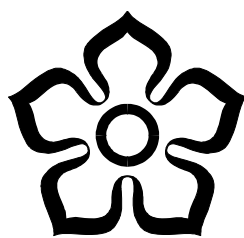


# **Stoneygate Conservation Area Character Appraisal (draft)**



Leicester  
City Council

## Contents

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Planning Policy Framework**
- 3.0 Definition of Special Interest**
- 4.0 Assessment of Special Interest**
  - 4.1 Location and setting
  - 4.2 Historic development and archaeology
  - Character analysis
  - 4.10 Purpose
  - Sub-areas and Townscape
  - 4.12 North Stoneygate
  - 4.15 West Stoneygate
  - 4.18 East Stoneygate
  - 4.20 South Stoneygate
  - 4.25 Prevailing and former uses
  - 4.29 Architectural character and key buildings
  - 4.47 Building materials and the public realm
  - 4.55 Greenery and green spaces
  - 4.61 Negative factors
  - 4.67 Problems and pressures
  - 4.70 Capacity for change
- 5.0 Community involvement**
- 6.0 Conservation Area boundary**
- 7.0 Management Proposal**
- 8.0 Contacts and appendices**

### Appendices

- Appendix 1 List of buildings in the Stoneygate Conservation Area
- Appendix 2 List of listed buildings and tree preservation orders in the conservation area
- Appendix 3 Management and Enhancement Proposals
- Appendix 4 Relevant Local Plan and other Policies
- Appendix 5 Glossary of architectural terms

### List of Maps *(not yet available)*

- Map 1 City of Leicester Conservation Areas
- Map 2 *Boundary of Stoneygate Conservation Area*
- Map 3 *Ordnance Survey 1888*
- Map 4 *Age of Buildings*
- Map 5 *Townscape Analysis*
- Map 6 *Stoneygate architects and their buildings*

*This is a consultation draft of the character appraisal of the Stoneygate Conservation Area. Comments are welcome and should be sent to the Planning Policy & Design Group, Regeneration & Culture, Leicester City Council, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester LE1 6ZG or fax (0116) 2471149 or e-mail [urbandedesigngroup@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:urbandedesigngroup@leicester.gov.uk)*

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 A character appraisal is the first step in a dynamic process, the aim of which is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of each conservation area. It defines and records the factors that make conservation areas special, thereby providing a baseline for decisions about an area's future. It also identifies features and problems that detract from this special quality and suggests, by means of management and enhancement proposals, the ways in which the special interest could be safeguarded or improved. The appraisal also reviews the boundaries of the conservation area and, where appropriate, proposes amendments. In the case of the Stoneygate Conservation Area no boundary amendments are proposed but the Council is proposing to make an Article 4 Direction to control certain forms of development (section 7.0 refers).
- 1.2 During the 1960s and 1970s many Victorian and Edwardian buildings across the country were being demolished because they were unfashionable, too large or too expensive to maintain. This was also true of Stoneygate where a number of sites had been redeveloped with blocks of flats. In places larger properties were being left vacant, to the detriment of their immediate environs. However, by the late 1970s there was a recognition of the architectural and historic value of Victorian and Edwardian buildings and the Council designated the Stoneygate Conservation Area in 1978. The conservation area was extended in 1989 to include properties on the south side of Avenue Road, 57 - 75 & 44 - 76 Stoneygate Road, 1 & 2 Francis Street and 20 - 58 Stoughton Road. A further extension in 2000 brought Pendene Road and Burlington Road, 352 – 368 London Road, and properties at the junction of Portland Road and Clarendon Park Road including the curtilage of Christ Church, into the conservation area. The present boundaries of the conservation area are shown on Map 2.
- 1.3 The survey and appraisal were carried out during 2006 following the methodology suggested by English Heritage. To ensure that a complete picture is built up about the value and character of the area the Council will ask people who live, work and visit the area for their views, including what they like or dislike about the area and their ideas about how the area could be preserved or enhanced.
- 1.4 Looking after and improving the qualities of conservation areas can bring real benefits to the people who live and work there. An attractive environment also helps to maintain property values. However, for a conservation area to be successful, both residents and property owners must play their part. The City Council will continue to strive to improve the environment of conservation areas whenever the opportunity presents itself and when resources are available and will encourage others to do likewise.

## **2.0 Planning Policy Framework**

- 2.1 The protection and preservation of historic environments are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to the country's cultural and historic heritage, its economic well-being and quality of life. Public support for conservation –

both in the built and natural environments – is likewise well established. National and regional governmental guidance reflects this.

- 2.2 The concept of conservation areas was first introduced into national legislation in 1967 in the Civic Amenities Act which defined conservation areas as areas “*of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*”. It is not the purpose of conservation areas to prevent change but to manage change in such a way as to maintain and, if possible, strengthen an area’s special qualities.
- 2.3 Current legislation is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This places a duty on the Council to declare as conservation areas those parts of their area that they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest [s.69(1)]. It also imposes on the Council to review past designations from time to time [s.69(2)]. Conservation area status also means that there are stricter controls on changes that can be made to buildings and land including the need for consent to demolish any building, strengthened controls over some minor forms of development and the automatic protection of all trees in the conservation area.
- 2.4 The Council has a further duty to formulate and prepare from time to time proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its conservation areas [s.71(1)] and these are set out in Appendix 4). The Council must also pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas when determining planning applications for sites within such areas [s.72(1)].
- 2.5 The City of Leicester Local Plan is the over-arching policy document for land use in the city and contains policies against which the appropriateness and design of development proposals can be measured. Some of these policies relate directly to the historic environment, including conservation areas, listed buildings and archaeology, and are designed to help ensure that new developments or conservation-led regeneration reflect the character and value of that environment. These are listed in Appendix 4. There is, however, a general presumption against the demolition of any building in a conservation area where that building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

### **3.0 Definition of special interest**

- 3.1 Stoneygate remains Leicester’s best-surviving Victorian suburb, containing a large number of late Victorian and Edwardian houses in the fashionable Domestic Revival styles of that period. Not only are these important in terms of their high quality construction they are also works by some of the city’s best-known late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century architects – Goddard, Stockdale Harrison, Redfern & Sawday, James Tait and Isaac Barradale. Stoneygate as a suburb is also a physical reflection of Victorian Leicester’s success as an industrial and commercial centre, as it was here that its wealthiest and most influential citizens built homes that reflected the ethos of the town – hard working, solid, unpretentious – and it was to here that the growing numbers of Leicester’s late 19<sup>th</sup> century middle classes moved or aspired.
- 3.2 The special character and appearance of the conservation area is also created by a consistency of scale and building materials across the whole area. Red brick, slate and timber in 2 or 3 storey buildings are a unifying theme for the area’s varied house and building types - from the large house in its own grounds to the smaller semi-detached and terraced villas of the middle classes, as well as the various styles and sizes of its churches. Visual interest at skyline level is another feature which marks

Stoneygate out as special – rooflines are rugged and informal broken by gables, turrets, dormers and often elaborate chimney stacks.

- 3.3 Another notable feature of the conservation area is its large number of trees. There are many tree-lined streets as well as well-treed and planted private gardens. Many parts of the conservation area are thus viewed through and against a backcloth of vegetation. The main London Road, despite the high traffic volume that results from its function as a main artery serving the city, remains particularly 'green' and is still the most attractive route into the city. It provides, by subtle changes of level and direction, many of the best views of Stoneygate's main landmarks and buildings.

#### **4.0 Assessment of special interest**

##### Location and setting

- 4.1 Stoneygate lies about 2.5 kilometres (1.6 miles) south east of Leicester city centre (measured from the Clock Tower to the junction of London Road and Stoneygate Road) at a height of about 80m above sea level. The total area is about 93 hectares (230 acres) making it by far the most extensive of Leicester's conservation areas. The A6 London Road divides the conservation area approximately in two and follows a line along the top of a narrow ridge of boulder clay and gravels, from which the land slopes gently away on either side. The slope on the east side is slightly steeper than that on the west side, but this ridge of land with firm well-drained boulder clays and gravels provided ideal sites for building. Its location on the south side of the city meant that it was not only away from the smoke and noise of Leicester's expanding industries but it was also outside the boundary of the town and therefore not subject to the same local taxes.

