Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (March 2021)  
Appendix D – RBC response to South Staffordshire (June 2021)  
Appendix E – RBC response to South Warwickshire (June 2021)  
Appendix F – RBC response to Black Country (Oct 2021)  
Appendix G - Solihull Statement of Common Ground

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 –  
[Local Plan No. 4](#)  
National Planning Policy Framework - [National Planning Policy Framework](#)  
Localism Act 2011 - [Government Legislation - Localism Act 2011](#)  
Planning Practice Guidance – Plan-making - [Government Planning Practice Guidance](#)  
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) - [Legislation - Planning](#)  
The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) - [Legislation - Town and Country Planning](#)  
27<sup>th</sup> October 2020 Executive Committee Report - [Previous Report to Executive Committee - October 2020](#)

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**7. KEY**

BORLP4 – Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4  
DtC – Duty to Cooperate  
LDS – Local Development Scheme  
NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework  
SCI – Statement of Community Involvement  
SoCG – Statement of Common Ground

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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## Introduction

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a three year project plan for the production and review of the planning policy documents that will make up the Development Plan for Redditch Borough. This is the seventh LDS for Redditch which covers the period from September 2021 to May 2024.

Redditch Borough Council is required to produce a LDS in order to comply with Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It provides residents and stakeholders information on the documents that will make up the Development Plan, the timescales they can expect for the preparation of these documents and the opportunities for involvement. Local Planning Authorities may revise their LDS at a time they consider appropriate or when directed to do so by the Secretary of State.

Since LDS No.6 was produced, the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 has been adopted. Since the Plan has been adopted there have been numerous changes to the planning system and revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework and the government's approach to calculating housing need. This means that it is now necessary for the Council to undertake a review of the Redditch Local Plan.

The timetable for the preparation of the Development Plan can be found on page 6. It sets out the key opportunities for public and stakeholder involvement in plan production as well as periods of evidence gathering and plan preparation.

## Borough of Redditch Planning Policy Framework

### Current Planning Policy Documents

The planning policy documents listed below make up the current planning policy framework for the Borough of Redditch.

### Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (2011-2030)

The Local Plan includes a vision and strategic objectives for the future development of the Borough, strategic policies which include site allocation policies to meet the development needs of Redditch. It also contains Development Management policies to guide decision making on planning applications. The key diagram and policies map visually represent the policies and site allocations.

BORLP 4 was adopted in 2017 and the Government requires all Local Plans to be reviewed within five years of adoption with the aim for all Councils to have up to date plans in place by 2023.

### Adopted Local Development Documents

The Council has adopted a number of planning policy documents, which can be used as material considerations in the determination of planning applications, including:

- High Quality Design SPD (2019)
- Open Space Provision (2007)
- Planning Obligations for Education Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2007)
- Employment Land Monitoring Supplementary Planning Guidance (2003)

### Neighbourhood Planning

Under the Localism Act 2011, Neighbourhood Plans can be produced by a Parish Council or a designated Neighbourhood Forum, to provide more detailed planning guidance on specific local issues. Neighbourhood Plans are subject to independent examination and local referendum at which if approved then the Neighbourhood Plan is “made” and the Council must then bring this into force as part of the Local Development Framework. However, it is for Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums to decide whether to bring forward a Neighbourhood Plan and therefore the LDS does not specify when or how they will be produced.

## Delivering the Development Plan

### Evidence Base

A range of technical studies and research will inform the preparation of the Development Plan Review. These are considered by the Council to represent a proportionate approach to the evidence base requirements and will be undertaken in house where possible and procured externally where specialist advice and expertise is required:

- Sustainability Appraisal
- Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)
- Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity Assessment
- Retail Needs Assessment
- Gypsy & Traveller Needs Assessment
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan

### Adoption of Planning Policy Documents

All planning policy documents are taken to Executive Committee and Full Council to obtain Member approval. In the case of the Development Plan, this is subsequently submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for examination. PINS will report back to the Council after the examination to report on the document's legal compliance and soundness for adoption.

### Monitoring

The Council will regularly monitor and review the progress of the Development Plan against the LDS timetable (set out on page 4). Monitoring will be set out in the Annual Monitoring Report which is publicly available.

## Timetable

The timetable for the key stages of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan Review is set out below. Any changes to the timetable will be advertised on the Council website.

Preferred Options Consultation (Regulation 18 Consultation)	September 2022
Publication (Regulation 19 Consultation)	June/July 2023
Submission	September 2023
Examination/Hearings	November 2023
Inspector's Report	Feb/March 2024
Adoption	May 2024

Stage of Local Plan production	2021 to Aug 22	Sep 2022	Oct 2022	Nov 2022 to May 2023	June / July 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Nov 2023	Feb/ Mar 2024	May 2024
Scoping and Reg 18 preparation										
<b>Preferred Options Consultation (Reg 18)</b>										
Publication Preparation										
<b>Publication (Reg 19)</b>										
Submission preparation										
<b>Submission</b>										
Examination										
Inspector's Report										
Adoption										

**Summary Profile of Redditch Local Plan Review**

<b>Redditch Local Plan Review</b>	
Role and Content	<p>Will review, update and extend the time horizon for the Local Plan up to 2040, setting out the vision, spatial strategy and policies and core policies for the spatial development of the Borough.</p> <p>Will include site allocations to accommodate Redditch's outstanding local development needs to 2040, additional needs for the extended time horizon of the Plan. Will also need to consider any unmet needs from adjoining local authority areas under the Duty to Co-operate</p> <p>A Policies Map will need to accompany the BORLP, which will illustrate geographically the policies in the plan and replace the current Policies Map associated with the existing BORLP4.</p>
Status	Development Plan Document
Position in chain of conformity	General conformity with National Planning Policy Framework
Geographic coverage	Borough wide



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**Birmingham City Council**

29th March 2021

Dear Ms. Dunn,

**Review of the Birmingham Development Plan**

Redditch Borough Council (RBC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on your letter dated 26 February 2021 and to continue to engage constructively with the Birmingham Development Plan in the best interests of positive plan-making as a Duty to Co-operate partner.

At this early stage in the plan-making process, this represents an informal officer response.

As you will be aware the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 was adopted in 2017 and is required to be reviewed by 2022 to ensure it is still fit for purpose. Part of this review will include a Housing and Employment Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA), which will be conducted in the near future. This will assist the Council in considering whether the housing and employment provision levels within the current plan up to 2030 are still appropriate.

Until this element of the review or any other work conducted as part of the review process is undertaken, Redditch is not in a position to raise any specific strategic or cross-boundary matters with regard to your evidence gathering exercise. However, the Council wishes to raise at this stage that it may have further cross boundary issues to address following the receipt of the HEDNA report and throughout the plan review process.

The Council notes the City Council's recognition that the Government's recent revisions to the Standard Methodology will subject Birmingham to a 35% uplift on its housing number. We also note that National Planning Policy Guidance states that the uplift is expected to be met by the cities and urban centres themselves, rather than the surrounding areas. In considering how need is met in the first instance, brownfield and other under utilised urban sites should be prioritised to ensure homes are built in the right places.

I trust the above comments offer a helpful contribution at this stage. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Louise Jones  
**Principal Planning Officer – Strategic Planning**  
Redditch Borough Council

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**City of Wolverhampton Council**

29th March 2021

Dear Mr. Culley,

**West Midlands Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Employment Land Paper**

Redditch Borough Council (RBC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the above document and to continue to engage constructively with the Black Country Plan in the best interests of positive plan-making.

At this early stage in the plan-making process, this represents an informal officer response.

As you will be aware the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 was adopted in 2017 and makes provision for 55 Hectares of employment land, a portion of which is to be met in neighbouring authorities.

Redditch is required to review its plan by 2022 to ensure it is still fit for purpose. Part of this review will include an assessment of whether the current employment provision is still appropriate. Therefore, it is envisaged that a Housing and Employment Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) will be conducted in the near future to assist in the completion of this element of the review. Until this work is complete specific responses to the questions posed in your letter dated 15 February 2021 are unable to be fully addressed. Therefore we would wish to have it noted that the Council may have further comments to make following the HEDNA's completion later this year.

With regard to the questions posed in your consultation, we can confirm that the current adopted plan does not plan to meet wider than the local need and it does contain a strategy which meets the B8 needs of the Borough. As highlighted above this position will be reconsidered through the plan review process and an up to date HEDNA.

I trust the above comments offer a helpful contribution. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Louise Jones  
**Principal Planning Officer – Strategic Planning**  
Redditch Borough Council

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**South Staffordshire Council**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Dear Mr. Fox,

**Duty to Cooperate Letter (1 June 2021)**

Thank you for providing Redditch Borough Council (RBC) with the opportunity to comment on the above document and to continue to engage with South Staffordshire's plan-making.

This letter represents an informal officer response only and will be taken to Members in due course and reported back to you.

From your letter we understand you are seeking RBC's view on your dwelling contribution of 4,000 to the unmet housing needs of the GBHMA. As you will be aware the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 was adopted in 2017 and is required to be reviewed by 2022 to ensure it is still fit for purpose. Part of this review will include a Housing and Employment Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA), which has very recently been commissioned and is currently being conducted. Until this element of the review is complete Redditch does not feel in a position to raise any specific matters regarding housing distribution in the GBHMA or to comment upon the appropriateness of your level of contribution to the unmet need.

We will of course continue to engage with your plan process as it continues.

Kind regards

Ruth Bamford  
**Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services**

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## South Warwickshire

21st June 2021

Dear Ms. Bozdoganli,

### **South Warwickshire Local Plan Scoping and Call for Sites Consultation**

Redditch Borough Council (RBC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on your email dated 10 May 2021 and looks forward to being able to engage constructively with the South Warwickshire Local Plan in the best interests of positive plan-making as a Duty to Co-operate partner.

At this early stage in the plan-making process, this represents an informal officer response only and has not been considered by Members. This will be done in due course and a sent to you retrospectively.

Your email specifically requested a response as a duty-to co-operate consultee in relation to any strategic cross boundary issues that need to be addressed and/or delivered through the South Warwickshire Local Plan, therefore the separate SWLP DTC form accompanies this letter as requested.

In addition to this we have some general comments in relation to the Scoping and Call for Sites Document, specifically Chapter 6. Options for Growth.

### **Chapter 6. Options for Growth**

The majority of the options (all except options A and D) include growth of some form either along the A435 (Studley, Alcester and further south) to the south of Redditch, or to the East/South-eastern edge of Redditch, Option F in particular shows a large area of growth at Mappleborough Green. Any of these options for growth could have a potential to significantly impact on Redditch, through new residents using existing services and facilitates in the Borough, as well as traffic implications through travelling along the A435 north to the M42 Junction 3 and beyond. We would request to be included in any transport work which considers the implications of development adjacent to Redditch in particular along the A435 at Mappleborough Green or adjacent to Studley and would stress this evidence should consider the implications on the Redditch road network. In addition, Worcestershire County Council would also need to be included in this work, given their role as the Highways Authority for Redditch.

Regarding Option B (Main Bus Corridors) whilst this is an understandable option, bus routes and provision are at the mercy of funding and private enterprise and subject to change at any given time.

Following a growth option heavily leaning towards main bus corridors solely would not be advisable due to these fluctuating circumstances. However, it is acknowledged that increasing population in these areas may increase the chances of sustainable bus provision in these areas in the future, but it is felt the option in isolation may not be the most appropriate growth strategy.

Option C (Main Road Corridors) and G (Dispersed) has the potential impact of reducing the gap between Studley and Redditch, it is noted that Page 65 of the Consultation Document states *“One principle we would seek to continue to apply would be to retain the separate character and identity of existing settlements.”* RBC supports this statement and would suggest it could feature as a Principle in the ‘Preliminary assessment of Growth Option Sustainability Appraisal’ document or any equivalent document going forward to ensure it is carried through when assessing the appropriateness of growth options.

Regarding Option F (Main Urban Areas), due to the nature of the existing development along the A435 and at Mappleborough Green there may be limited development potential within Stratford District to the west of the A435, therefore the majority of the development potential may be to the east of the A435. If development is considered to the east of the A435 services and facilities in Redditch are not necessarily easily accessible to these areas without enhancements for access across or onto the A435. This would need further investigation.

It also brings into question whether this option may unacceptably increase the pressure on some services in Redditch from cross boundary development. This would require further consideration if it is felt a credible option for further exploration.

Option G (Dispersed) highlights the opportunity that may exist for limited infill in existing settlements. RBC would need to see specific opportunities regarding the availability of limited infill at sites adjacent to Redditch before commenting further on this option.

I trust the above comments offer a helpful contribution at this stage. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Ruth Bamford  
**Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services**



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## **Black Country Authorities**

5<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Mr. Culley,

### **Consultation on Draft Black Country Local Plan**

Redditch Borough Council (RBC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the above document and to continue to engage constructively with the Black Country Plan in the best interests of positive plan-making. The response below has been written in consultation with the Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships and is due to be reported to Members at Executive Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

Firstly, we note and support the Black Country Authorities' intention at Paragraph 1.10 of the Draft BCP to draft and agree Statements Of Common Ground with all relevant bodies on Duty to Co-operate issues at the Plan's Publication Stage. RBC submitted its "Duty to Engagement Proforma" in 2018 which recognised the challenges of meeting the wider housing needs of the Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area. RBC reiterated in this Proforma that this needs to be based on fully evidenced scenarios and progressed through development planning work by the local authorities. We continue to emphasise this view.

Secondly, we recognise the significant shortfall of 28,239 homes and 210 hectares of employment land currently identified within the Draft BCP. In particular Paragraph 3.27 is noted, which places emphasis on the Black Country Authorities' support to neighbouring authorities in bringing forward land for housing and employment that "sits adjacent to the existing administrative boundaries."

As currently set out in the Draft Plan, it is RBC's interpretation that there are unlikely to be potential requirements for RBC to be involved in cross boundary discussions under the Duty to Co-operate with regard to meeting a proportion of the Black Country's housing and employment needs. This is because the authorities do not share any common boundaries.

I trust the above comments offer a helpful contribution. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Brown  
**Principal Planning Officer – Strategic Planning**  
Redditch Borough Council

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## STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND (SOCG) BETWEEN: SOLIHULL MBC (SMBC) and REDDITCH BC (RBC)

### 1. Introduction

1. The content of this SOCG is to inform the submission of the SMBC local plan and ongoing works associated with the delivery of The UKC Hub development proposals in particular.
2. This SOCG has been prepared in accordance with national guidance and is intended to cover matters of strategic importance relevant to the signatories to this SOCG. It covers both areas of agreement and areas that remain subject to further discussion.

#### Period Covered by SOCG

3. From July 2015 when SMBC commenced work on updating the current adopted development plan (the Solihull Local Plan Dec 2013) and it remains a live document to be updated as necessary.

### 2. Geography Covered

#### Housing Market Area (HMA)

4. Solihull is one of 14 authorities that make up the Birmingham & Black Country HMA, the others being:
  - Birmingham CC
  - Bromsgrove DC
  - Cannock Chase DC
  - Dudley MBC
  - Lichfield DC
  - North Warwickshire DC (also located with the Coventry & Warwickshire HMA)
  - Redditch BC
  - Sandwell MBC
  - South Staffordshire DC
  - Stratford upon Avon DC (also located with the Coventry & Warwickshire HMA)
  - Tamworth DC
  - Walsall MBC
  - Wolverhampton CC
5. Through membership of the West Midlands Combined Authority, the following authorities also have a relationship with Solihull MBC:
  - Coventry CC
  - Nuneaton & Bedworth DC
  - Rugby DC
  - Shropshire C
  - Telford & Wrekin C
  - Warwick DC
  - Warwickshire CC

### 3. Areas Solihull MBC & RBC are in Agreement

#### Solihull Local Plan Review

6. It is acknowledged that SMBC have published consultation material relating to its Local Plan review process at the following dates and stages:
  - Scope, Issues and Options – November 2015
  - Draft Local Plan – November 2016
  - Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation – January 2019
  - Draft Submission Plan – October 2020
7. In each case RBC have been consulted on these documents and have engaged as they felt appropriate at the time. RBC did not make any representations on publication of the Draft Submission Plan.

#### Housing Need

8. Solihull MBC Council and RBC have been active members of the GBSLEP HMA Technical Officers Group since it was created and have contributed to all discussions relating to the delivery of unmet housing need with the HMA
9. This engagement has been ongoing and effective in so far as it has resulted in unmet housing need (to 2031) within the HMA being reduced from 37,572<sup>1</sup> dwellings in 2015 to 2,597<sup>2</sup> dwellings as at 2019.
10. The 2,597 shortfall noted above represents the position using land supply as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, and as such does not yet include contributions towards the shortfall from authorities that have published plans or emerging plans since then. This includes both Lichfield and South Staffordshire. These authorities have plans that are seeking to make contributions to the HMA of 4,500 (2018-40) and up to 4,000 (2018-38) respectively<sup>3</sup>. Less than a third of this provision would need to be made by 2031 to see the overall HMA shortfall to 2031 having been dealt with.
11. At this time, both parties recognise that SMBC have made a commitment to test accommodating 2,000 dwellings towards the unmet housing need for the HMA, but recognise that the final details of that contribution must be tested through a Local Plan process in accordance with national guidance. This is primarily associated with the need to release land from the Boroughs Green Belt to support any contributions it makes. This 2,000 contribution has been taken into account in arriving at the 2,597 shortfall (as at April 2019) noted above
12. It is acknowledged that both SMBC and RBC were active partners as part of the HMA wide commission undertaken by GL Hearn to produce the Strategic Growth Study.
13. It is noted that in December 2019 BCC published an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS), which concluded that an early review [of the 2017 BDP] was not required. This stated that *"the Local Planning Authority will start scoping out the work needed to undertake this in 2020 and set out a timetable for any BDP update, if necessary, in the next version of the LDS by January 2022."* At this early stage Birmingham CC has not made any request to any LPA within the HMA to help with housing need beyond 2031, nor has it set out what any extent of shortfall beyond 2031 may be.

<sup>1</sup> Strategic Housing Needs Study Stage 3 (PBA August 2015)

<sup>2</sup> HMA Position Statement No. 3 September 2020 – Table 5 to reflect the position as of the Apr 2019 base date.

<sup>3</sup> HMA Position Statement No. 3 September 2020 – Appendix 2

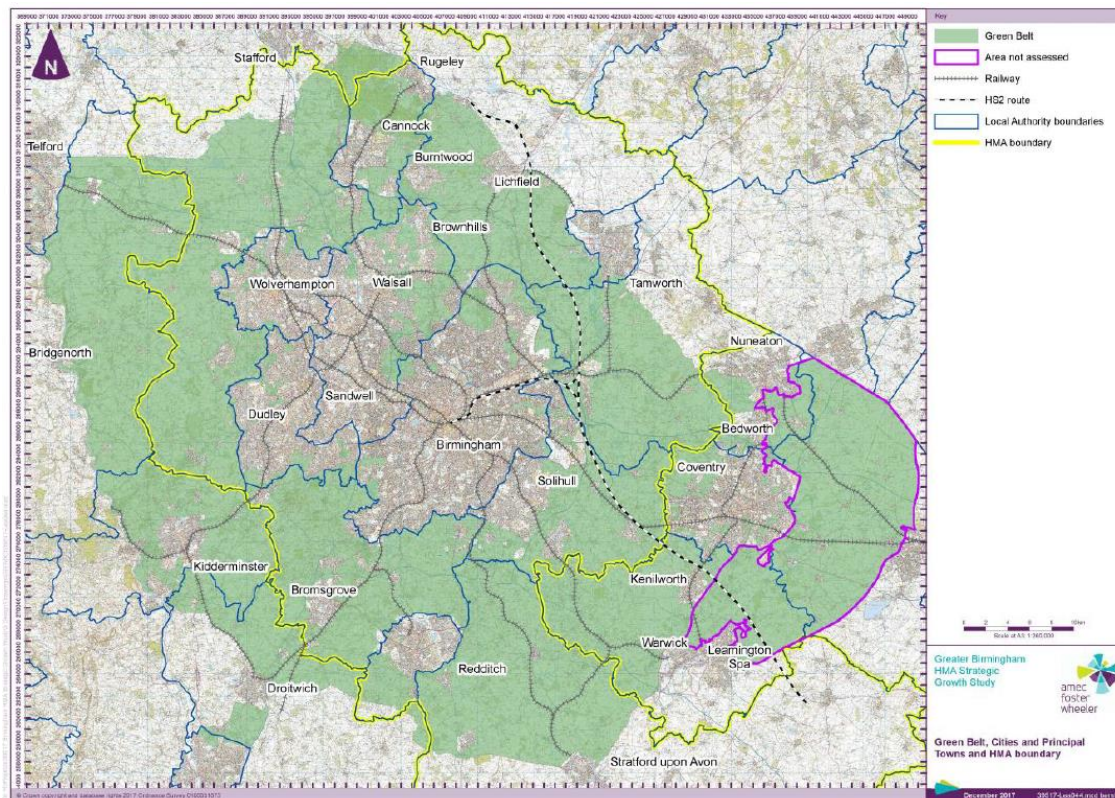
14. On the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2020 The Association of Black Country Authorities wrote to all members of the HMA regarding the challenges facing the Black Country Joint Plan review in so far as they related to matters of Housing and Employment land supply. This letter supports the ongoing duty to cooperate process in so far as it relates to the Black Country Joint Plan, but also plan preparation and review for recipient authorities (extent subject to stage of plan making). The letter identified that the Black Country Authorities are preparing a Draft Plan for consultation in summer 2021, with an aim to produce a Publication Plan in summer 2022 and adopt the Plan in early 2024. Despite initial work around urban capacity and potential Green Belt release within the Black Country area, there remains a significant level of unmet need in the order of at least 4,500 - 6,500 homes and up to 292 ha-570ha of employment land up to 2039.
15. Given the timetable at play here it is the view of SMBC that there remains a significant amount of work to be undertaken to evidence this shortfall and review the overall need in light of recent government changes to the Standard Methodology which, given the timeframes involved, will affect the continued development of the Black Country Plan. Any final shortfall will also be subject to testing through further consultation and public examination. SMBC therefore commits to continuing to work alongside the Black Country Authorities and other members of the wider HMA to review the evidence which supports the unmet need but notes that any outstanding need retains significant uncertainty and is also likely to be relevant towards the latter half of the Plan Period (post 2031 for example). Given the likelihood of a Local Plan review within SMBC prior to 2031 (having regard to the position with the BCC Local Plan and national planning system/guidance), SMBC is of the view that this issue can be more constructively and effectively managed as part of its next Local Plan review. As part of this SOCG, RBC acknowledge the position set out by SMBC and do not object to this approach in principle.

### **Housing Opportunities in the Urban Area or Beyond the Green Belt**

16. From the onset of the Boroughs Local Plan Review in 2015 it has been clear that significant housing pressures existed across the HMA, and beyond. Prior to the onset of the Plan review, SMBC notes that the development and examination of the BCC Local Plan which, following the publication of the Inspectors report in 2015, confirmed a significant shortfall in housing need that was required to be met within the wider HMA. In part of reaching this decision BCC were deemed to have demonstrated exceptional circumstances to justify the release of Green Belt land. In the proceeding 5 years SMBC have also noted the development and examination of other Local Plans across the HMA (for instance Bromsgrove) that exceptional circumstances were demonstrated to justify the release of Green Belt land to meet housing needs.
17. In addition, SMBC are active members of the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Planning Officers Group and engaged actively with the respective authorities in relation to the development and adoption of their Local Plans and the Memorandum of Understanding that underpinned them. This is a further important step as each authority demonstrated exceptional circumstances to justify the release of land from the Green Belt to meet the housing needs of the HMA. In the case of Stratford and North Warwickshire (where this matter remains subject to a live EIP), active proposals are also made to support the GBBC HMA.
18. Notwithstanding the above approximately 67% of the Boroughs land area is covered by Green Belt with significantly limited brownfield opportunities within the urban area or the rural settlements. As part of developing the Solihull Local Plan the Borough have been active participants in the HMA Strategic Growth Study, which included looking at options of density and brownfield land as a primary option ahead of releasing land from the Green Belt. In this

respect SMBC have sought to maximise the efficiency and deliverability of land within its existing urban areas.

19. Lastly, the plan below shows the extent of Green Belt coverage across the West Midlands Area. SMBC are mindful that a key part of the NPPF, and draft proposals for the future national planning system, is the principle of Sustainable Development and conversely the importance of meeting development needs as close as possible to where they arise. The above summary therefore clearly demonstrates that it would be unsustainable and inappropriate not to plan positively for meeting local housing needs within the Borough and where possible any of the unmet need within the wider HMA, especially arising from Birmingham given the geographical relationship and level of connectivity. This therefore provides part of the justification for exceptional circumstances in Solihull and demonstrates how SMBC have engaged with and supported the wider HMA in considering the most sustainable options for meeting development needs.



The West Midlands Green Belt and Greater Birmingham HMA (Figure 24 from Strategic Growth Study (GL Hearn Feb 2018))

### UK Central

20. The UKC Hub area is recognised as being of strategic importance to the local, regional and national economy. It will provide for an effective and efficient use of land associated with the development of HS2 and facilitate future and long term economic growth for the area. This will also include significant connectivity improvements with other areas both to the north and south east. The development proposal is supported by the WMCA and Mayor for the West Midlands.
21. As part of the next iteration of the plan, RBC notes SMBC published updated evidence regarding housing and economic development needs in the form of a Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA). The HEDNA includes analysis of employment forecasts including a scenario relating to potential above trend growth at the UK Central Hub.



In doing so it uses commuter patterns from the 2011 census that indicate 25.3% of the workforce are Solihull residents.

### **Employment Land**

22. RBC has not approached SMBC to ask for assistance in accommodating employment land that cannot be accommodated within RBC.

### **Duty to Cooperate**

23. RBC agree with SMBC that the Council has complied with its legal obligations under the duty to cooperate and if there is a difference between Solihull and other authorities in the HMA, this is around the issue of the soundness of the plan.

## **4. Areas Subject to Ongoing Discussion**

24. The only area of outstanding discussion relates to the delivery of homes to meet unmet housing need within the HMA beyond 2031. This need is likely to arise from Birmingham and the Black Country and will be the subject of on-going duty to cooperate discussions.
25. Whilst both parties agree that work through the Duty to Cooperate has been ongoing, constructive and effective in so far as the level of unmet need has reduced it is acknowledged that some HMA authorities believe that SMBC could do more to deliver additional homes. Both parties agree that this does not amount to a legal deficiency in relation to the Duty to Cooperate, but could be perceived as a matter of soundness. RBC acknowledges that the view of SMBC is that it has sought to maximise its housing land supply, including by making a meaningful contribution towards the unmet needs of the wider HMA, whilst also planning positively for the necessary mineral extraction to support development across the HMA. Both parties agree that such matters will be tested further through the period of representations and public examination.

## **5. Areas Subject to Disagreement**

26. There are no areas of disagreement outstanding at this stage.

## APPENDICES

### A. Relevant Notable Events/Timeline

#### 2014

27. November – Publication of the Strategic Housing Needs Study Stage 2 (Peter Brett & Associates (PBA)). This study considered both geographies and needs/supply across the study area and was commissioned by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP<sup>4</sup> and the 4 Black Country authorities.

#### 2015

28. January – Inspectors interim report into the Birmingham Development Plan confirming the appropriateness of the HMA geography.
29. August - Publication of the Strategic Housing Needs Study Stage 3 (PBA). This provided an update to the stage 2 study and noted the BDP Inspectors comments on the HMA geography. The housing need/supply balance across the HMA was noted to result in a shortfall of 37,572 dwellings<sup>5</sup>.
30. September – HMA Housing Conference (hosted by SMBC at the NEC). The conference was attended by representatives of all 14 HMA authorities and typically included a relevant Cabinet Member, Director/Head of Service and Heads of Policy. It was agreed:
- That the housing shortfall (37,500) is a shared problem for the HMA authorities;
  - To collaborate as part of our duty to co-operate to find a solution;
  - To share resources, expertise and provide mutual support towards a solution;
  - To establish HMA Technical officer group.

