

NEW WALK CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER STATEMENT

CONSULTATION DRAFT

February 2004

This is a consultation draft of the proposed character statement for New Walk Conservation Area. Comments are welcome and should be sent to June Gray, Urban Design Group, Environment Regeneration & Development, Leicester City Council, Welford Place, Leicester, LE1 6ZG, telephone 0116 252 7296, or fax 0116 247 1149, e-mail grayj001@leicester.gov.uk

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A conservation area is defined as an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance¹. The City Council designates conservation areas, after consulting local people, under powers contained in the national planning legislation and in accordance with advice from central government. Leicester's conservation areas contain the best of the older parts of the City and each conservation area is distinctive and contains qualities which help to give the City an overall character of its own. The City Council has a duty to preserve and enhance the character of conservation areas and has special legal powers to do this.
- 1.2 It is not the purpose of a conservation area to prevent change but to manage change in the light of the existing character of the area. When the City Council is considering a planning application for a site within a conservation area it must ensure that the proposed development preserves or enhances the character of the area. To do this it must be clear as to what the character of the area is and this document is intended to provide the framework for such consideration.
- 1.3 Looking after and improving the qualities of a conservation area 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 allow and will encourage others to do likewise.
- 1.4 New Walk Conservation Area was one of Leicester's first conservation areas, designated in 1969. It was extended westwards to include the Regent Road and Marlborough Street area in 1974 and again in 1980 to include the area between Regent Street and Leicester Prison on Welford Road. The boundaries of the Conservation Area are shown on Map 2. New Walk is also included on the list of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest (Grade II).
- 1.5 However, the boundaries of the conservation area include zones of diverse character. Therefore, for the purposes of this character statement, three sub-areas have been identified and will be considered separately. These are shown on Map 2.

Area A : **New Walk** (this includes the Walk and the buildings that directly front onto it, together with the public open spaces and their associated buildings).

This area is the important linear feature of the conservation area where there is considerable homogeneity in the design of the

¹ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 section 69

buildings. It includes the majority of the conservation area's trees and open spaces and has the lowest building density. The subtle curves of the walk itself set it apart from the rest of the conservation area. This is also the area with the widest range of land uses – residential, office, religious, retail, industrial.

Area B : **Regent Road** (from Granville Road to Marlborough Street and Duke Street, including The Crescent and King Street).

This area is defined by Regent Road which creates a 'spine' for the grid pattern of side streets on its north side. Most of the conservation area's redeveloped sites are located in this sub-area, particularly along Regent Road. Generally this is an office zone, with much of the accommodation being located in converted residential buildings. The detached, semi-detached and terraced layout of these large former houses is still very much in evidence. Large industrial buildings (now converted to residential use) are found at the western end of the sub-area along King Street.

Area C : **Holy Trinity** (the area south of Regent Road and bounded by the railway to the east, Lancaster Road and Welford Road)

This area is characterised by its south-sloping grid pattern of streets which are dominated by the Leicester prison in the south-west corner. It is almost wholly in residential use, with a small group of shops along Welford Road. It is built to a very high density.

- 1.6 If adopted, this Character Statement will form Supplementary Planning Guidance to the City Of Leicester Local Plan. It is therefore important that its contents are understood and, ideally, accepted by a range of interested parties. The draft Character Statement will therefore be subject to consultation with property owners and occupiers, local residents and community groups, local ward councillors and the general public. The results of the consultation will be considered in the preparation of the final form of the Character Statement. It will then be presented to Cabinet for adoption. Details of the consultation undertaken, the representations received and the Council's responses are available on request.

2.0 Location and landform

- 2.1 The conservation area, which covers an area of 29.5 hectares (73 acres), extends from King Street in the north-west, Granville Road in the east and Lancaster Road in the south. It lies on the hill created by the boundary between the Triassic and Jurassic geological systems. Between King Street and Granville Road, the ground rises about 20m (65ft), from Mercia

mudstones at the town centre-end to deep layers of boulder clay at the eastern end.² The land also slopes down from New Walk to Regent Road.

3.0 Archaeology, History and Development

- 3.1 In the late 18th century the land now forming the New Walk Conservation Area was part of the town's South Fields, a large area of un-enclosed open fields owned by the Borough Freemen and used for grazing. A footpath leading to Gartree village ran through the Fields, possibly on the line of the Roman road from Leicester to Colchester, '*Via Devana*'. The land was above the River Soar flood plain and outside the increasingly cramped confines of the town's medieval walls and, to the Borough Corporation, this made the South Fields highly desirable for building.
- 3.2 It is possible that they decided to lay out New Walk (originally Queen's Walk, sometimes Ladies' Walk) in 1785 as a means of putting pressure on the Freemen to sell the South Fields so that they could be enclosed and sold for building (Map 3). The convenient location of an existing footpath was to the Corporation's advantage as was the proximity of the town's newly fashionable residential area based around Friar Lane, Millstone Lane and New Street. The provision of a pleasant rural pathway linking the town's well-to-do residents with the open countryside and the racecourse (now Victoria Park) would have been another desirable outcome. When laid out, the Walk was gravel surfaced and lined with hedges.
- 3.3 However, despite this first move, it was not until nineteen years later, in 1804, that the Enclosure Award was drawn up. In that year, Susannah Watts describes New Walk as a path through open fields affording views of nearby villages as well as the church spires of the town.³
- 3.4 After the Award was ratified in 1811 King Street was laid out, followed by Wellington Street in 1812, Princess Road in 1815 and the Holy Trinity streets (Regent Road and the streets to the south) by the late 1820s.⁴ The south end of Newtown Street was complete by 1840 (when it was known as Lower King Street); it was linked through to Regent Road (Regent Street) by 1844.
- 3.5 The Corporation did not allow any building to take place along New Walk until 1824. Holy Cross Priory, however, overcame this restriction in 1818 by being built fronting Wellington Street. From 1824 onwards, albeit in a piecemeal fashion, development commenced south of Holy Cross Priory. However, building had to adhere to the Corporation's strict conditions, two of which were that (i) "*the privilege of opening communications with the New Walk be for the purpose only of a footway*" and (ii) that building should not be closer than 10 yards (9m) from the Walk. Only at the King Street end was this second condition breached late in the 19th century. It is