##### Historic development and archaeology

- 4.2 Before the development of Stoneygate as a suburb of Leicester the land was entirely rural and had been farmed at least since the middle ages. Archaeological finds indicate evidence of settlement in prehistoric times although such evidence is scarce. The Roman Gartree Road passed to the east of the conservation area approximately on the line of Kimberley Road. Finds from elsewhere would suggest that there may have been Roman settlement along this road. The name *Stoneygate* may be derived from an earlier name for this road: the *stoney path*. Records of 1515 indicate that at least part of the area was known as *Stongate*. In the early nineteenth century, when the first houses began to appear, the area was part of Knighton parish and lay outside the boundary of Leicester. Urban development did not begin properly in Stoneygate until about the middle of the nineteenth century.
- 4.3 In 1835 there were only a few houses in the area. The oldest was probably "Stoneygate House" (near present-day Knighton Park Road) which dated from 1760 and is shown on the Turnpike map of 1779. This was probably a late 17th century farmhouse that had been converted into a Gothic style gentleman's residence in about 1780. The owner was a Turnpike Trustee and landlord of the Three Cranes coaching on Wharf Street. The house and its land were sold in 1854 in 6 lots of four acres, which were divided into plots for eleven houses. Another house, "The Stony Gate", was located in present-day Dukes Drive and was the home of William Freer. Another 'Stoneygate House', the home of John Biggs, was located in the area now occupied by Toller Road. No further development took place until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and by 1846 there were ten houses in Stoneygate, all belonging to prosperous Leicester tradesmen and professionals. 'The Firs' at 223

London Road was built around 1826-9. Of these houses only 'The Firs' survives.

- 4.4 Development in the area was accelerated by the sale of part of the D'Oyly estate in the northern part of the conservation area and by 1863 there were 32 houses in Stoneygate, although these still tended to be the work of independent people building large houses for their own use. Other land to the east side of London Road was in the ownership of the Powys-Keck estate. The pattern of ownership on the western side was more complex. However, significant land holdings on the western side were owned by Wallis Goddard and by the Craddocks of Knighton.
- 4.5 Around 1865 the side roads were laid out and the area began to attract interest from speculative builders and land societies. Some of these roads were laid on land which had formed the grounds of the early larger houses. Knighton Park Road was laid out in 1867 and several houses had been built along it by 1870. Avenue Road also appears at about this time. The area bounded by Stoneygate Road, London Road and Stoughton Road was sold in building lots in 1867, with Alexandra Road and Sandown Road being completed between 1877 and 1881. In 1875 the Leicester to Stoneygate tramway was opened up and by 1880 Stoneygate was virtually part of Leicester. This was recognised in 1892 when the boundary of the Borough was extended to take in the parish of Knighton and thus the Stoneygate area. As a result, a substantial amount of building took place with fine houses overlooking Victoria Park and large houses along London Road.
- 4.6 The first Ordnance Survey map of 1885 shows the road layout within the conservation area much as it is now. All the major roads are laid out although some are awaiting development. Large houses set in extensive grounds, some with ranges of outbuildings, predominate. Some of these, for example in the vicinity of St Mary's Road, are grouped quite tightly making coherent and attractive urban form. Others such as those in Ratcliffe Road are set in very extensive grounds forming 'miniature estates'. Groups of semi detached houses are beginning to appear, particularly to the east of London Road in Alexandra Road and Sandown Road (then Landsdowne Road). Terraced development is seen in North Avenue, Central Avenue and Alexandra Road. Burlington Road and Pendene Road appear as lanes through garden and orchard plots leading to large residential premises at the end of each. The two main churches have been built – St John the Baptist in 1884 and the Clarendon Park Congregational Church in 1885/6.
- 4.7 Late Victorian Leicester produced a legacy of fine buildings between about 1870 and 1914 and it is in Stoneygate that many of the best of these can be found. These houses were shaped largely by the work of a small group of architects, most notably Joseph Goddard and his various partners, Isaac Barradale, and Stockdale Harrison and his sons. Their work established the stylistic theme of the Stoneygate area which will be described in more detail later. Other architects also contributed. Most notable among these was Ernest Gimson who built two of the best houses in Stoneygate (The White House on North Avenue and Inglewood on Ratcliffe Road). Both of these buildings are of national significance. James Tait contributed the Congregational Church on London Road. More detail can be found in Map 5.
- 4.8 During the 20th Century development in the area continued, but the designs adopted still tended to follow the discipline set by the first sites developed. This resulted in streets with a similar theme where groups of houses exhibited consistent height, building line, scale and degree of site coverage. The exuberance of the earlier designs and the wealth of subtle variations in detailing and decoration meant that the street scene was extremely lively and interesting. The original high standard of

design and materials was often maintained throughout the 1920s and 30s although detailing became simpler and new styles were introduced.

- 4.9 In the years since 1945 the pattern of development has not been so favourable to Stoneygate. Many of the large Victorian houses were lost including the Stoney Gate and Stoneygate House. These were most commonly replaced by blocks of flats usually of three to four storeys. Change to institutional uses, multiple occupation or student housing became common for many of the remaining large houses and latterly, from the 1970s, conversion to nursing homes, often with substantial extensions, became a frequent use for these buildings. The quality of new building did not always match the character of the environment but there are good examples of modern design at 22 Avenue Road, St John the Baptist School on East Avenue and 25 Springfield Road. Infill in the 1980s and 1990s saw a partial return to the vernacular influence of the turn of the century although this style was not always carried through with conviction and detailed knowledge of its sources. The twenty-first century is seeing more pressure for development on some remaining large sites (such as South Lodge and College Hall) as these come on the market from large institutional users such as the Council and Leicester University.

#### Character Analysis

##### Purpose

- 4.10 The aim of conservation area designation is the preservation and enhancement of an area of architectural or historic interest. However, conservation area status does not mean that change should be prevented or that an area should return to some 'better' period in its past. Rather, it is a means by which change can be managed to best preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. An appraisal is the means by which the elements and features that make up the intrinsic architectural and historic character of the area can be discovered and provides a baseline against which development proposals can be assessed. The character analysis of the Stoneygate Conservation Area follows in the paragraphs below.
- 4.11 In part, an area's special interest is a function of its *townscape* – that is, the ways in which the many elements in the built environment combine to create the urban environment. The quality of the townscape is determined by how well these elements fit together and the effect their combined power has on the viewer. They also give the environment of an area individuality and character. Paragraph 4.1 gives a general impression of the nature of the townscape but an area as extensive as Stoneygate would be expected to have sub-areas of diverse townscape and character. For the purposes of the character appraisal four such sub-areas are identified. These are shown on Map 2.

##### Townscape

- 4.12 **North Stoneygate** (from the northern conservation area boundary as far south as North Avenue, Dukes Drive and Holmfield Road)
- 4.13 Townscape - The site coverage in the area is generally relatively low and buildings are mostly 2-3 storeys in height. Many detached historic houses survive in the Knighton Park Road area. Some of these are in institutional use. Other large detached houses have been demolished and replaced by blocks of flats, particularly on the frontage to London Road between Victoria Park Road and Knighton Park Road. Despite infill development large areas of private open space remain, particularly in the grounds of Elmfield, Ashfield and the Charles Frears Campus of De

Montfort University.

- 4.14 The key feature of the sub-area is the slope to the east of London Road running down towards Evington Brook offering views into and out of the conservation area. The wooded frontages at the junction of Ashfield Road and Elmfield Avenue give an enclosed, secret quality to this locality. The grounds of Charles Frears School of Nursing preserve something of a parkland quality with large mature trees set in expansive lawns. West of London Road, Knighton Park Road is quite broad and spacious. At the western end is one of the best corners of the conservation area at its junction with St Mary's Road and The Avenue. This corner is enhanced by the trees on the small open space and the view progresses further opening out over the broad expanse of Victoria Park.
- 4.15 **West Stoneygate** (bounded by North Avenue, Dukes Drive, London Road, Avenue Road, part of Beechcroft Road, the southern conservation area boundary to the south of Avenue Road and the western conservation area boundary)
- 4.16 Townscape - This is an area of generally denser site coverage marked by streets of mainly quite large terraced houses and a high proportion of intact historic fabric. There are larger detached and semi detached properties on the London Road frontage and on Springfield Road. The sub-area contains two of the principal landmark buildings of the conservation area: the Church of St John the Baptist and the Clarendon Park Congregational Church. There is a large area of open space in the grounds of St John the Baptist School with a spinney along the London Road frontage.
- 4.17 This area has the most formal townscape of the four sub-areas with straight streets joining at rectilinear junctions. Parts of Clarendon Park Road, East Avenue and Springfield Road have a marked rhythm formed by repeated gables and bays in terraced or semi-detached residential frontages. The massing of St John the Baptist Church and the adjoining three-storey houses as seen from the London Road junction give an element of drama to an area of otherwise quite gentle townscape character, especially in contrast with the open expanse of the school playing fields on the opposite side of Clarendon Park Road. Stoneygate has few dramatic terminations to street views but the view of Christ Church looking north along Portland Road and, to a lesser extent, that of the White House looking north along Central Avenue offer good end stops to streets. Burlington Road and Pendene Road have a more rural character defined by vegetation close to the road edges, grass verges, and views across the allotments to the south.
- 4.18 **East Stoneygate** (all of the conservation area to the east of London Road south of Holmfield Road)
- 4.19 Townscape - This sub-area is dominated by mainly large semi-detached housing in Holmfield Road and St John's Road graduating to denser semi-detached and large terraced housing in the streets between Stoneygate Road and London Road and on the frontage to Stoughton Road. The limited private open space is mainly within areas developed as flats, including the grounds of the 1930s Stoneygate Court - the main landmark building within the sub-area.