31. November – SMBC publishes Scope, Issues and Options consultation.

#### 2016

32. January - HMA Housing Conference (hosted by SMBC at Solihull College).
33. March – Inspectors final report into the Birmingham Development Plan issued. The Inspector took into account the Strategic Housing Needs Study (both stage 2 and 3). He concluded that the city had a need for 89,000 dwellings and a supply of 51,100, leaving a shortfall of 37,900 dwellings.
34. November SMBC publishes Draft Local Plan consultation.

#### 2017

35. January – Birmingham Development Plan adopted, thus quantifying (at 37,900 dwellings<sup>6</sup>), through an adopted plan, the extent of the Birmingham shortfall which is the principal cause of the HMA shortfall. The plan recognises that the “Council will also play an active role in promoting, and monitor progress in, the provision and delivery of the 37,900 homes required

<sup>4</sup> Although it was noted that some authorities in the LEP are not part of the HMA, and some authorities not part of the LEP are part of the HMA.

<sup>5</sup> Table 2.2

<sup>6</sup> To 2031

elsewhere in the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area to meet the shortfall in the city.” Furthermore policy TP48 goes on to state that if other local authorities do not submit plans that provide an appropriate contribution to the shortfall, then the Council needs to consider the reasons for this and determine whether it is necessary to reassess Birmingham’s capacity by means of a full or partial BDP review after three years.

36. March – GL Hearn commissioned by the 14 HMA authorities to produce the Strategic Growth Study

### 2018

37. February – Publication of the Strategic Growth Study (GL Hearn).
38. February – HMA Position Statement No. 1 – Issued alongside the publication of the Strategic Growth Study. The statement noted:

- That the Strategic Growth Study “*is an independently prepared, objective study and not a policy statement. It does not in any way commit the participating authorities to development of any of the geographic areas referred to (nor does it exclude the testing of alternatives), but it is a thorough evidence base to take matters forward through the local plan review process.*”
- That there is a minimum shortfall of 28,150 to 2031, but that higher densities might increase supply on identified sites by up to 13,000.

39. September - HMA Position Statement No. 2

### 2019

40. January – SMBC publishes Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation.

### 2020

41. September - HMA Position Statement No. 3
42. October - SMBC published Draft Submission Plan

## **B. Relevant Organisations and or Groups SMBC is a Member of or Participates in.**

43. HMA Technical Officers Group
44. CSWPO – Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Planning Officers group. The group was initially established to support work on the West Midlands Regional Plans but following their abolition evolved to support the Duty to cooperate process for the area. As a neighbouring authority to Coventry, North Warks and Warwick, Solihull attend monthly meetings to gain a full understanding of emerging development pressures and policy developments across the area. The introduction of HS2 and UKC Hub has also given a strategic significance to ongoing meetings of this group given the existing and planned connectivity and growth opportunities. SMBC is also able to provide a useful link (alongside SADC and NWBC) between the Coventry and Birmingham HMA’s.
45. GBSLEP
46. WMCA

**C. Published Documents Referred To**

- 47. HMA Position Statement No. 1 (February 2018) - [HMA Position Statement - Greater Birmingham and Solihull](#)
- 48. HMA Position Statement No. 2 (September 2018) – [web link to be provided]
- 49. Strategic Growth Study (GL Hearn February 2018) - [Strategic Growth Study - Greater Birmingham and Solihull](#)
- 50. HMA Position Statement No. 3 (published September 2020)

**D. Signatures**

Signed: Ruth Bamford  
Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services, Redditch Borough Council

Signed: [x]  
Mark Andrews  
Head of Planning, Design & Engagement Services, Solihull MBC

Dated: [x]



REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive Committee  
2021****26th October****Adoption of revised Conservation Area Appraisal Boundaries, Appraisal and Management Plan for the Church Green Conservation Area**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matt Dormer
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford
Report Author Mary Worsfold	Job Title: Principal Conservation Officer Contact Email: m.worsfold@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527881329
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run and Grow a Successful Business</li> <li>• Finding somewhere to live</li> <li>• Aspiration, work and financial independence</li> <li>• Living independent, active and healthy lives</li> <li>• Communities which are Safe, Well Maintained and Green</li> </ul> The Green Thread runs through the Council Plan
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS****The Executive Committee RESOLVE that:-**

- 1) It approves the Church Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, and endorses its contents as a material consideration for planning purposes.
- 2) It approves the designation of the proposed extension to the Conservation Area to include 5 – 11 Alcester Street.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council has a statutory duty under s69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate any areas which they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas. The Council has a further duty under s71(1) to formulate and prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas.

**Executive Committee  
2021****26th October**

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- 2.2 A Conservation Area Appraisal has been prepared for the Church Green Conservation Area. The character appraisal identifies the factors and features which make the area special, based on an in-depth assessment of the area's buildings, spaces, evolution and sense of place. The Conservation Management Plan provides a strategy for the management of the conservation area in a way that will protect and enhance its character and appearance and support the wider regeneration of the town centre.
- 2.3 The conservation area appraisal identified the need for a small boundary change.
- 2.4 Having obtained the support of the Executive Committee for the draft boundary extensions, Appraisal and Management Plan, full consultation with local occupiers, owners and other interested parties between 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021.
- 2.5 A broad range of views were expressed in respect of the Appraisal and Management Plan, these can be viewed at appendix 2. There were no objections to the proposed boundary extension.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The cost of producing and consulting on the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been met by the existing Strategic Planning Team budget.

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory duty under s69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate any areas which they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas. The Council has a further duty under s71(1) to formulate and prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas.

**5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS****Relevant Strategic Purpose**

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- 5.1 The publication of the Church Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) will help support the Strategic Purposes by supporting the ongoing regeneration of Redditch Town Centre.

**Climate Change Implications**

- 5.2 The publication of the CAAMP has no direct climate change implications.

**6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS****Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 The publication of the CAAMP has no equality or diversity implications.

**Operational Implications**

- 6.2 Guidance in relation to the designation, preservation and enhancement of conservation areas are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) as outlined in the Character Appraisal and Management Plan.

The NPPF states that

*191. When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.*

The PPG states that

*Local planning authorities need to ensure that the area has sufficient special architectural or historic interest to justify its designation as a conservation area.*

- 6.3 The architectural and historic significance of the area, including the additions and proposals for managing them, are set out in the Appraisal and Management Plan.
- 6.4 Designation of conservation areas have planning consequences, some of which are outlined in the Appraisal and Management Plan, which include controls over trees in the area, more restrictions on permitted development rights and advertisements rights, and the duty to pay attention to the historic and archaeological significance of the area when considering the grant of planning permission and the duty to formulate proposals to enhance and preserve the conservation areas

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- 6.5 The Character Appraisal identifies the factors and features which make a conservation area special, based on an in-depth assessment of an area's buildings, spaces, evolution and sense of place. The Management Plan then provides a strategy for the management of the conservation area in a way that will protect and enhance its character and appearance, and support the wider regeneration of the Town Centre.
- 6.6 The CA has many positive features, which are noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal. It sits at the centre of the town with the Grade II Church as the focus, surrounded by green space. The historic buildings which surround the Green, both listed and locally listed, enhance the setting of the Church and this open space. Being predominantly pedestrianised it is a safe and attractive space for pedestrians. There are, however, some issues which potentially threaten the character of the CA. These include;
- Poor state of the public realm
  - Poor state of shop fronts
  - Parking around the church
  - Parking on the corner of Evesham Walk/Unicorn Hill
  - Vacant Units
- 6.7 It is also recommended that 5-11 Alcester Street are incorporated into the CA. It would seem to be anomalous that they have been left out especially as 5 and 7 are a continuation of 3, and 9 and 11 are the last historic buildings in this run and probably date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. All the buildings are sympathetic in terms of character with the existing buildings in the CA.
- 6.8 The attached Conservation Management Plan identifies strategies to protect and enhance the character and significance of the CA by addressing the issues identified in the appraisal. In terms of the issues noted above proposals include;
- Poor state of the public realm - Working with Highways at the County Council and NWEDR to finalise a uniform scheme of public realm works, probably following what has been introduced in Alcester Street. This is under way.
  - Poor state of shop fronts- encourage the reinstatement of historic detailing when opportunities arise through the development control process and Investigating the possibility of

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obtaining grant funding to finance a programme of upgrading shop fronts.

- Parking around the church - Approach the Church with the aim of discussing their parking requirements. Look at ways of accommodating their needs while at the same time improving the appearance of the space around the Church.
- Parking on the corner of Evesham Walk/Unicorn Hill- The Local Authority is in the process of issuing a Traffic Order to prevent parking in this area, but there will be a continual need to monitor the situation and liaise with Town Centre Management at RBC and NWEDR.
- Vacant Units- RBC with the assistance of NWEDR has submitted a Town Investment Plan as part of the Town Deal programme and has been offered a Town Deal of £15.6million. Phase 2 of the Town Deal programme is now progressing with Business Case Development for the projects. A Town Deal Board has been established, and the Board through consultation with the public and stakeholders will prioritise projects which will include work in the Town Centre. Work with partners at RBC and NWEDR to obtain funding to improve the appearance of the CA and in particular units within it to make the Town Centre a more attractive to prospective occupiers.

- 6.9 The proposed action points are in accordance with national policy guidance, local policies and follow on from the Conservation Area Appraisal. As noted above there have been discussions between NWEDR and the County Council regarding the upgrading of the Public Realm, and the intention is to continue working with NWEDR in respect of other elements of town centre regeneration.
- 6.10 Every year Historic England asks local authorities to assess whether listed buildings and conservations areas can be assessed as being 'At Risk' using their assessment criteria. Currently many town centre conservation areas are at risk, and the future is uncertain for large numbers of them, the impact of Covid 19 is only likely to make the situation worse in the short term. Church Green Conservation Area, for the reasons identified in the appraisal, and noted above, now meets the criteria for being 'At Risk'. If this is formally recognised, we will begin to look at what funding may be eligible from Historic England to address some of these issues.

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- 6.11 The occupiers of the Conservation Area, as well as a number of other interested parties including The Victorian Society and Historic England were notified either by a hand delivered letter or email of the Consultation. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, it was not possible to hold any consultation events, but information was provided on the RBC website together with links to the relevant planning page and a press release resulted in coverage in the Redditch Standard.

- 6.12 Thirteen written responses were received.

From those who expressed an opinion there was support to extend the Conservation Area as proposed.

A number of consultees expressed concern about the poor state of the public realm, various parking issues in and around the CA, and the increasing number of vacant units within the Area. The Management Plan details proposals for tackling these issues; public realm improvement works are underway; there are plans to discuss ways of improving the parking in the vicinity of the Church with the Church Community; and when the CAAMP is adopted we will be looking in obtaining grant funding to improve the appearance of the shop fronts as well as working with the BID and NWEDR on wider regeneration in the area.

The comments together with a response from the Conservation Officer where appropriate, are tabulated in Appendix 2.

- 6.13 Two responses required amendments to the text of the CAAMP. The following has been added to the end of the first paragraph of section 4.3.1, 'Outside of the Church, to the south is an early 14<sup>th</sup> century vault springer, with moulded ribs and a ballflower decoration, from Bordesley Abbey'. While, 'Work with the Church and NWEDR to improve the appearance of the Churchyard which forms part of the public realm, and improve the integration of the Church into the CA.', has been added to 4.2.2 of the Management Plan

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 There are no associated risks with this report .

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS****APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Church Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Management Plan

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Appendix 2 – Church Green CAAMP Consultation Comments

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Executive Committee report December 2020  
[Conservation Report - 8th December 2020](#)

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Historic England Guidance - [Historic England Information](#)



**Executive Committee  
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**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder		
Lead Director / Head of Service		
Financial Services		
Legal Services		
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)		

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# Church Green Conservation Area Town Centre Redditch

Character Appraisal and  
Conservation Management Plan

October 2021

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

making  
a  
difference

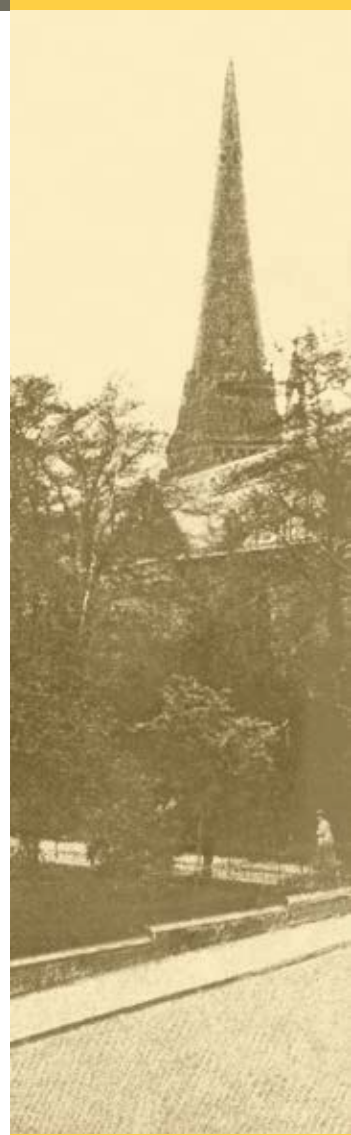
[www.redditchbc.gov.uk](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk)

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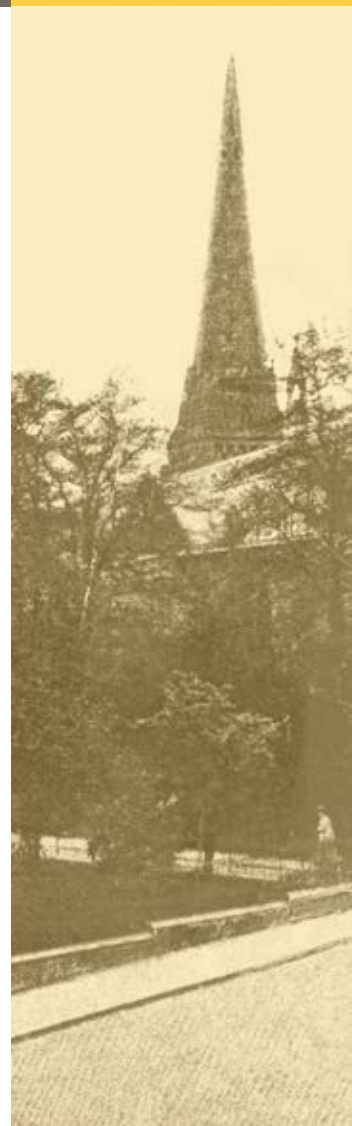
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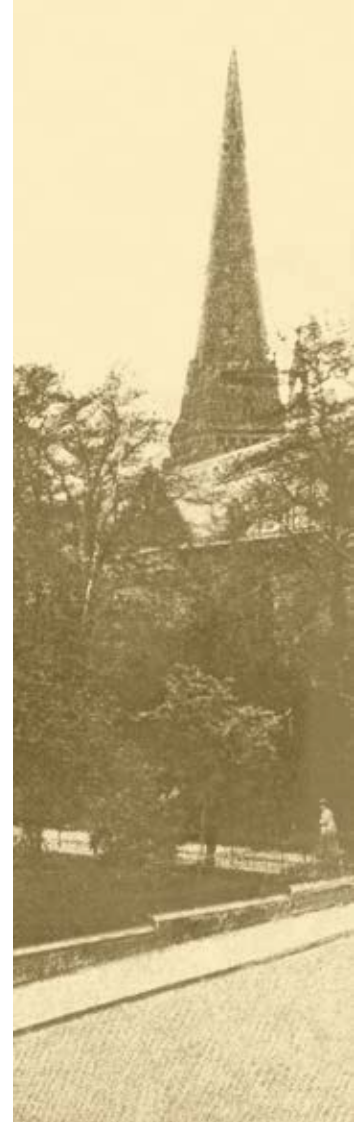
# 1.0 Introduction

**1.1** The purpose of a conservation area character appraisal is to identify the factors and features which make an area special, based on an in-depth assessment of an area's buildings, spaces, evolution and sense of place. This is the first step in developing a management plan for the continued preservation and enhancement of a conservation area. An appraisal evaluates the positive, neutral and negative features of the area and suggests opportunities for improvement. It is not unusual for the boundary of a conservation area to fluctuate over time as the area evolves, and an assessment of the current and potential boundaries is normally part of the appraisal process.

**1.2** The Church Green Conservation Area was designated on 6th August 1971 by Worcestershire County Council. It was then extended on 15th November 1978 by Redditch Borough Council and further extended in 2006, following the previous Conservation Area Appraisal also by the Borough Council.

**1.3** The appraisal of the Church Green Conservation Area was carried out in accordance with the most recent guidance from Historic England, the Historic England Advice Note 1, Second Edition (HEAN1), Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (February 2019).

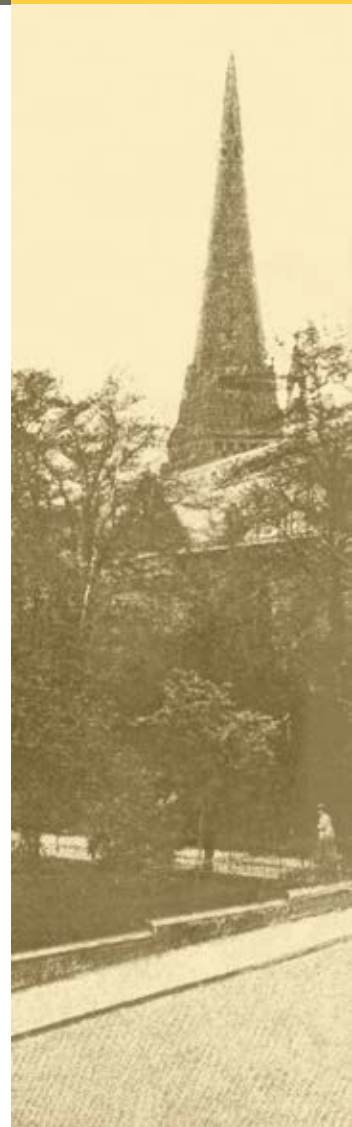
**1.4** Public consultation was carried out between 8th February 2021 and 19th March 2021.



## 2.0 Planning Policy Framework

Conservation area designation introduces controls over the ways owners can alter or develop their properties. The controls in conservation areas include the following;

- The requirement in legislation and national planning policies to preserve and/or enhance - The current primary legislation governing Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This legislation includes certain statutory duties which the Council, as Local Planning Authority, must uphold. s69(1) of the Act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate any areas which they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas, and under s69(2) to review such designations from time to time. The Council has a further duty under s71 (1) to formulate and prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas from time to time. When assessing applications for development within designated conservation areas, the Local Planning Authority must pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, under s72(1) of the Act. This does not mean that development will necessarily be opposed, only that it should not be detrimental to the special interest of the wider Conservation Area. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) revised in 2021, has replaced previous Government guidance, and is supported by further guidance in the National Planning Policy Guidance document (NPPG). The NPPF does, however maintain the importance placed on conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment as well as providing advice for conservation areas. Specific advice on the historic environment is found in Section 16, although references to the historic environment appear throughout the document.
- Local planning policies which pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area - The Borough of Redditch Local Plan No 4 (adopted in January 2017) contains a series of specific policies relating to the historic environment (see Appendix 3). These policies help guide the Local Planning Authority when assessing planning applications, to ensure that new developments and alterations preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.
- Control over demolition of unlisted buildings - Planning Permission is required for the total or substantial demolition of any building over 115m<sup>3</sup> in size, the demolition of a boundary wall over 1m in height next to the highway or 2m elsewhere and the removal of any agricultural building constructed before 1914. There is a general presumption against the loss of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Control over works to trees. An owner must submit a formal notification of works to the Council six weeks before starting work. This gives the Council the opportunity to place a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on the site protecting any notable trees from unsuitable works.
- Fewer types of advertisements which can be displayed with deemed consent.
- Restriction on the types of development which can be carried out without the need for planning permission (permitted development rights), these include the enlargement of a dwelling house, the rendering of properties, and the installation of antennae and satellite dishes.



## 3.0 Summary of Special Interest

The Church Green Conservation Area (CA) comprises the historic central core of the town of Redditch, centred on the church of St Stephen and the public open space, including the churchyard, which surrounds it. The space is enclosed predominantly by relatively modest late 18th century and 19th century buildings, on Church Green East, Church Green West and Market Place, although Church Green West has some larger 19th century public buildings. These buildings on Church Green West were added to the CA in 2006 along with the remaining historic buildings contiguous with this core on Evesham Walk, Church Road, William Street, Unicorn Hill and Bates Hill. The buildings on these latter streets are predominantly 19th century and also modest in character. The CA benefits from a number of the buildings having been identified as heritage assets in their own right, with 15 listed buildings and 17 buildings on the Local Heritage List. Much of the CA is pedestrianised, including Church Green East, Market Place, Evesham Walk and the top section of Alcester Street which falls within the CA, and this contributes to its sense of being a public open space.

## 4.0 Assessment of Special Interest

### 4.1 General Character, Location and uses

The CA is located within the central area of Redditch town centre, within the ring road system in the historic core of the town. Redditch is located 15 miles south of Birmingham, within Worcestershire but close to the border with Warwickshire.

There are two main topographical influences on the CA.

- a) the long ridge that runs north/south through the western half of Redditch Borough. This reaches from the Lickey Hills on the edge of the Birmingham plateau, through Foxlydiate, to Webheath, Headless Cross, Crabbs Cross and beyond Astwood Bank. Two spurs run eastwards from the ridge, at Mount Pleasant and Rough Hill Wood. The Mount Pleasant spur terminates in a small plateau on which the town centre is located, with the CA occupying the northern tip of this spur.
- b) the Arrow valley which follows a north/south course east of the main ridge. The land falls away quite steeply to the north and east of the CA towards the river valley.

The CA is focused around the Church of St Stephen and the surrounding amenity space. This area is enclosed by two pedestrianised streets and one roadway; Market Place, Church Green West and Church Green East, all remnants of an older street pattern. The buildings to the east of Church Green East are included from number 3 to 24 & 25, in addition 1 & 3 Alcester Street, which is a continuation of Church Green East. Along Church Green West the run of buildings on the west side from Red House as far as Unicorn Hill also fall into the CA, and it also extends partly along Church Road, William Street, Unicorn Hill and Bates Hill, which all extend westwards from Church Green West. Finally to the south of the Church the buildings to the south of Market Place from the corner with Evesham Walk as far as the library and the remnants of the historic buildings along Evesham Walk up to the entrance to the Kingfisher Centre, are also included.





These buildings are predominantly in use as offices and retail, with public buildings, including a hospital and what was originally the Library and Scientific Institute on the west side of Church Green West. The buildings are predominantly 19th century, but there are earlier 18th century properties as well as some from the 20th century. The CA is largely pedestrianised, although Church Green West forms a prominent north south vehicular route through the centre, passing to the west of St Stephen's, and continuing onto Unicorn Hill, with a turn off on to Church Road. The area to the east is pedestrianised.

## 4.2 Historic Development and Archaeology

Redditch is renowned as the centre of the needle-making industry, but owes its origin to the Cistercian monks, who founded Bordesley Abbey in the 12th century. Prior to their arrival, the area was a marshy and uninhabited valley that lay between two ancient trade routes along the ridgeways to the east and west, although there were Saxon settlements at Beoley, Ipsley, Headless Cross, Studley and Tardebigge. The monks drained and cleared the land, built water and windmills to run forges and established a thriving community alongside the abbey to accommodate the ironworkers, stonemasons and other labourers and their families, which was known as Red Ditch or Rubeo Fossetto, after the iron oxide discolouration of the local stream.

At the Dissolution, the local economy suffered, but was sustained by the Sheldon family of Beoley and their tapestry-making enterprise. The needle trade was already established in the region by this time and, after the Civil War, many more needlemakers settled in the Arrow valley. Local industry was fostered by the Earls of Plymouth of Hewell Grange and, by the turn of the 18th century, there were over 2000 needlemakers in the district, and also a flourishing fish-hook business. The construction of the Birmingham-Worcester canal through Tardebigge gave new impetus to local industry and the arrival of the railway in 1859 soon secured the town as the international centre of the needle-making industry. This new prosperity was reflected in the rapid growth and development of the town centre from the late eighteenth century onwards. Grand new houses were built along the Bromsgrove Road and Prospect Hill, conveniently located adjacent to the new large needle and fish-hook mills, such as Forge Mills, Abbey Mills, British Mills and the Easemore Works. Most significantly, the area now known as Church Green was transformed to meet the needs of the expanding urban population.

Traditionally, the area now known as Church Green had provided a crossing point for several important roads through the area leading across the valley from the ridgeways, and it is probable that it has served as a market and meeting place since the medieval period. A few of the timber-framed buildings dating from the seventeenth century or even earlier that fronted onto the present Market Place can be seen in early illustrations of the area, and traces of probable seventeenth-century structures survive at the rear of Church Green East.



In 1808 the Earl of Plymouth gave a portion of land on the Green to the town on which to construct a chapel. This was then a roughly triangular parcel of flat, open ground, devoid of trees, but the new chapel, known as The Chapel on the Green, contributed to its transformation. From the late 18th century, the scattered buildings around its perimeter were steadily replaced by more substantial buildings, plots were infilled, and formal street frontages were established. Such was the expansion of the town that by 1853 the chapel was deemed inadequate and was replaced by a large new church that became a focal point and landmark at the heart of the town. Its construction was accompanied by a massive tree planting scheme on the Green, now Church Green, partly funded by public subscription, and the churchyard was enclosed by decorative iron railings. In 1883 the Bartleet fountain, cast at the Coalbrookdale Works, was erected on Church Green and set amidst formal gardens to commemorate the town's new fresh water supply and, ten years later, the Church was altered and extended by the addition of a new memorial chapel. Also at this time, Church Green was enclosed to the north-west by further development, including the Scientific and Literary Institute of 1885, and Smallwood Hospital of 1894, given to the town by the Smallwood brothers, local needle manufacturers. Church Green West was then known as 'The Parade', as its avenue of trees were sufficiently mature to create an elegant promenade. By the turn of the century the population had risen to almost 12,000 and three years later Redditch became an urban district. It enjoyed continued prosperity during the early decades of the twentieth century not only from the needle trade but from other new industry in the area such as the Enfield motorcycle company.

On 10 April 1964 Redditch was designated a New Town and until 1985 the Redditch Development Corporation was responsible for the redevelopment of its urban area to accommodate the needs of the consequent huge increase in population which doubled in size to over 70,000. This included the new shopping centre and offices in the town centre and the ring road which links it with the outlying residential and industrial districts.

### 4.3 Architectural Interest and Built Form

#### 4.3.1 Styles of Buildings

The architectural style of the buildings in the CA largely relates to their type and date. The dominant feature of the CA is the Church of St Stephen (Grade II) located at the southern end of the open space. It is a Victorian Gothic church, built in the decorated style to designs by Henry Woodyer between 1854-5, and constructed in Tardebigge sandstone. There is a chunky North West tower with a tall broached spire, which is visible on several approaches to the town, and from some distance away. The east end was altered by Temple Moore in 1893-4. To the south west of the Church is a War Memorial Cross (Grade II). It comprises a Latin cross on a tall, tapering octagonal shaft with a substantial two-tiered square pedestal and single-stepped octagonal base, in Portland stone. On the south-west face of the pedestal is a carving of James Clark's 'The Great Sacrifice'. It was designed by the Bromsgrove Guild and erected in 1922. Outside of the Church, to the south is an early 14th century vault springer, with moulded ribs and a ballflower decoration, from Bordesley Abbey.

Church Green East contains the most cohesive run of buildings more domestic in scale some dating back to the late 18th century. These include Nos.7 - 8 and 23 (Church Green House), which are typical of late Georgian period in style; well-proportioned with moulded or dentilled cornices; sash windows with rubbed brick heads or rusticated voussoirs; and elegant door cases with traceried fanlights.