² Boynton, H & Pitches, G, *Desirable Locations*, Leicester City Council, 1996

³ Miss S Watts, *A Walk Through Leicester*, 1804 facsimile, Leicester

⁴ Gill, R, *The Book of Leicester*, Barracuda Books, 1985

also clear that the Corporation wanted New Walk to be different from neighbouring streets by requiring that new owners '*make an iron palisade fence along their whole front*'. On this proviso, the Corporation would remove the existing hedge and ditch.⁵

- 3.6 These conditions determined the openness and spaciousness that is characteristic of New Walk and set in place the rules for its traffic-free status. However, development remained unco-ordinated, taking place as and when building plots were sold. The rules governing plot layout did not, however, apply in the Holy Trinity area and development proceeded here in the manner typical of Leicester in the 19th century - small plots with buildings close to, or opening directly off, the footpath.
- 3.7 The Crescent in King Street is one of the earliest buildings in the conservation area; by 1828, it was part of an area of large villas and Regency terraces (see Map 4). In contrast to the wealth and elegance displayed in The Crescent, and also dating from the 1820s, some tiny two room dwellings (Cramant Cottages) were crammed into the back garden of 54 King Street.
- 3.8 Some of the conservation area's other notable buildings from this period can still be seen opposite the Museum at 58-60, 62-64 and 72 New Walk. During the 1830s and 40s some of New Walk's grandest buildings were constructed, most notably the Museum in 1836 (built by Joseph Hansom as a Nonconformist Proprietary school and sold to the Corporation in 1848). Lighting along the Walk was provided by elegant throwover arches, some of which survive.
- 3.9 As the town's newest suburb, the properties along New Walk were very fashionable places to live and the quality of the residents' surroundings was further enhanced by open spaces that were created as development progressed. Two grand east-facing terraces were constructed in the 1840s and 50s to take full advantage of these, at Museum Square and De Montfort Square (Map 4). However, despite local opposition, the Midland Counties railway line to London was built in 1840. Although in a deep cutting, the Corporation decided it needed to be hidden further and the bridge over the railway was hidden behind a barrier of planting. Even so, the coming of the railway may have accelerated the movement of the wealthier residents on New Walk to the emerging suburb of Stoneygate.
- 3.10 Development elsewhere in the conservation area proceeded apace. The large warehouse at 35 King Street (recently converted into apartments) was constructed in 1845 for Harris & Sons and between 1850 and 1860 more warehouses had been built on Wellington Street. Indeed many hosiery merchants who had lived in this part of New Walk were building

⁵ Hall Book, 17 March 1824, in Potts, *New Walk in the Nineteenth Century*, Leicester 1968

their factories and warehouses on land which not long before had been regarded as the best residential area of the town.⁶

- 3.11 South of New Walk, the development of the Holy Trinity area was also taking place but in a quite different form. The first building to be erected was the Prison – a monumental structure, the grim design of which was perhaps a response to the frequent civil disturbances of the time.⁷ However, its presence did not seem to deter developers or potential residents as all the surrounding streets were laid out in a standard grid pattern by 1828. Burton's map of 1844 (map 6) shows that Upper King Street (1835) had been built, with Crescent Cottages and Holy Trinity Church following in 1838. The small terrace of houses at 77-95 Regent Road date from 1841 while those at 44-72 Tower Street, 14-22 Newtown Street and 18-22 West Street were built sometime in the later 1840s.
- 3.12 The period between 1860 and 1899 saw the development of most of the rest of the conservation area. The remaining plots in the Holy Trinity area were built up, as was most of the land east of De Montfort Street. Here, large detached houses and substantial semi-detached villas made their appearance, for example, those at 44 Princess Road East, 3 Granville Road and 112-130 New Walk. St Stephen's Church, which was originally located on London Road, was demolished stone by stone when its site was sold to make way for the rebuilding of the railway station and the Wyvern Hotel; it was re-erected in 1893 on its present site on De Montfort Street. The traffic-free nature of New Walk also remained because carriage access was only permitted off London Road via a series of 'backways' or between building frontages and the Walk itself on a separate 'carriage way'.⁸ This resulted in a dense pattern of development in the form of roads and coach-houses.
- 3.13 The twentieth century saw substantial changes in the conservation area. Map 7 provides an indication of how much redevelopment has taken place. Building lines have, however, generally been respected, preserving the original layout. The Holy Trinity area suffered least – the twentieth century impact was primarily that of the car in the form of lock-up garages, parking courts and motor repair workshops. East of De Montfort Street the conservation area is also substantially intact as the 20th century buildings have been constructed primarily on previously undeveloped land.
- 3.14 In the 1960s proposals were made for an inner ring road across and a major Civic Centre, both of which would have required the demolition of, amongst other buildings, The Crescent on King Street. Although the original proposals were abandoned, a number of buildings in the area deteriorated, substantially because of planning blight, and were

⁶ *Victoria History of the Counties of England, Vol 4, and map page 261*, University of London, 1985

⁷ Mitchell, T, *A Newtown Trail*, Leicester Urban Studies Centre, Leicester, 1982

⁸ Boynton, Helen E, *Map from the Deeds of 162-164 New Walk, page 54, The History of New Walk, Leicester*, Leicester, 2002

demolished. Many were replaced by offices, such as 20-40 New Walk, Provincial House (37 New Walk) and the buildings at 20-34 and 9-43 Princess Road West.

