



Church Green Conservation Area Town Centre Redditch

Character Appraisal and
Conservation Management Plan

October 2021

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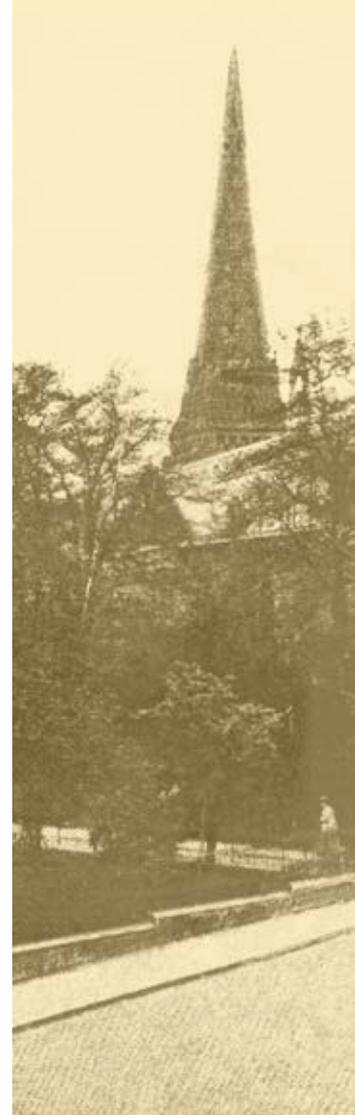
1.0 Introduction

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 115m³ 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

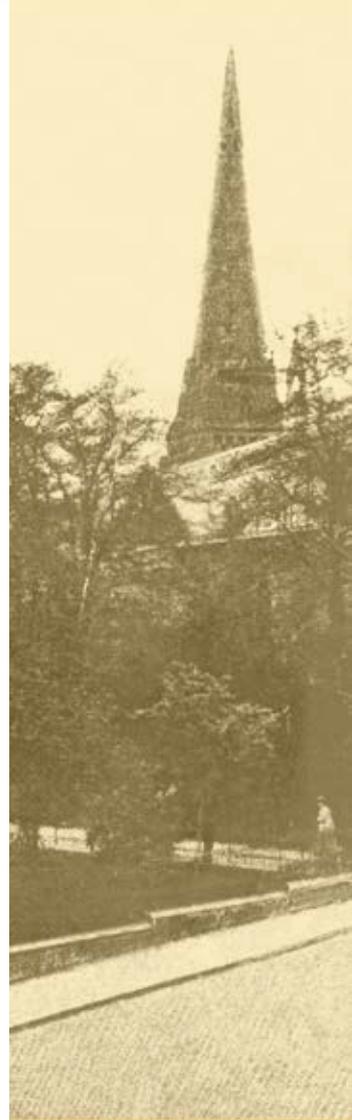
4.1 General Character, Location and uses

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.



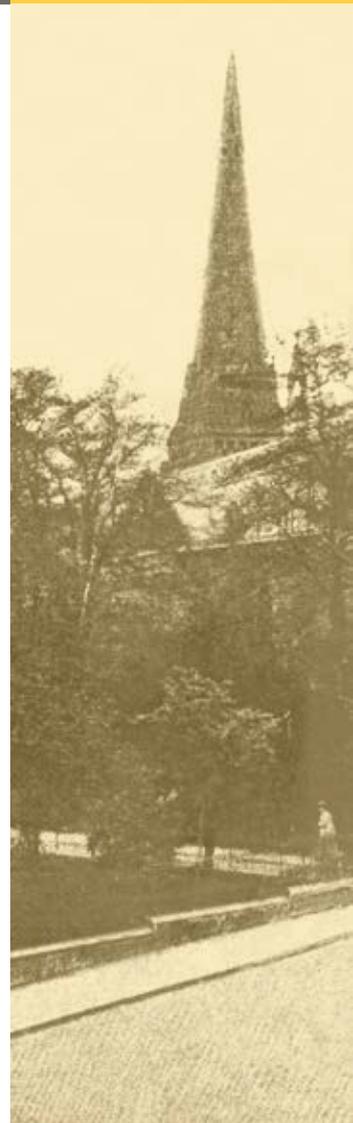
These buildings are predominantly in use as offices and retail, with public buildings, including a hospital and what was originally the Library and Scientific Institute on the west side of Church Green West. The buildings are predominantly 19th century, but there are earlier 18th century properties as 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.

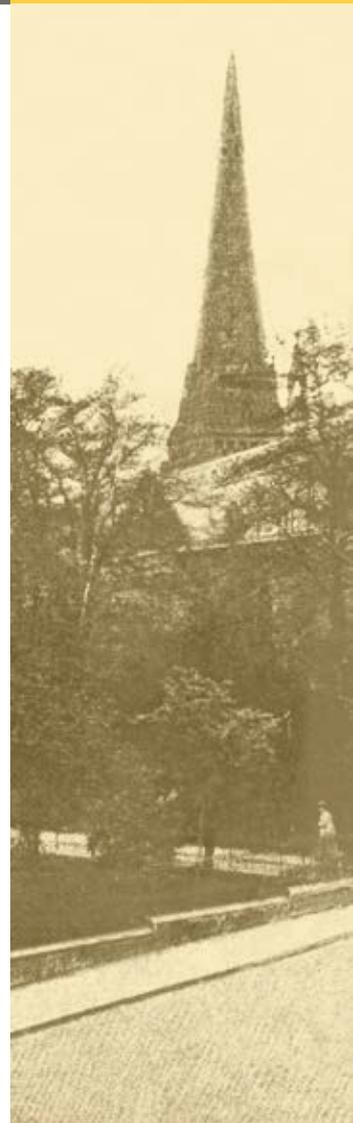
On 10 April 1964 Redditch was designated a New Town and until 1985 the Redditch Development Corporation was responsible for the redevelopment of its urban area to accommodate the needs of the consequent huge increase in population which doubled in size to over 70,000. This included the new shopping centre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



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23 Church Green East



20 Church Green East



7 - 9 Church Green East



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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.



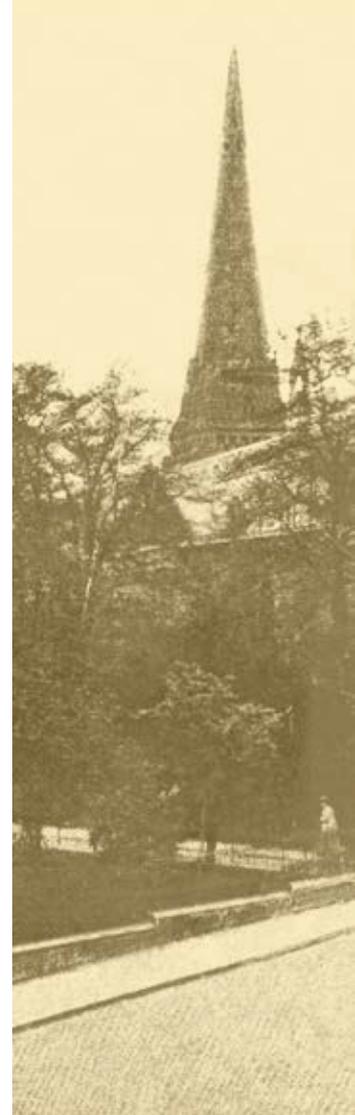
19 Church Green East



14 - 18 Church Green East



1 - 11 Alcester Street



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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*



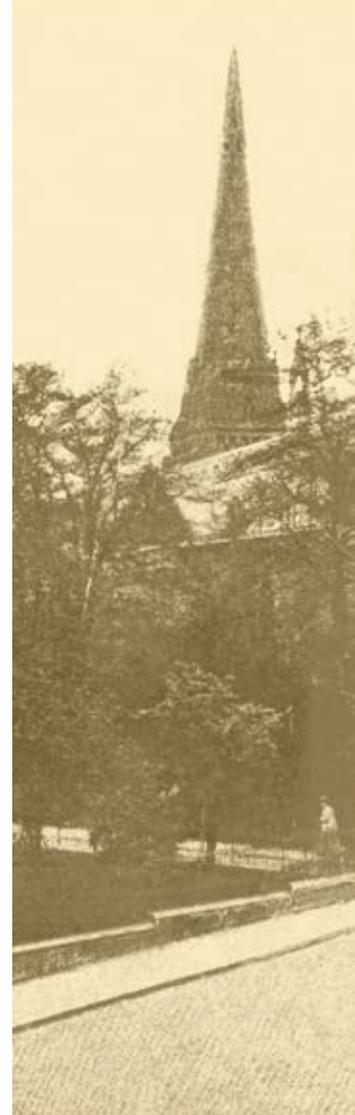
15 Evesham Walk



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

Church Green Conservation Area, Town Centre, Redditch Character Appraisal and Conservation Management Plan