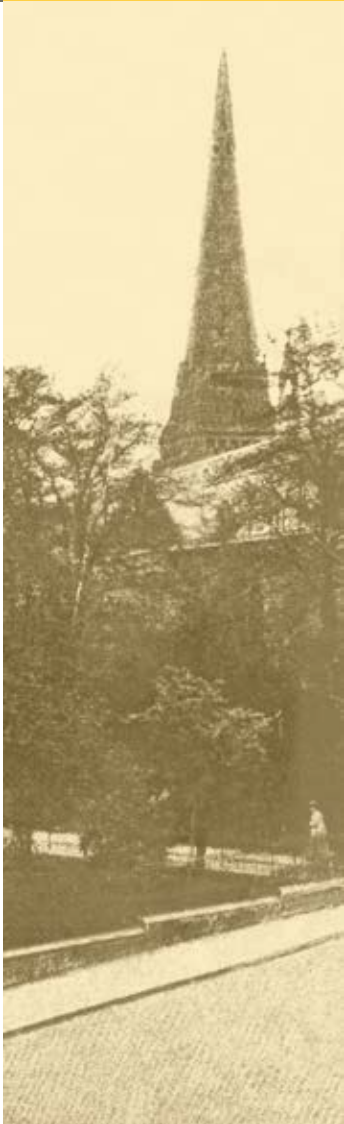
23 Church Green East



20 Church Green East



7 - 9 Church Green East



Some of the mid and late Victorian buildings and alterations are similarly proportioned but more ornate, some incorporating free but relatively high quality elements of Italianate classical detail including rusticated quoins, moulded flat canopies on consoles and moulded architraves to the windows, pilasters articulating the bays or flanking the windows, and some have classical porches with entablatures on Doric columns, for example, Beech House, Church Green East, and the Lloyds Bank at 19 Church Green East. Many however are of a more simple mid Victorian style with simple detailing including 3 to 7 Alcester Street, with just moulded window heads those to the first floors supported on consoles, and the later 19th century 14 - 18 Church Green East, with plain first floor bay windows and simple sash window openings to the top floor, which form a cohesive group with a unifying gable above the central unit. They comprise a purpose built parade with living accommodation above. There are also more modest late 18th buildings at 1 and 9 - 11 Alcester Street, which are low in comparison to their 19th century neighbours and humble in appearance to the other later 19th century buildings further to the north on Church Green West.



*19 Church Green East*



*14 - 18 Church Green East*



*1 - 11 Alcester Street*





In comparison Market Place and Evesham Walk are almost entirely Victorian. Buildings are generally simple in design, with the odd flourish; pilasters to 17 & 19 Evesham Walk; decorative lintels supported on consoles and plasterwork banding; and two storey stone bay windows to the upper floors of 10 Market Place. By contrast 7 Market Place dates to the 1950s, having been constructed for Woolworths and the building forms a far wider block to its neighbours as well as having the typical horizontal emphasis of buildings of that period, created by its wide façade and flat roof despite it being three storeys like its neighbours.



*Corner of Market Place  
and Evesham Walk*



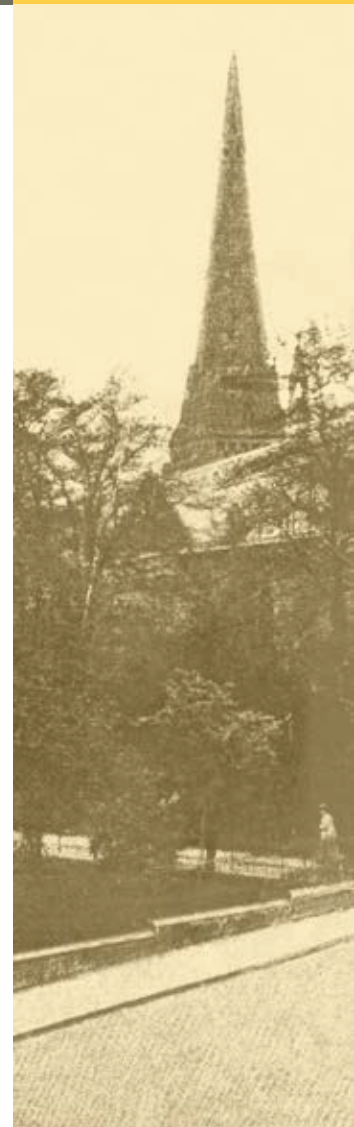
*15 Evesham Walk*



*17 Evesham Walk*



*7 - 9 Market Place*

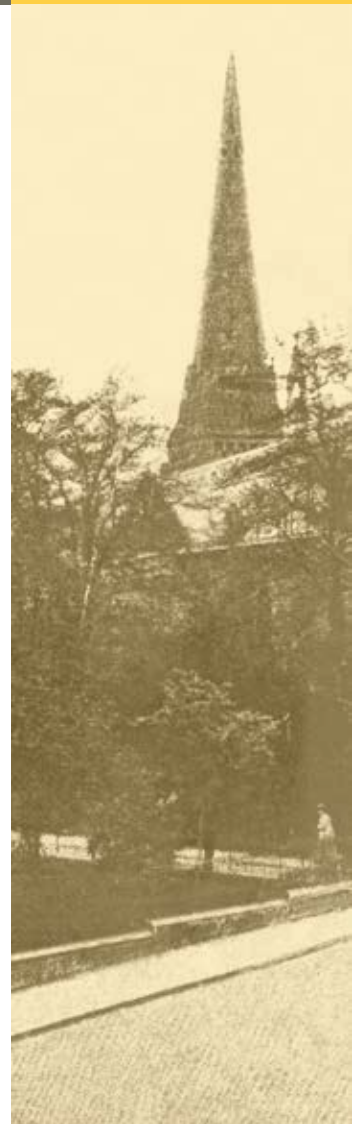


Church Green West is the most architecturally varied of the principal streets in the CA. On the corner of Unicorn Hill and Church Green West is a late 19th Century parade of purpose built shops with three floors of living accommodation above. The units are broken up with pilasters and the top floor has a mix of simple dormers and ornate gables. A decorative top floor turret with a cupola provides an architectural flourish on the corner. Immediately to the north are the more typical mid to late Victorian relatively plain buildings seen on the other streets, however beyond this point are a number of buildings of considerably larger scale and varying architectural styles; the HSBC Bank of 1964, flat roofed, with a horizontal emphasis, and stone facings; County House on the corner of Church Street, again with a horizontal emphasis, but in brick with stone banding, beneath a pitched slate roof set back behind a parapet and stone mullioned and transomed windows, it dates from 1922; on the opposite corner is the Literary and Scientific Institute, Gothic in brick beneath a steeply pitched clay tiled roof. The decorative detailing includes stone traceried windows in addition to stone mullioned and transomed windows, a first floor stone bay windows and gables on both elevations. The front of the building was extended out to Church Green West in 1956 the location of the down pipe on the Church Street elevation roughly marking the line of the original front façade.

Beyond is the Smallwood Hospital (1894-5) by William Henman (also the architect of the Children's Hospital in Birmingham, originally the General Hospital and Selly Oak Hospital). Set back from the road behind a car park, the building is two storey, brick beneath pitched tiled roofs, plain with projecting gables, but with a Jacobethan porch with obelisk pinnacles and a weathervane to the first floor gable. The original fenestration comprises mullioned and transomed stone windows. The hospital was sympathetically extended to the north and south in the 1920s. The final two buildings are both three storey brick buildings, Prospect House is Victorian and Red House a listed Georgian building.



*The HSBC Bank Building, Church Green West*







Library and Scientific Institute, corner of Church Green West and Church Road



County House, corner of Church Green West and Church Road



2 - 10 Unicorn Hill



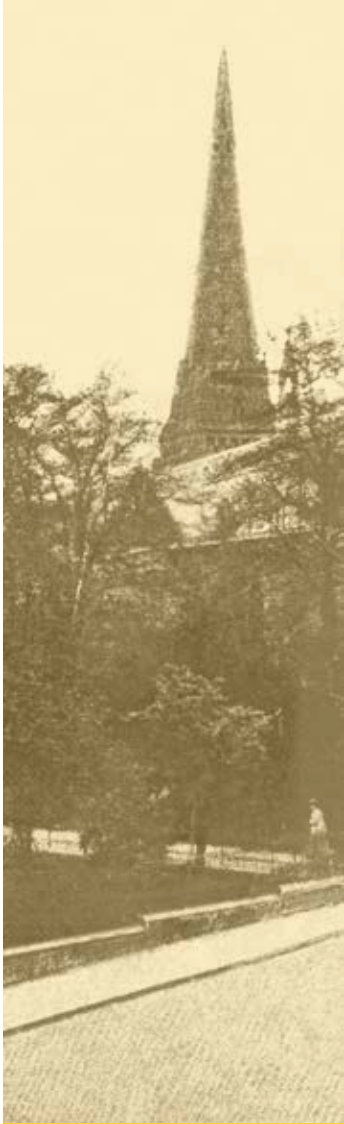
2 Unicorn Hill & 2 Church Green West



Red House, Church Green West



Smallwood Hospital, Church Green West



2 - 6 Bates Hill forms a continuation of Unicorn Hill. It has the appearance of originally having been two houses, however it is described on the 1884 OS as the Adelaide Works, a needle manufactory. Three storeys, in brick beneath pitched slate roofs. Apart from moulded window heads supported on consols the detailing is minimal. The ground floor of 2 - 4 has been lost to a modern shop front which with its oversized fascia, modern glazing and brick work detracts from the pair. Beyond the buildings is a substantial blue brick wall, which forms the boundary of the conservation area. It once enclosed a large Methodist chapel; the 1884 OS indicates that it accommodated a congregation of 900. It was demolished towards the end of the 20th century. The adjacent Manse remains. It is now offices and has been unsympathetically altered and extended, with the garden given over to parking. The original ornate cast iron gas light is still in place above the Bates Hill entrance to this building, one of the few historical features in the centre to remain.

William Street has largely been redeveloped and pedestrianised. With the exception of the buildings at the east end, which form the return to buildings on Church Green West, there is little of interest and street value. There are views of the rear elevations of the buildings at the eastern end of Unicorn Hill/Bates Hill, noted above, across car parking. The much altered eastern and rear elevations of the Old Manse and an uninspiring health centre terminate the west end of the street.



2 - 6 Bates Hill



Cast iron light fitting above the entrance to the Methodist Chapel and Manse





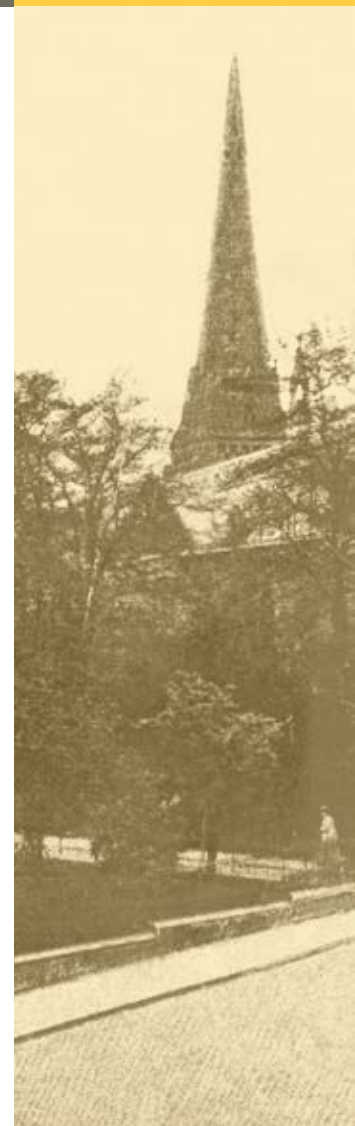
In comparison Church Road, although also truncated by the ring road, is of more interest visually, with buildings of varying ages, although predominantly Victorian. The Old Library, in Victorian Gothic, is the most imposing building on the north side of the street, and similar architecture can be seen on the southern side in the County Court buildings and the Church Road Tattoo Parlour. The County Court Building was originally constructed as a post office in 1888, and converted to a County Court in 1990 to designs by Douglas Hickman of the John Madin Design Group. Between the Tattoo Parlour and the early 20th century Former Redditch Benefit Building Society Building, is one of the oldest buildings in the centre of Redditch. The predominantly mid - 18th century property at 7 - 11 Church Road is constructed in stuccoed brick beneath a hipped pitched tiled roof. This is a relatively simple building in comparison to its Victorian neighbours, although the windows have moulded architraves and key blocks, and there are rusticated quoins to the corners of the original building. The 19th century bay at the west end has no quoins. To the rear is a 1950s extension in brick, flat roofed with a more horizontal emphasis typical of the period. Further along the road, but outside the CA is the bus depot, a large brick built building beneath a pitched corrugated roof, typical of 1930s design. Beyond to the south is the finely detailed neo classical former employment exchange, constructed in 1930. Detailing includes a stone plinth and door surrounds.



*7 - 11 Church Road*



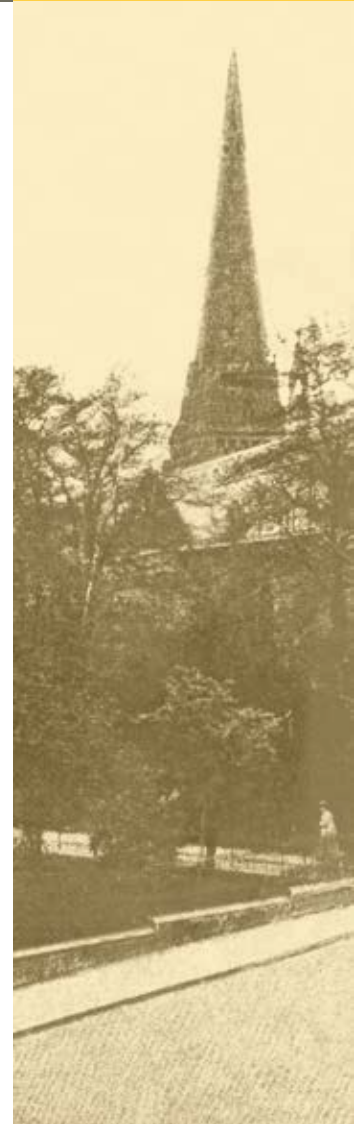
*County Court Buildings, Church Road*



In addition to the dominant 18th and 19th century architectural styles, there are various other subsidiary elements of nineteenth-century architecture found within the Area worthy of note; The industrial vernacular common elsewhere in the town, occurs in the multi-paned metal windows with segmental-arched heads and blue brick sills in Peakman Street and the Sportsman's Arms with its partly glazed brick façade. This tall, narrow building with its distinctive detailing and tiled façade is of architectural interest in its own right and is also of considerable townscape value. Its roof profile is clearly visible from the open space to the east of Peakman Street and as the only survivor of the buildings along the southern side of the street it provides an important sense of enclosure, framing the view into and out of the town centre.



*Sportman's Arms, Peakman Street*





#### 4.3.2 Spatial Analysis

The CA forms a compact area within the wider settlement with the buildings grouped around the Church which forms a focal point at the top of a ridge. Surrounding roads within the wider central area, although truncated by the ring road, lead up to this central point. The focus of the CA is the Church of St. Stephen. This is the largest and tallest building in the CA, although its impact has been diminished by the scale of new development in the vicinity. It is aligned east/west and has a similarly traditional plan form with a 5-bay aisled nave, a 3-bay chancel with south chapel and north vestry and a north-west tower with an elegant octagonal spire. It is positioned in a triangular area of largely green open space at the centre of the CA.



*St Stephen's Church*

The pattern of building within the CA is clearly defined and reflects the historic layout of the triangular area of green open space around the nineteenth-century church. Apart from the church, this consists primarily of the buildings that front onto Church Green East, Church Green West and Market Place. Evesham Walk, William Street, Church Street and Unicorn Hill all lead off.



The plots along Church Green East are in general quite narrow and deep, and are aligned perpendicular to the street. The building pattern is in general back of pavement. Although the façades are not in continuous alignment, the general flow of the street is maintained rather than being overtly staggered to produce a strong continuity and rhythm. It is possible that any irregularities reflect or overlie an earlier pattern of burgage plots, which were particularly common near market places. These were typically held by skilled craftsmen and traders and the houses would have included an integral workshop and a rear garden. The plots along Church Green East have been infilled and were more densely developed from the nineteenth century, but it is notable that some archways and alleyways have been retained that lead to the rear of these plots, several of which are still in use. The buildings at the northern end of the street are set well back from the main street frontage and include a much larger plot than average.



*Rear of the entrance way which emerges onto Church Green between 10 and 12 Church Green East*



*10 - 13 Church Green East*

Market Place follows a similar pattern; back of pavement, with narrow plots notably at the west end of the street. The wider plots at the eastern end of this street are partly historic, although still back of pavement, numbers 10 to 12, and partly 20th century, number 7. The façades are in alignment. Evesham Walk similarly has narrow plots, all back of pavement, predominantly three storey but with a varied roofline due to a mix of pitched roofs and gables facing the street, although similar in terms of height.

There is a continuity of the building line on Church Green West from the junction with Unicorn Hill up to the Old Library. Although due to the wider pavement, there is a feeling of the buildings being ‘set back’. This follows the historic pattern from around 1904. Smallwood Hospital is set back behind a car park, but on a similar line with Red House and Prospect House, and the historic building line of the 1880s. The back of pavement street pattern is also mirrored in Church Road, Unicorn Hill and Bates Hill, where the substantial blue brick wall to the now demolished Methodist Church continues the building line.



Church Green West and Church Street never appear to have had the tight grain of Market Place and Church Green East, and by the beginning of the 20th century most of the historic plots had been lost. The area of Bates Hill/Unicorn Hill, have in the sections which fall within the CA, retained the late 19th century grain.

The size and plan of buildings in the CA has been dictated by their historic uses and plot divisions. Most of the buildings in Church Green East, Market Place, Evesham Walk and some buildings in Church Green West share similar characteristics in that they are predominantly; domestic in scale; three storeys; well proportioned; of similar height; and plot frontages are of relatively regular width that reflects their former domestic use.

There are variations in the massing of the buildings along the street but this, for the most part, is subtle so that the roofline appears mainly uniform, although the exceptions to this are the 18th century buildings on Alcester Street.

Profiles of some buildings are visible at roof level which adds visual interest and also reveals the depth of the floor plans. Windows and doors are distributed regularly within the elevations to create a strong vertical rhythm within the streetscape that is reinforced by the quoins, chimneys, and downpipes and also subtly counterbalanced by the horizontal line of the eaves, roof ridges, string courses and plinths and of the overall alignment of the buildings.

Notable exceptions to this include some of the 20th Century buildings; the old Woolworths building on Market Place; HSBC Bank and The County building (No 9) on Church Green West. They are similar in terms of height; generally three storeys but have wider plots, giving them a horizontal emphasis rather than vertical.

Other exceptions include the late 19th century Gothic design of the former Scientific Institute and the long, low profile and Jacobean inspired detail of Smallwood Hospital which also differ markedly from the overall appearance, scale and character established in Church Green East due to their different date and specific function, but in a very positive way.





### 4.3.3 Building Materials

#### Roofs

Roofs are mainly covered with natural grey Welsh slate, although a few buildings are covered with small plain clay tiles or concrete tiles. The natural slate and clay tiles have historic merit and are in sympathy with the style and character of the buildings and the CA in general.

The buildings have mainly gabled roofs of either a single or double pitch, and a ridge line that runs parallel to the street. Rear wings have pitched roofs with ridges set at right angles to the street. The roof pitches vary from around 40 to 30 degrees, a few have gable end parapets, and there is a notable absence of dormers or rooflights. A few of the higher quality buildings have hipped roofs and any modern infill buildings have flat roofs set behind parapets.

Chimneys are either ridge-mounted or set within the roof pitch and built into the wall thickness rather than being externally exposed. They are brick-built, multi-flued, rectangular in plan and generally of tall, narrow proportions to give a strong vertical emphasis. Many have oversailing courses but their simple detail does not diminish the significant level of interest they add to the roofscape.

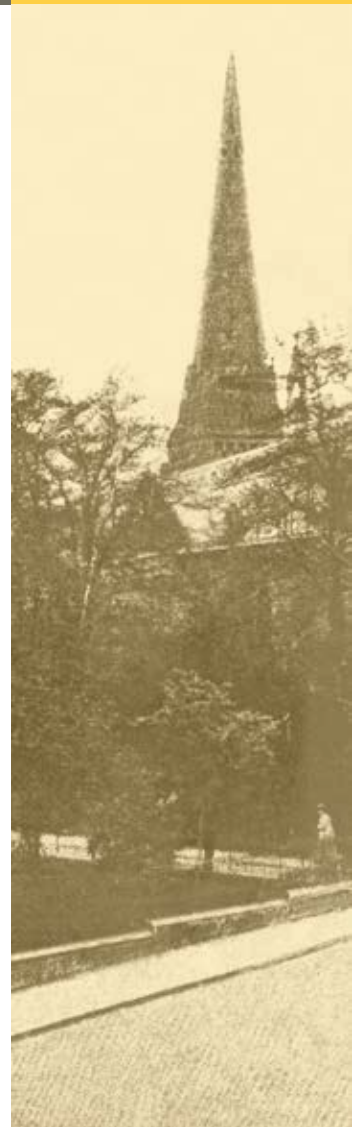
At eaves level there are often courses of dentilled brick or other simple moulded detail, the chief exceptions to this being Beech House, which has a modillion eaves cornice, and No.19 (Lloyd's Bank) and 20, Webb House, where the lower edge of the roof is completely concealed behind a projecting moulded cornice, the former of which is enriched with modillions and other decoration.

At gable ends, the roof covering is terminated close or flush to the wall and sealed to it with a mortar fillet. Flashings at abutments are of lead and in most cases stepped into the brick courses where required.

Rainwater goods are a mix of UPVC and cast iron. Original downpipes on the higher quality buildings are rectangular in cross-section.

#### Walls

Walls are built of local brick that has an attractive soft, warm reddish-orange to reddish-brown colour lending a subtle tonal variety to the buildings. Bricks are laid in Flemish bond with narrow joints and lime mortar. Some of the buildings have stone dressings and some have been partly or wholly stuccoed and painted in light pastel colours, but this is unlikely to be an original characteristic and detracts from the appearance of the buildings. In some cases, quoins, string courses, and other decorative detail have been painted to add additional emphasis. No. 20 Church Green East has banded rustication on the ground floor which is continued across the pilasters of the shop front, whilst No.19 Church Green East (Lloyds Bank) is entirely rendered, its prominent rusticated quoins and rock-faced rustication on the ground floor intended to achieve a fortified palazzo feel popular with provincial banks rather than relate to the local building characteristics. The Library and Scientific Institute and Smallwood Hospital on Church Green West, like other buildings are predominantly brick but with some stone detailing to windows and door cases.





*8 - 12 Church Green East*

The notable exceptions to this are St Stephen's and some of the 20th century buildings. St Stephen's is constructed of dressed and coursed local Tardebigge sandstone rubble that varies in colour from soft pink to buff and brownish grey. It has ashlar dressings and slate roofs with gable end parapets, the chancel roofs being set behind high parapets.

The 20th Century buildings include the HSBC Bank which is largely stone clad between extensive fenestration; 9 Church Green West, although brick has horizontal painted stone banding detail to the parapet, cornice, and between the windows on the upper floors, and to the ground floor on the Church Road elevation; The old Woolworths (7&9 Market Place), although brick, it is more of a buff colour, typical of the period rather than the reddish brown.



## Doors and Windows

Doors and windows are rectangular with a strong vertical emphasis that plays a key role in the rhythm and proportions of the streetscape in general.

Doors are of panelled wood, traditionally painted rather than stained. They have painted timber surrounds with plain fanlights and simple flat canopies above. Higher quality buildings have semi-circular arched heads, traceried fanlights, panelled reveals, stone steps, and classically-inspired surrounds with flanking pilasters or attached Doric columns and broken pediments, as at Church Green House and Red House and also the massive rusticated Doric pilasters that flank the entrance to No. 20, Webb House, Church Green East. Beech House and No.19 Church Green East, also have imposing classical porches.

Windows are usually slightly recessed from the wall surface. They have mainly flat heads of either rubbed brick or with rusticated stone voussoirs, either stepped or with prominent key blocks, and also projecting stone sills. Some later Victorian examples incorporate semi-circular arched heads, moulded architraves and flat canopies on console brackets.

The window mechanism is generally the vertically-sliding sash, divided into several vertically arranged panes held with narrow glazing bars. The height of the top floor windows is often less than that of those on the lower floors and the decorative treatment of the windows also varies with each floor. Tripartite sashes are also found within the CA. Like the doors, the windows are traditionally painted rather than stained to provide a bold contrast with the brickwork and emphasise their proportions within the façade.

The only notable exception to this general rule within the area is as follows:

- The late 19th century canted bay windows that run along the 5-bay façade of Nos 14 - 18 Church Green East
- The oriel windows on the first floor of The Sportsman's Arms in Peakman Street, which contain some leaded glass
- The rear wing of No. 20, Church Green East, which has segmental-arched multi-paned metal windows with blue brick sills common to many industrial buildings elsewhere in the town
- The stone windows to The Old Library and Scientific Institute which includes tracery windows and stone roundels to Church Green West and Church Road, and a stone oriel window above the entrance on Church Road. In addition there are elaborate stone arcades to each entrance.

Few historic shop fronts remain, although some properties have retained elements of their original shop fronts, notably the parade, 14 - 18 Church Green East, and 2 - 10 Unicorn Hill. Both 19th century purpose built parades of shops with living accommodation, still have pilasters and corbel details, although the actual shop fronts are long gone. 19 Evesham Walk has also retained some original fabric. Many retail ground floors are dominated by late 20th century/early 21st century shop fronts, in aluminium or upvc, with oversized fascias, which detract from the overall appearance of the building.







14 - 18 Church Green East



17 Evesham Walk



The oversized fascia to the Vodafone Shop in Evesham Walk



## 4.4 Setting and Views

Church Green Conservation Area is located at the centre of Redditch and forms an area of green open space that is almost entirely surrounded by built development dating primarily from the late eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These buildings define the boundaries of the space and provide a pleasing backdrop to the Church of St Stephen, which forms a focal point upon the Green. Notable features of the current setting include:

- Its close relationship with the surviving historic street pattern, in particular with the streets now known as Church Green East, Church Green West and Market Place, which enclose the Green.
- The Redditch Ringway, which encircles the town centre to the north, west and south, and is visible from the CA where it bridges the main roads into the town centre from the north and west.
- The redevelopment of the land within the ring road to the south and east of the CA during the second half of the twentieth century. Although the nineteenth century street frontage was retained along Market Place, behind this frontage almost half of the town centre is dominated by the Kingfisher Centre and its associated multi-storey car parks to the south and by new civic and office buildings to the east and south-east along Alcester Street and Grove Street with any vacant land in use as car parks.
- The large site east of the area which is occupied by North East Worcestershire (NEW) College. The nineteenth and twentieth century buildings which had been on this site have been replaced by entirely new structures with associated landscaping and car parking provision.
- The large twentieth-century office buildings and beyond the late nineteenth century buildings that include Redditch Baptist Church and Masonic Hall located to the north-east of the CA.
- The more fragmentary redevelopment immediately north-west of the CA. Although there has been some demolition and new community buildings erected adjacent to the ring road, the nineteenth-century street frontages along Church Green West, Bates Hill and Church Road, remain largely intact.

Important views into, out of, and within the CA are as follows:

### a) Into the Area

The topography of the CA and the height and scale of the new development on its fringes only allows very restricted views into it from distant vantage points, but there are several places from its edge, where there are interesting views into the CA;

- From the top of Prospect Hill
- From the junction of Bates Hill/Unicorn Hill Looking east into the CA
- Looking up Alcester Street towards the north east
- Looking south west along Peakman Street, from the NEW College site, where the view is framed by The Sportsman Pub
- There are also various long views of the Spire of St Stephen's including from the A441, approaching Redditch from the north.







*From the junction of Bates Hill/Unicorn Hill looking east into the CA*



*Looking up Alcester Street towards the Church, Church Green to the north east*



*Looking south west along Peakman Street, towards the southerly area of Church Green*



*View of the Spire of St Stephen's from the car park to the west of Herbert Street*



### ***b) Out of the Area***

The topography of the CA offers far-reaching outward views to the north, east and west towards the fields and wooded hillsides that surround the town. However, as the CA is largely enclosed by tall buildings there is limited opportunity to gain full benefit from these and the ring road has also detracted from these potential views. Again the height and scale of the new development south of the CA restricts all views in this direction.