- 3.15 However, the blighting of the area was the catalyst that led to the designation of New Walk as Leicester's first conservation area in 1969. The first improvements to New Walk were also undertaken at that time when it was relaid in red tarmac, with granite and concrete setts forming drainage channels and edging. Consequently, when an inner ring road (Waterloo Way) was again proposed in the 1970s, the Council succeeded in having it built in a cutting to minimise further damage to the continuity and character of New Walk. Unfortunately Waterloo House, described by Pevsner as one of the finest buildings on New Walk, was demolished to make way for the cutting.
- 3.16 In 1979, New Walk was declared an 'Area of Special Advertisement Control' to help preserve the visual amenity of the conservation area from excessive numbers and sizes of advertisements.⁹
- 3.17 In 1980, the Holy Trinity area was declared a Housing Action Area (HAA). This could have resulted in considerable alterations to the appearance of properties and the Council therefore also agreed to extend the boundaries of the New Walk Conservation Area and to declare an Article 4 Direction in order to preserve the special character and appearance of houses (paragraph 11.7 refers).
- 3.18 In 1994 the Council carried out further improvements to New Walk, including installing Parisien-style lamp columns and additional arches to increase lighting levels and some new front boundary walls and railings. During that year, English Heritage also included New Walk in the national Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest as a Grade II listed park.
- 3.19 In 2002 the Council's application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the 'New Walk Restoration Scheme' was approved. A programme to restore much of New Walk to its 19th century appearance was thus begun and works have included resurfacing to create a gravelled appearance, new lamp arches to replace missing ones, additional private boundary walls and railings schemes, new specially designed seating, landscaping, public artworks and tree planting. The Council is also preparing a Management Plan for the whole of the Walk.

4.0 Prevailing and former uses

- 4.1 New Walk was a fashionable residential suburb in the 19th century. However, a mixed land use had already developed around King Street and Welford Road by the 1830s and during the 1840s, large warehouses, small

⁹ Regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1969.

factories, workshops, pubs and small houses replaced many of the original villas.¹⁰

- 4.2 By the twentieth century, the area around King Street had become primarily commercial and industrial, a function which it retained until the collapse of the hosiery and footwear trades in the 1970s and 80s. The Crescent and Crescent Cottages have been converted to offices and several former warehouses and factories have been converted into flats or demolished to make way for new office and residential developments.
- 4.3 Most of the buildings along New Walk have been converted for office use, but residential properties can still be found at, for example, Bob Trewick House (21-27 De Montfort Square) and 72-78 New Walk. Within the last 10 years or so housing uses have begun to return to New Walk. Some are conversions from offices (such as at 77-89 Princess Road East and 140 New Walk) and others are new build such as 4 University Road, 19-61 Princess Road West and the site of Arlen House (2 Salisbury Road). The proximity of the area to the city's universities has also resulted in student halls of residence such as Kenneth Holmes Hall on Regent Road.
- 4.4 Towards the east-end of the conservation area, office and professional uses predominate and Leicester University uses many of the large properties for academic or office purposes; there are also some hotels and guesthouses. Many front and back gardens have been given over to car parking. Closer to the city centre, there are more leisure uses, such as bars or restaurants (such as the former 'Leicestershire Sunday School Union Centenary Memorial Hall' at 6 New Walk'). The site of one of the town's earliest swimming baths on New Walk (which was bomb damaged in the second World War) is now a car park.
- 4.5 In the Holy Trinity area, the majority of the buildings remain in residential use but a number have been converted to flats.

5.0 Architectural character and key unlisted buildings

*The inclusion of buildings in this section is selective and is intended to illustrate the range of building types, styles and materials in the conservation area. Those unlisted buildings that are considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area are shown in **bold**. If a building is not included this should not be taken to indicate that it does not make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area*

- 5.1 Despite much modern redevelopment the original architectural character of the conservation area is still apparent. It derives primarily from the early 19th century Regency classical style and can be seen in most parts of the conservation area. The massing and scale of buildings is generally similar, with only important public buildings such as the Museum or churches, departing from that uniformity.

¹⁰ Mitchell, T, *A Newtown Trail*, Leicester Urban Studies Centre, 2002

- 5.2 It is also significant that the Regency classical style was maintained in the area for over 40 years when elsewhere fashions were changing. East of De Montfort Street, however, there is greater stylistic variety as builders and owners adopted the new styles (such as the English Vernacular) which were making their appearance from the 1870s onwards.
- 5.3 Section 3 has described how the conservation area developed along two separate lines – north of Regent Road the layout is spacious and well-endowed with green space, whilst to the south the housing is at a much higher density on small plots laid out in a regular grid pattern. For simplicity, therefore, this part of the character statement will therefore consider each of these two areas separately.