The gentle slope to the east forming one side of the valley of Evington Brook is again the key to the townscape of this sub-area affecting views along Holmfield Road, Sandown Road, Alexandra Road, Stoughton Road and other streets running east from London Road. Alexandra Road and Sandown Road, running at right angles



between London Road and Stoneygate Road, have a formal quality resembling West Stoneygate. The curve at the junction of Stoneygate Road and Albert Road offers a good succession of views along the road and a pleasant wooded corner at the junction of these roads. The curve and slope of Stoughton Road, looking east from Stoneygate Road junction forms an emphatic edge to the conservation area.

- 4.20 **South Stoneygate** (west of London Road and south of Avenue Road from London Road to Beechcroft Road then south of the rear boundary of 18 Avenue Road to the western and southern boundaries of the conservation area).
- 4.21 Townscape - The sub-area is dominated mainly by detached properties within large garden plots with higher density semi-detached houses in Stoneygate Avenue and Woodland Avenue and in Knighton Drive. Some of the formerly very large 'miniature estate' plots such as Knighton Hayes are now much reduced. Some of these remain as large houses standing within still substantial plots representing important areas of private open space. Many of the larger detached houses, such as Gimson's Inglewood on Ratcliffe Road, provide landmarks in themselves and Stoneygate Baptist Church on London Road is an important institutional landmark.

#### Generally

- 4.22 The area is designed and laid out on a loose herringbone pattern with roads intersecting with London Road. Interconnecting roads link the side roads forming a loose, informal grid which coalesces into a rectilinear grid pattern in the streets north and south of Clarendon Park Road and, less coherently, in Sandown Road and Alexandra Road. The common thread running through the area is London Road. It is marked by subtle changes of level and direction, by views of buildings seen in association with trees and vegetation, by landmark buildings such as the towers of Clarendon Park Congregational Church and the Church of St James the Greater (just to the north of the conservation area boundary). This ensures that it remains the most attractive of all the radial approaches to the city centre. A further theme which is common to much of the area is the nature of the street skyline which is rugged and informal, broken by gables, turrets, dormers and often elaborate chimney stacks.
- 4.23 Tree lined streets and large mature gardens remain as Stoneygate's main defining features. Large houses and villas can be seen through and against a backcloth of vegetation and create a visual theme of red brick, slate and timber with trees and shrubs. The views westward from the Romway Road and St Philip's Road give a good impression of this character with large buildings set in spaces with trees, and landmarks such as the spire of St John the Baptist Church and Clarendon Park Congregational Church visible along the ridge formed by London Road.
- 4.24 Of the four sub-areas South Stoneygate has the most spacious, suburban character. The site is relatively flat although the level of the land falls away to the south along Elms Road towards South Knighton. Ratcliffe Road between London Road and Elms Road is a particularly good townscape passage with the gentle curve holding back views as the eye travels westward, generous tree cover (some of it dramatic conifers) and the detail of the projecting lodge of Knighton Spinneys helping to frame the view. The view looking east along Knighton Drive is also noteworthy, the trees in the straight road giving a marked formal quality. Stoneygate Avenue and Woodland Avenue are also impressive with slight variations in direction and high quality houses built at relatively high density.

#### Prevailing and former uses

- 4.25 Stoneygate remains primarily a residential area and provides housing in many forms. There is a mix of detached and semi-detached houses in a range of sizes, together with flats in converted Victorian houses, as well as purpose-built flat blocks on the sites of large Victorian and Edwardian homes or gardens. Where original large villas remain in private grounds they have generally been used for institutional or educational purposes, such as South Lodge Day Centre and the de Montfort University (formerly Charles Frears) School of Nursing on London Road. Elsewhere, former large houses have been converted more than once, such as Stoneycroft on Stoneygate Road; first built as a private house, then converted to a school for deaf children and converted again in the 1980s to provide luxury apartments with new flats in the grounds. London Road is the main A6 route to the capital and has remained so since it was first 'turnpiked' in the late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It still provides the main access into the city from the south.
- 4.26 Development in the conservation area has, throughout its history, been influenced by changes in housing need and demand. Before the advent of public, or affordable private, transport, it was the location chosen by the city's wealthy inhabitants for their homes. By the mid-nineteenth century, however, Leicester's population was growing rapidly and the sales of large local estates in the area opened up Stoneygate for more intensive development. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century development plots had become much smaller leading to the introduction of terraced houses in the area. Nevertheless, most houses were still large enough for a family and one or two servants. By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century lifestyles and family sizes had changed substantially and during the 1950s, 60s and 70s many large terraced houses were converted into small flats and bedsits because they were considered to be no longer suitable or affordable for use by smaller households. This led, amongst other things, to a general deterioration in the condition of buildings and the environment around them, a fact noted when the conservation area was designated in 1978. Since the 1990s, however, the growth in single and two person households, the appreciation and resale value of Victorian and Edwardian architecture and the buoyancy of the housing market has led to a growing trend for these properties to be subdivided into fewer, but larger, self-contained flats or changed back to single family use. This trend can be seen in the improvements in Alexandra Road and Sandown Road.
- 4.27 The area was also provided with schools as the population grew and education uses are still common in the area, either on new sites such as St John's C of E Primary on Clarendon Park Road or in converted houses such as the Islamic School on the London Road/ Stoneygate Road corner. Some nineteenth century schools were purpose built – Stoneygate College on Albert Road and Stoneygate School at 254 London Road for example. While the latter remains in use today the former has been converted to flats with townhouses behind. Elsewhere, again in response to demand, a number of large houses were bought by Leicester University and converted for student accommodation in the 1960s, with purpose-built halls of residence in the grounds - the Elms Road area is a case in point. Such uses have helped to preserve the original buildings. However, student housing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is now being provided elsewhere by the private sector and the sites and buildings occupied by halls of residence are consequently coming under pressure for private housing in the form of apartments or new houses.
- 4.28 Another trend that affected Stoneygate in the 1970s was the growth in the number of care homes for elderly people. However, profit margins today are less attractive and demand for suitable properties has declined, although several large care homes still exist. Hotel and boarding house uses were common along London Road during the middle of the twentieth century but only two survive, the rest having been converted

into flats. Other hotels can be found in Stanley Road and Elmfield Avenue.