The most notable outward views are;

- From the northern end of the CA at the junction of Church Green West and Church Green East looking north
- From the junction of Market Place and Church Green West looking west down Bates Hill and Unicorn Hill
- Down Peakman Street towards the NEW College building looking east
- From the western end of Alcester Street looking south east towards the Palace Theatre and beyond



*Prospect Hill looking north from, northern end of Church Green West*



*From the junction of Market Place and Church Green West looking west down Bates Hill and Unicorn Hill*



*Peakman Street towards the NEW College building looking east*



*From the western end of Alcester Street looking south east towards the Palace Theatre and beyond*





**c) Within the Area**

Most of the pedestrian routes within the CA have viewing points from which other parts of the CA create interest. This is particularly true upon and immediately adjacent to Church Green itself and also north of the church where the Green has been landscaped and planted to form a small park. The following viewing points are of interest;

- The view south from the northern end of Church Green looking towards the fountain, bandstand and church
- The view both north and south along Church Green East, which includes numerous listed buildings that date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries
- The view north-west across the Green towards the group of buildings that includes the former Scientific and Literary Institute, Smallwood Hospital and Red House
- From William Street where the west elevation of the church is framed by the street frontages
- From the top of Unicorn Hill/Evesham Walk looking east/north east towards the Church
- From the junction of Evesham Walk/Market Place towards the top of Unicorn Hill



*View south from the northern end of Church Green looking towards the fountain, bandstand and church*



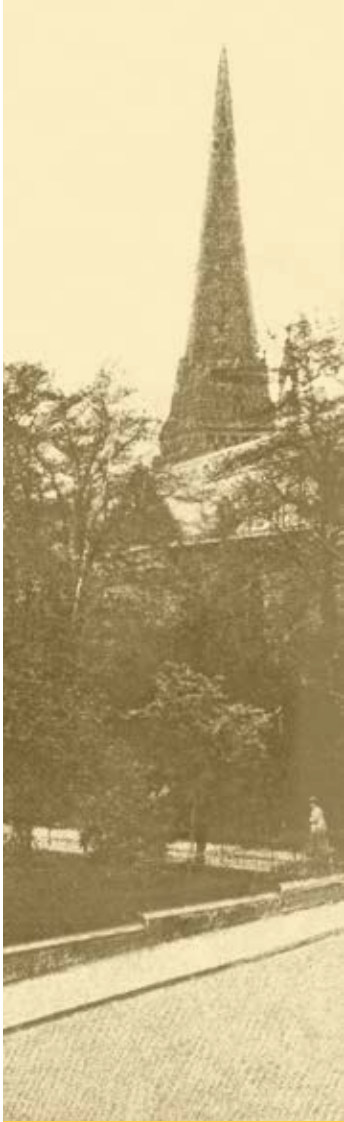
*The view north-west across the Green towards the group of buildings that includes the former Scientific and Literary Institute, Smallwood Hospital and Red House*



*From William Street where the west elevation of the church is framed by the street frontages*



*From the top of Unicorn Hill/Evesham Walk looking east/north east towards the Church*



## 4.5 Open Spaces and trees

The CA forms the most important area of open space within Redditch town centre. The abundance of vegetation and the restricted access to through traffic enhances its character considerably and it creates a sympathetic and attractive setting for the church and other historic buildings within the CA and around its perimeter. The exclusion of vehicles from Church Green East and Market Place has increased the value of the area as a public space.



*Flower beds Church Green East*



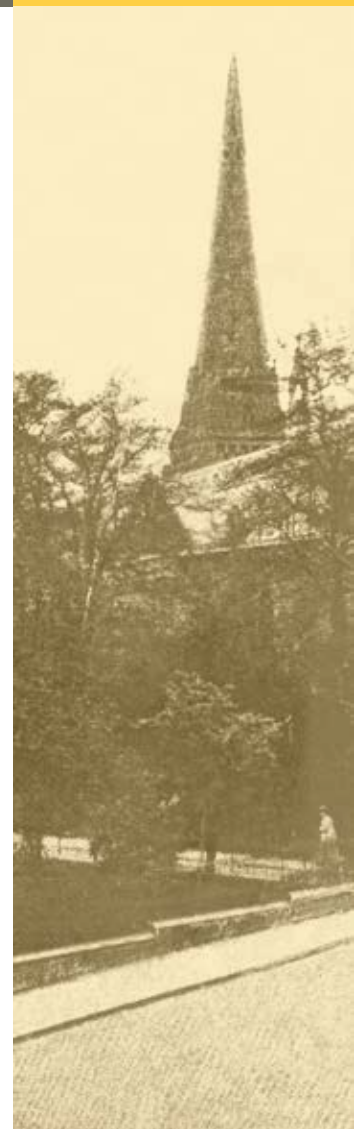
*Flower beds Church Green East*

Church Green itself combines a variety of uses as a churchyard, car park, a small public park and, in Unicorn Place, around the war memorial, a low-walled enclosure serves as a tiny civic square, in addition to a market space around the junction of Market Place and Church Green East. The space to the north is enhanced by the bandstand and the fountain. The Bartleet fountain is constructed of painted cast iron and stands at the centre of a shallow octagonal sandstone basin. The substantial shaped plinth supports a two tiered design. On the uppermost tier stands the figure of a woman, said to represent Temperance, who pours a stream of water from an urn. The lower tier has a number of large birds, cranes or herons, grouped around the main column and standing upon very naturalistic waterlily leaves. Pevsner describes the composition as ‘funny but engaging’<sup>1</sup>. The octagonal bandstand, which is built of painted timber on a brick base with open balustraded sides.



*War Memorial and Unicorn Square*

1. *Buildings of England; Worcestershire* Nikolaus Pevsner Yale University Press 1968







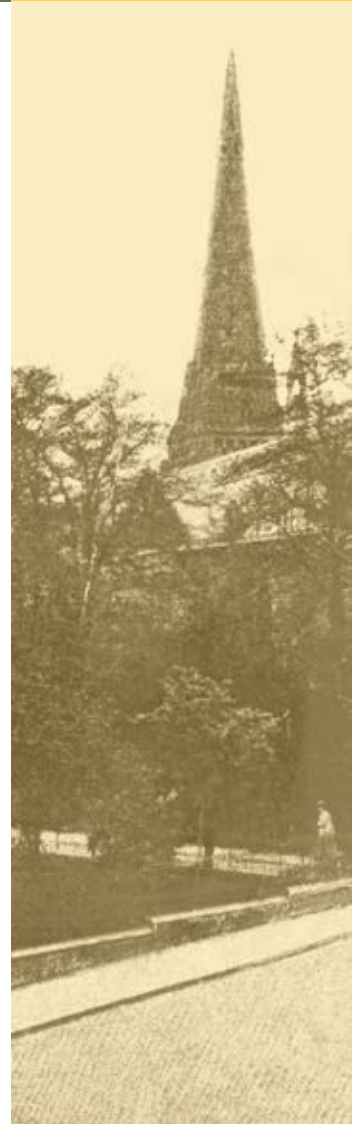
*The Fountain*



*The Fountain*



*The Bandstand*



The variety of uses leaves the area lacking coherence, and detracts from the quality of the historic space. The boundary especially to Market Place and at the junction of Market Place and Church Green East lacks definition. The area at the south eastern end of the Green, the junction of Market Place and Church Green East, has always included an 'extension' separated from the main green area by the path which runs from Market Place to Peakman Street, but this leaves the triangle of grass at the southern tip detached from the rest of the green space, which in turn is further broken up with the tree which would have been at the point of the triangle sitting on its own in a little roundabout.

The Churchyard merges into the 'square' and then into the street, bollards partially defining the space in front of the south door of the Church. The remainder of the space around the church forms a fairly informal arrangement of grassed areas, tarmac paths and parking areas, trees and shrubs that survive from the former churchyard. What was historically a path around the Church has been widened to allow parking to the south, north and east sides. The tarmaced path is in a poor state, with failed patch repairs further detracting from its appearance. The various parked cars also devalue the area.



*South eastern end of Church Green*



*South eastern end of Church Green*



*South eastern end of Church Green East,  
junction with Market place*





Immediately north of the church and overshadowed by its massive form, three chest tombs remain set beside the yew hedging and here the CA retains a sense of solemnity and peace, a sense of detachment from the noise and activity of the town centre.

There is uniform edging to the Green, possibly granite to the south and stone to the east and west sides, all with the same chamfered profile, which does provide definition. Unfortunately the railings which originally enclosed the green are long gone. The low-level yew hedging, however, survives and separates this area from the northern end of the Green. Here the fountain and bandstand are surrounded by pathways that form part of a more precise, geometric and formal sequence of flower beds surrounded by stone kerbs and grassed areas. There are additional large flower beds set between the pergolas along the western side of Church Green East.



*Chest tombs in the churchyard*



The numerous trees, both mature and those planted more recently, and also the vegetation in general, are a very important characteristic of the CA and of the streets in the immediate vicinity and contribute much to its appeal. The trees on and adjacent to Church Green are mainly deciduous and have now grown to a substantial size. They provide interest and colour throughout the seasonal cycles and an attractive backdrop to the church. Unfortunately some have been pollarded and have acquired an awkward and stumpy profile in the winter months. This was noted in the last appraisal in 2006 and has not improved over the intervening period. Many of the trees on Church Green West have been removed from what historically was a tree lined avenue, to the detriment of the appearance and feel of the space.

Yew hedging is another significant feature of the CA and is kept to a height of around one metre which maintains good visibility and a sense of open space. As noted above it delineates the churchyard north and east of the church and subdivides it from the planted space around the fountain and bandstand. Hedging is also present in the form of three-sided enclosures that surround seating along the broad pavement of Church Green West. Although an interesting feature, they subdivide the former broad promenade and could be adapted into a more sympathetic scheme of improvement.

Shrubs survive along the nave walls of the church and also new shrubs have been planted as part of an earlier landscaping scheme in and around the northern end of Church Green.

The large rectangular flower beds on Church Green East and those surrounding the fountain on the Green provide an important source of colour during spring and summer. Although the beds feel like an expansion of the original Green, rather than an integral part of it.



*Fountain and Band Stand to the rear*



*Pollarded trees close to the Band Stand*



*Hedges around seating on Church Green West*



*Flower beds at the northern end of Church Green East*





#### 4.6 Public Realm

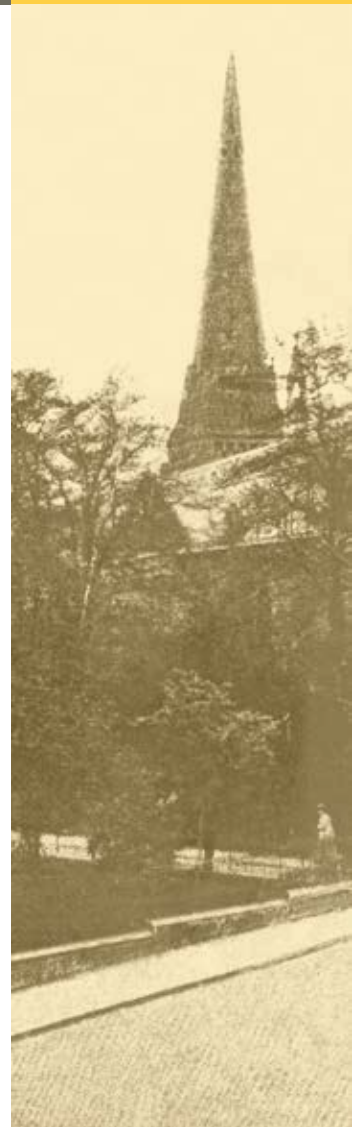
There are a large number of ground surfaces in the CA which would seem to have originated from various different public realm schemes. There are block pavers of various colours most in a poor condition either because surfaces have become uneven through wear and tear, or areas have been replaced in non-matching materials due to work carried out by the public utilities. The poorest areas in terms of surfaces are in Market Place and around the junction of Evesham Walk/Market Place/Unicorn Hill. Some areas have a better appearance than others notably the grey stone pavers to the south and east of the War Memorial and some elements of the public realm scheme which covers Alcester Street and stretching up into the south eastern corner of the CA, notably the delineated tarmaced areas to the south east of the Green. The multi coloured pavers and light tarmac are not the best colours for a historic conservation area, but this remodelled area has the benefit of being neat and tidy in appearance. The overall result is a lack of cohesiveness throughout the CA in terms of ground surfaces.



*Expanse of block paving on Market Place*



*Patched block paving on Market Place*

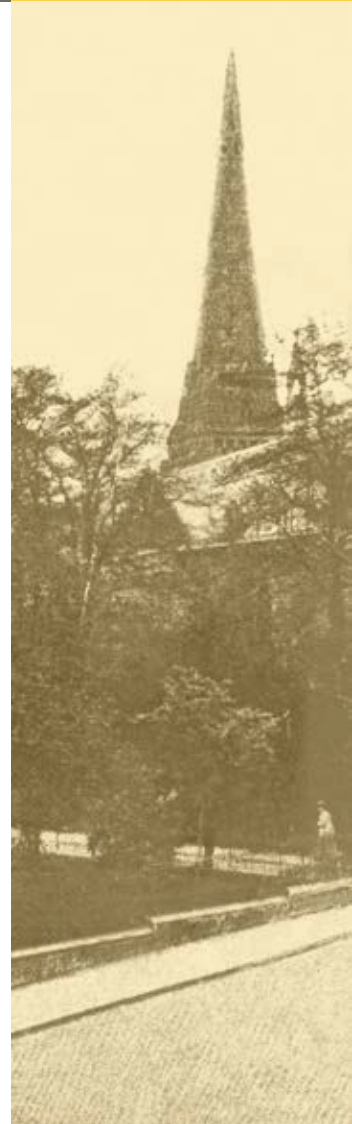




*Stone paving at Unicorn Square*



*Part of the new public realm scheme at the junction of Church Green West and Peakman Street*







*New public realm southern part of Church Green East*

The recent Phase I of public realm works involved the replacement of bins, benches and lighting so there is uniformity in terms of this street furniture. There is an older, although not unattractive, phase of lighting columns further west around the Church, Church Green West and the northern end of Church Green East, with the newer lighting at the southern end of Church Green East, Alcester street and part of Market Place.



*Old style lighting on Church Green*







*New street furniture to the east side of the Church*



*Trees in planters on Church Green West*

There is a great deal of clutter in other areas, notably around the junction of Market Place, Evesham Walk and Unicorn Hill where there is a proliferation of phone boxes, post boxes and other metal boxes. Cars are also parked here despite the fact that it is a parking free zone. The recently listed War Memorial is also surrounded by tatty and empty flower boxes. Further to the south west are a memorial to John Bonham from Led Zeppelin and a poorly maintained Holocaust Memorial. At the south eastern end of the CA inlaid in the road are a set of needles with an explanatory plaque, designed by Eric Klein Velderman in 2006, a reminder that at one time Redditch provided the world with ninety percent of its needles. They are currently in need of repair.



*Parked cars and other street clutter at the top of Unicorn Hill at the junction with Evesham Walk*

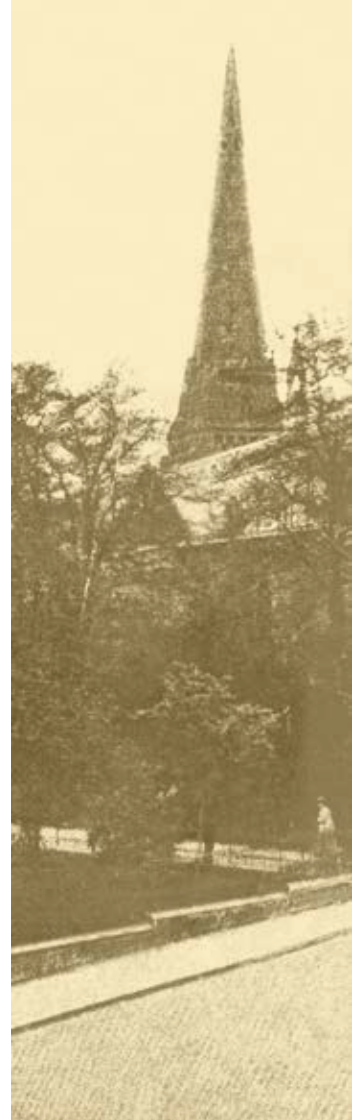




*The Holocaust Memorial*



*The Needles by Eric Klein Velderman*





## 4.7 Assessment of Condition

### 4.7.1 Positive Features

- A green centre in the heart of the town
- A fine collection of 18th and 19th century buildings which provide a setting to the listed church of St Stephen
- Significant number of listed and locally listed buildings
- The run of Victorian Shops in Evesham Walk
- The purpose built parades on the corner of Unicorn Hill and Church Green East
- The alleyways to the east of Church Green East illustrating the historic layout of the town
- The collection of predominantly Victorian public buildings and structures, which formed part of the original civic centre
- Survival of some architectural features
- Traditional roof coverings, uninterrupted with rooflights or dormers
- Fine brickwork that has not been rendered or painted
- Original pointing
- Original joinery
- White painted woodwork
- Stone kerbstones
- Chamfered stone blocks to the planting on the Churchyard boundary

### 4.7.2 Negative Features

#### ■ Poor state of the public realm

This is described in some detail above. Briefly there are block pavers of various colours, mostly in a poor condition due to wear and tear or repair work in non-matching materials. The south east corner of the CA has been incorporated into a new scheme along Alcester Street, which although does not utilise the best materials for a CA it does reinstate ‘pavements’ and has a neat and tidy appearance. This scheme is likely to move up into Market Place in the near future.

In some areas, notably at the top of Unicorn Hill at the junction with Evesham Walk, there is a proliferation of phone boxes, bollards and other street furniture.

#### ■ Poor state of shop fronts

No original shop fronts have survived, although there are some surviving original details such as corbels and pilasters.



The majority of shop fronts are modern and fail to respect the quality of the historic building to which they are attached. Fascias are of an incorrect scale, and there is a lack of detailing or interest.



*Oversized fascia*

#### ■ UPVC windows

A number of upper floor windows have been replaced with upvc windows. This combined with inappropriate designs detracts from the appearance of the building and the character of the CA.



*Oversized fascias and upvc windows to upper floors*



■ **Parking around the Church**

There is extensive parking at times around the Church and this has led to an increase in the size of the path around the building to accommodate parking. This clutters the immediate setting of the Church, and detracts not only from the appearance of the Church but also the green space which is at the heart of the CA.

■ **Parking on the corner of Evesham Walk/Unicorn Hill**

Vehicles are regularly parked outside the unit which occupies this corner. Again this detracts from the pedestrianised area.



*Parking around the church*

■ **Vacant Units**

A survey in June 2020 indicated that there was a vacancy rate of approximately 20% in respect of retail units.



*Vacant units*



*Vacant units*



### ■ Setting to the Conservation Area

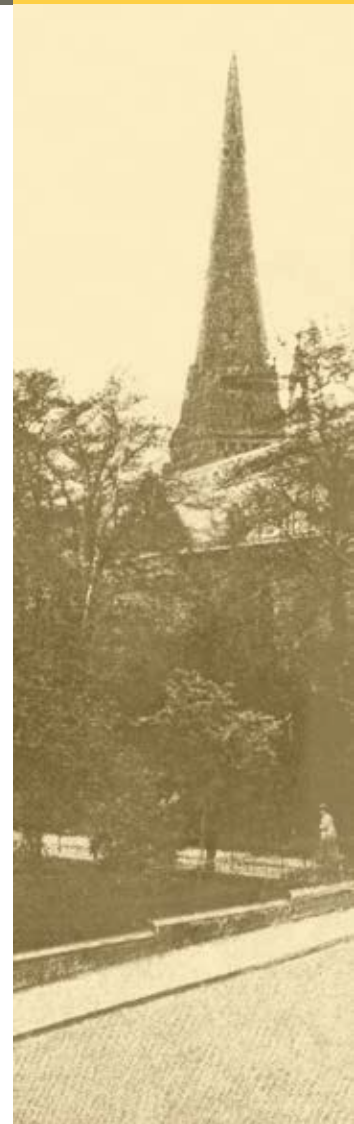
The historic setting of the CA has long been lost. Immediately to the south lies the extensive Kingfisher Shopping Centre; to the south east the Town Hall and Threadneedle House both large scale 3 to 4 storey buildings; and to the east the large blocks of the recently redeveloped NEW College together with its associated car parks. These buildings present a significant contrast to the buildings in the CA being considerably larger in terms of scale and have obliterated the grain of the historic town. The ring road is also visible to the north and west, and presents another modern intrusion.



*Part of the Kingfisher Centre to the south of the Conservation Area*



*Entrance to the Kingfisher Centre to the south of Evesham Walk*





■ **Unsympathetic Modern extensions to the rear of Church Green East**

Extensions take a variety of forms but many have been designed without much thought to scale, design or materials of the original buildings.



*Poor rear extensions to properties on Church Green East*





## 5.0 Extension to the Conservation Area

It is suggested that 5 - 11 Alcester Street are incorporated into the CA. It would seem to be anomalous that they have been left out especially as 5 and 7 are a continuation of 3, and 9 and 11 are the last historic buildings in this run and probably date to the late 18th century. All the buildings are sympathetic in terms of character with the existing buildings in the CA.

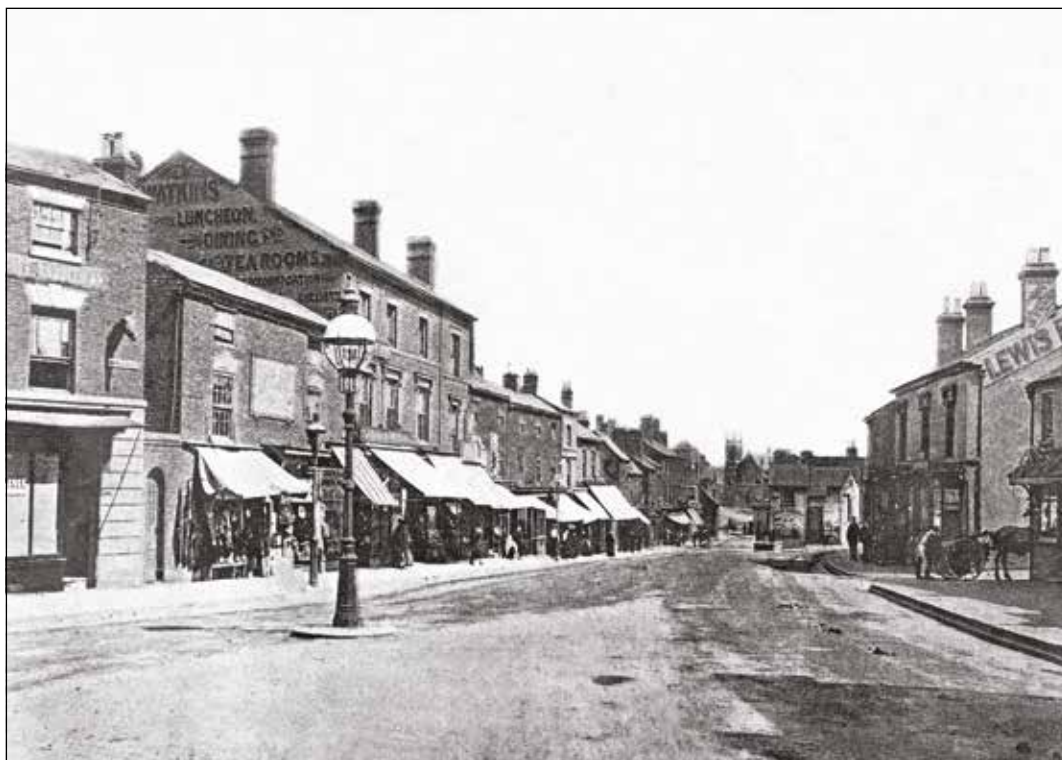


*1 - 11 Alcester Street*

## 6.0 Public Consultation

Public consultation was carried out between 8th February 2021 and 19th March 2021.





# Conservation Management Plan

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose

**1.1.1** The purpose of this Conservation Management Plan is to provide a clear strategy for the management of the Church Green Conservation Area in a way that will protect and enhance its character and appearance. It should be read in conjunction with the Church Green Conservation Area Appraisal (November 2020) in which the character and special interest of the Conservation Area was identified, along with the features and other issues that currently compromise or detract from its character and appearance.

**1.1.2** Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas. The Conservation Management Plan is intended to provide guidance to those involved in dealing with development and change not only within the Conservation Area but also in respect of its setting. The Plan sets out policies to maintain and reinforce the character of the Conservation Area but also to guide and manage change and in particular to respond to the threats to the character which have been defined in the appraisal. It also outlines the resources required for implementation and provides for monitoring and review. The Conservation Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with national policy contained in the NPPF, The NPPG, and the most recent guidance from Historic England, 'Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management', Advice Note 1 (2019).

## 1.2 Public Consultation

Public consultation was carried out between 8th February 2021 and 19th March 2021.

## 1.3 Status of the Conservation Management plan

The Conservation Management Plan will be used as a technical document to provide guidance for owners in the Conservation Area. It will inform and guide the development control process and policy formation it is intended that following a period of public consultation it will be formally adopted by Redditch Borough Council.

# 2.0 Planning Policy Context

**2.1** The Conservation Management Plan lies within a framework of local and national planning policy for the historic environment. General planning policies and proposals for the control of development and use of land within conservation areas can be found in the Redditch Local Plan 4 (Adopted in January 2017). The historic environment policies are detailed in Appendix 3.

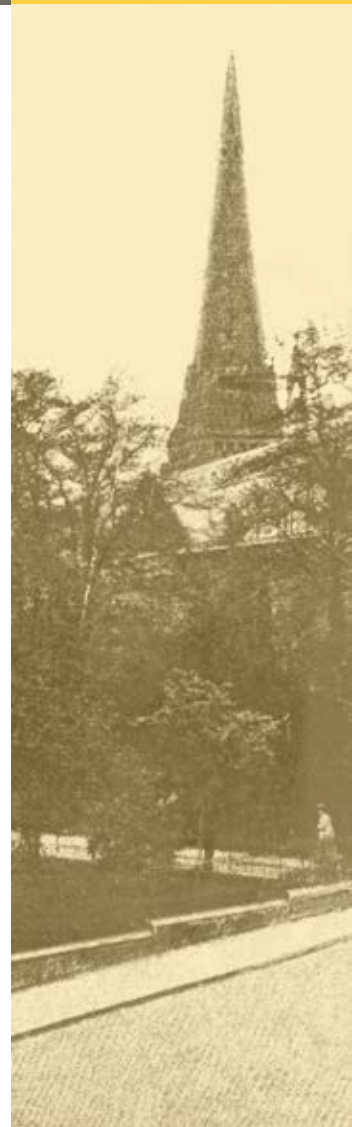
**2.2** This policy framework, along with national policy guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) will be used to further the preservation and enhancement of the character of the Conservation Area.

# 3.0 Summary of Special Interest, Issues and Opportunities

## 3.1 Special Interest

The special interest of a Conservation Area is defined by more than its appearance and includes the atmosphere, texture, sense of place and setting as well as more obvious qualities such as groups of historic buildings. Notable buildings and the spaces between buildings set an overall context for an area, but a designated Conservation Area should be more than just a collection of attractive buildings.

The Church Green Conservation Area (CA) comprises the historic central core of the town of Redditch, centred on the church of St Stephen and the public open space, including the churchyard which surrounds it. The space is enclosed predominantly by relatively modest late 18th century and 19th century buildings, on Church Green East, Church Green West and Market Place, although Church Green West has some larger 19th century public buildings. These buildings on Church Green West were added to the CA in 2006 along with the remaining historic buildings contiguous with this core on Evesham Walk, Church Road, William Street, Unicorn Hill and Bates Hill. The buildings on these latter streets are predominantly 19th century and also modest in character. The CA benefits from a number of the buildings having been identified as heritage assets in their own right, with 15 listed buildings and 17 buildings on the Local Heritage List.