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



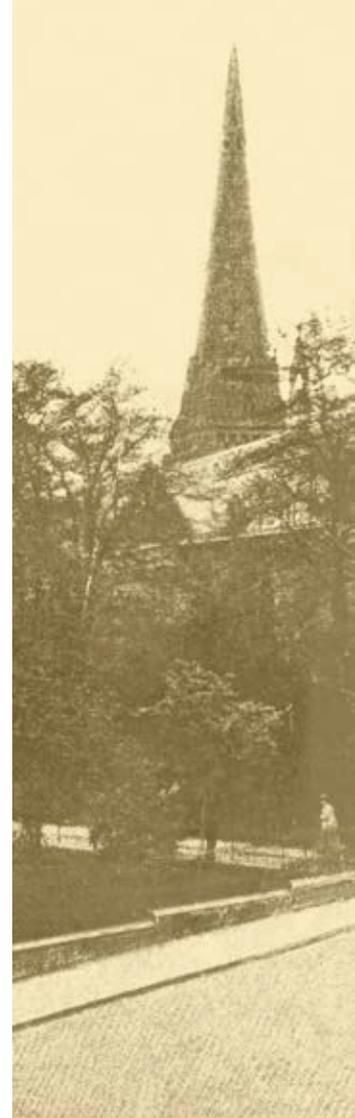
2 Unicorn Hill & 2 Church Green West



Red House, Church Green West



Smallwood Hospital, Church Green West



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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.

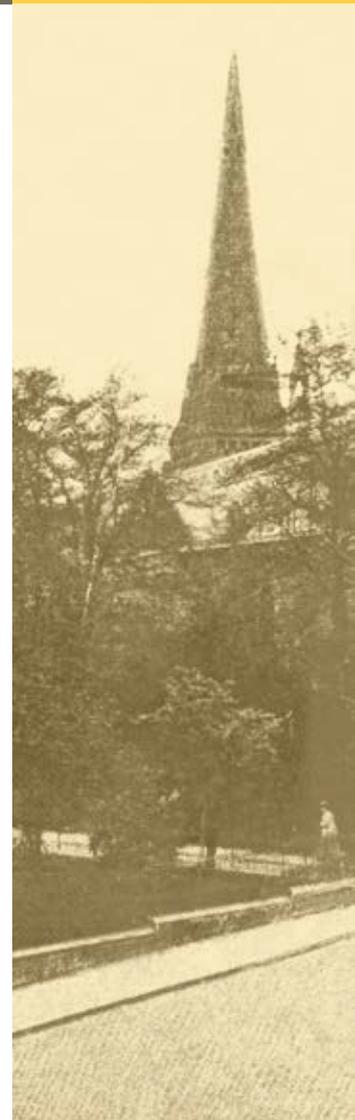
William Street has largely been redeveloped and pedestrianised. With the exception of the buildings at the east end, which form the return to buildings on Church Green West, there is little of interest and street value. There are views of the rear elevations of the buildings at the eastern end of Unicorn 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



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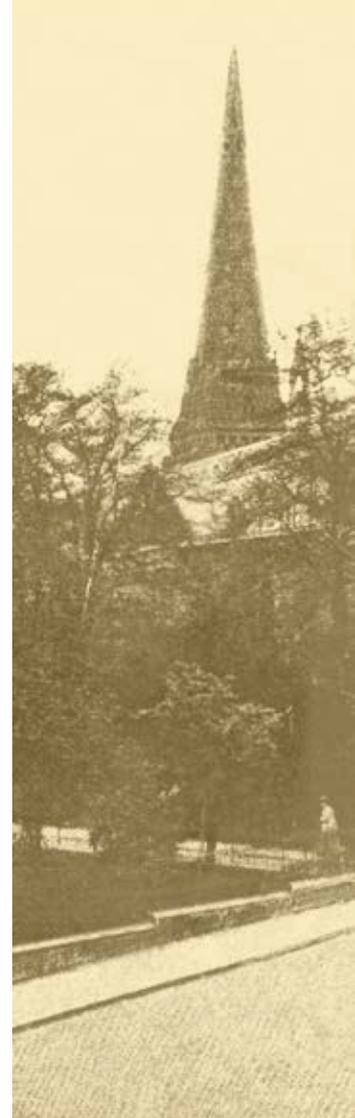
In comparison Church Road, although also truncated by the ring road, is of more interest visually, with buildings of varying ages, although predominantly Victorian. The Old Library, in Victorian Gothic, is the most imposing building on the north side of the street, and similar architecture can be seen 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



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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



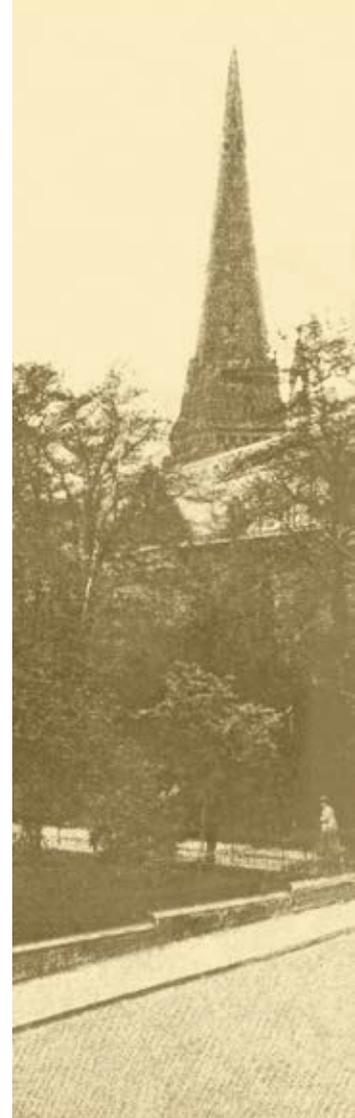
4.3.2 Spatial Analysis

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 overlies 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.



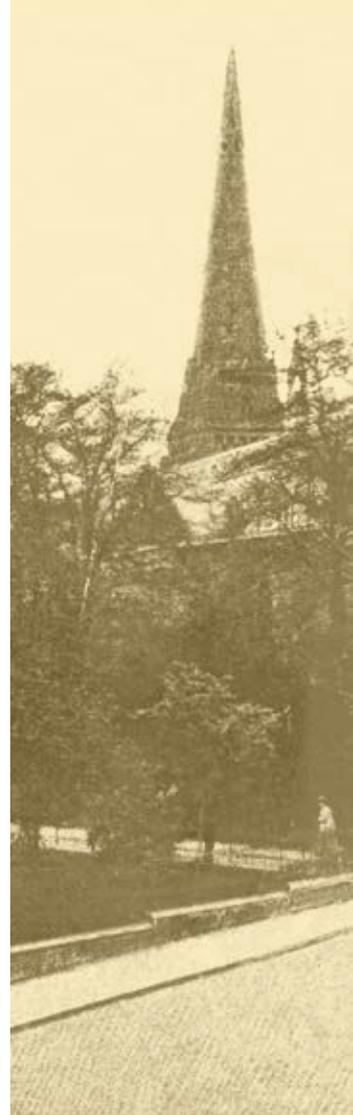
Rear of the entrance way which emerges onto Church Green between 10 and 12 Church Green East



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.