#### Architectural character and key buildings

*Stoneygate is a large conservation area with a large number of buildings. Where examples are quoted in the section below this should not be taken to indicate that these properties are the only important buildings within a particular category but are cited here as examples. Map 5 provides a more comprehensive summary of buildings that the Council considers make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.*

- 4.29 The earliest surviving houses in Stoneygate are built in neo-Classical styles. While historically important, houses in this style are few in number and thus limited in their impact on the overall street scene within the conservation area. The appearance of these houses is smooth and well proportioned with stucco rendering and low (about 35°) pitched roofs. They were large and set in their own grounds. Number **223 London Road** (of about 1830) and **2 Springfield Road** (about 1850) are examples of this style. Typical details include small pane windows based on the Golden Section in plain openings, shallow-pitched hipped slate roofs with overhanging eaves, and Classical piers supporting porches.
- 4.30 These early buildings were followed around 1860 by a more solid Gothic style. There are similarly relatively few buildings in this style. It never became predominant for domestic architecture in Leicester due to the persistence of Classicism into mid-century and the later popularity of other styles as described below. Henry Goddard designed the house that now forms part of the **former Stoneygate School** at 254 London Road (c 1859) in the Gothic style and there are good examples from 1878-80 at **2-8 Alexandra** and in the adjacent part of London Road and at **24-26** and **75 Knighton Drive**. These houses are usually built in red or white brick. Pointed window heads and door openings are the typical features of the style. Roof pitches are steeper (up to 45°) than those of the earlier houses and roofs often terminate in gables. Tall chimneys, gables, and dormers provide craggy skylines, characteristic of Stoneygate, to these houses. Ornate bargeboards are often used to seal the verges of gables or dormers. Carved decorative stonework and brick patterning are used as decorative elements. Tuck pointing is used in some cases, as at 2 Alexandra Road. Windows typically have a single pane in each sash and horns reflecting advances in the production of glass in the mid nineteenth century.
- 4.31 Two churches in the conservation area provide striking examples of the Victorian Gothic style. Both use the style in very original ways. **St John the Baptist Church** in Clarendon Park Road (by Goddard and Paget 1884-85) is quite plain on the outside, its structural elements being used to create a dramatic interior, but impressive in scale and volume within the street scene. **Clarendon Park Congregational Church** (by James Tait 1885-86) in London Road is in Mountsorrel granite. Its main landmark feature is a west tower rectangular in plan forming a broad western facade and the windows to Springfield Road show an inventive use of Gothic tracery.
- 4.32 The Gothic style was soon supplanted in domestic architecture by the fashion for more eclectic Queen Anne or Domestic Revival buildings in the last quarter of the century. These styles now form the main basis of the architectural distinctiveness of Stoneygate and the area contains examples of their accomplished use.
- 4.33 Most Stoneygate buildings constructed between about 1875 and 1914 echo the informality and asymmetry of the Gothic houses and their rugged skyline formed by

steeply pitched roofs, gables, dormers and chimneys. **4 and 6 Springfield Road** (by Goddard Paget and Goddard 1894) are important examples of the Queen Anne style using motifs derived from English architecture of the early eighteenth century, particularly the jettied upper floors with very small paned windows. Others are **34 Elms Road** and **147 Ratcliffe Road**. The architecture of the Netherlands influenced English architecture in the Queen Anne period and this is carried through into the revived form of the style with the use of triangular pediments at **7 St John's Road**, and stepped Flemish gables at **15-17 St John's Road**, and the curved shaped gable form at **350 London Road**.

- 4.34 There is no clear dividing line between the Queen Anne and Domestic Revival styles: both are revivals of ideas and motifs drawn from historical English Architecture. Motifs from the polite architecture of the Queen Anne period may be mixed with those derived from English vernacular architecture. The free mixture of decorative elements and architectural motifs is in any case a feature of the architecture of this period. An example of this free use of motifs is the Regency Hotel of 1902 at **358/360 London Road**.
- 4.35 Many houses of this period have extensive and ornate detailing particularly to the eaves, ridges, bargeboards, window surrounds, cills and lintels). There is a variety of ornamental detailing including pediments, cornices, moulded brickwork and carved timber. Doorways, often imposing and highly decorative, are very important features. They incorporate solid timber panelled doors with leaded fanlights over and are contained within porches (often with finely coloured tiled decoration) or canopies with tiled roofs. Surrounds are usually decorated with mouldings and other carved details. There was a return in the later nineteenth century for small pane windows, at least in the upper sash, reflecting the interest in cottage architecture. The size and quality of timbers used, the detailing and the use of leaded lights and stained glass all contribute to the essential character of the buildings. Chimneystacks are often designed with decorative intention and their importance on the skyline has already been mentioned. Examples of the Domestic Revival style are many with some of the most striking groups of three storey terraced houses built in the 1880s and 1890s being to the design of Isaac Barradale. The Domestic Revival style is marked by big overhanging second floor gables and sham timber framing. There are examples at **6-12 Clarendon Park Road**, **51-53** and **55-57 Knighton Drive**, **10-20 Alexandra Road** and **43-53 Stoneygate Road**. Among many detached examples of this style are **Knighton Spinneys** (Joseph Goddard 1885) and **15 Elms Road** (Stockdale Harrison 1894). All are marked by bold and robust massing combined with a degree of delicacy in detailed design.
- 4.36 The families who lived in the Victorian and Edwardian houses of Stoneygate would have had servants to fulfil a range of functions including grooms and coachmen. This led to the provision of ancillary buildings such as stables and coach houses, often attractive in themselves and always important in the pattern of development of Stoneygate and as an expression of its historical development. There are two examples, one rebuilt, in Cone Lane at the rear of Knighton Lodge in Knighton Park Road. Some of the larger houses had **gate lodges**: two examples are the lodge to Knighton Hayes at 2 Ratcliffe Road and that to Knighton Spinneys also on Ratcliffe Road which forms a delightful feature in the street scene. **Garden pavilions** are often hidden behind their parent properties but nevertheless offer variety and visual and historic interest expressing the elegant lifestyle for which the houses were built. There is a delightful example in rustic timber at the rear of Knighton Lodge in Knighton Park Road and another at the rear of 38 Knighton Road.

- 4.37 In the 1890s and into the early years of the twentieth century the Arts and Crafts movement made its impact on Stoneygate. Again the style associated with this movement is not clearly differentiated from the Queen Anne and Domestic Revival styles. Rather it is marked by a more studied reference to English vernacular architecture producing a rather simpler, less heavily decorated effect often with prominent and dramatic roofs. Within Stoneygate the style is marked by the use of local orange-red brick and Swithland slate for roofing. **Inglewood** (1892) on Ratcliffe Road and the **White House** (1898) on North Avenue, both by Ernest Gimson, are nationally known examples of this style. Both houses show a concern for the use of local materials and with restrained decoration in the form of decorative plaster and leadwork. Some of the work of the Stockdale Harrison practice is also in the Arts and Crafts style notably **33 Elms Road**. **13 Stoneygate Avenue** is an example of this style of 1899 from the Goddard practice. An example of a revived Classical style is the early twentieth century Baroque **Stoneygate Baptist Church** of 1913 with its Ionic order.
- 4.38 The Arts and Crafts influence persisted in domestic architecture after 1919. Decorative detail was normally less exuberant: 'stripped down' reflecting a huge rise in building costs following the First World War. The development of substantial detached and semi-detached houses, mostly two-storey, continued throughout the years between 1919 and 1939 particularly on parts of the London Road frontage (there are good examples on the west side of London Road between Knighton Road and Knighton Drive, in Southernhay Road, the southern part of Elms Road and on Victoria Park Road. Two of the most impressive houses of this period are **27 Elms Road** and **34 Victoria Park Road**. Two inter-war houses which break away from the basically Arts and Crafts influenced style with some panache are the 'hacienda style' **10 Ratcliffe Road** (which is roofed in glazed green pantiles) and **5 Southernhay Road**. The first large blocks of flats appeared: The 'moderne' style **Knighton Court** on Knighton Park Road and **Stoneygate Court** with its Gothic details on London Road.
- 4.39 After 1945 the pattern was set for continuing development to add quality to Stoneygate within the framework of the diversity of styles established. This was not always achieved convincingly. A number of demolitions took place and replacement buildings varied in character and quality. A number of standard flat roofed blocks of flats with minimal detailing and modelling were built, for example in Albert Road and Knighton Drive. These buildings adopted the simplicity of much of the architecture of the period without any of the command of detail necessary to make them positive additions to the street scene. It is fair to say that the architectural character of Stoneygate was damaged in this period by demolitions and redevelopment and by infill and extensions. Some individual buildings did, however, contribute positively to the developing character of the area. The quality of **22 Avenue Road** (1955-58) has been recognised by listing - one of a handful of listed buildings of this type nationally. **St John the Baptist Primary School** of 1971-74 provides a civilised and expansive building, adding quality to its context without resort to pastiche. **3 Burlington Road** is an example of a successful more traditional design with a simplicity echoing the Arts and Crafts Movement.
- 4.40 In the 1980s and 1990s the tendency has been to attempt to echo the theme established by the Victorian and Edwardian architecture of the area using red brick, pitched roofs and detailing that picks up themes from the earlier buildings. Again the level of success has varied. 25 Springfield Road of 1982-83 attempts to address its context in its use of materials and form without copying details. 69-75 Stoneygate Road of 1987 achieve some success with a more traditional approach integrating

garages under the raised principal floor of the houses. Many other developments, however, have been developers' standard designs, incorporating elements such as bargeboards and finials in a way which indiscriminately copied features from earlier architecture without consciously observing the particular character of Stoneygate.