Much of the CA is pedestrianised, including Church Green East, Market Place, Evesham Walk and the top section of Alcester Street which falls within the CA, and this contributes to its sense of being a public open space.

### 3.2 Summary of Issues

The appraisal has highlighted the following problems and pressures in the Church Green Conservation Area;

- Poor state of the public realm
- Poor state of shop fronts
- Upvc windows
- Parking around the church
- Parking on the corner of Evesham Walk/Unicorn Hill
- Vacant Units
- Setting to the Conservation Area
- Unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of Church Green East

Despite the above issues the CA has a number of positive features as detailed in the Conservation Area Appraisal. It sits at the centre of the town with the Grade II Church as the main focus, surrounded by green space. The historic buildings which surround the Green, both listed and locally listed, enhance the setting of the Church and this open space. Being predominantly pedestrianised it is a safe and attractive space for pedestrians. Addressing the negatives would further enhance the area, and could help with regeneration of the town.

## 4.0 Conservation Management Proposals

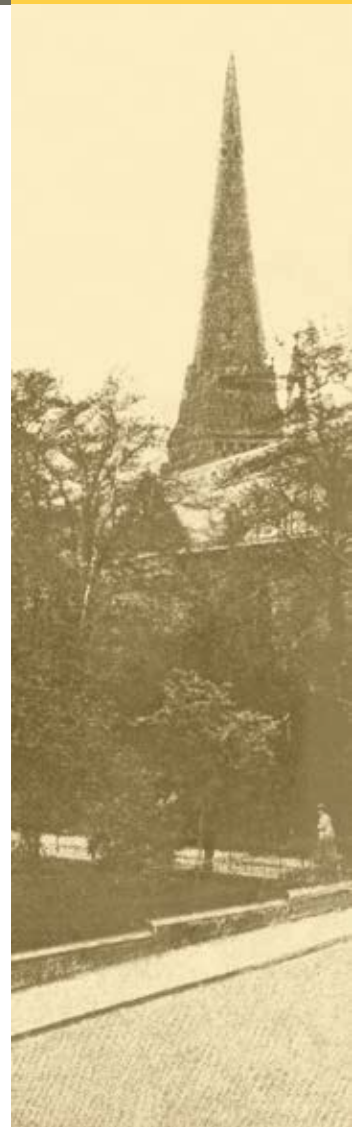
### 4.1 Introduction

The following strategies have been identified as ways in which to protect and enhance the character and significance of the CA, by addressing the negative features identified above. The proposed action points are in accordance with national policy guidance and local policies, and follow on from the Conservation Area Appraisal.

### 4.2 Poor state of the public realm

#### 4.2.1 Issues

The existing public realm comprises block pavers of various colours, mostly in a poor condition due to wear and tear or repair work in non-matching materials. The south east corner of the CA has been incorporated into a new scheme along Alcester Street, which although it does not utilise the best materials for a CA it does reinstate 'pavements' and has a neat and tidy appearance. This scheme is likely to move up into Market Place in the near future. In some areas, notably at the top of Unicorn Hill, at the junction with Evesham Walk, there is a proliferation of phone boxes, bollards and other street furniture.



## 4.2.2 Proposed Action

- Work with Highways at the County Council and NWEDR to finalise a uniform scheme of public realm works probably following what has been introduced in Alcester Street to bring a sense of uniformity to the Conservation Area.
- Work with County Council and NWEDR to rationalise the street furniture and other clutter at the top of Unicorn Hill/Evesham Walk.
- Work with the Church and NWEDR to improve the appearance of the Churchyard which forms part of the public realm, and improve the integration of the Church into the CA.

## 4.3 Poor state of shop fronts

### 4.3.1 Issues

No original shop fronts have survived, although there are some surviving original details such as corbels and pilasters. The majority of shop fronts are modern and fail to respect the quality of the historic building to which they are attached. Fascias are incorrectly scaled, and there is a lack of detailing or interest.

### 4.3.2 Proposed Action

- The reinstatement of historic detailing will be encouraged where opportunities arise through development proposals.
- Where applications are made to alter shopfronts and signage they should be determined in accordance with Redditch Local Plan 4 Policies; policies in the NPPF; guidance in the NPPG; guidance produced by Historic England; and the High Quality Design SPD (2019)
- Investigate the possibility of obtaining grant funding to finance a programme of upgrading shop fronts

## 4.4 UPVC windows

### 4.4.1 Issues

A number of upper floor windows have been replaced with upvc windows. This combined with inappropriate designs detracts from the appearance of the building and the character of the CA.

### 4.4.2 Proposed Action

- The reinstatement of historic detailing will be encouraged where opportunities arise through development proposals
- Undertake a photographic survey of all the properties in the CA from the road and other public vantage points. This will provide a record of the condition and appearance of each property, which would be useful in any future enforcement situations.
- Investigate the possibility of introducing an Article 4 direction to control alterations to windows and doors, on historic buildings only.





## 4.5 Parking around the Church

### 4.5.1 Issues

There is extensive parking at times around the Church and this has led to an increase in the size of the path around the building to accommodate parking. This clutters the immediate setting of the Church, and detracts not only from the appearance of the Church but also the green space which is at the heart of the CA.

### 4.5.2 Proposed Action

- Approach the Church with the aim of discussing their parking requirements. Look at ways of accommodating their needs while at the same time improving the appearance of the space around the Church.
- Consider whether parking for the Church could be accommodated in a nearby car park, with a minimum number of spaces being located immediately adjacent to the building.

## 4.6 Parking on the corner of Evesham Walk/Unicorn Hill

### 4.6.1 Issues

Vehicles are regularly parked outside the unit which occupies this corner. Again this detracts from the pedestrianised area.

### 4.6.2 Proposed Action

- The Local Authority is in the process of issuing a Traffic Order to prevent parking in this area. Continue to monitor the situation and liaise with Town Centre Management at RBC and NWEDR.

## 4.7 Vacant Units

### 4.7.1 Issues

There are now a significant number of vacant ground floor units within the CA, as well as empty upper floors which are more difficult to identify. A survey in July 2020 put the vacancy rate in terms of shop units at 20%.



### 4.7.2 Proposed Action

- RBC, with the assistance of NWEDR is in the process of submitting a Town Investment Plan as part of the Town Deal Program to secure £25m. Funds would not just be for the Town Centre but for projects throughout the Borough. A Town Deal Board has been established, which includes private sector partners. The Board through consultation with the public and stakeholders will prioritise projects which will include work in the Town Centre but there is a need to work on several regeneration sites and infrastructure projects. RBC has £1m to spend as part of an Accelerated Fund, and some of this may be spent on the Public Realm in the vicinity of the Church.
- Work with partners at RBC and NWEDR to obtain funding to improve the appearance of the CA and in particular units within it to make the Town Centre more attractive to prospective occupiers.
- Formally designate the CA as ‘At Risk’ (see section 5 below) and discuss with Historic England the possibility of some funding to improve historic buildings within the CA.

## 4.8 Setting to the Conservation Area

### 4.8.1 Issues

The historic setting of the CA has long been lost. Immediately to the south lies the extensive Kingfisher Shopping Centre; to the south east the Town Hall and Threadneedle House both large scale 3 to 4 storey buildings; and to the east the large blocks of the recently redeveloped NEW College together with its associated car parks. These buildings present a significant contrast to the buildings in the CA being considerably larger in terms of scale and have obliterated the grain of the historic town. The ring road is also visible to the north and west, and presents another modern intrusion.

### 4.8.2 Proposed Action

- The impact of potential development on the significance of the Conservation Area should be fully considered when planning applications are assessed. New development on sites in close proximity to the CA can have a negative impact on the setting of the Area. When such sites come forward consideration should be given to the setting of the CA, appropriateness of the location and siting of the new development, as well as materials and scale.
- The potential impact on the setting of the CA should be assessed by carrying out a full setting assessment following the Historic England guidance in The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition). Schemes should look to minimise the harm to the CA through appropriate design modifications, as well as maximising the enhancement.
- New proposals should be determined in accordance with Redditch Local Plan 4 policies; policies in the NPPF; guidance in the NPPG; and guidance produced by Historic England.
- The location of development should be carefully considered to protect important views and the setting of listed buildings within the CA.



## 4.9 Unsympathetic Modern extensions to the rear of Church Green East

### 4.9.1 Issues

Extensions take a variety of forms but many have been designed without much thought to scale, design or materials of the original buildings.

### 4.9.2 Proposed Action

- The impact of potential development on the significance of the CA should be fully considered.
- The potential impact on the setting of the CA should be assessed by carrying out a full setting assessment following the Historic England guidance in The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition).
- New proposals should be determined in accordance with Redditch Local Plan 4 policies; policies in the NPPF; guidance in the NPPG; guidance produced by Historic England; and guidance in SPD.
- In designing extensions consideration must be given to ensuring the subservience of the extension to the host building, as well as the scale, design and materials.

## 5.0 Conservation Area at Risk

Like other elements of our environment, conservation areas change over time, in both positive and negative ways. The reasons why conservation areas become at risk are complex and varied, depending on their situation.

Every year Historic England asks local authorities to assess whether listed buildings and conservations areas can be assessed as being ‘At Risk’ using their assessment criteria. Historic England separately assess listed churches, parks and gardens and scheduled ancient monuments. They then work with various stakeholders to try and address the issues that lead to the heritage asset being at risk. Currently many town centre conservation areas are at risk, and the future is uncertain for almost all of them. It remains unclear how the nation’s economy will be affected following the decision to leave the European Union, and the impact of Covid 19 is only likely to make the situation worse in the short term.

Church Green Conservation Area, for the reasons identified above, now meets the criteria for being at risk. If this is formally recognised, the Conservation Area may become eligible for funding from Historic England to address some of these issues.



## 6.0 Monitoring

The monitoring of the condition of the CA over the lifetime of the Management Plan and beyond will be essential to establishing the success of the plan.

The following are proposed;

Redditch Borough Council will work actively with building owners and occupiers in pre planning application discussions to achieve the best design solutions.

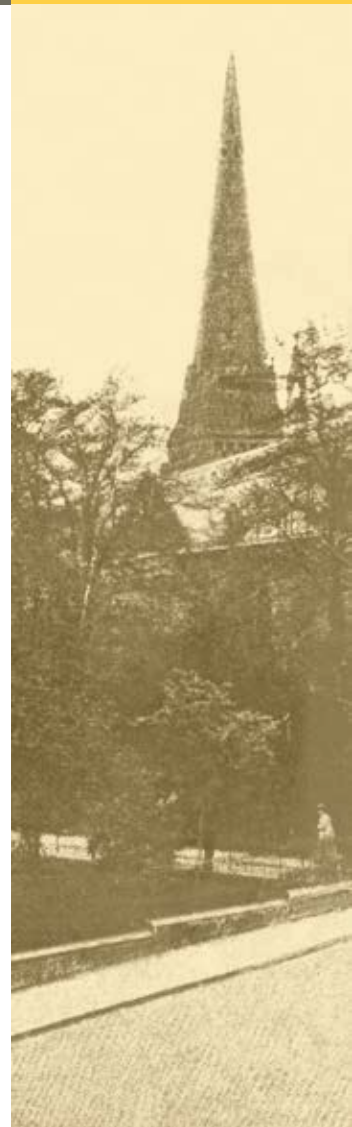
Redditch Borough Council will carry out a photographic Survey of all the buildings in the Conservation Area to aid monitoring, and in particular to aid enforcement action. The photographs will be taken from the road or other public vantage points.

Redditch Borough Council will ensure that appropriate enforcement action is taken, to preserve the character of the Conservation Area. Defined timescales will be pursued.

Subject to available resources, the Conservation Area will be reviewed on a four yearly basis and the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will be updated where necessary.

The successful management of the Conservation Area will depend not only on the commitment of the local planning authority, but also other stakeholders especially those who work and live in the area.

General advice on all matters related to the historic environment, including Conservation areas and listed buildings can be obtained from the Conservation Officer.





# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### List of properties in the Conservation Area

1 Evesham Walk  
 2 Evesham Walk  
 3 Evesham Walk  
 4 Evesham Walk  
 5 Evesham Walk  
 6 Evesham Walk  
 7 Evesham Walk  
 8 Evesham Walk  
 9 Evesham Walk  
 10 Evesham Walk  
 11 Evesham Walk  
 1-2 Market Place  
 3 Market Place  
 4 Market Place  
 5 Market Place  
 6 Market Place  
 7-9 Market Place  
 10 Market Place  
 11 Market Place  
 12 Market Place  
 2 Unicorn Hill  
 4-6 Unicorn Hill  
 8-10 Unicorn Hill  
 2-4 Bates Hill  
 6 Bates Hill  
 2 Church Green West  
 Unit 1 3-4 Church Green West  
 Unit 2 3-4 Church Green West  
 5 Church Green West  
 6 Church Green West  
 7 Church Green West  
 7 A Church Green West  
 HSBC Church Green West  
 9 Church Green West  
 County Buildings Church Green West  
 The Old Library Church Green West  
 Smallwood Hospital Church Green West

Prospect House 7 Prospect Hill  
 Red House Prospect Hill  
 9 Prospect Hill  
 7 Church Road  
 11 Church Road  
 13-15 Church Road  
 3 Church Green East  
 4 Church Green East  
 5 Church Green East  
 Beech House Church Green East  
 6 Church Green East  
 7 Church Green East  
 8 Church Green East  
 8a Church Green East  
 9 Church Green East  
 9a and 10 Church Green East  
 10a Church Green East  
 12 Church Green East  
 13 Church Green East  
 14-15 Church Green East  
 16 Church Green East  
 17 Church Green East  
 18 Church Green East  
 19 Church Green East  
 20 a and b Church Green East  
 21-22 Church Green East  
 23 Church Green East  
 24- 25 Church Green East  
 1 Peakman Street  
 1A Alcester Street  
 1 Alcester Street  
 3 Alcester Street  
 5 Alcester Street

### Outside the Conservation Area but proposed for inclusion

7 Alcester Street  
 9 Alcester Street  
 11 Alcester Street



## Appendix 2

### Listed and Locally listed Buildings

#### Listed Buildings

St Stephen War Memorial Grade II

Church of St Stephen Grade II

Williams Memorial about 32 metres north west of the Church of St Stephen Grade II

Fountain about 73 metres north of the Church of St Stephen Grade II

The Red House, Church Green West Grade II

7 and 8, Church Green Grade II

9, 10, 11, and 12, Church Green Grade II

13, Church Green Grade II

20, Church Green Grade II

National Westminster Bank, Church Green East Grade II

Kerwood and Company, Church Road Grade II

#### Locally Important buildings

The following buildings have been identified as being of local importance on the Local Heritage List compiled in 2009.

The Bandstand, Church Green

Nos. 3-5 Church Green East

No 6 (Beech House) Church Green

Nos. 14-15 Church Green East (see above check numbers)

No 19 (Lloyds TSB) Church Green East

No 2 Church Green West & Nos. 2-6 Unicorn Hill

Former Literacy & Scientific Institute Church Green West

Smallwood Hospital Church Green West

The County Court Building Church Road

Nos. 10-12 Market Place

The Sportsman's Arms No. 1 Peakman Street



## Appendix 3

### Heritage Environment Policies in the Redditch Local Plan 4

#### Policy 36

**36.2** Designated heritage assets including listed buildings, structures and their settings; conservation areas; and scheduled monuments, will be given the highest level of protection and should be conserved and enhanced. Non-designated heritage assets, nationally important archaeological remains and locally listed heritage assets, and their settings will also need to be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance and contribution to the historic environment.

**36.3** Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and those at risk should be protected. The sensitive adaptive reuse of buildings at risk will be encouraged where they may secure the future of a heritage asset. Proposals that will lead to substantial harm to or loss of significant heritage assets will not be permitted. Where there is to be a loss of a heritage asset that has been agreed, developers are required to record, archive and make information about the asset publicly accessible.

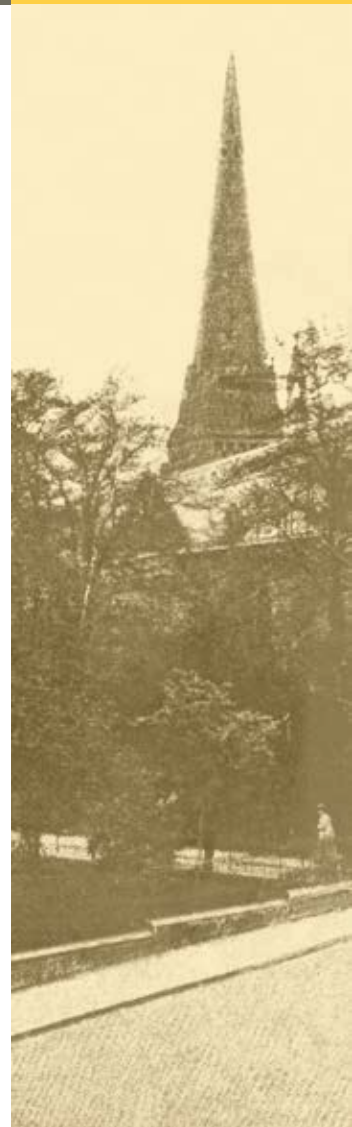
**36.4** Heritage-led regeneration will be encouraged, particularly when related to the Town Centre Strategic Site, but also at any other site of historic value. Proposals which aim to realise the leisure and tourism potential of the historic environment will also be encouraged where these will result in enhancements to heritage assets and/or enhancement of the wider historic environment.

**36.5** Applications for development affecting any heritage asset or its setting must be accompanied by a heritage statement. The level of detail should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset and the likely level of impact. Where a development site includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, developers must submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. Where appropriate, development proposals will be expected to have regard to the Historic Environment Assessment for Redditch Borough.

#### Policy 37

**37.2** Built heritage is key to preserving the distinct local identity of the Borough and all historic buildings and structures should be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance. The Borough Council will conserve and enhance its historic buildings and structures by:

- i. supporting applications for development that conserve and enhance a building/structure, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest;
- ii. supporting heritage-led regeneration in the Town Centre that enhances the existing historic environment through high quality development that is sensitive to its context;
- iii. recognising the international significance of Redditch's metal-based industries, particularly needle making and its contribution to the development of the Borough. Buildings and structures associated with the Borough's industrial heritage have been given the highest level of protection and where there are opportunities to better reveal their significance, proposals will be expected to do so;



- iv. encouraging use of the Worcestershire Farmsteads Guidance where proposals relate to a Historic Farmstead;
- v. working with owners of historic buildings and structures to increase understanding of the heritage asset and where appropriate provide support in developing proposals that are sensitive to the historic building or structure; and
- vi. maintaining a Schedule of Locally Listed Heritage Assets (the Local List), and encouraging local communities to identify local features, buildings or structures of historic interest that may be included on the Local List.

**37.3** The Borough Council will implement strict controls over the use, extension or alteration of a historic building, structure or its setting. The sensitive adaptive reuse of buildings or structures at risk will be encouraged, particularly where they may secure the future of a heritage asset.

**37.4** Applications for development that will harm or result in the loss of a historic building or structure will not be permitted unless there is a clear and convincing justification demonstrating that the harm or loss is necessary to deliver substantial public benefits that cannot be achieved through an alternative design or location or that all of the criteria in paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework have been met.

## Policy 38

### A. Conservation Areas

**38.2** Proposals for development within Conservation Areas will be required to conserve and enhance the character or appearance of the area. All development proposals, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings and structures will be expected to:

- i. demonstrate a creative design solution, specific to the site in question and the use to be accommodated;
- ii. ensure the siting of any development respects the pattern of buildings, historic layout, existing open spaces, trees and boundary treatments;
- iii. demonstrate attention to the proportion, form, massing and scale of the development and buildings that surround it;
- iv. demonstrate attention to the quality, sourcing and application of materials, finishes and detail, reflecting but not necessarily copying the elements of existing buildings within the area; and
- v. ensure that views into or out of a Conservation Area are protected and enhanced.

**38.3** Proposals which ensure the sensitive adaptive reuse of vacant buildings or encourage investment into the area, particularly in the Church Green Conservation Area will be looked at more favourably.

**38.4** Where trees contribute to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas then their preservation and protection will be sought. The Borough Council will not allow the loss of trees of high amenity value or the felling or other works to a tree which would detract from its contribution to the character or appearance of the area.





**38.5** Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of a Conservation Area will not be permitted. Where a loss of a heritage asset has been agreed, developers are required to record, archive and make information about the asset publicly accessible.

## **B. Church Green Conservation Area**

**38.6** The Borough Council will conserve and enhance Church Green Conservation Area by:

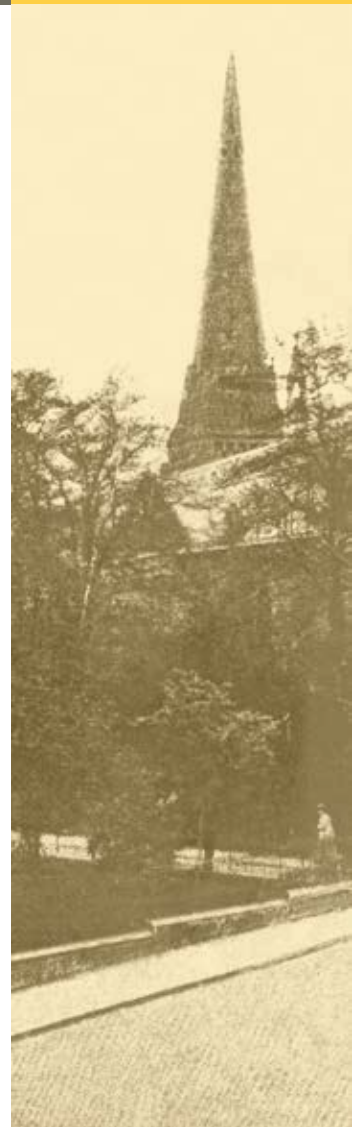
- i. recognising the importance of Church Green as focal point for the Town and as
- ii. protecting views in, out and within the area, particularly that of St Stephen's Church and its spire;
- iii. supporting high quality schemes on sites that currently detract from or make a negative contribution to the area;
- iv. supporting heritage-led regeneration in line with Policy 31 Regeneration for the Town Centre and the Redditch Town Centre Strategy;
- v. continuing with improvements to the public realm through new signage, lighting and street furniture;
- vi. protecting the open space around St Stephen's Church and seeking opportunities to strengthen its links with the Borough's Green Infrastructure Network; and
- vii. supporting applications for shopfronts, signage and other advertisements which are of a sympathetic design that is complementary to the shopfront, building and its historic context.

**38.7** Development proposals should have regard to the Church Green Character Appraisal, Management Plan and the Redditch Town Centre Strategy.

## **C. Feckenham Conservation Area**

**38.8** The Borough Council will conserve and enhance the Feckenham Conservation Area by supporting proposals which complement and improve the existing character and appearance of the area.

**38.9** Development proposals should have regard to the Feckenham Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan.



## Appendix 4

### Glossary of Architectural Terms

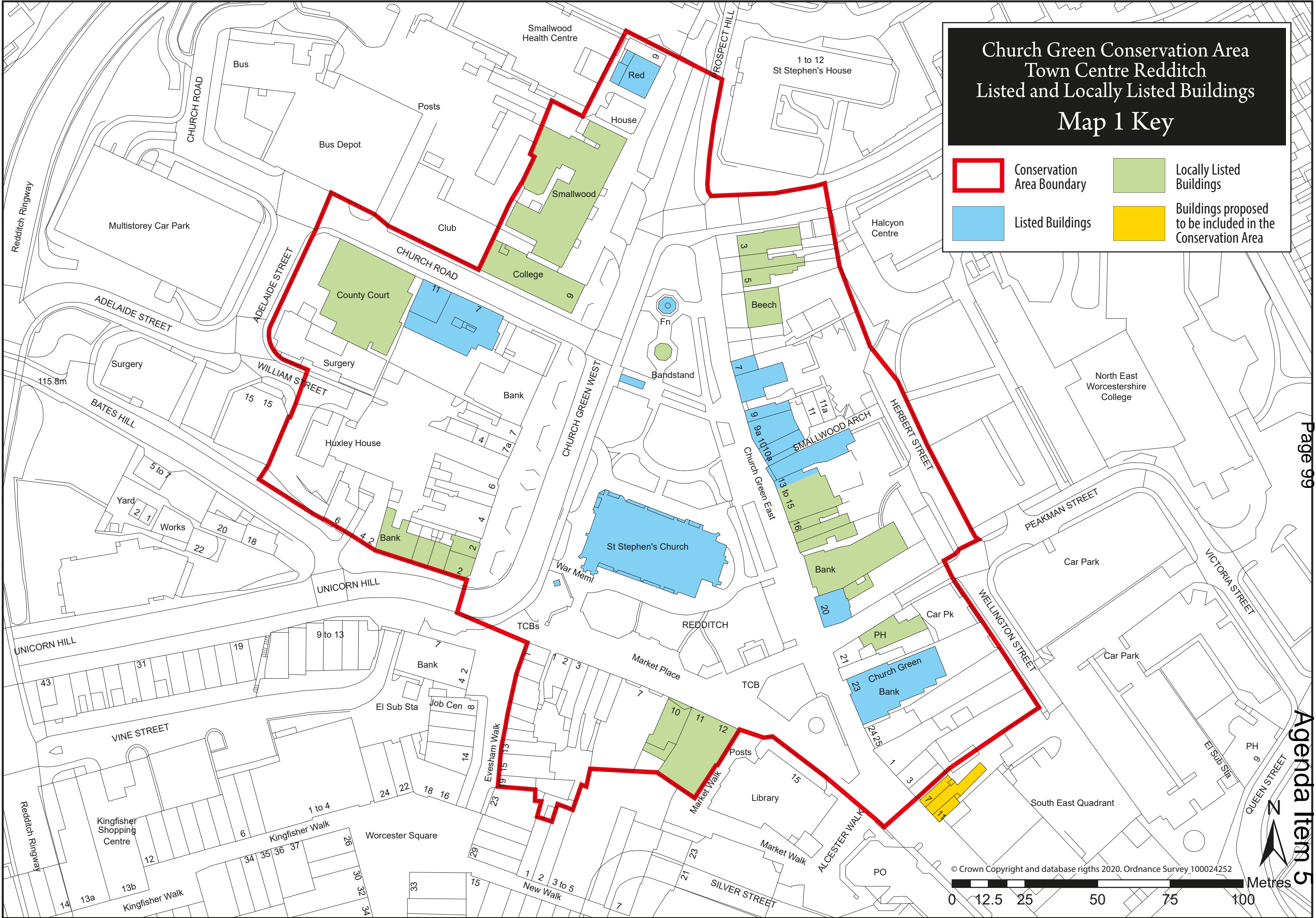
Listed Building	A building of special architectural or historic interest included on a national register. Historic England is responsible for adding new entries to the statutory list.
Conservation Area	An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which, it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Local authorities are responsible for designating new Conservation Areas.
Bargeboards	An angled decorative timber board at eaves level.
Burgage plot	A medieval term describing a long strip of land, with the narrowest section facing the street.
Camber headed	A slightly curved window head.
Classical	An architectural style from ancient Rome and Greece, revived in the Georgian period. Detailing is simple and refined with columns, moulded doorcases and sash windows.
Consoles	Bracket of curved outline.
Cornice	Projecting moulding often found at eaves level, or as part of a pediment.
Diaper pattern	Repetitive decorative arrangement of bricks, often in diamond shapes or squares.
Doorcase	A moulded case or frame lining a doorway.
Doric columns	The plainest of the three types of columns found in classical architecture, with simple vertical flutes and an unornamented capital. (The three types are Doric, Ionic and Corinthian).
Dormer	A window projecting from the roof (see 33-37 Worcester Road).
Edwardian	Dates from 1901-1910.
Fleur-de-lis	A stylised lily with three pointed leaves.
Georgian	Dates from 1714-1830.