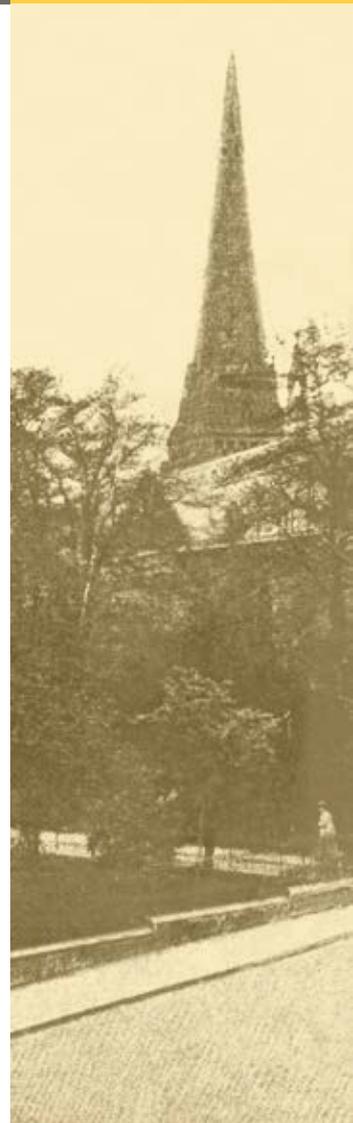
The size and plan of buildings in the CA has been dictated by their historic uses and plot divisions. Most of the buildings in Church Green East, Market Place, Evesham Walk and some buildings in Church Green West share similar characteristics in that they are predominantly; domestic in scale; three storeys;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

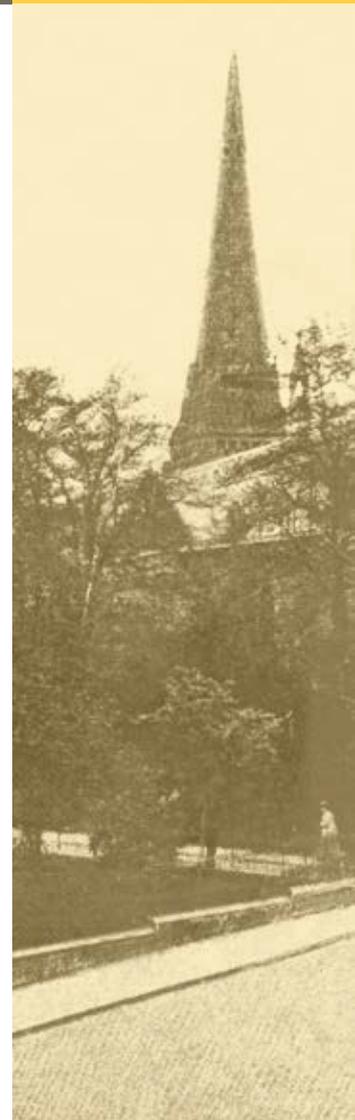
At eaves level there are often courses of dentilled brick or other simple moulded detail, the chief exceptions to this being Beech House, which has a modillion eaves cornice, and No.19 (Lloyd's Bank) and 20, Webb House, where the lower edge of the roof is completely concealed behind a projecting moulded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

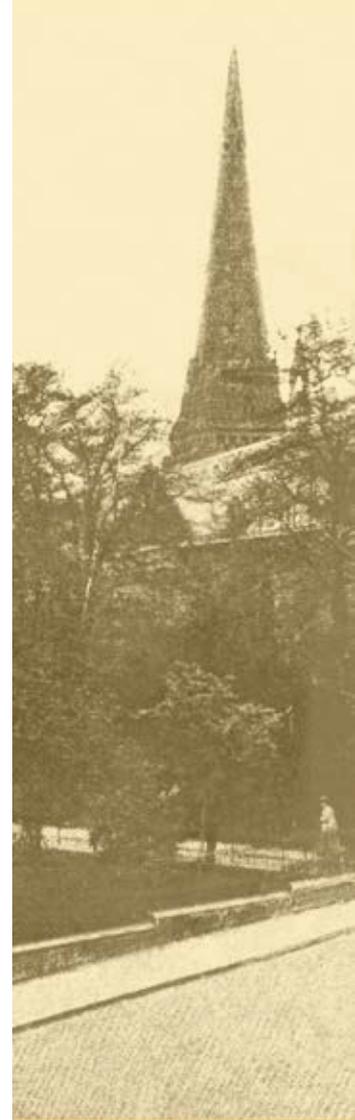




8 - 12 Church Green East

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.

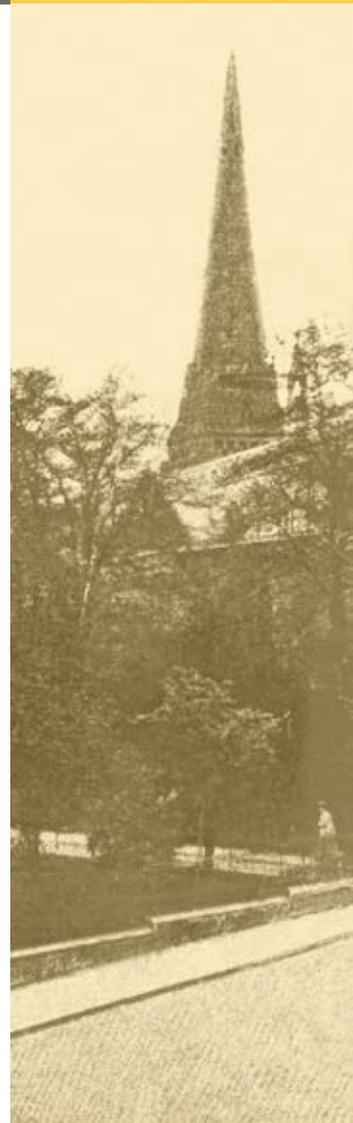
Windows are usually slightly recessed from the wall surface. They have mainly flat heads of either rubbed brick or with rusticated stone voussoirs, either stepped or with prominent key blocks, and also projecting stone sills. Some later Victorian examples incorporate semi-circular arched heads, moulded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

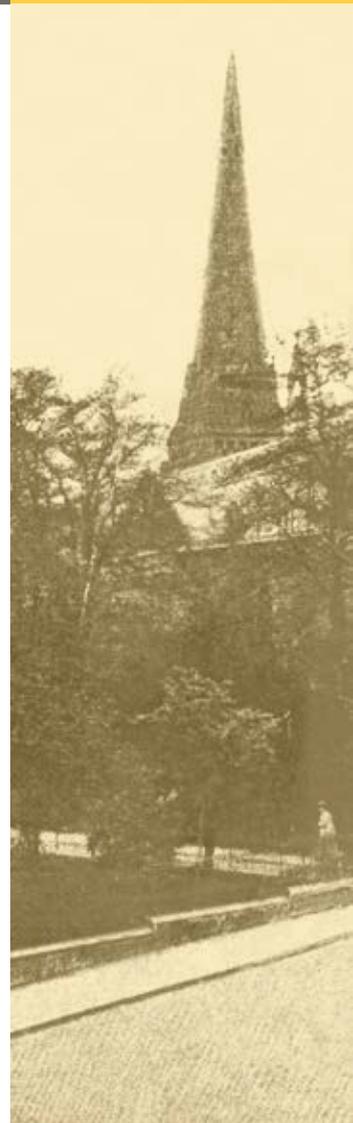
- a) Its close relationship with the surviving historic street pattern, in particular with the streets now known as Church Green East, Church Green West and Market Place, which enclose the Green.
- b) The Redditch Ringway, which encircles the town centre to the north, west and south, and is visible from the CA where it bridges the main roads into the town centre from the north and west.
- c) 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.
- d) 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.
- e) 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.
- f) 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.



Church Green Conservation Area, Town Centre, Redditch

Character Appraisal and Conservation Management Plan



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



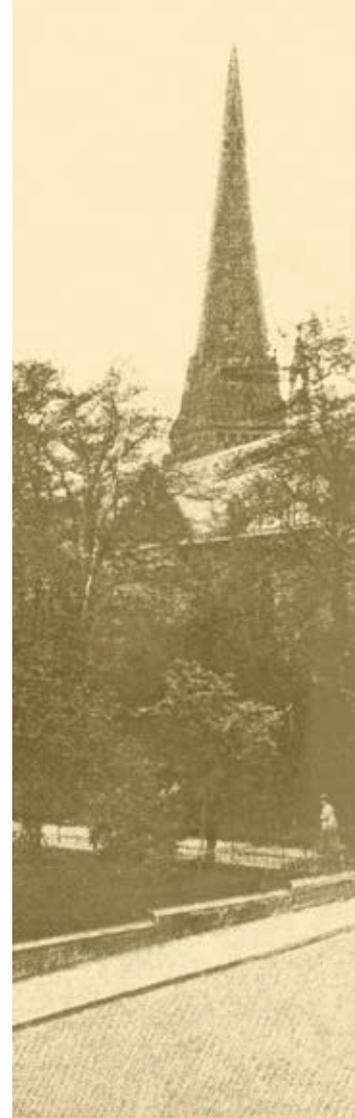
Looking up Alcester Street towards the Church, Church Green to the north east