- 4.41 More recently, however, re-use and new build have been successfully combined at the former Stoneygate School on London Road, thus ensuring that both the setting of the Victorian Gothic school building within its large front garden and the relationship of the building to the main London road have been preserved. Elsewhere, the sale of Leicester University halls of residence, such as Mary Gee Houses and 20-26 Elms Road, will provide further opportunities to achieve development that will also enhance the conservation area.
- 4.42 **Garden boundary walls and hedges** make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area. They are not only attractive features in themselves but they help to define public/private space, create a sense of enclosure and provide a pleasant setting for the imposing buildings behind. The walls and hedges within Stoneygate provide clear definition between public and private spaces. In some cases, such as the boundary walls of the **White House** and of **14 Knighton Park Road to The Avenue**, high boundary walls help to delineate space and to lead the eye around a corner thus serving important townscape functions. In other cases a strong edge is made by random granite rubble walls and gate piers such as on Stoneygate Road and Victoria Park Road while a softer, more suburban design is evident in other localities, such as Southernhay Road.
- 4.43 The range of detailed boundary treatments is wide. There are relatively few elaborate designs. **Carisbrooke** on **Stanley Road** has a low Charnwood granite boundary wall with sandstone copings and imposing gate piers. There are remains of a Charnwood diorite boundary wall with brick piers at **14 Knighton Park Road** and remains of unusual stepped gate piers on Victoria Park Road. The boundary to **Ashfield** in Elmfield Avenue combines hedges, iron park railings, close boarded fencing and fine gate piers. There are relatively few railings in the conservation area: one example is the attractive simple bow-top railings around the open space on **St Mary's Road**. Examples of high brick walls serving a townscape function are noted above and there are a number of low brick boundary walls in the terraced streets.
- 4.44 More common than front walls and railings, particularly in East and South Stoneygate are wooden fences, close boarded, picket, or in some cases chestnut paling often used in conjunction with hedges or other vegetation to give a softer, more rural appearance. Fences are stained or painted. The comfortable, informal boundary that results is a particular feature of Stoneygate. The south side of **Ratcliffe Road**, for example, has runs of different types of wooden fencing and hedges giving a suburban distinctiveness to this part of the conservation area.
- 4.45 Fences and hedges in the conservation area contain a number of attractive, sometimes quirky, vehicle and pedestrian gates. These include a pleasant mild steel gate at **1 Avenue Road Extension** and a wooden pedestrian gate at **215 London Road**. Traditional Leicester-style bow-top railings can also be seen at **32-4 Knighton Drive** and **20-26 Elms Road**. There are also many examples of Victorian garden details such as black and red tiled paths with red or dark blue 'rope' edging, granite sett surfaces to back alleys or dark grey diamond-pattern clay pavers. These all serve to create an important part of the area's historic and textural context.
- 4.46 The loss of features such as gardens, forecourts, front boundary walls and gates can

therefore affect the character and appearance of the conservation area. Such losses tend to have the greatest impact in the narrower, terraced streets where properties have been converted into flats – Stoneygate Road, St John’s Road, Alexandra Road and Sandown Road are particular example where front gar5dens have been paved over to reduce maintenance, store bins or, where large, to provide off-street car parking.

#### Building materials and the public realm

- 4.47 Stoneygate has a rich variety of building materials and these contribute significantly to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The most common material is **brick**, generally the warm-coloured local red brick expertly laid with narrow joints, but sometimes enhanced with patterns in blue brick. Rubbed brick panels are a feature of some houses, for example foliate panel above the entrance to 3 Sandown Road and the date plaques at 338-40 London Road. Many properties have decorative corbelled brick eaves courses, often interspersed with decorative **glazed clay tiles**. Some properties are built in pale yellow or white bricks, an expensive material in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Examples can be seen at 344-346 London Road and 19 St John’s Road, while at 3-17 Alexandra Road the use of pale bricks is restricted to the front elevation to minimise cost but maximise the ‘superior quality’ of the property. At these properties the white bricks are also decorated with red brick detailing which serves to enliven the façades. **Red clay** roof tiles, ridge tiles and ridge and gable finials are a feature of many buildings in the area as is **clay tile-hanging** on many façades (such as 14 and 31 Knighton Drive).
- 4.48 Another commonly used material is **stone**, both for buildings, boundary walls and occasionally for roofs. The largest stone buildings in the conservation area are Clarendon Park Congregational Church and Stoneleigh Manor on Stoneygate Road, both of which are built in Mountsorrel granite with limestone dressings. Limestone appears on many other properties as decoration around windows, as quoins, stone bands or name plaques and, occasionally, to create grander entrances for modest houses such as 58-68 Stoneygate Road and 14 Knighton Drive, as substantial carved doorcases. Pierced stonework in the upper part of the tower at Christchurch on Clarendon Park Road helps to add lightness and interest to the tower and façade while the bell stage at the top of the London Road frontage of the Clarendon Park Congregational Church and the red sandstone pier caps and copings along the boundary wall at 12 Victoria Park Road are other striking examples of the use of stone for decoration. Dark grey **Welsh slate** is another common roofing material, while more recent houses use a range of artificial slates and concrete tiles.
- 4.49 Stoneygate has a large number of houses in the Domestic Revival style and the use of **timber** is therefore common for windows and as external decoration in the form of mock half-timbering, bargeboards, door canopies, dormer pediments etc. Original timber windows are of particular importance in establishing and maintaining the character of buildings, both individually and in groups. Mullions, transoms and coloured leaded lights combine to add visual interest and animation to building façades and there are many good examples of timber use in the area – 25-27 St John’s Road, 238 London Road, 34-36 Stoughton Road, 10-12 Knighton Drive and, most exuberantly, at 14 Ratcliffe Road.
- 4.50 Many of the buildings in the conservation area retain their original **coloured** or **stained glass** windows and fanlights. These add significantly to the architectural

character of individual buildings and add considerable visual interest to the environment. Particularly good examples can be seen at 10 St John's Road and 2 and 8 Knighton Drive.

- 4.51 **Render** and **stucco** can also be seen in various locations and reflects the fashions of the times. The latter appears as a finish on early 19<sup>th</sup> century Italianate buildings such as 'The Firs' 223 London Road. Render is common on inter-war houses such as those on Holmfield Road and Southernhay Road.
- 4.52 Metalwork of various kinds is also common in the conservation area. Many Victorian/Edwardian houses retain their original **cast iron** rainwater goods, often with elaborate or dated hopper heads such as 14 and 43-45 Knighton Drive and 14 Ratcliffe Road, and some **wrought iron** bow-top railings survive. A very fine cast iron gate can be found at 46 Knighton Drive.
- 4.53 Adopted road surfaces in the conservation area are all of tarmac. Most footways are also surfaced in tarmac, in some cases dressed with granite aggregate which gives quite a pleasing granular texture and pinkish colour to the surface. However, many pavements are uneven as a result of previous trenching work or because of tree root disturbance. This is particularly obvious in Ratcliffe Road and Elms Road. There are some areas of concrete paving slabs for example in Stoneygate Avenue and Elmfield Avenue. Extensive runs of Charnwood granite kerbs survive throughout the conservation area with some diorite kerbs in London Road on the west side between Knighton Road and Toller Road. Granite setts survive in some private backways, for example that at the rear of 263 -271 London Road. There are three beautifully detailed pavement crossings in pink granite setts and slabs in Elms Road between Ratcliffe Road and Shirley Road. Private driveways are mainly in tarmac with modern block materials used in some cases.
- 4.54 All lighting columns in the conservation area are modern in concrete or steel. Similarly items such as litter bins and bus shelters are all modern. The only vestiges of historic street furniture to survive are post boxes and some street name signs: there are Edwardian post boxes in Clarendon Park Road and St John's Road.

#### Greenery and green spaces

- 4.55 Within the conservation area the only area of public open space is the small park bounded by St Mary's Road, Knighton Park Road and Victoria Park Road. This is a pleasant space made less formal by not being geometrically triangular and containing a cast iron parish boundary marker and mature trees including some Corsican pines in the centre which appear on the 1885 map.
- 4.56 The opening up of the streets on the north western boundary of the conservation area onto the expanse of Victoria Park is important in defining the character of North Stoneygate and the buildings on Victoria Park Road are in turn an important defining edge, and backdrop, to Victoria Park.
- 4.57 Large, mature, private gardens are an important key to the character of Stoneygate. Many gardens contain mature trees which contribute as much as the buildings to the special character of the area. Some gardens may contain elements of late-Victorian or Edwardian structure in the form of trees and hedges, tiled paths, boundary walls and 'rope' design border edgings.
- 4.58 As important as any particular building or garden is the overall pattern of built- and



unbuilt-on areas within the conservation area and the variations in this pattern between and within the defined sub-areas. This helps to form the character of the area by providing green settings for the buildings. It also gives glimpses through and between streets, for example between Avenue Road and Springfield Road through the garden of 10 Springfield Road, thereby increasing a sense of space. The contrast between the spacious South Stoneygate and the more densely developed West Stoneygate is also an important aspect of the character of the area.