Gothic	An architectural style from 12th to 16th centuries but revived in the late Victorian period. Typical details include elaborate tracery, heavily mullioned windows and pointed arches.
Jettied gable	Projecting upper storey overhanging the lower floors, often a feature of timber framed buildings.
Keystones	A wedge shaped block found at the centre of an arch.
Medieval	Dates from 950-1547.
Modillions	Small consoles along the underside of an eaves cornice.
Mullioned windows	Vertical posts separating the sections of a window, usually in stone or timber.
Pediment	Low pitched moulded triangle often found over door ways or windows and at roof level.
Palazzo	Palace.
Polychromatic brickwork	A feature of Victorian Gothic architecture, using a variety of alternating colours of brickwork.
Portico	A feature of classical architecture, moulded projecting hood on supporting columns to form an open sided porch.
Quatrefoil	A tracery detail in the shape of a flower with four lobes separated by cusps. A trefoil has three lobes.
Quoins	Angular often slightly raised stones added to the corner of a building.
Regency	Dates from 1810-1820.
Rusticated	Roughened texture added to stonework with sunken joints.
Stucco	An external plaster finish, often finely textured.
Victorian	Dates from 1837-1901.
Voussoirs	Wedge-shaped stones or bricks forming an arch.
Wattle and daub	Sticks and twigs interwoven to form a panel packed with plaster and then limewashed. Commonly found in timber framed or thatched buildings.



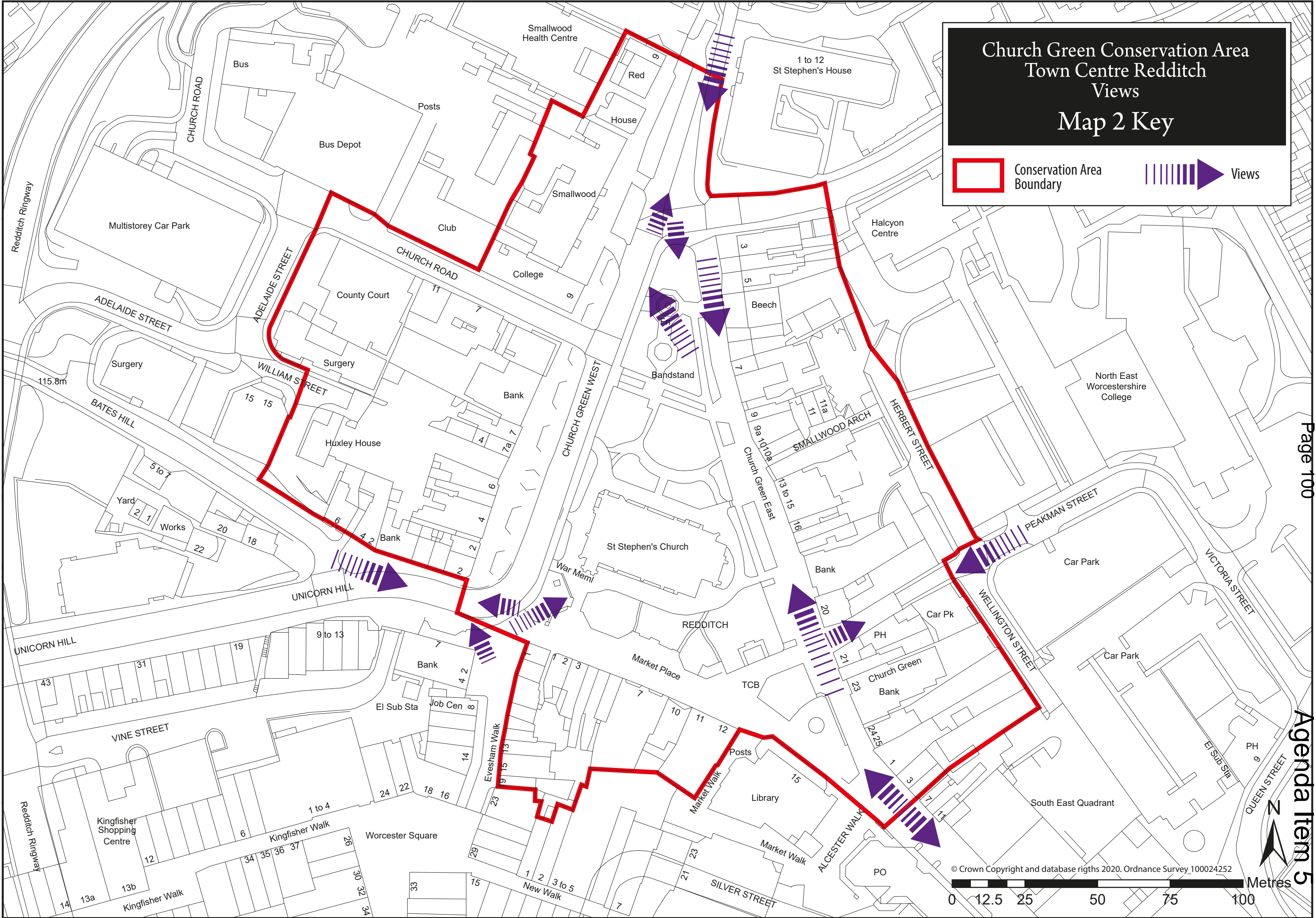




### Church Green Conservation Area Town Centre Redditch Listed and Locally Listed Buildings Map 1 Key

<div></div>	Conservation Area Boundary	<div></div>	Locally Listed Buildings
<div></div>	Listed Buildings	<div></div>	Buildings proposed to be included in the Conservation Area





# Church Green Conservation Area

## Town Centre Redditch

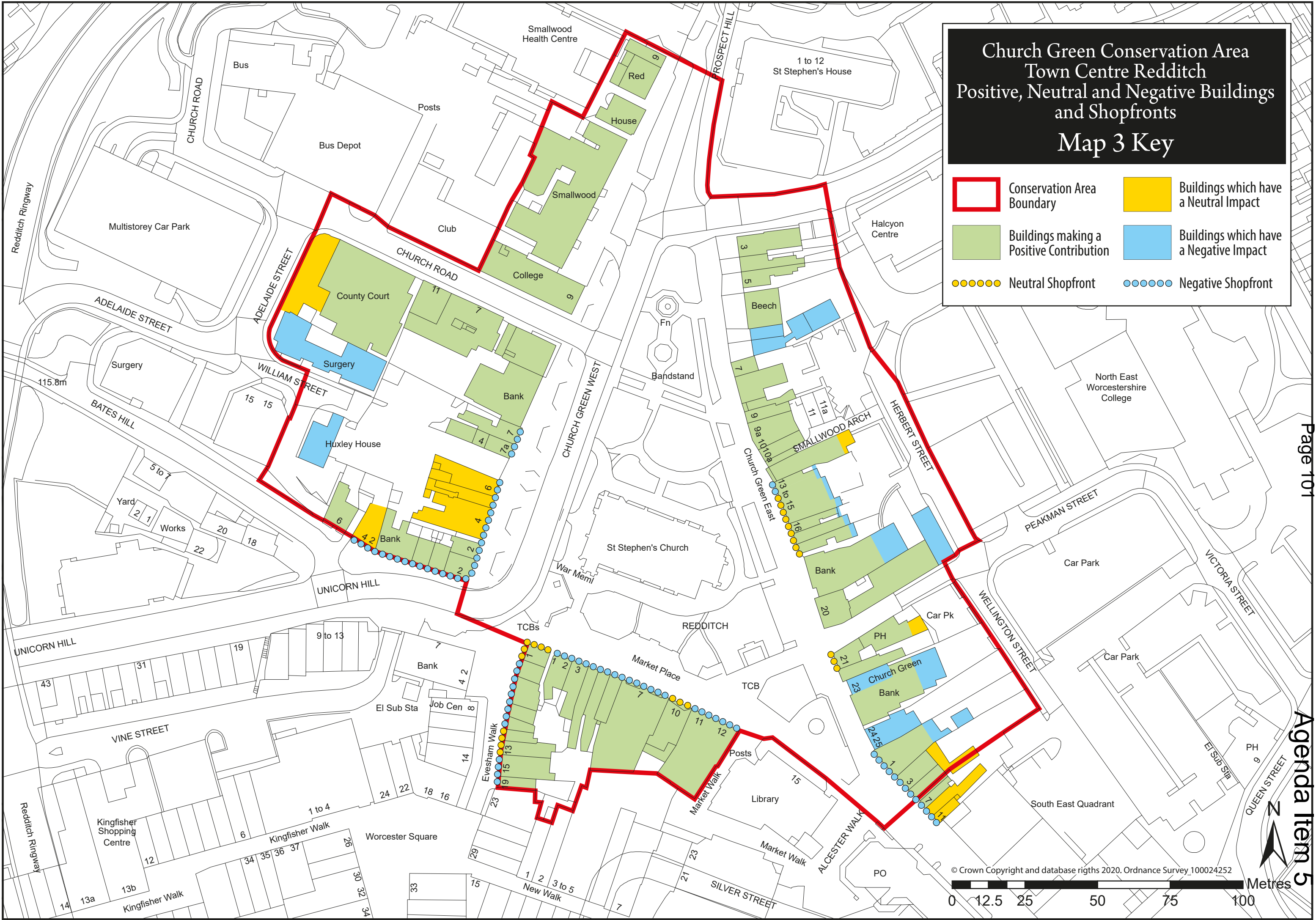
### Views

#### Map 2 Key

Conservation Area Boundary

Views





Church Green Conservation Area  
Town Centre Redditch  
Positive, Neutral and Negative Buildings  
and Shopfronts  
Map 3 Key

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Buildings which have a Neutral Impact
- Buildings making a Positive Contribution
- Buildings which have a Negative Impact
- Neutral Shopfront
- Negative Shopfront



If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Phone: 01527 548284

Email: [equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

### Strategic Planning and Conservation

Planning, Regeneration & Leisure Services  
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Redditch, Worcestershire B98 8AH

Telephone: 01527 64252.

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[www.redditchbc.gov.uk](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk)

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**APPENDIX 2**  
**Church Green CAAMP Consultation Comments**

Reference No	Question	Response/Comment	Officer response
<b>1</b>	1 Do you have a view on the proposed extension to the Conservation Area?	Yes, I do have comments, these include: (i) how much has it cost to produce this latest version of a report which was approved in April 2006? (ii) why has only two extra properties been included (shown on map 1)? (iii) the purpose-built and specially designed public library [which sadly now has a vastly reduced space inside], must be included in the extension of the CA. It does NOT need to be demolished! (iv) in appendix 2 imperial units are used. In this type of local government report it is a requirement that metric units are used. Replace the yards with metres.	(i) the report was produced by council officers within approved budgets (ii) 7-11 Alcester Street continue the run of historic properties, and hence their proposed inclusion in the CA (iii) The library was not included as it is set slightly away from the existing CA, which covers the predominantly historic core of the centre of Redditch. It was considered that it did not reflect the overall character of the area, being part of the 19060s/1970s redevelopment of the centre. (iv) This has been amended.
<b>2</b>	2 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the state of the public realm?	No comment at this time. This question (No.2 ) should be made clearer. Much easier to understand!	Noted
<b>3</b>	3 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the poor state of shop fronts in the Conservation Area?	Does the current leader of the Council (Matt Dormer) think he will be able to get even more national Government money in the form of grants ('free money') to enable shop/premises owners/businesses to replace existing shop fronts with something new and approved?	The Council will explore the possibility of obtaining some grant funding to assist in financing a programme of upgrading shop fronts.



4	4 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the issue of poor replacement windows on upper floors of buildings within the Conservation Area?	Does the current leader of the Council (Matt Dormer) think he will be able to get even more national Government money in the form of grants ('free money') to enable shop/premises owners/businesses to replace existing WINDOWS with something new and approved? What happens if a particular existing business simply refuses to change their windows (and shop front)?	See response to 3 above. Participating in any future scheme to improve shop fronts would be voluntary
5	5 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the parking issues within the Conservation Area?	The fault lies solely with the wrong policy of [REDACTED] manager of the Kingfisher Shopping Centre. These KSC car parks for many years have many empty levels even on the busiest retail days of the year e.g. Xmas. It is time that the KSC abolished all car parking charges. Sadly, RBC is unable to get the KSC management to agree to this. Except for car park No. 7 the KSC car parks only help footfall into the shopping centre not to the Church Green and Alcester St. area. If plenty of signage to FREE parking on the HoW College site it would help.	The Appraisal is only addressing the issue of carparking within the CA. The Kingfisher Centre and its car parks are outside the CA  This comment does not require the inclusion of the manager's name and so it has been redacted
6	6 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of vacant units within the CA?	Don't blame Charity Shops! If the rents and rates for these vacant units was significantly lower than good businesses including charities would be interested. The British Heart Foundation moved out because the rent being charged was too high.	The appraisal made no claim that the charity shops were responsible for the vacancy rates. The Local Authority do not determine rental levels, which are set by market conditions.
7	7 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the setting of the Conservation Area?	No comments now. In my opinion, this question should be made clearer. Reword it 'address the setting of the CA' make it simpler easier to understand!	

8	8 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of the Church Green East, within the Conservation Area?	Who is to blame? RBC's planning etc. for approving these extensions – which might have been done before the creation of the CA. So will Matt Dormer [The Leader of the Council] be able in the future to: (i) arrange for national government money to pay for demolishing these structures? and (ii) pay the businesses substantial compensation for all the total inconvenience etc. caused? <b>Afterwards</b> , will there be an idea to 're-wild' this area of the CA? <u>It probably would be an asset</u> for more urban foxes, more pigeons, more unwanted vermin!	It is possible that these extensions were constructed prior to the creation of the CA, or before these areas were included in the CA. The LA is not in a position to demolish these additions but has made proposals in the Management Plan to guide future decision making to ensure future extensions including replacements are more sympathetic to the character of the CA
9	9 Do you have any other comments in respect of the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?	Don't waste any more of local council tax money on 'blue sky thinking'. Finally, to repeat a major point, include the Public Library located in the Market Place in the Conservation Area. This would help stop the absolutely crazy plan to demolish this building.  I, together with many colleagues sincerely hope these and all other submissions to this consultation are made public.	As explained in Section 2 on page 4 of the Appraisal, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas ) Act 1990 requires local authorities to review existing conservation areas and formulate proposals for their preservation and enhancement, and hence the preparation of this document. As regards the library, please see the response to point 1
10	Any other Comments?		
11	1 Do you have a view on the proposed extension to the Conservation Area?	I am in favour of extending the conservation area as I believe this will encourage the continuity of the town centre's feel.	Noted and welcomed
12	2 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the state of the public realm?	Much of the town centre looks dilapidated & unloved, any improvement would be welcomed by most in my opinion.	Noted
13	3 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the poor state of shop fronts in the Conservation Area?	Shop fronts definitely need attention. I feel it would be much better if the shop frontage Matched the architecture of the building.	Noted
14	4 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the issue of poor replacement windows on upper floors of buildings within the Conservation Area?	I believe the windows should be replaced to match the architecture of the building	Noted

15	5 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the parking issues within the Conservation Area?	I strongly believe vehicles should be removed from the conservation area, this will drastically improve the image & feel to the town centre.	Policies have been proposed to curtail the illegal parking, and it has also been proposed to discuss the parking requirements of the Church. Some disabled parking will have to be maintained. These proposals should improve the parking situation in the CA
16	6 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of vacant units within the CA?	Ideally small businesses would be perfect for the vacant units. Eateries & independent music/craft beer venues would certainly encourage myself & many others to make use of the night time economy	Noted
17	7 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the setting of the Conservation Area?		
18	8 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of the Church Green East, within the Conservation Area?	I don't feel this is a priority, the extensions are unsightly, but are not visible from the conservation area.	Noted. Although these areas are not viewed from Church Green, they still form part of the CA and could be improved as proposed in the Management Plan.
19	9 Do you have any other comments in respect of the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?	The conservation area could potentially be a well used area by many Redditch residents & visitors. I would love to see it being used for various music & entertainment events. The bandstand being used on a Summer Sunday afternoon for brass bands would be great. With the right approach, the town centre could potentially return to a thriving & pleasant place to be.	It is understood that previously events were held at the bandstand. It is hoped that these events will resume post covid. The use of the area for other events could be explored by the Council. The bandstand is available for booking via the Leisure and Events Team
20	Any other Comments?		
21	1 Do you have a view on the proposed extension to the Conservation Area?	I think it makes sense to include 5-11 Alcester Street into the area	Noted

22	2 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the state of the public realm?	<p>I agree that we should not have a mish mash of paving, and it is appalling that utilities have been allowed to repair their damage inappropriately. We should ensure that this cannot happen in the future.</p> <p>Currently there are many trip hazards and uneven surfaces. Any plans to improve the appearance must also deal with the accessibility issues that have arisen. To make Redditch accessible to those using wheelchairs, pushchairs or mobility aids we must strive to keep our pedestrianised areas flat, without camber, and without steps. A uniform paving scheme will assist in that.</p> <p>This also relates to street furniture – care must be taken to ensure that bins, benches, lamp posts etc do not create unnecessary obstacles. I'd like to see more seating around the holocaust and John Bonham memorials. This is not a pleasant place to sit currently, especially on market days.</p>	Noted The public realm proposals which are underway should achieve this
23	3 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the poor state of shop fronts in the Conservation Area?	<p>I welcome the enforcement of more sympathetic shop fronts, and one must consider the type of business we are allowing to occupy these historic buildings – the branding of companies like cash converters, betting shops and takeaway outlets is not conducive to a more traditional shop front look.</p> <p>Potential grants to improve this is worth investigating, especially in order to attract small local businesses to the town centre. Large chains should have the resources to fund this themselves.</p>	Noted
24	4 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the issue of poor replacement windows on upper floors of buildings within the Conservation Area?	<p>I have never noticed the windows as I walked through the area. It is not an urgent concern, but I agree that future changes should be sympathetic to the age of the buildings.</p>	Noted



25	5 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the parking issues within the Conservation Area?	<p>The cars parked on the corner at the top of unicorn hill should not be there for any reason. There should be parking fines for using this area. They often represent a hazard, especially for partially sighted visitors. It's a pedestrianised area, not a car park.</p> <p>The church should have a number of designated spaces only, as those with access issues may need to park there rather than one of the multi storey car parks.</p>	These issues are covered by Proposals in the Management Plan
26	6 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of vacant units within the CA?	<p>1 Many of the units are not suitable for businesses because the building is not accessible. It is well recognised that non inclusive premises are bad for business. If there are steps or narrow doorways this discourages the disabled shopper, or those pushing children in prams. Bad design is bad for business. To ensure these properties are suitable to let they must be fit for the future as well as sympathetic to the past. This is an ethical issue as well as economic – we must not exclude anyone from enjoying our town centre. 1 in 5 people in the UK is disabled. Redditch was once renowned for its shopmobility scheme, but sadly accessibility seems to have fallen down the agenda.</p> <p>2 Business rates in the town centre are very expensive. New businesses which would fit the ethos of the area should be able to access financial support to have town centre premises.</p> <p>3 I also find the proliferation of people trying to stop me on the street to tell me about electricity / a certain charity etc very off putting. Their presence makes me rush through this area so that they do not disturb me.</p>	<p>1 Re-designed shop fronts should incorporate adequate access for people with disabilities</p> <p>2 Business rates and reliefs are set by central government and administered locally. Small business rates relief is available in certain circumstances. More information is available on the RBC website <a href="#">Redditch Borough Council website - information about business rates</a></p> <p>3 We will ascertain if this is still a problem post Covid, and should it remain an issue investigate whether or not numbers can be reduced.</p>

27	7 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the setting of the Conservation Area?	<p>I don't feel that any of the current buildings obstruct any views. We should be mindful of future developments but I quite like the contrast between modern parts of the centre alongside the traditional buildings – for example the palace theatre extension and the Hughes electrical building complement the old part of the theatre.</p> <p>The ugliest building in my opinion is the town hall with its uninspiring office façade of brown brick and small windows. (The library is a similar colour but the large windows invite you in.) The town hall is also not good from an access point of view. The car park has a difficult camber and the ramps and corridors are narrow with awkward turning points.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Town Hall and car park do not fall within the CA so are not covered by the CAAMP</p>
28	8 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of the Church Green East, within the Conservation Area?	<p>The backs are not important as the fronts. We should not allow any further unsympathetic extensions.</p>	Noted
29	9 Do you have any other comments in respect of the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?	<p>1 You have failed to mention any improvement to the bandstand and fountain area. This has been an excellent location for public events and more should be done to improve on that.</p> <p>2 Lately the standard of the flower beds has fallen. When they are unloved and full of weeds the town centre looks scruffy and unloved.</p> <p>3 I think the conservation area should support the concept of a local history museum in the town centre, so residents and visitors know more about the buildings we are trying to preserve. It would be good to put up some informative signage so people can learn about historic Redditch.</p>	<p>1 Events have been held at the bandstand in the past and there is no reason why these should not take place again post covid.</p> <p>2 We will liaise with the team at RBC who maintain the flower beds with a view to improving maintenance.</p> <p>3 If it is possible to obtain funding for improved shop fronts, there is likely to be a requirement to carry out some public engagement connected with the history and development of the town. Interpretation boards could also be installed.</p>
30	Any other Comments?		

31	1 Do you have a view on the proposed extension to the Conservation Area?	I would also like to see it extended to include the Library site and all the north side of Church Road	The library was not included as it is set slightly away from the existing CA, which covers the predominantly historic core of the centre of Redditch. It was considered that it did not reflect the overall character of the area, being part of the 19060s/1970s redevelopment of the centre.
32	2 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the state of the public realm?	I think all the proposals to improve the area need to be carried out	Noted
33	3 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the poor state of shop fronts in the Conservation Area?	I agree that the shop fronts, particularly their signage, distract from the look of the area. I would like to see them reduced to a minimum consistent level and this policy rigorously enforced.	Noted
34	4 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the issue of poor replacement windows on upper floors of buildings within the Conservation Area?	Again, it would be nice to have provided grants were available to replace them. I don't think that current tenants should bear the cost.	Grants, if they become available, are not likely to cover the cost completely and landlords are likely to have to be involved in the process
35	5 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the parking issues within the Conservation Area?	1 I think parking around the church is abused by congregation members etc and should be stopped. Similarly parking on pavement should also be stopped. 2 I think that Church Green West and Unicorn Hill should be pedestrianised, possible with only buses allowed access. Again parking along Church Green West should be prevented and deterred by fines for those parking there, even for short periods line stopping to go to the bank.	1 The Management Plan details proposals for tackling the parking at the Church and on pavements at the top of Unicorn Hill. 2 Should proposals come forward to pedestrianise Church Green West and Unicorn Hill then RBC would work with WCC to achieve a high quality public realm.
36	6 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of vacant units within the CA?	The lease cost of these properties, and the business rate, are a major deterrent to new start up and the viability of shops in the CV. Subsidies should be available.	Market forces should be determining rents for properties which are not owned by the Council. It is hoped by making the area more attractive combined with wider regeneration policies will encourage more people to visit and over time will result in more interest in the vacant shop units. As regards Business Rates see the response to 26 above.

<b>37</b>	7 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the setting of the Conservation Area?	Current plans to “Regenerate Redditch” based upon the funding applied for under the Towns Fund grant must be used to protect what we have now and improve the area. Knocking down the Library and new building it that area, which is directly adjacent to the CA, I do think protect the CA. Similarly, My understanding is that the current inter-war building on the North West of Church Road are to be demolished and a Supermarket built there. Again not sympathetic to the CA. Lastly conversion of Smallwood Hospital to residential properties I feel in also inappropriate	These areas do not fall within the CA, but are clearly within the setting of the CA. The Management Plan highlights that policies in the Local Plan and the NPPF require the impact of new development on the setting of the CA must be fully considered when planning applications are assessed. If Smallwood Hospital ceases to be used as a hospital, then a new use will have to be found for the property. Again, proposals to alter the property will have to be determined in accordance with the Redditch Local Plan and the NPPF.
<b>38</b>	8 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of the Church Green East, within the Conservation Area?	It is difficult to reverse years of lax control of developments such as this and the removal of extension could make properties unsuitable or unattractive to their tenants or prospective new tenants. The only proposals I can see apply to preventing it happening the future. What actions do you propose for the extensions and developments which are already there.	It is not possible to make owners remove poor extensions to their properties, but over time further changes will be proposed and they will need to be rigorously assessed in accordance with Local plan policies and the NPPF, and this is confirmed by the Management Proposals.
<b>39</b>	9 Do you have any other comments in respect of the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?	I think it is very important that every effort be made to promote and exploit the history and heritage of the town. Focuses such as this contribute to such efforts. More should be made of the historic assets of the town such as enforcing protection of site on the list of sites of historic interest.	Noted If the Appraisal and Management Plan are adopted, it will become a material consideration in the planning process in addition to Local Plan policies and the NPPF.
<b>40</b>	Any other Comments?		
<b>41</b>	1 Do you have a view on the proposed extension to the Conservation Area?	Yes	



42	2 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the state of the public realm?	<p>The library building is fine. All we need is an in character brick wall or a historical mural painted on the blank wall facing the post office. A centrally located library is a draw in attraction, It also hides the horrible square facade of the Kingfisher centre which has no character links to the CA. I see no reason to move the Town Hall – what a waste of money that would be. If the building is too big, then just convert the top on or two floors to residential. This applies also to the police station. The town centre is a sensible location as strangers to the town can easily find it for help and town centres are often the focus of crime. Accessing the fire station site is difficult for elderly non-drivers – it is too far to walk from buses. How about rebuilding on the site and adding housing units above the police station – just one room studios as affordable housing? All housing in the town hall means not enough parking spaces. If you must move the town hall, then have a daytime use on the ground floors.</p>	<p>The Town Hall, library and police station fall outside of the CA, so their futures are outside the remit of the CAAMP</p>
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43	3 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the poor state of shop fronts in the Conservation Area?	<p>1 Pleased someone has noticed we have a history to be proud of. Forget the pavement. We want people looking up and around them. Let's clean all the brickwork and replace bricks and mortar WITH THE RIGHT TYPE OF BRICKS. Let's put up boards that say who built what and who lived where and what they achieved and put in discrete tour markers, like a treasure hunt, for people to follow a history tour from place to place. Put up photos of the Earl of Plymouth, the Bartletts, the Smallwoods etc.</p> <p>2 Yes, change the shop fronts, and use that dark and horrible old market place for a museum with a spiralling ramp accessible from the town hall subway and the path through by the post office with glass walls above and level with the surrounding roadway. Build it high enough to have VIEWS, and have an easy access to the passage into the Kingfisher Centre (opening out the passage, now Debenhams and M&amp;S have gone to encourage people in)</p>	<p>1 If it is possible to obtain funding for improved shop fronts there is likely to be a requirement to carry out some public engagement connected with the history and development of the town. Interpretation boards could also be installed.</p> <p>2 The old Market place is outside of the CA and so its future is outside of the remit of the CAAMP</p>
44	4 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the issue of poor replacement windows on upper floors of buildings within the Conservation Area?	The windows are fascinating. Don't mind new materials but get the dimensions right	Noted
45	5 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the parking issues within the Conservation Area?	Put the parking underground where possible, but remember old people can't walk far and many volunteer at the church. I don't drive but don't find cars detract from my view of the history provided they are not an obstruction to pedestrian access. Also not driving up the main streets is good	Noted, although underground parking is not a viable option for the CA, especially when there are numerous car parks within a short walk.

46	6 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of vacant units within the CA?	If you can attract people to the museum because it is fun, and likewise to the history tour and move the market to go right down the middle of Alcester street where there is room to browse, (or pedestrianise Unicorn Hill and put it there) you can increase the lengths people will walk and so use adjoining shops. Themed market days also work to draw people in – ie medieaval market or victorian market etc (You could alternatively take down the gloomy shutters in the old market square roof and raise the floor level to improve light levels and put the market back there – access would be from the library/ post office side but make the pavement slope gradually up. This would give you space underneath for perhaps an ice rink accessible from the town hall subway. If you must do the floor, do it last because al development involves dirt and heavy machinery.	Not all these proposals are relevant to the CA, but we will work with other parties including the Business Improvement District (BID) and NWEDR on wider regeneration of Redditch.
47	7 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the setting of the Conservation Area?	Just make the most of our amazing history. History works for Worcester, York, Stratford, Chester. Why are we not using ours?	Noted. The CAAMP sets are proposals for managing the long term future of the CA
48	8 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of the Church Green East, within the Conservation Area?	Plant trees around the edge of the carpark, put the car park underground with a park on top and no one will look that way. Maybe we could even add some more buildings to create a medieval street museum like (ie state that it is a replica) but put in real traders to match the era – baker, butcher, tailor, apothecary etc	Noted. There are proposals in the Management Plan to improve the public realm.