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



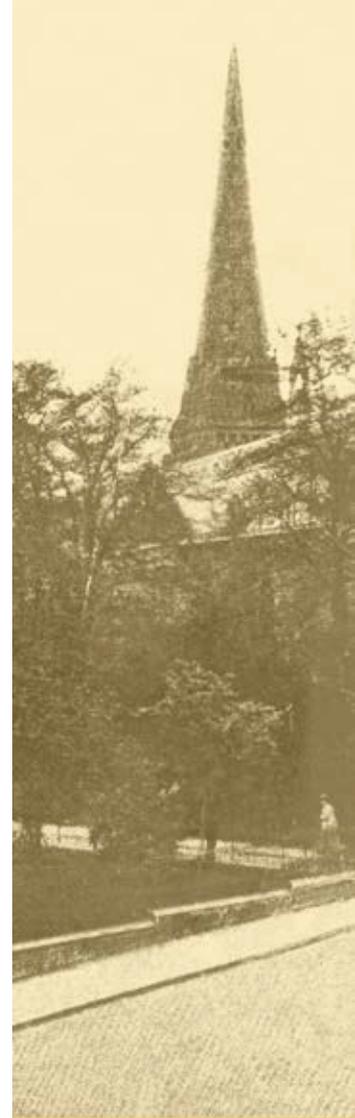
From the junction of Market Place and Church Green West looking west down Bates Hill and Unicorn Hill



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



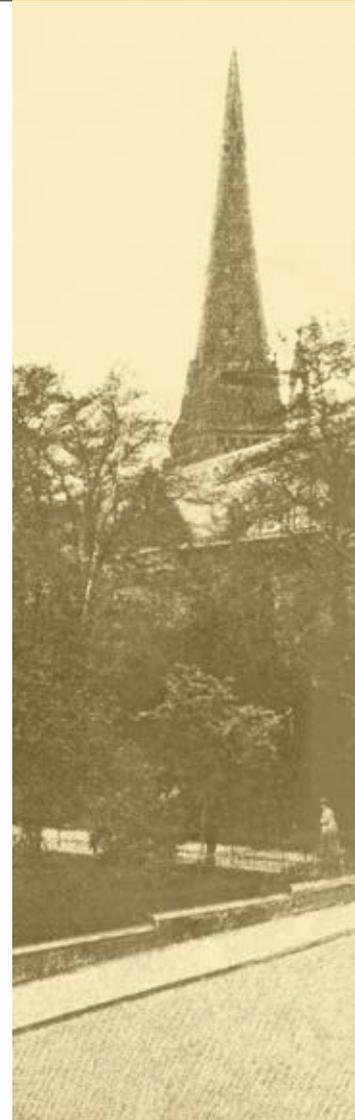
The view north-west across the Green towards the group of buildings that includes the former Scientific and Literary Institute, Smallwood Hospital and Red House



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



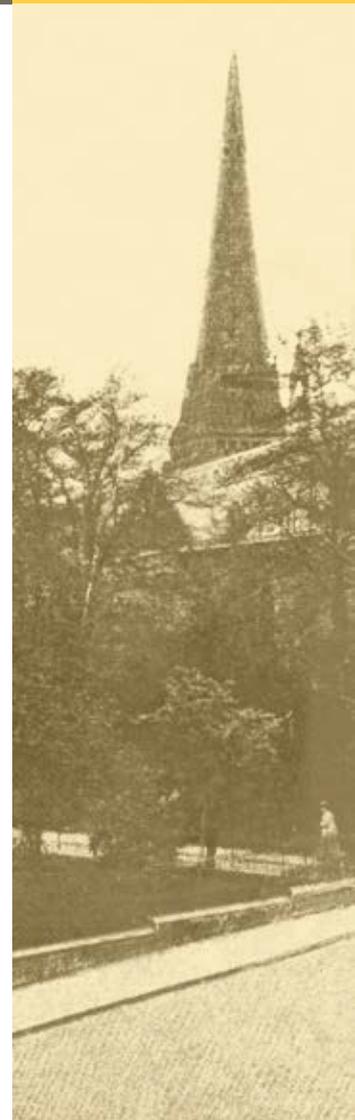
Flower beds Church Green East

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 Temperence, 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'¹. 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





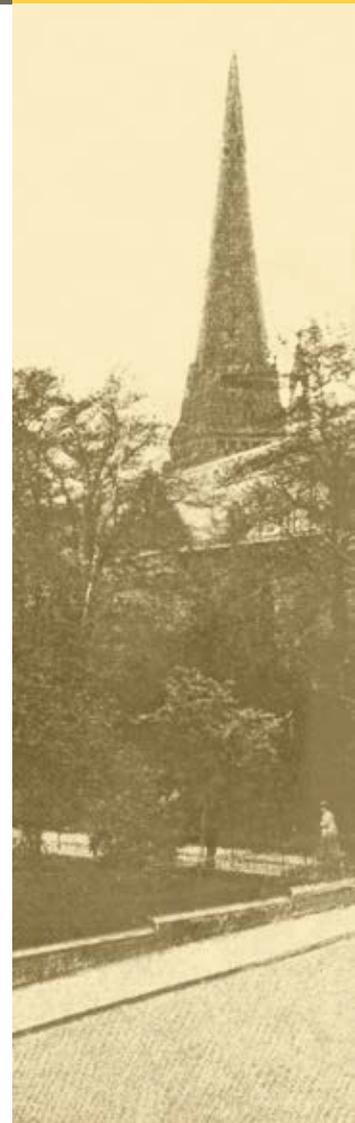
The Fountain



The Fountain



The Bandstand



Church Green Conservation Area, Town Centre, Redditch

Character Appraisal and Conservation Management Plan

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*



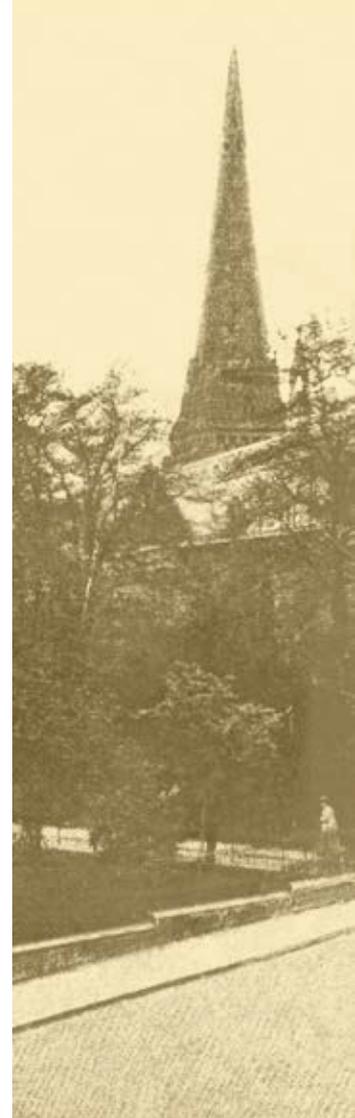
Church Green Conservation Area, Town Centre, Redditch Character Appraisal and Conservation Management Plan