- 4.59 Stoneygate is characterised by its many mature street and garden trees. The visual links between the geometric shapes of buildings and the informal shapes of trees and between the hard visual qualities of building materials and the softer texture of foliage or bare twigs are extremely important in defining the quality of the Stoneygate street scene. Trees are significant in almost every street view in the conservation area. They provide a changing seasonal backdrop and context for views of the buildings and sensual qualities of light and shade, sound and movement.
- 4.60 The variety of species gives Stoneygate particular richness. Limes are common as street trees but there is a good avenue of horse chestnuts in Knighton Drive and fine mature oaks in Avenue Road. Many garden trees reflect the interest in recently introduced exotic conifers in the nineteenth century. This indicates how good the air quality was in this part of the Victorian town as conifers are particularly susceptible to airborne pollution. The conifers provide variation in colour and often exciting sculptural form. Particularly spectacular are the many cedars, with good specimens in the grounds of Charles Frears Campus and a superb specimen at the rear of Knighton Hayes. Also of note are the many flowering trees which provide a further element of visual variety to the area in spring.

#### Negative factors

##### *Unsuitable development*

- 4.61 The character of the area has suffered from some unsympathetic development in the late 1960s and 1970s. As has been noted some modern flat developments have had a damaging effect on the character of the area as they have not been designed to complement their surroundings or to replace the quality lost by demolitions.

##### *Alterations to buildings*

- 4.62 Some properties have suffered from the installation of uPVC windows and doors. Modern uPVC components do not reproduce the detailed visual quality of wooden windows. When historic joinery is removed the area loses a key to its history and architectural evolution. The variation in planes over the surface of a window, the subtlety of proportion between timber components, the quality of decorative detail, and the punctuation of reflections provided by glazing bars are never reproduced in visually inferior substitute materials. The continuing infiltration of uPVC and other substitute materials such as aluminium will increasingly erode the overall character of the area. As well as loss of joinery many properties have suffered from re-roofing in concrete tiles which replace the subtle, relatively smooth roof in slate or plain tile often with a ribbed coarse-grained roof in the substitute material. The replacement of original cast iron rainwater goods with plastic gutters and downpipes, whilst seeming to be minor, can also affect the character of individual buildings. It is particularly unfortunate when this involves the loss of decorated or dated hopper heads and 'ogee' profiled gutters.

### *Loss of front gardens*

- 4.63 The high level of car ownership in the area has resulted in the loss of many front gardens. The pleasant green aspect of front garden planting which is an essential ingredient in Stoneygate's character has been removed and replaced with hard surfacing to provide off street car parking. The problem is exacerbated when larger properties are converted into flats, leading to an increase in the demand for off street parking spaces. Where there is no space for on-site parking, vehicles park in the street, thereby reducing the space available for moving traffic. Alexandra Road and Sandown Road are particularly affected by on-street parking.

### *Other effects of multiple occupation*

- 4.64 The subdivision of properties puts increased pressure on the character and resources of the area as demand for facilities increases. Besides the increase in demand for car parking in the area as a result of more households, there are also other more subtle changes which take place and have an equally negative effect. The increase in the number of households means that there is a subsequent increase in the number of dustbins in the area. The introduction of large wheelie bins over the last few years has also had a considerable impact with converted properties having several of them. In many cases they are stored at the front of the house and appear as alien features in the street scene. Poor external maintenance creates an 'uncared-for' appearance and gardens and grounds of subdivided properties are often neglected (as they are not seen by residents as their responsibility). There are many cases where use of the building for flats has resulted in front gardens being concreted over to remove the need to maintain the garden space and to provide a storage area for 'wheelie' bins. Unless a management scheme is in place then these conditions can detract from the positive aspects of the area (such as Clarendon Park Road, Alexandra Road, Springfield Road etc).

### *Traffic*

- 4.65 Traffic within the area has continued to increase in line with the national trend; indeed between 1981 and 2001 vehicle ownership in the Stoneygate area increased by 25% while the number of households increased by less than 5%. London Road, which is at the heart of the conservation area, is a main radial route into the city from the south (the A6) and its function is not therefore likely to change. Traffic levels on London Road are particularly heavy and a major source of character erosion within the conservation area. Heavy traffic appears as an intrusive feature viewed against the serenity of Stoneygate's suburban character. London Road also acts as a barrier to the free movement of pedestrians in the area as the heavy traffic makes this road difficult to cross, although the recent introduction of improved pedestrian facilities such as refuges, pelican crossings and pedestrian phases at traffic-light controlled junctions, has improved matters somewhat for pedestrians.

### *Visual clutter*

- 4.66 Much of this is simply part of modern life: blocks of flats, for example, attract a cluster of 'for sale' notices. Traffic signs are determined by government requirements set out in legislation and based on highway safety, although there is some leeway for historic areas. Masts and antennas required by telecommunications operators have become part of the visual environment in towns and the countryside alike. Planning controls over telecommunications development are designed to favour the operator and local authorities are normally only in the position of trying to negotiate a less

visually damaging position for this plant rather than being able to object in principle. The presence of the 'wheelie' bin and its visual effects have already been mentioned.

#### Problems and pressures

- 4.67 It is probable that the sale of student halls of residence in the Elms Road and Ratcliffe Road areas is the source of the greatest current pressure on the conservation area. Redevelopment of the Mary Gee House and Woodlawn complexes is likely in the near future, while redevelopment at Elms Road Houses is under way.
- 4.68 Other sales of large buildings and sites are also generating pressure for change. South Lodge, owned by the Council, is now surplus to requirements and has been put on the market.
- 4.69 As has been noted earlier the loss of original architectural and other features can have a detrimental effect not only on individual buildings but also cumulatively on the character and appearance of the conservation area generally. Replacing original timber sash windows with plastic can seriously erode architectural character. It is impossible to reproduce the same glazing bar profiles in plastic and the loss of such finely moulded features can make a façade look dull and uninteresting. This problem is magnified when coloured or stained glass or leaded lights are also lost. The removal of cast iron rainwater goods can also affect the architectural and historic integrity of a building, particularly if dated or decorated, while the loss of front gardens and their associated walls and railings removes the important separation between the public and private domains and damages the green environment.

#### Capacity for change

- 4.70 From the farmland of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and the exclusivity of the area as the location for the homes of Leicester's wealthiest citizens to the fully developed suburb of today, the Stoneygate Conservation Area has been under an almost continuous process of development for 160 years. Densities have gradually increased as the area adapted and changed to accommodate the needs of a growing population; from the first large houses and 'mini-estates' which established the area's reputation as a desirable location, large semi-detached and terraced villas for the well-off middle classes followed. As land prices and building costs rose, smaller terraced houses became the norm. The detached houses of the inter-war period completed the development of the area, while the large Victorian and Edwardian terraced villas and houses became unfashionable, too big or too expensive to maintain and reverted to various forms of multiple occupation. The purpose-built flats of the 20<sup>th</sup> century represent the most recent facet of Stoneygate's development, albeit that the design of many of them has not preserved or enhanced the conservation area. However, these changes have been mitigated to a considerable extent by the area's tree cover and green aspect, and this is a feature for which there may well be only a finite capacity for change.
- 4.71 The history of the development of Stoneygate does not mean, however, that more intensive land use can or should continue. There are some large sites that have development potential, notably the University of Leicester halls of residence on Elms Road and Ratcliffe Road, and it is in those locations that there is the greatest capacity for change in the conservation area. The Council recognises this and requires that site development guidance is prepared for each site to establish the appropriate uses, scale, layout and form for any future development. In the case of the University halls of residence and South Lodge, the guiding principle is to seek to

maintain existing 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings and their settings. In addition, the overriding aim for any new development is the preservation or enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area. The City of Leicester Local Plan sets out policies to protect existing environments and the amenity of new residential development (see Appendix 4). The Council will also actively apply the policies in the Local Plan and will ensure that Site Development Guidance (SDG) is agreed for large sites such as South Lodge and the halls of residence. Such SDG has been agreed between the University and the Council to preserve the original houses (for conversion to apartments), retain important trees and achieve appropriate density of new build on the cleared sites.