49	9 Do you have any other comments in respect of the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?	<p>Pleased we are moving forwards but please, no need to move the town hall, and keep the police station central. The real way to get people in, though is to have new things to do and to look at which change often – you need different themed markets and a museum with “How to build a watermill, a coracle, weave a tapestry.....days. These people will then eat and buy other products while they are here. The existing market space is too cramped and in the way of people just trying to get from a to b so will never draw large numbers – people like to amble in a market.</p> <p>The bus station is a disaster – dark cold and smelly. I like the idea of converting this to a food hall and having the buses next to the trains (again, cars park underneath). Use the old subway access to the new food hall and replace those stupid steep stairs with a fun to go up slope or an escalator – or, go mad and build right over Unicorn Hill with an escalator by the railway station</p>	The Town Hall, Police Station and Bus station are outside the CA so are beyond the remit of the CAAMP, but will be considered as part of wider regeneration policies in the Town, along with the Market.
50	Any other Comments?		
51	1 Do you have a view on the proposed extension to the Conservation Area?	<p>Firstly, how much has this document cost to have assembled?</p> <p>Secondly, how has the CA got into such a state over such a long period, this can only be down to the council not following their own instructions for tenants</p> <p>Thirdly, this should not in any way incur any costs on council tax payers and should come from government funds and tenants only.</p>	<p>The report was produced by council officers within approved budgets</p> <p>Town centres have suffered nationally due to the change in shopping patterns and a subsequent lack of investment from all sectors. RBC does not own any property within the CA</p> <p>It is hoped to obtain some grant funding but otherwise to work with landlords, tenants and other stakeholders to improve the appearance of the CA</p>



53	2 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the state of the public realm?	<p>Yes, why have you, the council, allowed for this CA to get into such a state that requires urgent actions?</p> <p>You have obviously allowed the fronts of buildings to get into such a poor/unappealing state as you must surely be the landlord of these properties. Or you have allowed the current/previous landlords to not follow certain building standards set out by yourselves.</p> <p>Extensions at the rear would have been passed by yourselves so you only have yourselves to blame?</p>	<p>The condition of the CA has deteriorated for a number of reasons; elements of the public realm reaching the end of their natural life; the reduced demand for retail units due to the switch to online shopping and hence the reduced investment from all sectors in the Town Centre; alterations to buildings which did not require planning permission or were made prior to designation, to name but a few.</p> <p>RBC is not the landlord of these properties</p> <p>Appraisals of this type are carried out periodically, the last was in 2006, and allow a fresh assessment of the condition of the CA, and identifies various ways to move forward.</p>
54	3 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the poor state of shop fronts in the Conservation Area?	See previous section	See above
55	4 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the issue of poor replacement windows on upper floors of buildings within the Conservation Area?	<p>The windows, not all, are in keeping with the style of the building but upvc. I believe that this is an issue of the landlord for allowing the change to be made. You do need to chase the landlord for this or take the blame for allowing these changes to have been made and not kept within the style of the building.</p>	<p>These changes may have been made prior to designation, or the time to take enforcement action has passed.</p> <p>As part of the Management Plan it is proposed to undertake a photographic Survey of all the buildings to act as a baseline record to aid future enforcement.</p> <p>Otherwise, the aim is to work with building owners to improve the appearance of their properties when the opportunities arrive. The possibility of obtaining some grant funding to do this will be investigated.</p>

56	5 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the parking issues within the Conservation Area?	Not too sure who you would need to see about this but why has parking been allowed around the church? I remember the time when it was just to one side that was allocated to parking. And who is this parking being used by? Is it for church use? Or by the well off who don't want to walk too far to work? It does not explain who is using this parking. This does need explaining more, and anyway, carpark 7 could be used for this instead.	The Management Plan proposes approaching the Church to discuss their parking requirements, with the possibility of accommodating some of their parking elsewhere, with the aim of improving the appearance of this part of the CA.
57	6 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of vacant units within the CA?	Unfortunately, this is down to your marketing department to attract new clients to these premises. Also, dependent on how long they have been empty and unoccupied, could you not look at another use for them? Turn them into high end apartments, housing. Or try and encourage independent retails to this area? Don't you wish you never cancelled the carnival all those years ago? This area use to be thriving.	These properties are owned by private landlords. Subject to obtaining planning permission alternative uses for the buildings could be considered.
58	7 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the setting of the Conservation Area?	I would no knock the library down to make way for some kind of open space, use the library as a central hub for the whole of Redditch (a bit like the MAC at Cannon Hill Park. This may breathe new life into the surrounding area wit the arts?	Demolition of the library would require planning permission, and the impact on the setting of the CA would be considered as part of the planning balance when determining the application.
59	8 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of the Church Green East, within the Conservation Area?	You must have allowing the planning applications to go through, so YOU sort this out or unfortunately, live with it!!!	It is possible that these extensions were constructed prior to the creation of the CA, or before these areas were included in the CA. There are proposals in the Management Plan to guide future decision making to ensure future extensions including replacements are more sympathetic to the character of the CA

<b>60</b>	9 Do you have any other comments in respect of the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?	A lot, if not all, of these issues have arisen from the council's incompetence of allowing these things to happen as planning permission would have been required for a lot of what is wrong in this area. Obviously, someone must have been making a quick buck and allowing poor decisions to have been made and accepted. In no way should the Redditch tax payer be penalised in any way for someone's incompetence!! You need to ensure that future developments are adhered to building regulations for the CA	The condition of the CA has deteriorated for a number of reasons; elements of the public realm reaching the end of their natural life; the reduced demand for retail units due to the switch to online shopping and hence the reduced investment from all sectors in the Town Centre; the time to take enforcement action has passed; alterations to buildings which did not require planning permission or were made prior to designation, to name but a few. The LA has made proposals in the Management Plan to guide future decision making to ensure future alterations and other work are more sympathetic to the character of the CA
<b>61</b>	Any other Comments?		
<b>62</b>	1 Do you have a view on the proposed extension to the Conservation Area?		
<b>63</b>	2 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the state of the public realm?		
<b>64</b>	3 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the poor state of shop fronts in the Conservation Area?	The frontages that are occupied by flourishing concerns seem to be in adequate condition. It is not surprising that it is mostly Charity shops that are not so investment by Council and grants would have to provide funding, and yes improvement would benefit the area.	Noted
<b>65</b>	4 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the issue of poor replacement windows on upper floors of buildings within the Conservation Area?	I have a personal loathing of plastic replacement windows so should love an improvement	Noted

66	5 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the parking issues within the Conservation Area?	Parking at the Evesham Walk/Unicorn Hill junction is an eye sore and completely unnecessary	Noted
67	6 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of vacant units within the CA?	Can an attempt be made to procure small traditional traders to the CA? Artisan foods, leather workers, etc would immensely benefit the whole town but would need inducement until profitability increased.	Such a scheme would have to be part of a wider regeneration plan. Various business support grants are available from NWEDR, and more information can be found on their website, <a href="http://nwedr.org.uk">nwedr.org.uk</a>
68	7 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the setting of the Conservation Area?	I urge retaining all the mature trees. I do not find car parking at the church intrusive.	There are no plans to remove trees.
69	8 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of the Church Green East, within the Conservation Area?	No comment as I do not know what is within these structures.	
70	9 Do you have any other comments in respect of the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?	Signage to the Kingfisher Centre from the Bus Station is appalling. And entry is very difficult for the disabled. The lift seems to be deliberately hidden away, the down escalator from the lower ground floor invisible.	This area falls outside of the CA, but the comments can be forwarded to the Management at the Kingfisher Centre
71	Any other Comments?		
72	1 Do you have a view on the proposed extension to the Conservation Area?	I am glad the importance of the historic character of the town is finally being recognised. Yes - extend the CA as set out in the proposal	Noted
73	2 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the state of the public realm?	<p>I believe in its current state the public realm around Church Green and the wider CA does not encourage any sense of pride in the town. It is scruffy and unloved. Cluttered with cars - often illegal parking. (Parking enforcement officers - where are they?) Poorly placed phone boxes etc. Too many take aways.</p> <p>We need an interesting busy market to create a 'buzz'. A monthly farmers market would draw visitors in.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>It is intended that the Management proposals will address the parking and public realm issues.</p> <p>The potential for alternative markets will be explored by the Business Improvement District (BID) and NWEDR</p>



74	3 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the poor state of shop fronts in the Conservation Area?	The shop fronts are awful. Absolutely no regard for the age of the building behind them. It is perfectly possible to upgrade the shop front in an appropriate style reflecting the history of the property. Look at Stratford, Alcester and, to some extent, Bromsgrove. Please do not repeat the past mistakes.	Noted
75	4 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the issue of poor replacement windows on upper floors of buildings within the Conservation Area?	If at all possible current tenants should be encouraged to consider the style more carefully if upgrades to the windows are necessary. New tenants should be made aware that they too should make sympathetic upgrades.	Noted. Although the Council is not in a position to make new tenants alter properties but will encourage appropriate improvements through the planning process.
76	5 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the parking issues within the Conservation Area?	Double yellow lines - HAH! The drivers for the takeaway shops on Church Green totally disregard the parking rules. They cause congestion and make it difficult and dangerous for bus users. Parking at the church needs to be made strictly drop off only. Extend the disabled parking zone near the Sportsman's Arms for people who wish to attend services. Encourage the parking near The Red House with better lighting and signage.	The issue of illegal parking on Church Green could be investigated. The Management Plan proposes approaching the Church to discuss their parking requirements, with the possibility of accommodating some of their parking elsewhere, with the aim of improving the appearance of this part of the CA.
77	6 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of vacant units within the CA?	Applying for every grant going! Encourage more 'up market' shops with a reduction in the rental/rates costs around the CA. Take aways need to be cafes or restaurants with seating outside.	Noted The LA does not control rents, they are agreed between landlords and tenants. The location of takeaways is controlled through the planning process, although outside seating could to be encouraged if appropriately positioned.
78	7 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the setting of the Conservation Area?	I totally agree with 4.8.2 Modern can be blended with old if sympathetic consideration is made part of the planning approval.	Noted
79	8 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of the Church Green East, within the Conservation Area?	Personally I'd like to see them demolished! But, not practical. Any new works must strictly be in keeping with the CA proposals. Monitoring of such works has to be undertaken.	Noted
80	9 Do you have any other comments in respect of the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?	I understand that it is difficult to undo the desecration of the previous decisions. Redditch is a historically modern town, i.e. mainly Victorian, let us not lose any more of that history. I love my town - there are worse places - but I'd love to see other people seeing it's attraction.	Noted

<b>81</b>	Any other Comments?		
<b>82</b>	1 Do you have a view on the proposed extension to the Conservation Area?	<p>I believe that the extension of the proposed Conservation Area can only be a good thing. Every part (as far as possible) of ALL the Town's historic buildings (even those outside of the CA – in the wider Town scape and the Borough as a whole) should be retained.</p> <p>Old doesn't mean not fit for purpose – so we should always look to retain and enhance what we have rather than knock down and rebuild.</p>	Noted
<b>83</b>	2 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the state of the public realm?	<p>I believe that although the Yellow 'brick' road was a good idea, to define the space and make tidy – from the perspective of 'value for money' regarding the relatively quick deterioration (discoloured/vehicles and other tyre marks) I do not believe it was the best choice of colour scheme – not-withstanding the non-obvious link to the CA. The bit of interest is where the 'needles' have also incorporated into the paving design.</p> <p>I agree that a uniform approach befitting of the area and to create charm would be great – but at the same time needs to be hardwearing and stand the test of time.</p> <p>Street clutter, other than obvious seating should be removed or replaced. It's a shame we couldn't introduce the old-style red phone boxes into the CA.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The proposal is to update the older public realm to match the areas updated a couple of years ago. This work is underway.</p>

84	3 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the poor state of shop fronts in the Conservation Area?	<p>I 100% agree that shop frontages need to be reinstated in line with the historic context of the town as development proposals arise. I would go further and say that business occupying the area should be encourage/incentivised the redo their shop fronts.</p> <p>Remove all gaudy colour schemes, certainly oversized signage needs to be downsized (as was the case when the new Co-Op in Crabbs Cross was being completed – going back to original heritage design). People will know a place exists they don't need to see big ugly signage. Such changes can be done sympathetically thus ensuring a business is still on brand but just is a setting of heritage</p>	It is proposed to improve the appearance of the shop fronts over time by rigorously applying the policies in the Local Plan and the Design SPD (2019)
85	4 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the issue of poor replacement windows on upper floors of buildings within the Conservation Area?	<p>OK, so I don't think the actual issue here should be that UPVC is used – these days you can get some amazing 'old' style windows in UPVC – and from a maintenance point of view is better in the long run. I think the issue is one of mismatched design.</p> <p>I do however agree that some form of control in the development/improvement of buildings in the CA would be a good thing, so long as cost to owners do not become increasing prohibitive to the existence of a business.</p> <p>Photographic surveys of all CA properties are also a good thing.</p>	Noted. It is proposed to seek the reinstatement of historic detailing when the opportunity arises.

86	<p>5 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the parking issues within the Conservation Area?</p>	<p>I believe one of the biggest things that lets the area down is excessive cars on the streets – most of the time parked on double yellow lines – simply because some people are too lazy to walk. The cars detract from the beauty of the buildings. Cars parked on Unicorn Hill are a nuisance and are unsightly – might it be possible to allow for extra parking behind the buildings – with access from the service road and for a strict time period only. The space in front of Wetherspoons on Unicorn Hill is in fact an utter disgrace – which for many years has remained neglected and is too overused – this needs some clear thought with regards to business contributions to maintain (if it's their land?) and alternative parking determined.</p> <p>Bates Hill is another area of congestion – with drivers parking on corners limiting other drivers' ability to safely pull onto Unicorn Hill. I think parking around the Church will be a sensitive issues for some however believe that a solution could be found – maybe weekend dual use of the College carpark could be the way forward for the Church – but need to ensure this doesn't lead to excessive fees from private parking operators – as people should be encouraged into the town but not detrimented by excessive fees. Maybe alternative parking for much of the town centre could be accommodated by erecting an 'in-keeping' two level carpark on the site of the Old nightclub/ Old Health Centre of Church Road – or further down towards the rear of Red House.</p> <p>I also agree with the issuing of traffic orders aimed at preventing parking. I also think the area by the top of Easemore Road – Church Green East – where we see a new takeaway has recently opened – we can see that will be open to traffic abuse – by delivery drivers pulling up onto the shop frontage area – maybe consider some new bollards or planters etc. to restrict access – otherwise pavers will soon become worn or broken.</p> <p>What is also a negative impact of cars in the CA – is when attending Memorial services, Weddings etc, or simply enjoying the outdoor setting of the Church yard etc, that cars with loud music playing and loud exhaust pipes are allowed to 'drive by' – with no</p>	<p>This document only addresses the parking issues in the CA, which is a notable problem, at the top of Unicorn Hill and around the Church.</p> <p>The wider parking issues will be discussed with WCC as part of the wider regeneration process.</p>
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89	6 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of vacant units within the CA?	<p>It would be great if Redditch could secure £25m – there is so much that could be achieved. The immediate RBC fund of £1m needs to be spent on the priority issues of the CA. Frontages of unoccupied premises need to have thoughtful and interesting window coverings – large TO LET signs are simply not good enough. Maybe local business and individuals/communities would be willing to ‘sponsor’ a shop front and some heritage wraps/window films could be places in situ until a suitable new owner is established.</p> <p>Agree that the area needs to be made more attractive to prospective occupiers but that is not simply an issue of making it look amazing and fancy paving – but it’s also down to cost and therefore reasonable rents and rates should be applied with the aim of retaining business in the long term and not just creating a short term win.</p>	<p>We will work with the BID to explore the possibility of a scheme to make the shopfronts of vacant units more attractive.</p> <p>Rents are determined by market forces and RBC has no control over rents as they do not own any property within the CA. Business rates and reliefs are set by central government and administered locally. Small business rates relief is available in certain circumstances. More information is available on the RBC website <a href="#">Redditch Borough Council - small business rates relief information</a></p>
90	7 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the setting of the Conservation Area?	<p>Agree with all proposed actions with regards to the setting of the Conservation area.</p> <p>Business should be pushed to the limits to come up with wonderful plans – not just run of the mill plans (that is also true of the wider Redditch Borough).</p> <p>Encourage businesses to invest and make it wholly attractive – so that it gives the town the amenities it needs and enables businesses to care about where they are, what they can do themselves to enhance the CA.</p> <p>Artisan, historic, local, global everything is possible if enough people want to make it happen.</p> <p>Purpose and reward (for the benefit of many) – not simply profit.</p>	Noted

91	8 Do you have any comments in respect of the proposals to address the problem of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear of the Church Green East, within the Conservation Area?	<p>I guess this is trickier to comment on since most people see the front rather than the rear of properties.</p> <p>But yes, have the right policies in place that allows only for sympathetic and appropriate development – that should have been a given for many years..... this should become standard practise – rather than an after-thought.</p> <p>E.G. this is what we will allow: x,y,z – does the proposed development meet or exceed? – if yes then go ahead, if not go away and reconsider – or if the answer is x,y,z falls below then the response to proposals would have to be NO.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Management Plan has provided guidance on this at Section 4.9.2</p>
92	9 Do you have any other comments in respect of the content of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan?	<p>I think the CA appraisal overall has been well thought out and brought together. It covers the majority of what we would like to see and be focused on.</p> <p>To add a few things however:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why was the old Library sold – I realise it's in the CA – but it would have made an amazing Redditch History Museum.</li> <li>- WE need our market back – and sorry to say not the lack lustre excuse of a market we have put up with for many years, but one that is vibrant, good product ranges etc...</li> <li>- Pedestrian areas should always be so – as all too often random vehicles will use the pedestrian zones – whether due to lack of signage or lack of bollards being in situ (unless needed for emergency access).</li> </ul> <p>In the CA and wider setting down towards the Palace theatre and along the top of Church Green East - more needs to be done to improve areas to allow businesses to set up appropriate outdoor covered seating areas (the 2020/2021 pandemic has shown us only too quickly how things can change). Really do need to encourage more eateries into the areas in the CA and surrounding.</p>	<p>The old library was not owned by RBC</p> <p>The potential for alternative markets will be explored by the Business Improvement District (BID) and NWEDR</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The bandstand – needs to be brought into greater use – maybe monthly events with a selection of bands/musicians/singing/dancing etc – let's show case our Towns talent and diversity – encourage community groups to get involved – this maybe could lead to a more cohesive society.</li> <li>- Finally (for now) encourage healthy competition amongst business, market traders and all those willing to make a positive impact on the development and success of the town. In this sense a full and thriving 'together' town is much better than an empty, dull and unloved town.</li> </ul> <p>We can be magnificent, we know there are so many with the skills and talent – there needs to be a 'real will' and it would just be nice if more people were encouraged to work together as teams (not simply RBC versus the community) – not-withstanding the obvious benefit that obtaining funds would bring (to be spent wisely and not wasted).</p>	<p>It is understood that previously events were held at the bandstand. It is hoped that these events will resume post covid. The use of the area for other events could be explored by the Council. The bandstand is available for booking via the Leisure and Events Team</p>
94	Any other Comments?		
95		Reinstate trees to the Parade, this would enhance the area greatly	It is not entirely clear which area is being referred to, but the Public Realm works will consider the inclusion of more trees, although they may be in planters
96		Put the old library to some use for the people of Redditch	This property is not owned by RBC
97		Extend conservation to buildings 5-11 Alcester Street	Noted, and this has been proposed

<b>98</b>		Sort out patchwork of paving, make it more coherent to the area as a whole	This is proposed as part of the public realm works and is partly underway
<b>99</b>		Repair buildings in Evesham Walk particularly the one damaged by fire	This is the responsibility of the landlord, but the Council can try and ascertain the timetable for the completion of these works.
<b>100</b>		Let Market Place be just that, a central place for the market, and the old Woolworth building could be an indoor market hall.	The location of the market is likely to be considered as part of the wider town centre plans. The old Woolworths building is not owned by the Council, although the use of the building as an indoor market could be suggested to the landlord.
<b>101</b>		Above all preserve and protect what we have while we still have it.	Noted and agreed. The Management Proposals are aiming to do this.
<b>102</b>		Thank you for consulting the Victorian Society on this Character Appraisal and Management Plan. We very much welcome its publication and hope that the Council will adopt it to help preserve the character and appearance of this significant historic central area of Redditch Town Centre. We also support the addition and inclusion of the buildings at 5-11 Alcester Street within the designation.	Noted and Welcomed
<b>103</b>		There does not seem to be any mention of the 'early C14 vault springer from the (Bordesley) Abbey with ballflower and moulded ribs' which is set in the churchyard to the south of the church, as mentioned in Pevsner (2007) p548 and which as far as I can recall was there when I last visited the church in 2018, but given the references to the bandstand, fountain and chest tombs, perhaps this should be included as well. Should it be separately listed; it doesn't get a mention in the church list description?	Noted, the existence of this structure could be added to the description of this immediate area  As regards listing Historic England will only consider buildings and structures which are under threat, so that is not possible at this time. If it falls within the Churchyard then it could be considered as curtilage listed.



104		Also the north (tower) doorway to the church was clearly designed as a principal entrance to the church, but has long been unused & was as I recall fairly neglected and unsightly; it seems something of a wasted opportunity and it would be good to see some really positive outcomes in how the church relates to the conservation area which this Plan could facilitate.	In future discussions with the Church we can look at ways of better integrating the Church with the CA.
105		And parking around the church is of course a long standing issue, which is mentioned and certainly needs attention!	Proposals have been made in the Management Plan to tackle this.
106		There have been previous discussions with RBC and a draft plan prepared which would site parking on the north side of the Church. A Faculty would be required for this. There is obviously a need for some parking at the Church and the Church does generate some income from parking. Open to further discussions	Noted. This needs to be followed up as part of the proposal in the Management Plan to discuss the parking issues around the Church to improve the appearance of the area.
107		As regards the trees, there is a challenge that the Victorians planned for the effect at the time and did not predict the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century tree canopy we now have. I would suggest that the pollarding was, in fact helpful and in keeping with Victorian vista. Leaving the trees is lovely, but the built environment ends up being lost in the greenery in the summer months.	The trees do make a positive impact on the environment and character of the CA. There is no intention to remove them, but manage them better as part of the public realm. More recent trees have been smaller and in planters.
108		St Stephen's Redditch is a grade 2 listed building that sits in the heart of the Church Green conservation area within a churchyard that has been closed for burial. The land belongs to the church, but maintenance and grass cutting is now the local authority's responsibility.	Noted
109		The Church acts as a focus for a number of events within the centre of Redditch; events at the bandstand have been supported by the café and toilets in the church; several local organisations use the church; it is used for concerts, Remembrance Day; and the Christmas tree and lights are centred on the Church.	Noted

110		There have been discussions regarding the parking and public realm improvements around the Church, as well as some discussions with the Diocesan Advisory Committee. Any changes would need a Faculty from the Diocese of Worcester.	The Management Plan highlights the need to have discussions with the Church to improve the parking situation and general appearance of the space around the Church.
111		The Church would like to see other changes to the immediate Public Realm including; 1) Better demarcation of the highway and the churchyard 2) A new path to the side door on the north side 3) Lowering of ground levels on the east side to prevent damp ingress 4) Improving the maintenance of surrounding planting and the trees	The discussions on parking could be widened to incorporate the wider public realm of the Churchyard

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**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****Executive**

26th October 2021

**2022/23 Annual Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan: Updated Budget Framework and Member Engagement Plan**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor David Thain
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Chris Forrester
Report Author	Job Title: James Howse Contact email: james.howse@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 0152764252 ext 1205
Wards Affected	No
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS****The Executive resolves that:-**

- 1) That the updated member engagement plan for the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP Report is noted and supported.**

**2. BACKGROUND****Budget Setting (decision making) Context**

- 2.1 The Council's 2022/23 Budget and (annually updated) Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022/23 to 2024/25 provides the framework within which revenue and capital spending is undertaken in an affordable and sustainable way.
- 2.2 The Council's 2022/23 Budget and (annually updated) Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is subject to approval by Council in February 2022. It is a statutory requirement to do so by early March.
- 2.3 This (Budget and MTFP) report received by Council in February 2022 inevitably includes a degree of financial detail and nuance. Also, some of the financial data (for example in relation to precept values and the details of the Local Government Financial Settlement agreed by Central Government) is not available until late in the process. As a consequence, the formal approval process has an inherent degree of complexity and time pressure, which can be a challenge to sound, transparent decision making.



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**Financial Context**

- 2.4 The Council's financial position must be considered to be fragile having:
- i) recently received a statutory recommendation from its external auditors under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in relation to its financial position;
  - ii) identified (but still needs to deliver) significant savings over the medium term;
  - iii) reserve balances (General and HRA) only marginally above minimum levels;
  - iv) high levels of planning uncertainty with regards to the levels of available funding in coming years; and
  - v) significant financial pressures arising from Covid-19 and its impact on Leisure Services and other income generating activities.
- 2.5 The Council will therefore inevitably need to make some tough decisions in order to prioritise resources and balance budgets in a sustainable and affordable way. Consequently, the Council's Section 151 Officer, supported by the Corporate Management Team is currently leading a piece of work aimed at developing a 'Financial Turnaround Plan' for the Council which will be incorporated into the next Budget (and MTFP) setting cycle.

**Unprecedented Levels of Uncertainty**

- 2.6 The future of the system of local government finance remains uncertain. The government has committed to re-assess the baseline need for spend in each local authority (through its 'Fair Funding review'). This has been pushed back (again) to 2023/24 at the earliest - but is still expected to happen. This review will have a significant impact on the government's calculation of the Settlement Funding Assessment for (and therefore the amount of funding available to) this council - and remains therefore a significant risk.
- 2.7 It also remains uncertain as to what the Government's plans are with regards to the system of business rates - including the share of business rates retained locally. It is also unclear as to whether Government will announce a one-year financial settlement for Local Government in the Autumn (for 2022/23) or a multi-year settlement.

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- 2.8 Furthermore, the short, medium and long term impact of the Covid- 19 pandemic and UK's exit from the European Union (on residents, the economy and the state of national and local government finance) remains uncertain.
- 2.9 Taken together therefore (the outcome of the fair funding review, the future of business rates, COVID-19, Brexit and the state of the local and national economy) represents a challenging context within which to set the budget and MTFP - one characterised by an unprecedented level of uncertainty.

**Member Feedback**

- 2.10 In recent years there has also been an expressed appetite on the behalf of members to understand more about the underlying issues within the Budget and MTFP, and an acknowledgment of the importance of involving members in advance of the formal report on the Budget received by full Council in February each year.

**Purpose of this Report**

- 2.11 Given the above context (of an inherently complex February 2022 Budget Report and MTFP, the need to prioritise resource and balance budgets, unprecedented levels of uncertainty and member feedback) the purpose of this report is to set out an updated member engagement plan for the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP Report.

**2022/23 Annual Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan: Budget Framework and Member Engagement Plan**

- 2.12 In order to improve levels of engagement with members, a number of developments are planned as part of the Budget setting process including:
- i) Presenting a simple reconciliation between the previously approved Budget and MTFP to the updated Budget and MTFP
  - ii) Updating the approach and timetable for member engagement to include
    - a. additional engagement opportunities (through the Budget Scrutiny Working Group and through such as workshops) open to all members.
    - b. Earlier engagement opportunities (than the formal February Budget Report)
    - c. Reasonable opportunity for suggestions to be considered.