Area A : New Walk

- 5.4 Among the earliest surviving buildings are 58-60 and 62-64 New Walk, which are good examples of the Regency classical style. These date from around 1825 and have stucco-rendered fronts. The left-hand pair has a heavy Doric porch and the right-hand pair has twinned pilasters, a Greek key frieze on the parapet and Egyptian-style chimney pots. A pair of Regency cottages at 19-25 New Walk are less ornate but the appearance of the plain stuccoed façade is relieved by the use of small segmental bow windows, stone quoins and a bracketed eaves cornice.
- 5.5 Another early building is 72 New Walk, a detached house built in plain red brick but with classical proportions, double bracketed eaves and a rectangular fanlight in the Chinese style. Numbers 74-78 New Walk return to the stuccoed Regency style with simple doorcases and elegant balconies. The Museum opposite dates from 1836; it was one of the first non-residential buildings on the Walk but its massive portico with a big pediment and heavy Tuscan columns continues the classical theme¹¹.
- 5.6 In 1840 the railway line was built and effectively formed a boundary between the developed north and the undeveloped south of the conservation area. However, the railway also gave access to cheaper building materials from other parts of the country and this allowed for the large scale building in brick which is characteristic of 19th century Leicester. The terrace at 98-104 New Walk is one of the earliest examples of brick building in the area, dating from before 1844. Built in a reddish-grey brick it nevertheless continues New Walk's stylistic conservatism in its use of pilasters, columns and delicate fanlights (the rather clumsy bay windows date from the 1870s following the fashion of the day).
- 5.7 By the 1850s and 1860s the Regency style had become unfashionable. However, large parts of New Walk continued to be built with neo-classical references. The use of stucco was generally abandoned and brick became the material of choice. This can be clearly seen in the unusual light grey

¹¹ Trubshaw, D *What is distinctive about New Walk?*, unpublished essay, 2002

bricks used at the terrace on the west side of Museum Square. Designed by Flint and Wickes to look like a single grand house with a 'palace front', it dates from 1852 and has a symmetrical composition with contrasting segmental and triangular pediments in stone, with a strong stone stringcourse to the first floor and bold stone quoins to the corners. Also from that date, a rather less refined group by William Flint can be seen at 7-17 New Walk. Another brick and stone 'palace front' overlooks De Montfort Square on the west side.

- 5.8 Although the 1860s saw the beginning of what is now called the 'Battle of the Styles' there is little to show that the conservation area was much affected by it. The classical style remains evident in the warehouse building at **1-3 Wellington Street**. However, an interesting building of that period can be found. Built as a warehouse, **11-13 Wellington Street** is an interesting mix of Gothic and 'Venetian' styles with polychrome brickwork, ornamentation at stringcourse and eaves level, Venetian style windows and floral capitals. The last are worthy of close examination as each capital represents different flowers or seeds – snowdrops, ferns, lily of the valley, hops, acorns etc. The 'Flemish' façade of **19 Wellington Street** is more subdued but, nevertheless, makes a valuable contribution to the architectural quality of the street.
- 5.9 Development south of de Montfort Street did not begin until after 1862.¹² However, when it did it was in the same plain, symmetrical, debased Italianate classicism as before. The fourteen semi-detached houses (**112-130 New Walk**) built in red brick by William Rushin in 1865 show this clearly. Deep overhanging eaves supported on brackets, stone quoins and stone window surrounds are used; the bay windows are the first examples of this architectural feature in New Walk. The Oval (originally Albert Grove) was created the following year. Nearby is St Stephen's Church, which is quite different. It is a Gothic building but the choice of this style was not deliberately intended as a move away from the Classical theme of New Walk. Rather it is an 'architectural accident', having been 'imported' in 1891 from its original site on London Road (paragraph 3.9 refers).
- 5.10 Beyond University Road a distinct style change takes place. Where the buildings nearer to the city centre are calmly and regularly Classical, here they are dramatic and bold in the newly fashionable English Vernacular style. Built in the 1880s by such architects as Stockdale Harrison (146-154 Upper New Walk), the eaves lines 'leap up and down, with gables and turrets topped by finials, spikes of lead or terracotta'.¹³ These three storey buildings are a free mix of timber framing, wooden balconies, bay windows, tile-hanging and decorated doorways, and, with **156-170 Upper New Walk** (1888-91) form a convex curve around to **1 Granville Road**. Nearby, an example of the style at the turn of the 20th century can be seen in the form of **57 New Walk** (the former County Records Office).

¹² *Spencer's Map 1862*, Leicester Record Office

¹³ Taylor, M (Ed.), *The Quality of Leicester*, Leicester, 1993

Area B : Regent Road

- 5.11 Most of the houses to the south of New Walk, on Princess Road, West Walk, de Montfort Street and Regent Road were built between 1862 and 1875. They depart from the style of the Walk and begin to introduce more decoration. Some remain strictly Classical, such as **104, 108 and 128 Regent Road** (1869), while others proclaim their owner's wealth and status, for example **44 Princess Road East** (built in 1870 for F J Morley, the owner of Morley's department store on Cheapside, by his brother). In a cream brick and "amidst the unassuming elegance of de Montfort Square, its riotous decoration stands out boldly and in somewhat doubtful taste. Rows of moulded bricks in panels either side of each window suggest wooden roller blinds, and the decoration round the door and windows and on the corner stones is very ornate".¹⁴ Each façade is crowned by a broken pediment.
- 5.12 At **2-10 Salisbury Road** (1870s) the Flemish or Queen Anne style makes a modest appearance and elsewhere the late Victorian English Vernacular style is used with boldness and aplomb, reflecting the confidence of their new wealthy middle class owners. The large house at 113 Princess Road East is a particularly fine example by Goddard and Sons using brick, stone and timber, fish-scale tiles, decorative bargeboards, dormers and polygonal chimney stacks to grate decorative effect. Its neighbour opposite at **21 University Road** (1873) is perhaps not as grand but it too has interesting stonework and a circular tower with a conical slate roof.
- 5.13 There are several other good examples of English Vernacular architecture in the conservation area. Dating from the early twentieth century, the style can be found at **25 De Montfort Street**, and **1a and 1b Salisbury Road**. This latter pair of buildings are typical of the style in their use of render, brick and mock half-timbering with leaded casement or sash windows, big bracketed gables and Swithland slate roofs, an unusual building material for New Walk. They contrast yet complement the late Victorian vernacular style on the opposite side of Upper New Walk (nos.146-154).