- 4.72 Some damage to the character and appearance of the conservation area has already resulted from the loss of architectural features such as windows and front gardens. The further erosion of character could be better managed by the use of an Article 4 Direction covering the whole conservation area. Such a proposal forms part of the Management and Enhancement Proposals set out in Appendix 3.
- 4.73 Where loss of gardens, front walls, architectural features etc has already occurred the Council will seek to remedy such losses either through the normal planning process or by means of grants, funding permitting.

## **5.0 Community involvement**

- 5.1 Consultation on the appraisal will begin with a Press Release when the draft text will be placed on the Council's website, with copies made available for consultation in the Customer Services Centre at the Council offices at New Walk Centre. There will also be at least one exhibition in a suitable location in the conservation area for a minimum of one week and at least one 'open evening' meeting arranged to discuss the management and enhancement proposals at the same location. The Stoneygate Conservation Area Society and all people who live, work or visit the area will be invited to 'drop in' at the open evening or visit the exhibition. All views expressed in person, writing, phone or e-mail will be included in the report that will be placed before the Cabinet of the City Council, together with details as to how the various views have been taken into account in the preparation of the Management and Enhancement Proposals.

## **6.0 Conservation area boundary**

- 6.1 Stoneygate Conservation Area has been extended twice since its declaration in 1978. The appraisal has included an examination of the existing boundaries as well as requests from local residents and other interested parties such as the Stoneygate Conservation Area Society. These are summarised below, together with the Council's response :-

- ***Include Elmsleigh Avenue*** – this residential street is a mix of inter-war detached houses, a bungalow and the entrance to the houses on Llewelyn Court. Other than 7 Elmsleigh Avenue, there are no notable buildings. The avenue is also separated from the rest of the conservation area by later developments of little townscape value on Stoughton Road. The Council does not therefore propose to extend the boundary to include Elmsleigh Avenue. However, 7 Elmsleigh Avenue should be included in the Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest.
- ***Include the former church rooms (now a Hindu temple) and the former St John's Church school, 72-76 Clarendon Park Road*** – these two

properties are important features in the street scene of Clarendon Park Road and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area, not least because they retain their original windows, doors etc (although the former now has a new porch with three white domes and a ramp. They also abut the western boundary of the conservation area and 'read' as part of it. The Council proposes to extend the boundary to include them.

- ***Include the Victorian haylofts and stables at rear of 30-38 Francis Street.*** These buildings are red brick 1½ storey structures with original windows and doors facing each other across a small yard. Whilst interesting, the inclusion of these buildings within the conservation area would also require the inclusion of a short stretch of the rear service road. This would be illogical unless the rest of the service road was also included. As there is nothing of architectural and historic interest in the rest of the service road area the Council do not propose to extend the boundary at this point.

## **7.0 Management and enhancement proposals**

- 7.1 Conservation areas are complicated places that derive their special character from the interaction of many different elements. They are therefore vulnerable to change, particularly if that change is the result of a series of small changes that, taken individually, may be minor but cumulatively add up to very large changes in character or appearance. However, the intention behind the designation of conservation areas is not to prevent change but to manage change in such a way that areas can adapt and evolve but retain the features integral to their special architectural and historic interest.
- 7.2 By setting out the special architectural and historic features of the area in some detail, the foregoing character appraisal provides information, supplementary to that in the Local Plan, for those charged with managing or changing the environment and helps them to ensure that any development is planned in a manner that is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## **8.0 Contacts and appendices**

- 8.1 Further information on this, or any other, conservation area or listed building can be obtained from the Council by contacting the Conservation & Nature Team at :-
- Planning Policy & Design, Regeneration & Culture, Leicester City Council, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester LE1 6ZG
  - Fax : (0116) 2471149
  - E-mail : [urbandesigngroup@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:urbandesigngroup@leicester.gov.uk)
  - On the Council's website at [www.leicester.gov.uk/planning](http://www.leicester.gov.uk/planning) and search under 'conservation areas'.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

#### List of Buildings within the Stoneygate Conservation Area

Albert Road	-	Victoria Court (1 - 18 inc.), 1 - 7 (odd), 2, 4, 10, 25 - 27 (Tiffany Court) & 20, Albert Court 1 - 12 (inc.)
Alexandra Road	-	N0s. 1 - 37 (odd), 2 - 22 (Even)
Allandale Road	-	Nos. 25, 27, 32 (flats 1 - 5)
Ashfield Road	-	Nos 5 - 11, 17, 19 (odd), 6 - 12 (even)
Avenue Road	-	Nos 1, 3 69, 71, 73, 79, 89, 91, 99 - 101, 103 - 105, 149, 157 - 173, 181 (Rowland Court) (odd), 2 - 10, 18, 22, 24 (St. Crispin's pre-preparatory dept.), 34, 36, (Flats 1 - 5), 38 (Flats 1 - 6, 7 - 12), 40 (Flats 1 - 8), 42, 46, 50, 56, 60 - 66, 68 (even) (Vernon House) & Scout Hut (even)
Avenue Road Extension	-	No. 1
Barratt Close	-	Nos. 1 - 8 (inc)
Beechcroft Road	-	Nos. 1 - 9 (odd), 2 & 6
Birkdale Avenue	-	Nos. 2 - 6 (inc)
Carisbrooke Road	-	Flats 10 - 32
Cedars Court	-	Nos. 1 - 33 (odd)
Central Avenue	-	Nos. 1 - 19, 19a, 19b, 21, 23 (odd), 2 - 30 (even)
Clarendon Park Road	-	Nos. 71 - 75, Ambleside, 77 -105 (odd), Clarendon Park Methodist Church , 2 -16, 28 - 34, 38 - 52, 56 - 64 (even), former St John's Primary School, former St John's Church Rooms (now Hindu temple), St John the Baptist Church
Cross Road	-	Nos. 1, 3, 2 - 14 (even)
Dukes Drive	-	Flats 1 - 36 (inc)
East Avenue	-	Nos. 1 - 11, 19 - 37 (odd), St John the Baptist School
Elmfield Avenue	-	Nos. 1 - 11 (odd), 6 - 12, Flats 1 - 6 inc., 14, 14a, 16, 16a, 18, 18a, 22 - 44, 48 (even)
Elms Road	-	Nos. 1, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 19 - 27, 33 (odd) 6, 8, 8a, 8b, 8c, 10, 12, 20, 26 (Clare Hill), 28
Francis Street	-	Nos. 1, 2
Holmfield Road	-	Nos. 1 - 21 (odd)
Knighton Drive	-	Nos. 15, 17, 31, 37 (Colbri Court Flats), 39 - 77 (odd), 4 - 14, 18 (Charles Court Flats, 1 - 12), 20, 24 -