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



Church Green Conservation Area, Town Centre, Redditch

Character Appraisal and Conservation Management Plan

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



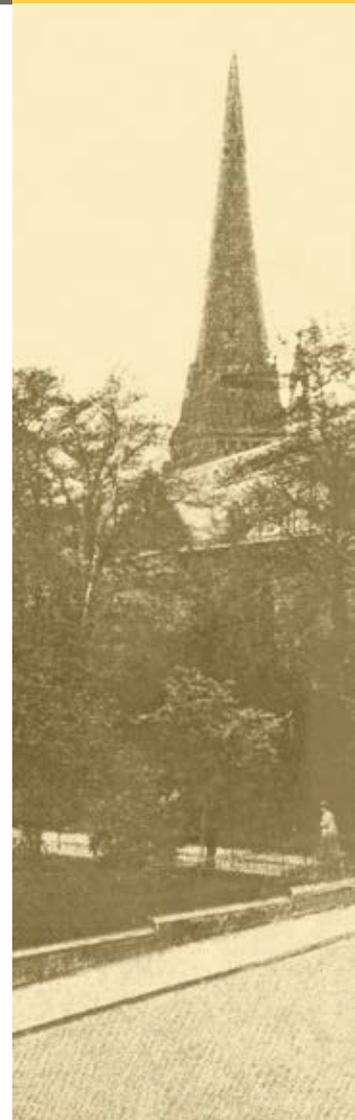
Pollarded trees close to the Band Stand



Hedges around seating on Church Green West



Flower beds at the northern end of Church Green East



4.6 Public Realm

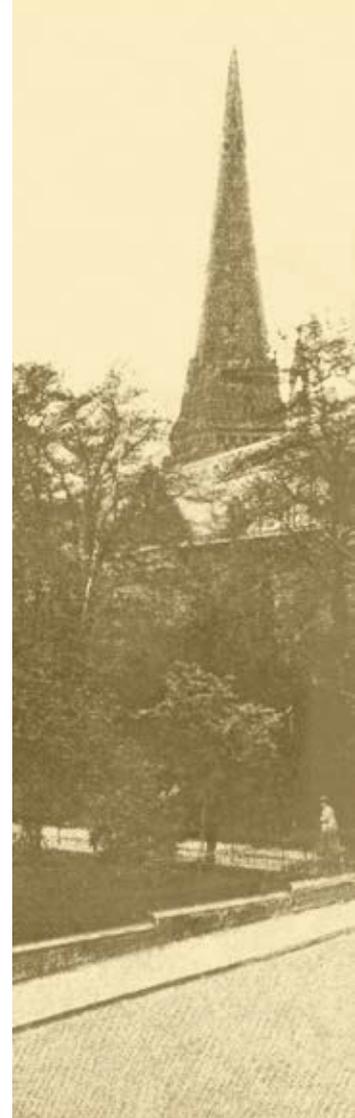
There are a large number of ground surfaces in the CA which would seem to have originated from various different public realm schemes. There are block pavers of various colours most in a poor condition either because surfaces have become uneven through wear and tear, or areas have been replaced in non-matching 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

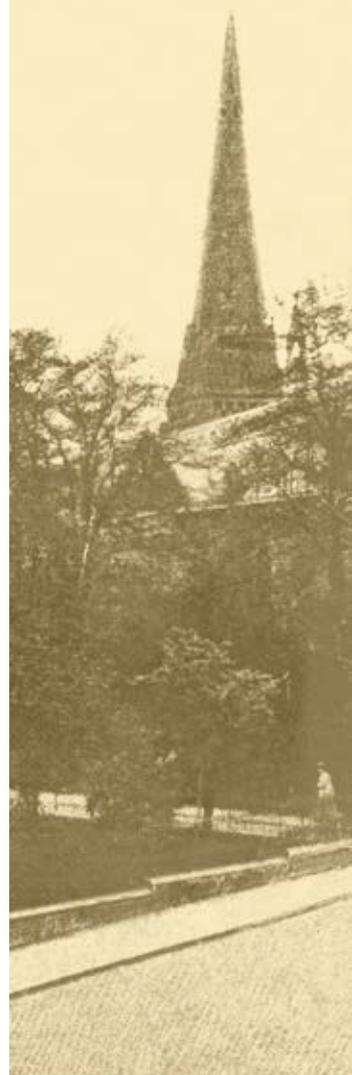




Stone paving at Unicorn Square



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



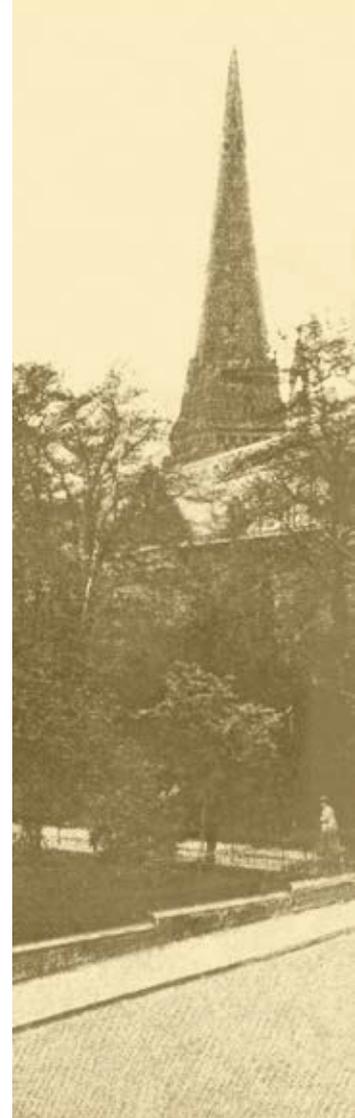


New public realm southern part of Church Green East

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



Church Green Conservation Area, Town Centre, Redditch Character Appraisal and Conservation Management Plan



New street furniture to the east side of the Church

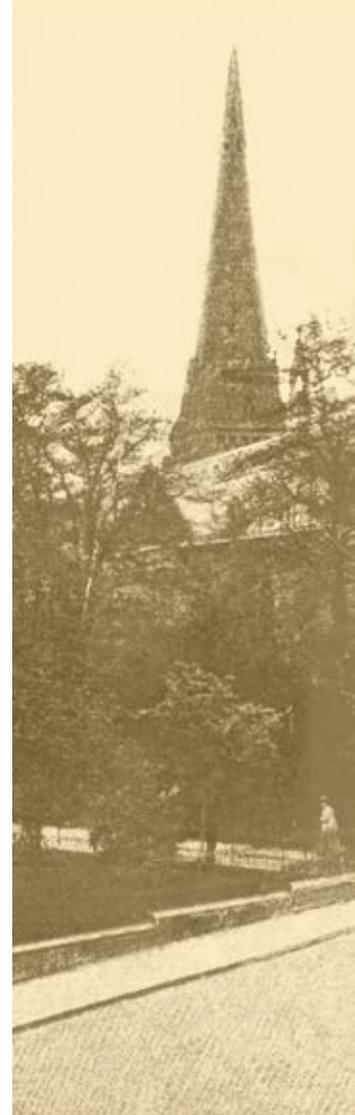


Trees in planters on Church Green West

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

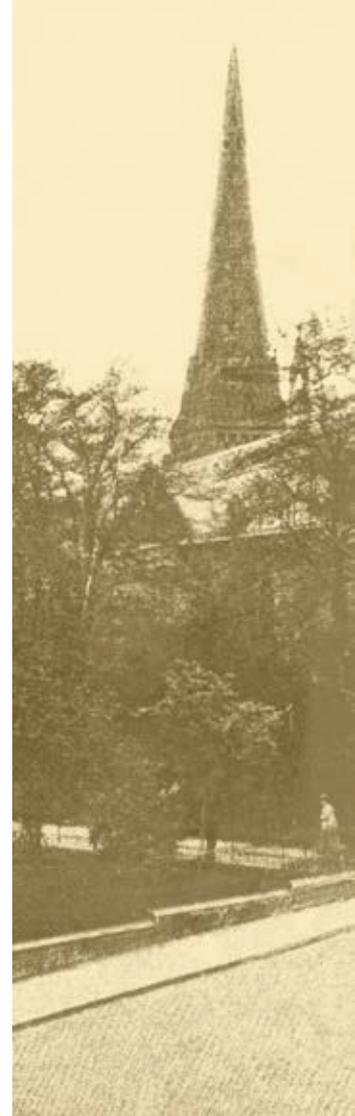




The Holocaust Memorial



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

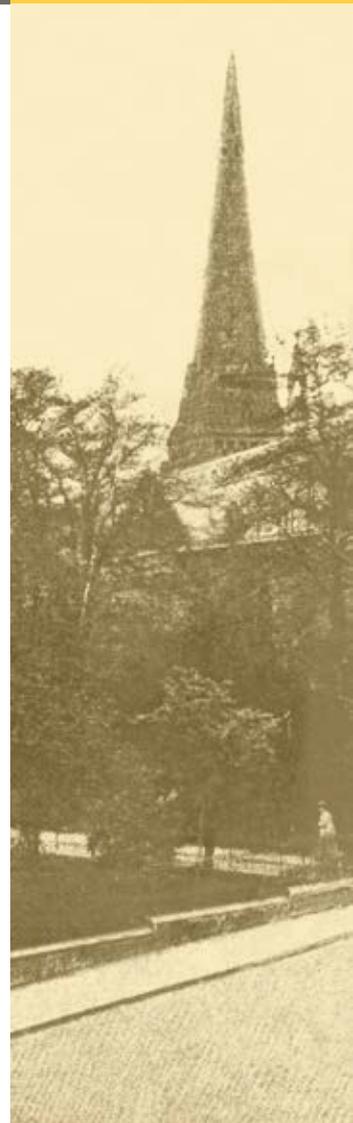
■ **Poor state of the public realm**

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.