Holy Trinity

- 5.14 One of the most distinctive groups of buildings in this area is The Crescent, built as an elegant terrace similar to the curved terraces in Bath by William Firmadge. It is set behind an (originally fenced) area and has a gently curved and well-proportioned façade of plain red brick with a slightly projecting central section featuring a pediment. Semi-circular fanlights above the doors and finely detailed wrought iron balconies and pedimented porch combine to create a building of considerable architectural distinction.
- 5.15 In King Street, as in New Walk, the Greek theme of the early classical revival style is taken up in the cottages and houses at 71-81 King Street

¹⁴ Leicester City Council, *Leicester's Architectural Heritage*, Leicester, 1975

(1838) and 1-29 Upper King Street (1835), where more key patterns and anthemion (honeysuckle) motifs are used for decorative effect. Holy Trinity Church (1838) was built by Sidney Smirke in an early classical style in harmony with Upper King Street but was totally remodelled in purple brick and stone, complete with spire and pavilion-roofed turrets in the High Gothic style, by S S Teulon in 1872. The large warehouse at 35 King Street dates from 1845 and would have presented a great contrast with its surroundings, which, at that time, would have been a mixture of small workshops, houses and public houses etc. Not only would it have been larger and more impressive but its classical architectural style would also have been distinctive and fashionable.

- 5.16 In the 1840s several small brick-built terraces were built in the Newtown area. At **14-24 Newtown Street** the houses are of three storeys with a simple stringcourse, flat window arches and moulded timber panels in the door jambs. Those at **44-54 Tower Street** are much simpler but their two storeys are well-proportioned with flat window arches and a deep plinth. The group of houses at **2 Newtown Street - 73 Regent Road**, possibly by William Flint, are built in an attractive white brick (unfortunately mostly painted over) with round-headed windows and a bold pedimented gable facing Newtown Street. In contrast, Southfields Cottages at **77-95 Regent Road** (built in 1841) are faced in stucco, copying the Greek Classical style of the larger houses on Upper King Street. Thought to have been built by the Midland Railway for middle management, the choice of the Regency classical style may be a status symbol.¹⁵ Despite the classical style falling out of fashion in the 1850s and 60s it prevailed in the Holy Trinity area.
- 5.17 In stark contrast are the massive brick walls around William Parson's prison building of 1823-25. Built with a Derbyshire sandstone sham castle gatehouse reminiscent of the Welsh castles of Edward I, its presence dominates this corner of the conservation area. The buttressed walls are one of the area's earliest brick structures as well as the largest.
- 5.18 There are two fine groups of two storey houses from this period at **1-15 Tower Street** (1855) and **2-14 Lancaster Road** (1857). Here there are stringcourses, highly decorated eaves cornices, coupled doorways and stone cornices supported on elaborate console brackets. The first floor window lintels are also decorated with a central console bracket. The former also has a pedimented gable and blank windows to the Newtown Street façade, features that pay an architectural compliment to the treatment of the 1840s houses at the corner **27 West Street** and **56 Tower Street**.
- 5.19 The late Regency classical references continue in the grandly designed three storey houses at **16-42 Lancaster Road** (circa 1860) but here they are enhanced by stone window mouldings, stone quoins and paired doors with square pilasters and moulded entablatures. Two finely detailed canted bay windows with acanthus leaf capitals and rope-mouldings to the

¹⁵ Mitchell, T, *A Newtown Trail*, Leicester Urban Studies Centre, Leicester, 1982

mullions can be seen at numbers 22-24. A pair of semi-detached houses at **24-26 West Street** are also elegantly decorated with classical motifs in timber and stone against cream brickwork.

- 5.20 During the last quarter of the 19th century, more 'fashionable' styles began to appear, introducing new forms of decoration into the area. The north end of West Street provides many examples of this in close proximity to one another. At **17-25 West Street** decoration is quite lavishly applied to the Leicester red brick houses in the form of ornate lintels, scrolled brackets to the bay window roofs and a tiled eaves stringcourse with paired brackets and pierced banding. Close to the junction with Regent Road a double height bay with a roofed balcony complete with turned balusters and pierced spandrels at **5 West Street** adds interest to the corner. The square and canted bays at **13-15 West Street** would have been added to these otherwise Classical buildings, the former having much stained glass. From the 1890s **2-12 Turner Street** have been designed with very steeply pitched slate roof and paired front doors beneath tiled canopies supported on big timber brackets. To the north, Lorne House at **61 Regent Road** has Gothic Revival details such as hoodmoulds with ballflower end-stops and a triple light Gothic window between the end bays. It is also decorated with crossed rope patterned clay tiles to the stringcourse and bay, rope-moulding to the mullions, and a moulded brick date plaque (1883) on the Newtown Street elevation.