		34, 40 - 58, 62, 64, 72 (even)
Knighton Park Road	-	Nos. 3, 11, 15 (odd), 2, 4 Knighton Court (1 - 54 inc), 12 - 20 (even)
Knighton Road	-	Nos. 3 - 11, 15, 17, 21, 23, 27, including private chapel and C of E Chaplaincy, 31, Woodlands Flats (1 - 12), 33, 35 (odd), 4 - 10, 10a, 12, 14, 26 - 36, 38, 50, 52 (even)
London Road	-	Nos. 183 - 187 Hollybank Court Flats (1 - 42), 195, (Victoria Gardens Flats 1 18), 197 - 207, 209, Hollies Flats (1 -21), 213, 215, 219 - 223 (The Firs), 257, 259 Clarendon Park Congregational Church, 263 - 273, 279, 289 - 299, 307, 315 Stoneygate Baptist Church, 319 (Raglan Court 1 - 11), 323 - 339, 341 (Knighton House) 349 - 353 (odd), 232 - 238, 240 The Albany Flats (1 - 27), 244, 248, 248a, 250 - 254 (Stoneygate School), 266 (Charles Frears School of Nursing), 290, 292, 296, Stoneygate Court (1- 65), Lyndhurst Court (1 - 24), 320, 322 Oliver Court (1 - 43), 328, 330a, 330, 334 - 350 (even)
Malvern Road	-	Nos. 1 & 2 - 8 (even)
North Avenue	-	Nos. 1 - 25 (odd), 4 (flats 1 - 18), 6 & 8 The White House, The North House
Portland Road	-	Nos. 9 - 17, 21 - 35 (odd), 20 - 46 (Maxim House) (even)
Ratcliffe Court	-	Nos. 1 - 24 (inc.)
Ratcliffe Road	-	Nos. 5 - 19 (Parklands), 101 - 107 (Mary Gee House), 129 - 133, 147, 159, 169 (odd), 2 - 18, 22, 24, 32 (Inglewood) - 58 (even)
St John's Road	-	Nos. 1 - 27 (odd), 2 - 12 (even)
St Mary's Road	-	Nos. 2 - 10 (even)
Sandown Road	-	Nos. 1 - 29 (odd), 2a, 2 - 20, Flats 22 - 32, 38 - 42 (even)
Shirley Road	-	No. 46
Southernhay Road	-	Nos. 1 - 13 (odd), 2, 4, 8 - 12, 16 - 20, 24 - 28 (even)
Springfield Road	-	Nos. 1 - 5, 9 (Health Centre), 25, 27, 31 - 55 (odd), 2 - 10, 14 - 48 (even)
Stanley Road	-	Nos. 3, 5 & 7 (Eastfield College), Stanley Court
Stoneygate Avenue	-	Nos. 1a, 1 - 5, 5a, 7 - 13, 13a, 15 (odd), 2 - 20, 24 - 28 (even)
Stoneygate Court	-	Nos. 1 - 9, 10 - 45, 46 - 65 (inc.)
Stoneygate Road	-	Nos. 1, 3, 7 - 19, 21 (Pollard Court Flats 1 - 22), 23 - 29, 39 - 53, 57, 61, 63a, 63b, 65 - 75 (odd), 2a (The Lawns), 2 - 18, 24 - 30, 34, 44, (garage), 46, 48, 48a (Telephone Exchange), 50, 54a, 56, 58 (Hostel), 60 - 76 (even) Electricity Sub - Station
Stoughton Road	-	20 - 30, 30a, 32, 32a, 34, (Flats 1 - 6), 36 (Flats 1 - 5), 36b, 36c, 38 (Flats 1 - 2), 40 - 56 (even), 58 (Scout Hall), Electricity Sub - Station
Toller Road	-	Nos. 3 - 19 (odd), 2 - 16 (even)
Victoria Park Road	-	Nos. 2, 12 - 34 (even)
West Avenue	-	Nos. 2 - 36 (even)
Woodland Avenue	-	Nos. 1 - 25 (odd), 2 - 16 (even)

## Appendix 2 : List of listed buildings and tree preservation orders in the conservation

## area

### Listed Buildings

22 Avenue Road (Grade II)  
St. John the Baptist Church, Clarendon Park Road (Grade II\*)  
The Firs, 223 London Road (Grade II).  
Clarendon Park Congregational Church, London Road (Grade II)  
Former Stoneygate School, 254 London Road (Grade II)  
The White House, North Avenue (Grade II)  
Inglewood, 32 Ratcliffe Road (Grade II)  
56 Ratcliffe Road (Grade II)  
2 Springfield Road (Grade II)  
4 & 6 Springfield Road (Grade II)  
Eastfield, Stanley Road (grade II)

Official listed building descriptions are available on request from the Urban Design Group, telephone 0116 252 7296

### Tree Preservation Orders

<b>TPO ref.</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>TPO ref.</b>	<b>Address</b>
002	Stanley Court, 5 Stanley Road	006	15 & 15a Southernhay Road and Avenue Gardens
018	Avenue Road (Nos. 4, 22, 42, 73, 91, 5 Southernhay Road and 2, 24, 36 Springfield Road)	021	The Sycamores, North Avenue
022	37 East Avenue	022	37 East Avenue
024	31 Knighton Road	025	2 Springfield Road
028	319 London Road	032	11 Elmfield Avenue
034	32 Ratcliffe Road (and 11 Elms Road)	056	288 London Road.
061	6 Knighton Road (and 15 Knighton Drive)	074	28 Stoneygate Road
080	9 St. John's Road	082	36 Knighton Road (now 38 Knighton Road)
083	8 Knighton Road (now 17 Knighton Drive)	084	Stanley Road, Entrance to 5 Stanley Court
090	Cedars Court, London Road.	095	213 and 215 London Road
103	12 Knighton Road	104	14 Knighton Road
105	31 Knighton Drive	110	7-11 Stoneygate Road.
112	28 Knighton Road	115	54 Stoneygate Road.
117	30 Stoneygate Road, Stoneleigh Manor.	118	307 London Road, South Lodge Special School.
136	19-24 Ratcliffe Court.	141	1, 3 & 5 Toller Road
152	Knighton House, London Road	154	328 London Road.
155	8 Springfield Road.	160	349-353 London Road.
161	50 Stoneygate Road.	164	353 London Road (and 3 Ratcliffe Road).



182	Ratcliffe Court, Ratcliffe Road.	184	Albert Road/Stoneygate Road (Victoria Court, De Montfort Court).
196	2 Southernhay Road.	204	223 London Road.
239	Land adjacent 54 Stoneygate Road.	276	52-56 Ratcliffe Road
303	5 Stoneygate Avenue	306	1 Stoneygate Road
307	6 Ashfield Road	313	26 Knighton Drive
321	Carol Court, Sandown Road	344	2 Knighton Park Road
345	21 Elms Road	396	105 Avenue Road
401	34 Elms Road	402	Eastfield, Stanley Road
406	33 Elms Road	410	18 Stoneygate Avenue
412	12 Ashfield Road	420	Ratcliffe Road/Carisbrooke Road
428	325 London Road	450	20-22 Knighton Drive

### Appendix 3 : Management & enhancement proposals

Location	Management or Enhancement Proposal
Conservation Area generally	<p>1. Seek an Article 4 Direction to require planning permission for porches, replacement windows, roofs, painting of façades, driveways etc and for the works to front boundary walls/gates etc. Re-issue Conservation Area Guidance Notes at the same time. <b>Delivery</b> : by mid-late 2007</p> <p>2. Make use of powers afforded the City Council by national legislation to encourage good design, including a presumption against the demolition of buildings that make positive contributions to the character and appearance of the conservation area. <b>Delivery</b> – on-going</p> <p>3. Seek funds for Historic Building Grants for repairs to buildings in the conservation area and to encourage improvements to front yards and bin storage spaces. <b>Delivery</b> : short term (2008-9 bidding round)</p> <p>4. Install more conservation area plaques <b>Delivery</b> : short term</p> <p>5. Retain historic street surfaces and furniture wherever possible <b>Delivery</b> – on-going</p> <p>6. Encourage the good management of trees in private gardens and consider developing guidance noted for owners of trees. <b>Delivery</b> : short-term</p>
Elmsleigh Avenue	<p>Include 7 Elmsleigh Avenue in the Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest <b>Delivery</b> : short-term</p>

Short term – within 3 years, Medium term – 3-5 years, Long term – 5 + years

#### Appendix 4 : Relevant Local Plan and other policies

Subject	Local Plan Policy No.	Details
The Plan Strategy	PS01	Conservation & enhancement of the city's buildings
Residential Amenity	PS10	Factors to be considered when determining planning permission for new housing
Built Environment		
Archaeology	BE01	Preservation of the city's archaeological heritage
Listed Buildings	BE02-05	Protecting the character and setting of listed buildings
Conservation Areas	BE06-07	The need to preserve and enhance conservation areas; a presumption against demolition of buildings that make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of conservation areas
Buildings of local interest	BE08	Protecting buildings that play a key role in defining Leicester's townscape
Article 4 Directions	BE08	Protecting historic and architectural features of buildings
Design Guidance		
Stoneygate Design Guide	-	Adopted September 1986

#### Appendix 5 – Glossary of architectural terms

bargeboard	projecting board placed against the outside incline of the roof of a building, often used decoratively
cornice	horizontal projecting section at the top of a building or wall
fanlight	a window over a door
finial	a formal ornament at the apex of a gable or spire
half-timbering	the external visible timbers of a timber-framed building (or mock half-timbering where timbers are applied externally to create the impression of half-timbering)
jetty (ies)	the projection of an upper storey outward over the one below
pediment	a low pitched gable shape over a door or window
quoin	dressed stones laid up the external corners of buildings, usually in alternating large and small blocks
sikhara	the spire or tower over the sanctuary of a Hindu temple
stucco	a cement-type render used for facing external walls
tile-hanging	a covering of overlapping rows of tiles on a vertical surface
tracery	ornamental stone or metal openwork in a window opening