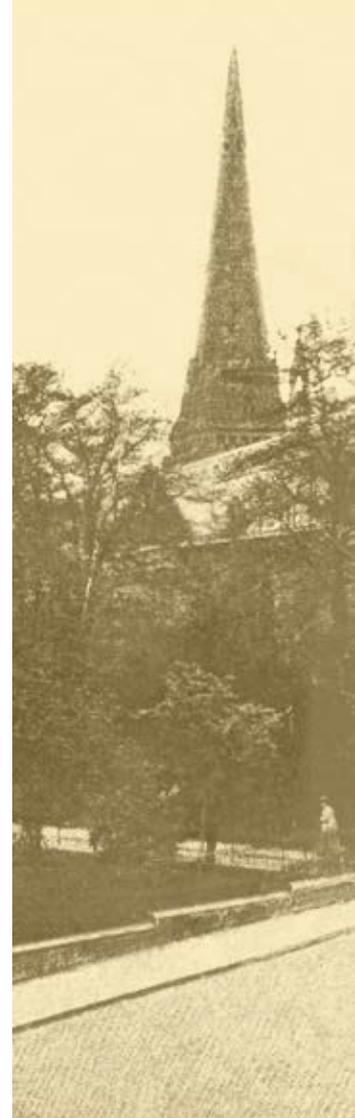
Oversized fascia

■ 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**

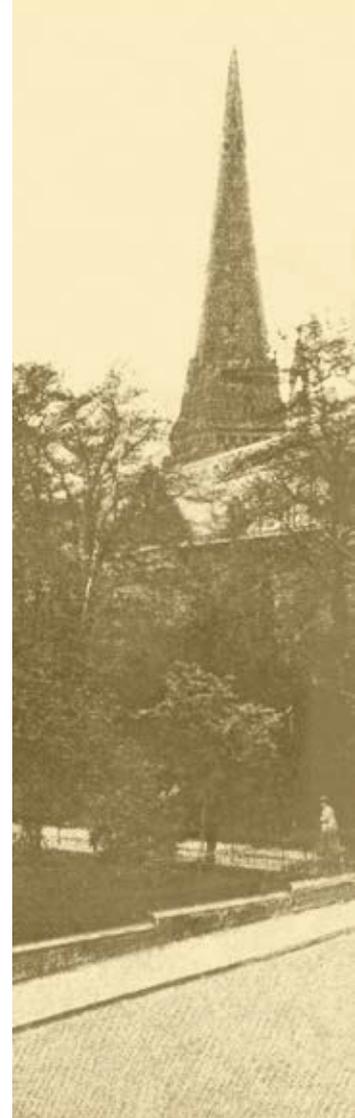
A survey in June 2020 indicated that there was a vacancy rate of approximately 20% in respect of retail units.



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.

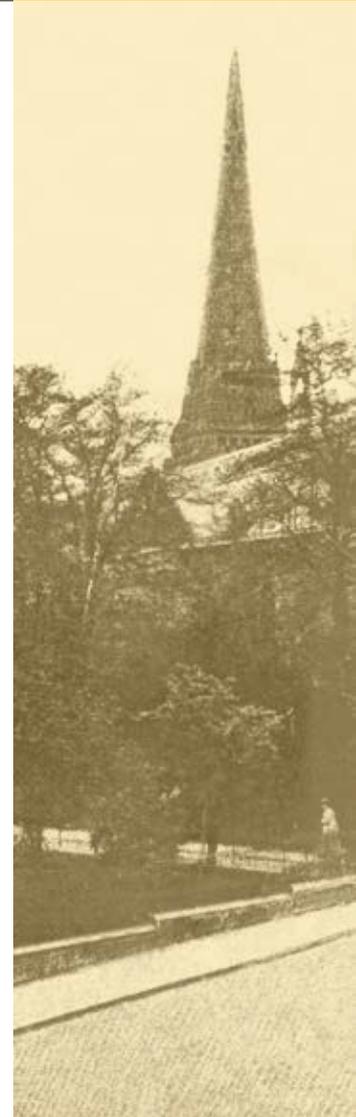
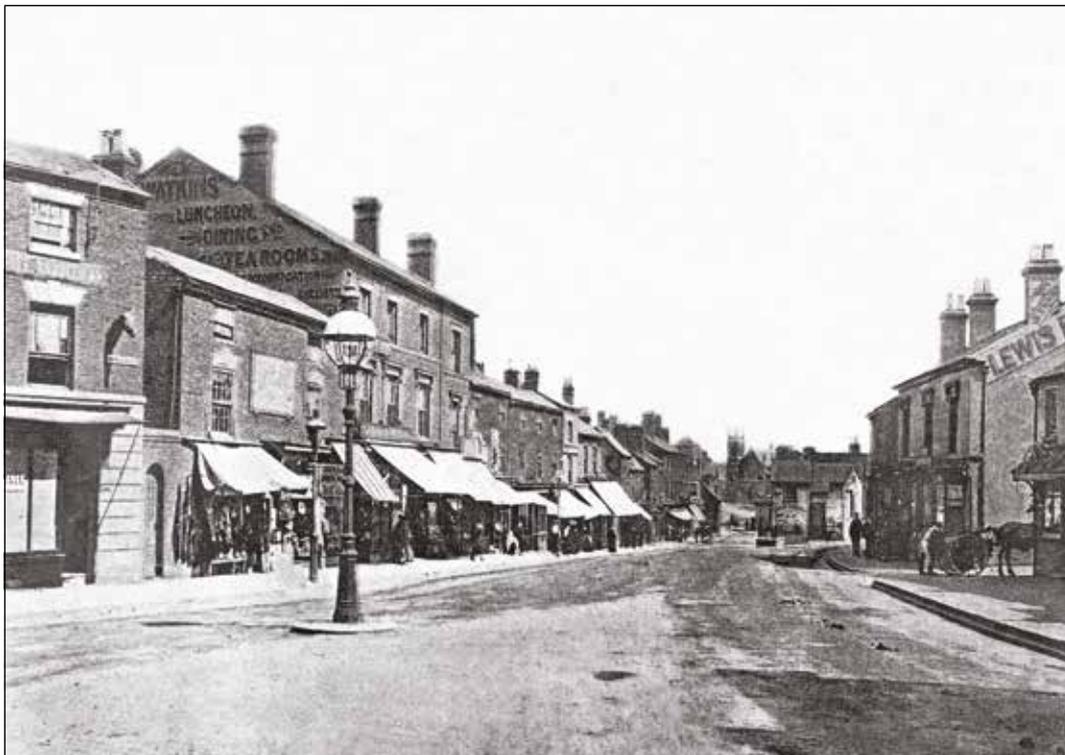


1 - 11 Alcester Street

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

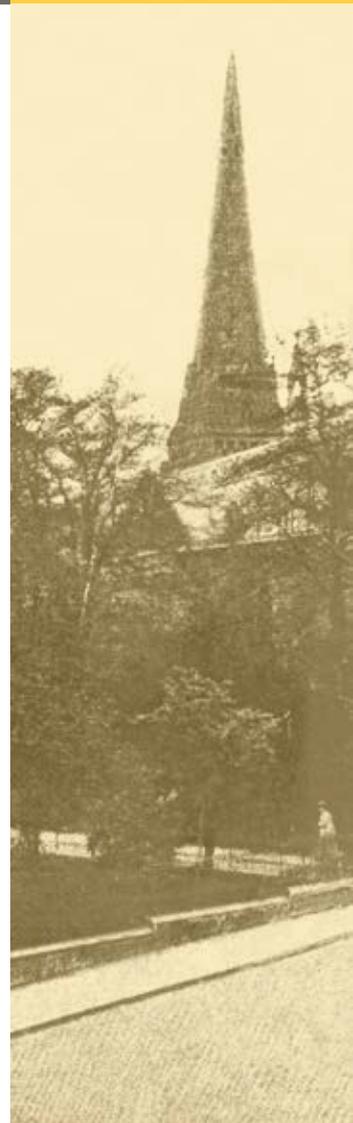
4.1 Introduction

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.