6.0 Townscape

- 6.1 The term *townscape* refers to the ways in which views open and close, as the observer moves through an area; changes in scale; visual contrast and textural qualities in the street scene: all qualities which help to give the environment of an area individuality and character.
- 6.2 The visual quality of the New Walk conservation area stems from diverse factors. New Walk itself is on a hill and it is not straight. The observer's eye is therefore diverted at various points along the route. Its buildings are set back from the pathway creating an open feeling to the area which is emphasised by the three open spaces along its route. The form, massing and scale of the original buildings also tend to be similar, thus adding to the prevailing feeling of calm and orderliness. The Walk area is also quiet and green. The trees are its most prominent feature and the open spaces give an extra vital dimension to the experience of travelling along the Walk.
- 6.3 Between Regent Road and New Walk the townscape is different – large modern offices and Victorian houses laid out on large plots in a wide grid pattern but still 'green'. Noise and busyness begin to intrude here. In Holy Trinity the townscape is different again – the buildings are still laid out in a grid but here they are terraced and crowd in towards the roadways. They are also on a hill that slopes down towards a park edged with trees. The whole is, however, dominated by the massive walls of the Prison. Map 8 provides a visual analysis of the essential elements of this unique townscape.

Views and vistas

- 6.4 From the north end of the Walk the rising ground to the south can be clearly seen but there is subtle change of direction at the Museum which 'closes' the onward view. At the Oval the slope gets slightly steeper and the pathway bends away to the right while, further on, the gradient at Upper New Walk increases significantly as the path curves back again. Each direction change reveals or conceals new views or vistas and everywhere along the route the buildings create a sense of enclosure without causing a feeling of being 'hemmed-in'.
- 6.5 Adding to the interest each of the linked open spaces contribute their own character and quality to the townscape and it is the combination of openness and enclosure that prevents New Walk from being 'just a corridor'.¹⁶ At various points along the Walk there are views or glimpses of objects beyond the conservation area to add to the visual interest.
- 6.6 In the Regent Road area there are interesting views to the clock towers of the Fire Station and Freeman's Common and the hill affords a view towards the town or outwards towards the school and the new de Montfort Street flats. The Holy Trinity area is more inward-looking with some views out being 'stopped' by other buildings or features such as West Street northwards to one of the Museum's Classical façades or the view outwards to the War Memorial at the top of Lancaster Road.

Landmarks and corners

- 6.7 Certain buildings, by reason of elements such as their design or scale, appear as landmarks or visual 'punctuation marks'. The scale and mass of Holy Cross Priory make it stand out and the Museum's big Classical Tuscan portico creates a strong visual impact. The spires of the area's two churches are obvious features that can be seen for some distance and Crescent Cottages form a 'hinge' around which four roads turn. The most powerful landmark is, however, the Prison, the massive walls of which dominate the south side of the conservation area.

Textures and rhythm

- 6.8 All buildings, surfaces and vegetation provide texture in some form. Colour, both natural and man-made, is also an important element of visual texture. Across the conservation area there is a variety of textures and colours of building materials that are variously pierced, broken or decorated by the rhythmic patterns of articulated façades, windows, stringcourses, pilasters and balconies.
- 6.9 The colour changes on New Walk are subtle and gradual from King Street to de Montfort Square but then Upper New Walk dramatically introduces decoration, bright red brickwork and jagged rhythms. The facades along Upper King Street are painted in pale colours with architectural details (window surrounds, stringcourses and anthemion and line mouldings) picked out in stronger colours.

¹⁶ Taylor, M (Ed), *The Quality of Leicester*, Leicester, 1993

- 6.10 Virtually every street has its own textural and rhythmic qualities – from the boundary walls and railings at 1-9 Salisbury Road to the patterns created by the bay windows, gables and eaves brackets of the Holy Trinity area. The exterior walls of the Prison have a strong vertical emphasis which is enhanced by the half-round ‘buttress towers’ along its length.
- 6.11 Street and footpath surfaces also contribute to the townscape quality. On New Walk new stone gullies and a gravel-effect surface finish have introduced a new and subtler colour scheme with more interesting textures. Not only does this complement the stonework of the surrounding buildings it also re-creates the impression of the original gravelled walkway and helps to increase light levels. Elsewhere, but contributing little to the quality of the townscape, standard black tarmac and concrete paving slabs are used. At Lower Hastings Street the roadway is poor quality concrete.

Skylines and edges

- 6.12 Where there are varied rooflines, dormers, chimneys, spires and turrets there is usually a visually interesting skyline and, thus, more interesting townscape. The conservation area still retains much to create skyline interest particularly along Wellington Street, Regent Road and Lancaster Road. The crenellations and towers of the Prison stand out prominently against the sky and its high brick walls form a solid edge on the south-west corner of the conservation area. Wellington Street and the railway line are big physical and visual boundaries.

Sounds and Images

- 6.13 As can be seen on Map 8 the conservation area has different pockets of quiet and noise. These affect people’s perceptions and image of the area and can influence their decisions to linger or hurry through it. This is probably why the heavily trafficked streets of Regent Road, Granville Road and Welford Road have few pedestrians whereas people walking to and from work or school can be found mostly on the side streets or New Walk itself. The quiet of the Walk allows birdsong to be heard and wildlife to be seen. For Leicester people this is the essence of the conservation area. In a recent survey, users of the Walk valued the natural environment and tranquillity of the area.¹⁷ The trees, planting, peace and quiet and lack of cars make the spaces popular for users to walk, eat lunch and read.