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**Reconciling the previously approved Budget and MTFP to the updated Budget and MTFP**

- 2.13 The Council's updated budget and MTFP will be set out in full in February 2022 and inevitably will contain a significant amount of financial data, and the large number of adjustments and alterations to previous years budgetary estimates.
- 2.14 In order to cut through this complexity and help members and stakeholders understand the key issues within the budget the Council's Section 151 Officer intends to include a reconciliation of the headline numbers included in the previous and updated MTFP as summarised in the following table:

	<b>22/23</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>24/25</b>
<b>Previous Forecast Surplus / Deficit</b>	<b>£x m</b>		
+ Corrections			
+ Assumptions Changes			
+ Pressures			
+ Covid funding impact			
+ Resource Planning and Prioritisation (RPP)			
<b>= Updated Forecast Surplus / Deficit</b>			

*NB: It should be noted that the Council's newly implemented TechOne system will help the Councils ability to analyse and present this information this year.*

**Key**

**Corrections:** One of the outcomes of budgetary control, closedown and setting procedures is the identification of errors in the underlying budgets. The implementation of TechOne will assist this important housekeeping exercise.

**Assumptions:** All budgets include estimates and assumptions. Eg. Inflation and interest rates, Government grants, council tax base and collection rates. These are updated annually.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****Executive****26th October 2021**

Pressures: Expenditure (and income) budgets required to deliver previously approved strategies and plans are subject to a multitude of market forces, sector issues, demographics and other matters.

Covid funding: Covid-19 related grant funding has been made available recently and will be separately identified in order to provide transparency as to how this funding will be allocated.

Resource Planning and Prioritisation (RPP):

RPP is the outcome of the steps taken to identify options to do things differently and more efficiently, to identify savings but also required areas of investment. It is the culmination of a 'check and challenge' process with regards to the Council's budgets, led by the Corporate Management Team and presented to Executive (and ultimately full Council). It is a critical element of the Council operating within available resources.

**Planned 2022/23 Budget (and MTFP) Member Engagement Timetable**

- 2.15 It is anticipated that using the above reconciliation to focus in on the key issues driving the updated Budget and MTFP will improve member engagement.
- 2.16 Additional member presentations will also be undertaken as part of the process in the lead up to the presentation of the formal Budget and MTFP Report, as summarised in the table below.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Outcome(s)</b>
August	CMT RPP Session	RPP Savings / Options Earmarked reserve review
September	Modelling of RPP Session	Outline Budget Analysis
October to December	Executive and CMT RPP Sessions	Budget options / buy in / steer
November	Budget Scrutiny Working Group	Engagement on budget
Dec/Jan	All Member Budget Briefing	Engagement on budget

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****Executive****26th October 2021**

January	Executive reporting	Formal Budget MTFP Report approved for Council
February	Council (and O&S) reporting	Approved Budget / MTFP

- 2.17 NB. It should also be noted that in addition to the above, steps are being taken to further strengthen the members training schedule with regards to local government finance more broadly (which will include budget setting, but also other key elements of local government finance such as accounting and audit arrangements).
- 2.18 It should also be noted that the above does not alter the terms of reference of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group who will continue to have the right and opportunity to choose to pre-scrutinise budget reports during the year.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The Council's 2022/23 Budget and (annually updated) Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022/23 to 2024/25 provides the framework within which revenue and capital spending is undertaken in an affordable and sustainable way.
- 3.2 While this report, in itself does not have any direct financial implications, effective member engagement as part of robust governance and decision making arrangements, is an important part of setting robust, affordable and sustainable budgets.

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 As part of the budget and the Council Tax approval process, the Council is required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to make specific calculations and decisions in approving a balanced budget for the following financial year and setting the Council Tax Level. These will be included in the resolutions and presented to Council on 21 February 2022.
- 4.2 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 places a general duty on local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs.



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### **5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 The budget and MTFP is the financial expression of the Council's priorities and therefore underpins all of the Council's strategic purpose(s).
- 5.2 All of the Council's strategic purposes are considered within the Resource Planning and Prioritisation element of the Council's budget setting process.

#### **Climate Change Implications**

No implications.

### **6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 No implications.

#### **Operational Implications**

- 6.2 Officer support from the Finance and Democratic Services teams will be needed to deliver this plan.

### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

Improved member engagement will help raise the awareness of the Council's financial risks, thereby helping to mitigate them.

### **8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**Executive**

26th October 2021

**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Councillor David Thain	
Lead Director / Head of Service	James Howse / Chris Forrester	23/8
Financial Services	Chris Forrester	23/8
Legal Services	Claire Felton	23/8



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 2nd September, 2021

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Debbie Chance (Chair), and Councillors Andrew Fry (in attendance as substitute for Councillor Jenny Wheeler), Salman Akbar, Joanne Beecham, Michael Chalk, Julian Grubb and Lucy Harrison

### Also Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer – Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships  
Councillor Nyear Nazir – Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Regulatory Services  
Councillor Craig Warhurst – Portfolio Holder for Housing and Procurement

### Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton and Judith Willis

### Democratic Services Officers:

Jo Gresham and Joe Galkowski

## 14. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies were received from Councillors J. Wheeler and A. Fogg with Councillor A. Fry in attendance as substitute for Councillor J. Wheeler.

## 15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any Party Whip.

## 16. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers registered on this occasion.

Chair

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 2nd September, 2021

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## 17. DEMENTIA TASK GROUP REPORT

Councillor Chalk presented the Dementia Task Group Final Report to the committee. He thanked the members of the Task Group for taking part and individuals from external bodies who had provided witness testimonies to help inform the working group. Likewise, Councillor Chalk explained the background of the Task Group and its importance given the predicted number of individuals likely to be diagnosed with Dementia over the coming years, some of those being in Redditch Borough.

Councillor Chalk summarised the recommendations from the report. The first recommendation related to the promotion of Dementia Services in Redditch Borough by holding an event in conjunction with the Older People's Forum and Age UK. The second recommendation related to the updating of the Older People's Forum booklet which was available on the Council website. The last recommendation was that Councillors should be provided with Dementia Training so they could better understand the changing needs of the residents of the Borough. He recognised there would be some minor financial implications in terms of Officer time but believed they were achievable.

Members noted the report identified that there was no Public Health Practitioner operating in Redditch after the previous one had left the post. Members wondered why a replacement Public Health Practitioner had not been included in the recommendations of the Task Group. The Chief Executive responded by saying that previously Public Health had operated a model where there was a public health practitioner for each district but had modified this to a thematic based approach. He commented further that it was unlikely that the Worcestershire County Council Public Health Team would revert to the previous practice of place based Public Health Practitioners. The Chief Executive added that he and the Redditch Partnership Manager were working closely with partners as part of the local Integrated Care System through the Redditch Collaborative, so was happy to obtain up to date data and information for the Committee regarding Dementia Services.

Councillor Nazir was in attendance for the item, as the Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Regulatory Services. She thanked the members for bringing the report forward and recognised that there was not much provision of Dementia support, but there were some such as the Dementia Café at Astwood Bank. Councillor Nazir highlighted that there was also a hesitancy from GPs to diagnose individuals with Dementia.

It was suggested that an additional recommendation should be added which required the Chief Executive to return to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with new data and information in relation to Dementia

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 2nd September, 2021

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Services. The recommendation was made by Councillor Chalk and seconded by Councillor Fry.

On being put to a vote, the proposal was agreed.

**RECOMMENDED that:**

- 1) officers work with local agencies including the Older People's Forum, Age UK to hold a Dementia Awareness Event in the Town Hall and promote the event on the Council's website.**
- 2) officers undertake a refresh of the Older People Services Booklet which is currently available on the Redditch Borough Council website and include a specific section regarding Dementia Services available in the Borough.**
- 3) Dementia Training be provided to all Elected Members in order for them to better understand the changing needs of the residents in the Borough.**
- 4) As part of the work in respect of Integrated Care System, the Chief Executive of Redditch Borough Council to work alongside partner agencies to provide Members with further information on Dementia services in the Borough and potential services for the future.**

## **18. PARKING AND ENFORCEMENT UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update on Parking Enforcement in Redditch from Kevin Hiron, Environmental Services Manager.

During the update Members' attention was drawn to the recommendations that were agreed by Executive Committee for the Overview and Scrutiny Parking Enforcement Task Group final report from March 2020.

There was detailed discussion in respect of recommendation 1 regarding Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) being put in place in order for enforcement to take place on zigzag lines outside of schools. The Committee were informed that this recommendation had not yet been actioned, and that the process of the implementation of TROs was a protracted one. In addition to this, the Covid-19 pandemic had inevitably caused further delays. The Chair suggested that this was something that perhaps County Councillors who were present at the meeting could raise with



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 2nd September, 2021

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Worcestershire County Council. Councillor Dormer agreed to address this further at a county level to see if any progress could be made.

Some Members noted that the process could possibly be so lengthy as Worcestershire County Council (WCC) were responsible for looking at TROs across the whole of Worcestershire and not just in Redditch. It was suggested that potentially Redditch could be offered as a trial area for TROs on zigzag lines due to its tight urban setting, which could possibly result in the process being carried out more quickly.

Members discussed the use of Walking Buses to help combat parking outside of schools. The Environmental Services Manager commented that this worked well with the third recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Parking Enforcement Task Group final report from March 2020 which recommended that Officers from Redditch Borough Council work with WCC, local schools and West Mercia Police to develop a strategy to tackle problem parking near schools. In addition to this, the Environmental Services Manager highlighted that the Road Safety Education Team ~~who~~ offered class talks within schools.

The Chief Executive recommended that some monitoring be undertaken within the next 6 months by Officers around schools in addition to the possibility of looking into School Streets, an initiative where a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times was implemented on the road outside a school. It was agreed that the Parking Enforcement Task Group be re-established to reconsider the outstanding recommendations and the possibility of the implementation of School Streets in the Borough. The Chief Executive also agreed that the earlier suggestion of offering Redditch as a trial area was a positive one and could potentially provide good outcomes for the Borough.

Councillor Beecham stated that she would be happy to volunteer as Chair of the Parking Enforcement Task Group should it be re-established and Members were happy with this suggestion. The Democratic Services Officer agreed to investigate the process for revisiting the Parking Enforcement Task Group and to contact relevant Members.

The Committee agreed that an update on Parking Enforcement be included on the Work Programme in sixth months' time. However, it

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was noted that there may be little progress in respect of TROs in sixth months' time, but it would provide a good opportunity for the Committee to receive further information from the Parking Enforcement Task Group and School Streets.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Parking and Enforcement Update be noted, and any actions progressed subject to the preamble above.**

**19. PRE-SCRUTINY - HOMES ENGLAND ASSET TRANSFER (TO FOLLOW)**

The Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services presented the report for the Executive Committee on Homes England Asset Transfer to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for pre-scrutiny.

It was highlighted to Members that this was a straightforward report and provided clarification on the circumstances of these transfers and historical context of previous transfers to the Council.

Some Members queried what the transfer would mean for the current tenants of the Matchborough West Meeting Rooms. It was acknowledged that currently the meeting rooms did have tenants and that the change of ownership would not affect them at present. However, it was reported that it was not known what might happen going forward.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**20. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME - SELECTING ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY**

Members were provided with an updated copy of the Executive Committee's Work Programme, for the period of the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 through to the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022. No additional items were selected for pre-scrutiny during consideration of this item.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021 be noted.**

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- 2) The content of the Executive Committee's Work Programme for the period 1<sup>st</sup> September through to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 be noted.

## **21. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

During consideration of this item there was further discussion regarding inviting the West Mercia Road Safety Team to a future meeting of the Committee in order to provide more information to Members on Road Safety and Speeding in the Borough. This was agreed by the Committee and the Democratic Services Officer undertook to contact the West Mercia Road Safety Team to see if they would be available to attend.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be noted.**

## **22. TASK GROUP REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS**

Members were informed that a topic proposal had been received from Councillor L. Harrison regarding Speeding and Road Safety in the Borough. It was highlighted that this topic had been identified as a possible area of investigation during the Overview and Scrutiny Committee training that had taken place in June 2021.

The Chair reminded the Committee to bring forward proposals for Task Groups for the Committee to consider. It was requested that the Democratic Services Officer emailed Members to remind them that a Topic Proposal could be received at any time for consideration by the Committee.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Task Group Reviews - Draft Scoping Documents item be noted.**

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## 23. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE REPORTS

### a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Jennifer Wheeler

The Chair reported that the Budget Scrutiny Working Group was due to meet on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and that an update would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

### b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Jennifer Wheeler

The Chair reported that the Performance Scrutiny Working Group was due to meet on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and that an update would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

### c) Dementia Task Group – Chair, Councillor Michael Chalk

The Chair acknowledged that the report had been considered and agreed by the Committee earlier in the meeting, therefore an update was not required.

### d) Parking on Unicorn Hill, Short, Sharp Review – Chair, Councillor Joanne Beecham

Councillor Beecham informed Members that there had not been another meeting of the Parking on Unicorn Hill Short, Sharp Review since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, however, the next meeting was scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021.

**RESOLVED that**

**The Task Groups, Short Sharp Reviews and Working Groups Update Reports be noted.**

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## 24. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS

There were no updates reports for the Committee.

## 25. MINUTES

### RESOLVED that

**The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## 26. PRE-SCRUTINY - ST DAVID'S HOUSE EXTRA CARE SCHEME BUSINESS CASE

The Head of Community and Housing Services presented the report for the Executive Committee on St. David's House Extra Care Scheme Future Delivery Model to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for pre-scrutiny. The purpose of the report was to consider the options for the services provided by Redditch Borough Council at St. David's House and the Queens Cottages, including domiciliary care, core care and kitchen provisions. The recommended option was to put the services out for procurement to a specialist care provider.

Councillor Warhurst was in attendance for this item, as the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Procurement, and was invited to speak on the item. Councillor Warhurst recognised that this was a difficult decision to make however it was a huge cost to the Council for a non-statutory duty and therefore necessary to do due to the Council's financial situation. Councillor Warhurst concluded by saying that the Council would be keeping the property as landlord, so therefore could ensure the provision of care provided at St. David's House and the Queens Cottages were at the level the Council expected for its residents.

Members asked if the Trades Unions had been consulted and what the outcome of the discussion was. It was reported that a meeting with union representatives was due to take place the day after the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, so discussions had not taken place.

The Committee wanted further assurances that there was confidence in the business case. Members were informed that some soft market testing had been undertaken within the care sector in conjunction with Worcestershire County Council. This was because any potential service provider had to be on the Worcestershire County Council approved care provider list. Members were advised that if there were no successful



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tenders for providing the aforementioned services at St. David's House and the Queens Cottages, then the Head of Community and Housing Services would be willing to return to members to update them.

Members expressed concerns about how this business case would affect the number of staff and quality of services provided to the residents in St. David's House.

The committee noted many of the points that had been raised throughout the discussion and that it was a difficult decision to make. However, it was acknowledged that the service provided at St. David's House by Redditch Borough Council was not a statutory function, that any provider of care needed to be a Worcestershire County Council approved care provider and that they would be monitored by the Care Quality Commission as the ultimate body for inspecting care service quality. Likewise, Members believed if this action wasn't taken, the Council could be in a worse financial position.

Councillor Chalk recommended that the Committee recommend to Executive that the support the recommendations contained in the Executive report. This was seconded by Councillor Beecham. On being put to a vote, the proposal was agreed. Some members voted against the recommendation.

## **RECOMMENDED that**

**Executive Committee resolve that the delivery of the Personal Domiciliary Care, Core Services and Kitchen services at St David's House Extra Care Scheme be procured in accordance with the Business Case attached to the report.**

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm  
and closed at 8.06 pm

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## **Executive Committee**

**Tuesday, 7 September 2021**

### **MINUTES**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor Gemma Monaco (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Brandon Clayton, Peter Fleming, Anthony Lovell, Nyear Nazir, Mike Rouse, David Thain and Craig Warhurst

#### **Also Present:**

Councillor Michael Chalk (Chair, Dementia Task Group)

#### **Officers:**

Claire Felton, Sue Hanley, James Howse, Steve Shammon and Judith Willis

#### **Senior Democratic Services Officer:**

Jess Bayley-Hill

#### **14. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **16. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader advised that during the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021, Members had endorsed the recommendations in the Dementia Task Group's report and added an additional recommendation. This additional recommendation had been listed in an extract from the minutes of that meeting which had been provided for the consideration of the Executive Committee in a supplementary pack.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had also agreed recommendations on the subject of St David's House, which corresponded with the recommendations in the report for this item. An extract from the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of this item had also therefore been included

.....  
Chair

# Executive Committee

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in a supplementary pack for the consideration of the Executive Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had also pre-scrutinised the Homes England Asset Transfer report. However, no recommendations had been made by the Committee on this subject.

## 17. MINUTES

### **RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## 18. DEMENTIA TASK GROUP - FINAL REPORT

Councillor Michael Chalk, in his capacity as Chair of the Dementia Task Group, attended the meeting to present the group's final report.

The Committee was informed that the Task Group's investigation had taken 12 months to complete. During the review Members had gathered evidence from a range of expert witnesses. The review had taken slightly longer than originally anticipated due to delays caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown.

There were various forms of dementia and it was estimated that, by the date of the meeting, up to 1.6 million people had a form of dementia in the UK and people in a range of age groups could develop dementia. The group had concluded that it was important to raise awareness of dementia, including both the symptoms and the impact that the illness could have on both patients and their families.

The group had proposed three recommendations. The first proposed that a Dementia Awareness Event should take place at the Town Hall. This type of event had taken place in previous years, prior to the pandemic, and provided a useful opportunity to share information about both dementia and the support services that were available locally to patients and families.

The second recommendation called for the Older People's Services Booklet to be updated. Members were advised that there was a booklet already, though the content needed to be refreshed. This proposal would have implications, in terms of the officer time that would be required to work on updating the booklet.

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The third recommendation suggested that there should be a Member training session focusing on dementia awareness. This would enable Members to identify the symptoms of dementia and potentially enable Members to work effectively with residents and families impacted by dementia, as part of their ward work activities.

The fourth recommendation had been added at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September. This recommendation called for the Council's Chief Executive, as part of work on the Integrated Care System, to work alongside partner agencies to provide Members with information about dementia services in the Borough. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had concluded that this was a particularly important addition as it would help to ensure that Members were kept apprised of changing circumstances.

The Executive Committee subsequently discussed the proposals in detail. The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services, in her capacity as the lead Portfolio Holder for health, commented that producing an insightful report such as this during a pandemic was commendable. Members were advised that the recommendations appeared to be achievable and would help to raise awareness of a condition that could have devastating impacts on both patients and their families. The reality of caring for a person with dementia was that it could be challenging, and carers could experience grief, loneliness, isolation, embarrassment and discrimination and these were all implications that needed to be taken into account. The Council would always try to address such issues and to provide communities with the information and support they required. The Dementia Awareness Event would be key to achieving this. The report had also helpfully noted that there were many people who had not yet received a diagnosis, though were already exhibiting symptoms and this could make it difficult for those individuals to receive the support they required.

Reference was made to the proposed Member training and it was suggested that this would also potentially be beneficial for Parish Councillors. For this reason, Members agreed that the third recommendation from the group should be amended slightly to enable Parish Councillors to be invited to participate in the dementia training that would in future be provided to elected Members. The Committee also suggested that it would be important to ensure that information about the early signs and symptoms of dementia was included in this training, as it would help Members to work with residents at an early stage of the illness, including those who might not yet have received a diagnosis. There was general consensus that ideally all Members should aim to achieve the status of Dementia Friends, and it was possible that the training would assist with this process.



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The Committee also discussed the involvement of the Council's Armed Forces Champion, Councillor Julian Grubb, in the review. Members were advised that during the investigation, the Task Group had discovered that there were higher rates of early onset dementia amongst armed forces veterans compared to the general population. The interview with Councillor Grubb had provided a useful opportunity to explore the matter further. It was suggested that it would be helpful for further information about the Armed Forces Champion to be provided for the public's consideration on the Council's website.

During consideration of this item, questions were raised about whether the booklet referred to in recommendation 2 would be available as a physical object or would be electronic. The Committee was advised that this would need to be clarified by officers outside the meeting. However, it was envisaged that a paper copy could be made available, though there would be financial implications attached.

Councillor Chalk concluded his remarks by thanking the other Members who had served on the review, the officers who had provided support to the exercise and the expert witnesses from a range of organisations who had submitted evidence for Members' consideration.

### **RESOLVED that**

- 1) officers work with local agencies including the Older People's Forum, Age UK to hold a Dementia Awareness Event in the Town Hall and promote the event on the Council's website;**
- 2) officers undertake a refresh of the Older People Services Booklet which is currently available on the Redditch Borough Council website and include a specific section regarding Dementia Services available in the Borough.;**
- 3) Dementia Training be provided to all Elected Members and Parish Councillors in order for them to better understand the changing needs of the residents in the Borough; and**
- 4) as part of the work in respect of Integrated Care System, the Chief Executive of Redditch Borough Council to work alongside partner agencies to provide Members with further information on Dementia services in the Borough and potential services for the future.**

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### 19. **ELECTRICAL SAFETY STANDARDS IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2020**

The Private Sector Housing Manager presented a report on the subject of the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020.

These regulations had been in force for new tenancies in the private rented sector for some time. However, the regulations also now applied to existing tenancies. The regulations ensured that landlords for properties in the private rented sector had to make sure that electrical safety checks were carried out for each property, as they were for gas safety inspections. Assessments needed to be completed every five years. Landlords were obliged to inform local authorities of any issues that were identified during the checks and were required to address these problems within 28 days.

The report proposed penalties that would be imposed on landlords for non-compliance, in terms of undertaking remedial works to address any issues that were identified. Should landlords fail to act, the Council could take the action on the landlord's behalf and recharge for the works. The penalties represented an additional fee that landlords would be obliged to pay for non-compliance. In considering the level at which to set the penalty fee, the Council had taken into account the approach that was being adopted at other local authorities in Worcestershire. The proposed penalty fees were:

- £1,000 for a first offence
- £3,000 for any subsequent offences.

Following the presentation of the report, the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Procurement explained that Officers had worked hard to ensure that the proposed penalties were set at an appropriate level. Nationally, there was evidence to suggest that if penalties were too punitive landlords would prefer to take their case to court, which could result in considerable costs for all parties. The proposed penalties were considered to be a sufficient deterrent without being likely to encourage many landlords to resort to the legal process. Members were asked to note that there were many good landlords in the Borough. It was likely that good landlords would welcome the requirements set out in the legislation, as it would help to address the actions of rogue landlords and would encourage fair competition.

During consideration of this item, Members expressed concerns that there might be tenants living in the private rented sector who were not aware of their rights. Officers were therefore urged to

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publish communications on the Council's website which helped to clarify tenants' rights.

**RECOMMENDED that**

**the proposed financial penalty charges for non-compliance are adopted and the respective enforcement powers of the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 are delegated to the Head of Community and Housing Services.**

**20. HOMES ENGLAND ASSET TRANSFER**

The Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services presented a report detailing arrangements for the transfer of assets from Homes England to Redditch Borough Council. Members were advised that this was a housekeeping matter and the Council would manage the assets that were received moving forward.

**RESOLVED that**

**Approval is given to the transfer of the following assets from Homes England to the Council.**

- 1) Land at Auxerre Avenue;**
- 2) The Anchorage;**
- 3) Land adjacent to Crossgates Depot, Crossgates Road, Park Farm; and**
- 4) Matchborough West Meeting Rooms**

**21. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.**

The Chair confirmed that there were no referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or other Committees on this occasion.

**22. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORTS**

The following updates were provided with respect to the Executive Advisory Panels and other bodies:

- a) Climate Change Cross Party Working Group – Chair, Councillor Anthony Lovell

Councillor Lovell confirmed that a meeting of the Climate Change Cross Party Working Group had recently taken place. During this meeting on-street electric charging points had been discussed. Members were advised that Councillor Lovell had subsequently raised this issue with Worcestershire

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County Council's Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and Transport.

The group had also discussed action that could be taken to improve the carbon efficiency of Council houses. There were various options available which had been adopted in other parts of the country.

b) Constitutional Review Working Group – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

Councillor Dormer explained that a meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Group was scheduled to take place on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

c) Corporate Parenting Board – Council Representative, Councillor Nyear Nazir

Councillor Nazir advised that a meeting of the Board that had been scheduled to take place in May had been cancelled. A meeting of the Board had taken place though on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021. During this meeting, the Annual Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Report had been considered, which focused on the performance of the Independent Reviewing Service for Children's Social Services. Reference had also been made at this meeting to the Worcestershire Children's First Sufficiency Strategy 2021, which related to a process for ensuring that there were adequate placements for children and to avoiding placing children unnecessarily into care.

Due to the interruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated lockdown, the Board did not have a Work Programme. Therefore, there were plans to discuss the appropriate content for the work programme at the following meeting of the Board.

d) Member Support Steering Group – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

The Committee was informed that a meeting of the Member Support Steering Group was scheduled to take place on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

e) Planning Advisory Panel – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

Councillor Dormer explained that there were no meetings of the Planning Advisory Panel scheduled to take place.

# **Executive Committee**

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**23. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021 be noted.**

**24. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Under S100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 of the said act, as amended.**

**Minute Item No. 25 – St David’s House Extra Care Scheme – Business Case**

**25. ST DAVID'S HOUSE EXTRA CARE SCHEME - BUSINESS CASE**

The Head of Community and Housing Services presented a report outlining the proposals detailed in a business case for the future delivery of the St David’s House Extra Care Scheme.

The Committee was informed that the Extra Care Scheme enabled residents to live independently whilst receiving support. St David’s House and the Queen’s Cottages were located in Batchley and consisted of 54 units. Many of the tenants living in this accommodation had previously been Council tenants.

Redditch Borough Council had a contract with Worcestershire County Council to provide a range of services at St David’s House and the Queen’s Cottages, including domiciliary care, personal care packages and kitchen services for tenants and their visitors. The Extra Care Scheme at St David’s House was not a statutory service. Many stockholding Councils had chosen to outsource provision of such services to specialist care providers.

In previous years, Redditch Borough Council had received £200,000 from Worcestershire County Council in Supporting People Funding, which had helped to cover many of the costs of delivering the service. Unfortunately, this funding had been withdrawn some years ago and the Council subsequently received a much-reduced sum of £58,000 from the County Council, meaning that the service was heavily subsidised by Redditch Borough Council.



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The report proposed that the Extra Care Scheme should be procured in future for St David's House and the Queen's Cottages. Any procured provider would be robustly monitored and would need to be on Worcestershire County Council's preferred provider list. In order for service providers to be included on this list, they needed to demonstrate that they met particular conditions in service delivery.

Following the presentation of the report, the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Procurement commented that Members were being asked to make a difficult decision. However, unfortunately the Council had been subsidising the Extra Care Service delivered at St David's House and the Queen's Cottages for a number of years and the financial position was not considered to be sustainable. There were a number of specialist care providers operating in the region that could provide excellent care to tenants and monitoring would help to ensure that service quality did not suffer. The Council would retain ownership of St David's House and the Queen's Cottages and consequently the authority could continue to ensure that an Extra Care Service remained available at the site. Should the Council have chosen to sell the site, there would have been a risk that the new owners might have sold the land for development and a valuable service could have been lost in the Borough.

During consideration of this item, reference was made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's debate in respect of this item. The Executive Committee was informed that some Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had raised concerns that they were uncomfortable with the proposal that had been made. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had also suggested that the proposal needed to be discussed with representatives of the Trades Unions and that action needed to be taken to ensure that staff were protected through the TUPE transfer process.

Following the presentation of the report, the Committee discussed the proposals in some detail. Members noted that communications had already been issued on the subject of the proposals and this would help to keep the public informed about the situation. Questions had been raised by some members of the public with elected Members prior to the meeting concerning the implications for these proposals of the Government's recent announcement of an increase in National Insurance (NI) contributions to help cover the costs of adult social care. Members commented that further information on the Government's proposals was needed moving forward.

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**RESOLVED that**

**the delivery of the Personal Domiciliary Care, Core Services and Kitchen services at St David's House Extra Care Scheme be procured in accordance with the Business Case attached to the report.**

(During the consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed which related to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and which related to consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the authority or Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.)

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm  
and closed at 7.29 pm

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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