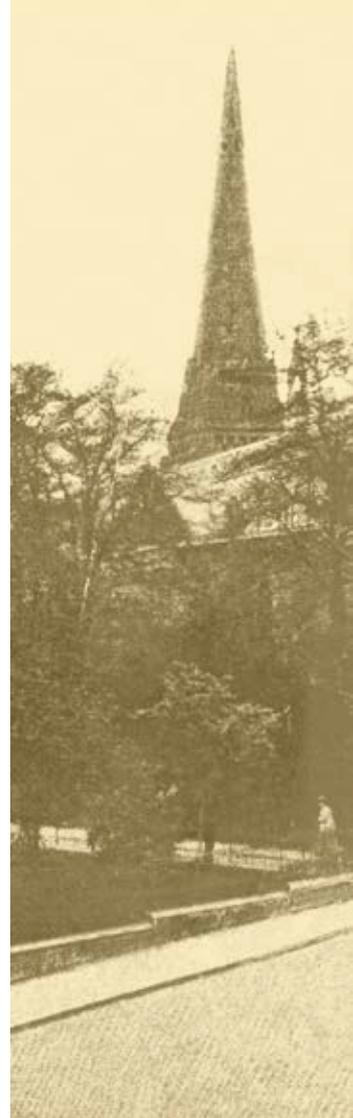
4.6.2 Proposed Action

- 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.

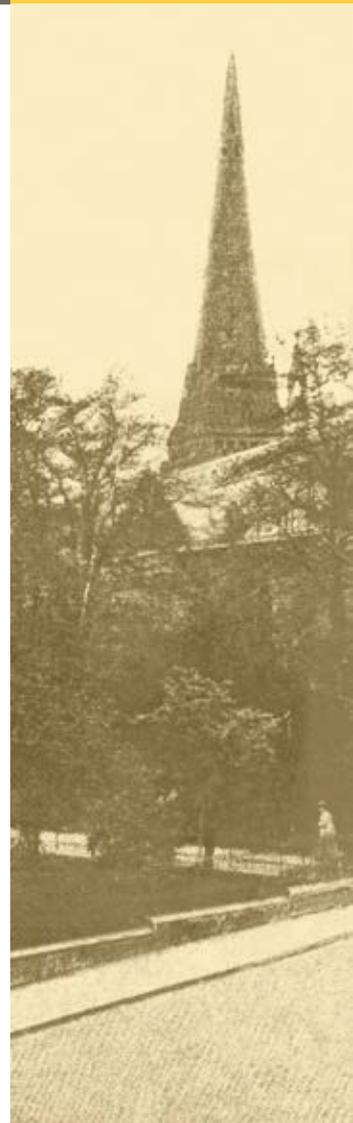
4.8 Setting to the Conservation Area

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

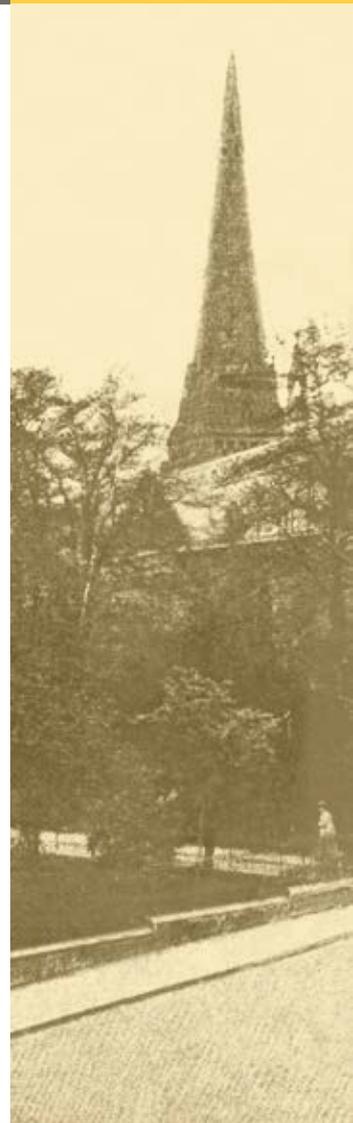
- The impact of potential development on the significance of the CA should be fully considered.
- The potential impact on the setting of the CA should be assessed by carrying out a full setting assessment following the Historic England guidance in The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good 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.

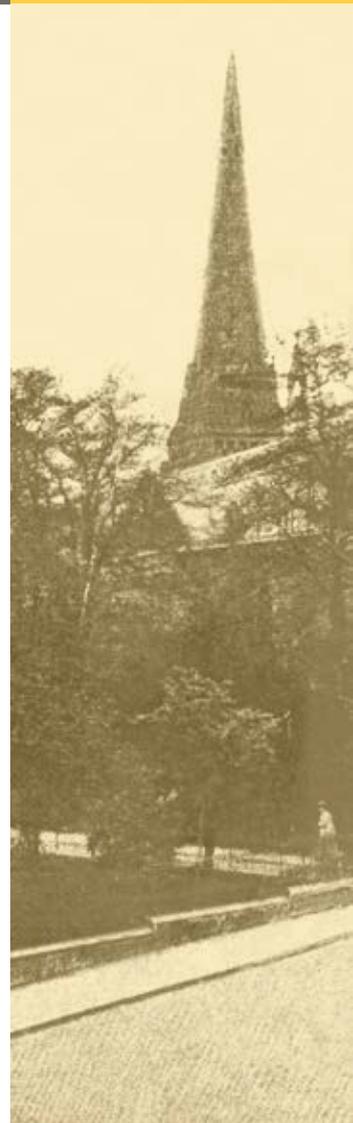
Redditch Borough Council will carry out a photographic Survey of all the buildings in the Conservation Area to aid monitoring, and in particular to aid enforcement action. The photographs will be taken from the road or other public vantage points.

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.

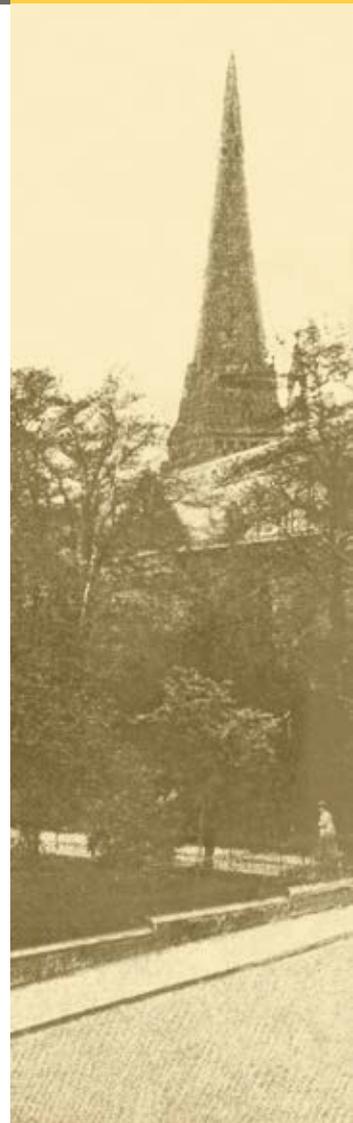
36.4 Heritage-led regeneration will be encouraged, particularly when related to the Town Centre Strategic Site, but also at any other site of historic value. Proposals which aim to realise the leisure and tourism potential of the historic environment will also be encouraged where these will result in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

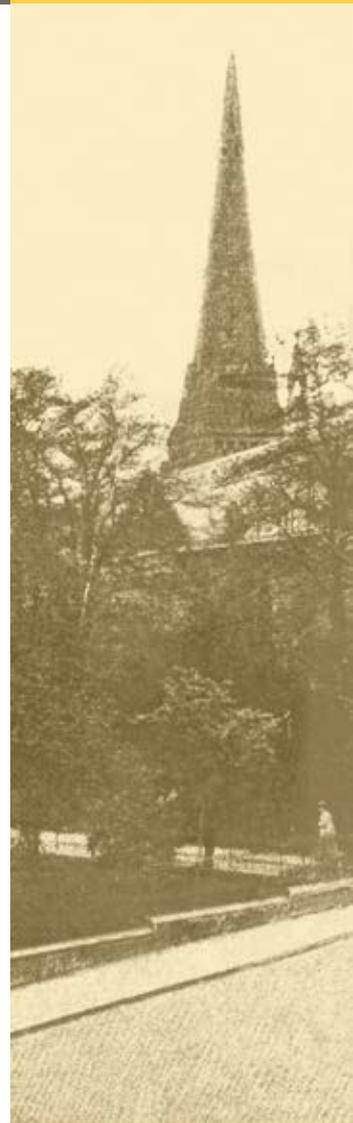
A. Conservation Areas

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.