Intrusion

- 6.14 For many, traffic noise is the most intrusive element in the urban environment and, as has been described above, the conservation area is not immune to such disturbance. However, the visual content of an area also influences our reaction to it and, hence, our view of the quality of the townscape. The effect may be conscious or subconscious, but unpleasant, unsightly or discordant views can damage our perceptions of an area.

¹⁷ *New Walk Open Spaces User Survey 2003*, Parks & Environmental Services, Leicester City Council

- 6.15 In New Walk conservation area the visual intrusions tend to derive from the inappropriate scale or design of new buildings. This is particularly apparent on Regent Road where the office blocks located next to the railway make no concessions to the character or design conventions of their surroundings. Their strong horizontal emphases, lack of articulation in the facades and flat roofscapes are unsympathetic and do not enhance the conservation area. Similarly, the window proportions and scale of the student housing at the junction of West Street are discordant features in the streetscape.

7.0 Building Materials

Exterior walls

- 7.1 Unlike most of nineteenth century Leicester the conservation area is not wholly characterised by the presence of red brick. Local red brick is common in the Holy Trinity area but only makes its appearance generally in New Walk after 1850 and about half way up the hill. From the town end to de Montfort Square painted stucco and grey or cream bricks are the most common materials, either as wall finishes or for moulded window surrounds. Other wall finishes are also used, such as rendering, slate tile-hanging and plain or fish-scale pattern red clay tiles while modern infill or redevelopment sites have introduced red engineering bricks, harsh yellow bricks and red tiles.
- 7.2 The remodelling of Holy Trinity Church was carried out in a red-purple brick with limestone decoration and Charnwood granite is an important element in the structure of St Stephen's Church. Stone is commonly used for decoration (in quoins and pediments) and there is much precast concrete and modern tiled finishes to be seen on Princess Road West. The ornate entrance façade of the Prison is in Derbyshire sandstone and the high walls are of a soft-toned red brick. Boundary walls, where they remain or have been re-instated, are generally of brick with stone copings and plain or ornate cast iron or steel railings.

Roofs

- 7.3 Pitched roofs tend to be of Welsh slate, with red clay tiles being used at Upper New Walk. Where the roof is hipped, the hips and ridges are leaded; where clay tiles are used ornamental clay ridge tiles are common. More rarely, Swithland slate is used, a material unique to Leicestershire and last quarried at the end of the nineteenth century. The roofs of bay windows are in either slate, red clay tiles or lead with rolled edges. The Vernacular Revival buildings at Upper New Walk are enhanced further by the use of large gables with terracotta dragons and lead or terracotta finials. Original chimney stacks and yellow or red terracotta chimney pots of various designs can also be found and remain important to the townscape and character of the area. Of particular note are the polygonal chimney stacks at 113 Princess Road East and the Egyptian style chimney pots at 66-68 New Walk. Some buildings, such as 1a and 1b Salisbury Road, have Swithland slate roofs.

Other materials

- 7.4 Timber windows and doors remain the norm, although some aluminium and upvc has begun to appear, particularly in the Holy Trinity area. Most bay windows are made of timber and range from the very plain (at Lancaster Road) to the highly decorative (69 Regent Road). Throughout the conservation area there are examples of cast or wrought iron (The Crescent and 74-78 New Walk) and some stained glass (for example, the bay window at 15 West Street). Timber is used on a small scale for decoration – such as the mock half-timbering at Upper New Walk, the ornate balcony at 5 West Street or the splendid porches at 103-105 Princess Road East. Glazed tiles have been used for additional decorative effect at eaves level (for example at 17-25 West Street) and other motifs in moulded clay tiles (such as the ‘crossed ropework’ designs at 61 Regent Road) add to the visual diversity.

8.0 Open spaces and trees

- 8.1 New Walk is a 1km long linear park close to the city centre. It is set in an avenue of trees and links a series of open spaces. The trees are spaced at fairly regular intervals and comprise various species – horse chestnut, plane, lime, maple, sycamore, birch, oak, cherry and hornbeam. Some have been severely lopped, others have been left to develop natural growth patterns. Over the years, replacement planting has been done on an ad hoc basis, rather than to an overall long-term planting plan. As a result a wide variety of tree species have been used, some of which, for example white birch and purple plum, are inappropriate in terms of scale, growth pattern or lifespan.
- 8.2 The three open spaces along New Walk each have a different character. The Oval is small and intimate with a mix of pine, yew, beech, lime, birch, false acacia and a dawn redwood. Museum Square is quiet with densely planted shady borders dominated by a mature Horse Chestnut tree in the middle of the square. The bleakest and largest space is de Montfort Square where there is little to attract the eye or invite closer inspection. Here, plane, beech and oak trees are confined mainly to the north and east boundaries and a pedestrian ‘desire line’ worn across the uninteresting expanse of grass.
- 8.3 Many trees are located on privately-owned land and make valuable contributions to the townscape. The row of horse chestnuts in front of The Crescent on King Street is a particularly fine example. Elsewhere the yew at 101 Princess Road East and the mature limes and horse chestnuts in the garden of number 113 are of townscape significance, as are the limes on the corner of Regent Road/Granville Road. Some spaces are poorly landscaped or maintained; the car park adjacent to the flats and offices at 77 Princess Road East, for example, would benefit from a well-designed landscaping and surface treatment.
- 8.4 The many street trees are also important in the conservation area and can be of high amenity value. The prominent young plane tree in front of the

Prison and the planes in the central parking area of West Walk are good examples. Elsewhere the limes along University Road and Regent Road and the hybrid black poplars on Welford Road help to soften the environment. However, some trees are creating problems or have limited amenity value. The severe damage to the footway at the corner of Salisbury Road is being caused by a very large hybrid black poplar; the amenity value of the landscaping along Waterloo Way is diminished by the poor condition of several trees and shrubs. The only moderate form and condition of the young sorbus trees along Upper King Street mean that these trees are also of limited amenity value.