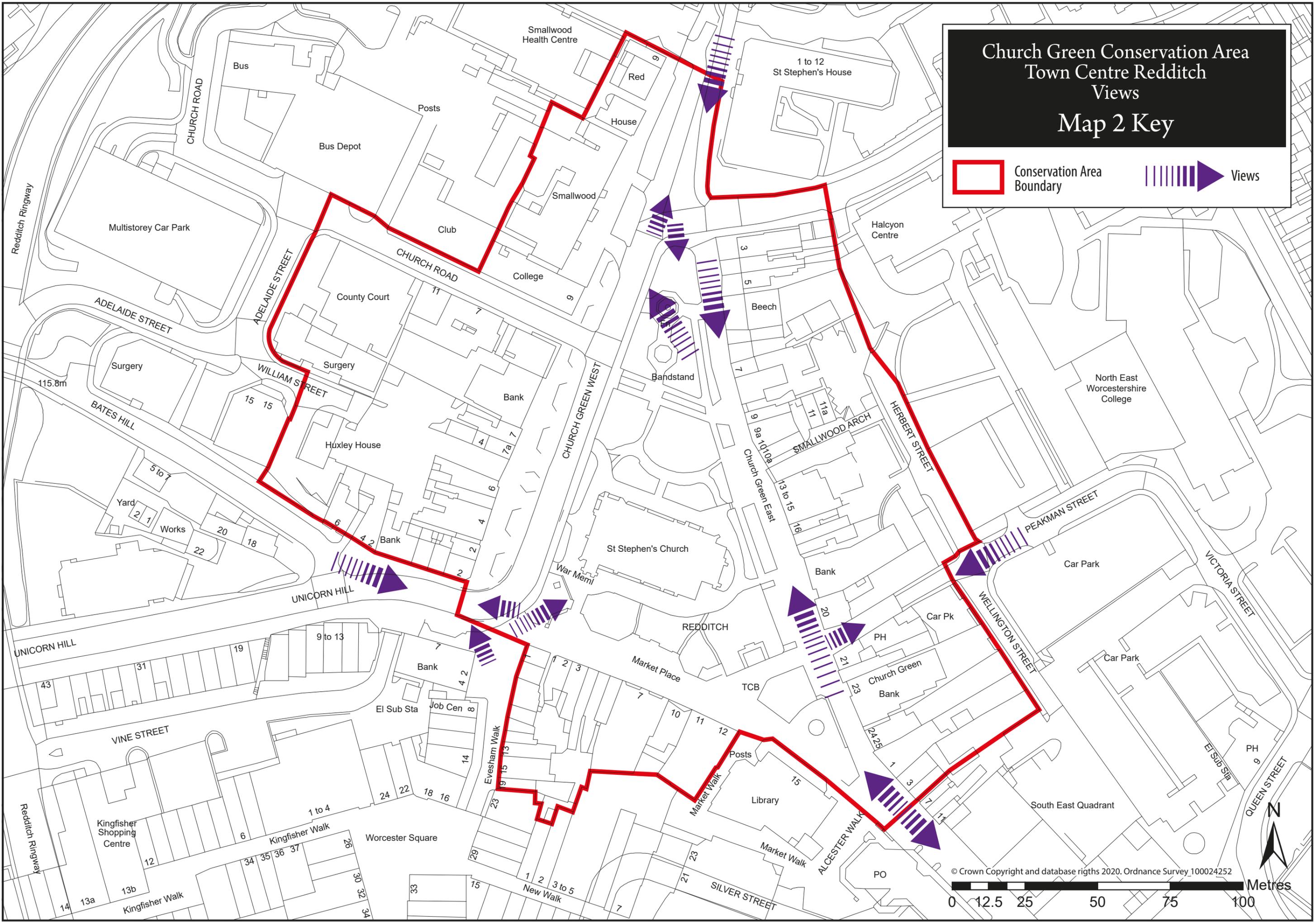
Gothic	An architectural style from 12th to 16th centuries but revived in the late Victorian period. Typical details include elaborate tracery, heavily mullioned windows and pointed arches.
Jettied gable	Projecting upper storey overhanging the lower floors, often a feature of timber framed buildings.
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 Views Map 2 Key

 Conservation Area Boundary

 Views

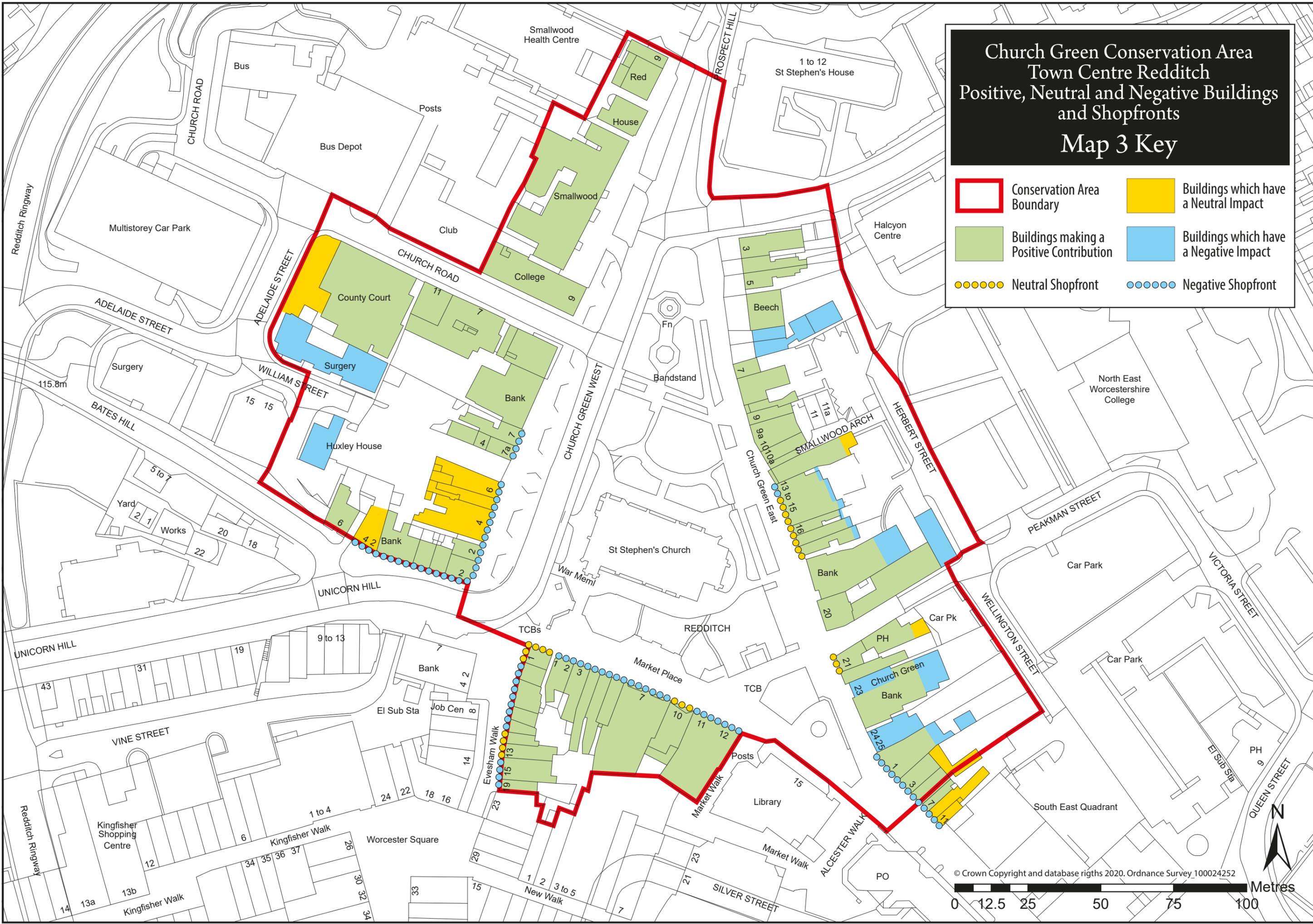


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Church Green Conservation Area Town Centre Redditch Positive, Neutral and Negative Buildings and Shopfronts Map 3 Key

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





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