- 8.5 The Holy Trinity area, however, is too intensively developed to permit much tree growth, the exception being in the car park in front of 77-95 Regent Road where a mature beech tree stands out amongst a variety of other trees and shrubs. Where there are narrow front yards some garden planting remains (such as on West Street and the top of Upper King Street) but generally front gardens have been paved over. However, the views west down the hill to Nelson Mandela Park help to compensate for the lack of planting.
- 8.6 The mature trees, parkland, gardens and network of open spaces are also attractive to wildlife, creating habitat similar to that of a woodland edge. The contribution that birdsong makes to the character of the conservation area has already been noted. However, the experience of seeing wild animals close to home or work is known to improve people's quality of life; thus the visible presence of wildlife adds a further layer to New Walk's special character. Species typical of the 'woodland edge', such as Mistle Thrush, Song Thrush, Blackbird, Robin, Treecreeper, Spotted Flycatcher and several species of tits can commonly be seen. Foxes, hedgehogs, small rodents and grey squirrels as well as Pipistrelle and Brown Long-eared Bats are also present.
- 8.7 The tree cover and quality of the open spaces along New Walk have been assessed as part of the New Walk Restoration Scheme. New or replacement tree planting will be carried out during the 2003/04 planting season using two species - Silver Pendant Limes (*Tilia petiolaris*) east of Waterloo Way and London Planes (*Platanus acerifolia*) to the west of that point. De Montfort Square will be improved and works include re-routing and formalising the desire line. The view to the statue of Robert Hall has been opened up and provided with a new seating area. Five new purple beech trees will be planted on the south side of the square with low planting along the western boundary and the new seating area. New spring bulbs will be set amongst the grass and fencing will enclose the whole area.
- 8.8 Other, smaller open spaces – at Granville Road and the approaches to The Oval for example - have been re-designed and replanted.
- 8.9 Responsibility for street trees and those within the public realm lies with the City Council and management and replacement programmes are

essential to maintain the character of the conservation area. The current replacement programme on New Walk is a first step but a long-term management plan (including a tree replacement programme) needs to be put in place. Trees of townscape significance in private ownership are identified on Map 8.

9.0 Lighting and street furniture

- 9.1 Gas lamps were first introduced onto New Walk in 1832 but were replaced in 1895 and 1900 with the distinctive 'Paris' design that is still a feature of the Walk.¹⁸ The lamps are complemented by lamp posts with overthrows at various points, some of which are replicas to replace those removed in the past. Along Lower Hastings Street street lighting lanterns are supported on a swan-neck arms but generally standard steel concrete lampposts are used.
- 9.2 Public seating and litterbins in 'one-off' designs of have been installed along New Walk, together with new railings at some street crossing points. The juxtaposition of these with the Council's standard galvanised steel pedestrian barriers is unfortunate and warrants reconsideration. Traffic signals and signs tend to be confined to Regent Road and the points where New Walk crosses other highways. Statutory 'No Cycling' signs of the minimum size permitted have been installed along New Walk and supplemented by specially designed information signs. Unfortunately these tend to be ignored and cyclists regularly use the Walk. However, the Police have confirmed that the No Cycling Order is enforceable.

10.0 Loss of character

Buildings and materials

- 10.1 The greatest erosion of character in the conservation area has been the replacement of original features such as windows and doors. An Article 4 Direction covering all residential properties in the Holy Trinity area was made in 1980 when the area was declared a Housing Action Area (HAA). Its specific purpose was to protect important architectural details such as sash windows and panelled doors.
- 10.2 However, despite the removal of permitted development rights, many top-hung mock sash windows have been installed without planning permission. A small number of plastic (uPVC) windows and doors have also been installed, mostly on Lancaster Road. The fine detail of the originals, such as the curved transom of the top sashes at 16 West Street, has thus been lost.
- 10.3 The painting of brickwork (such as at 69-73 Regent Road), while not common, is also detrimental to the visual character because it hides the texture and colour of facades. However, the removal of paint, where it is

¹⁸ Boynton, Helen E., *The History of New Walk, Leicester*, Leicester, 2002

done aggressively or badly - as at 54 Regent Road - can render the building susceptible to longer term physical deterioration.

Vacant sites

- 10.4 There are few vacant sites in the conservation area but those that do exist cause considerable damage to the area's character and appearance. Loss of buildings in such sensitive urban environments can be particularly damaging to the integrity and quality of the townscape.
- 10.5 Three of New Walk conservation area's vacant sites are used as car parks. The first, at the west end of Regent Road, is located on the site of a terrace of small houses. The demolition of the houses (under the Council's former slum clearance scheme), whilst perhaps being necessary at the time, has interrupted the rhythm of Regent Road. When seen in relation to the listed buildings nearby it also tends to draw unwanted attention to another car park at the rear of Crescent Cottages.
- 10.6 The Fenwick's car park has frontages to both New Walk and King Street. The site has been undeveloped since the Second World War when a bomb destroyed the original building. The gap thus created in both streets has a very negative effect on the townscape quality of this part of the conservation area. The redevelopment of nearby sites has improved the appearance of the immediate area to a greater or lesser extent, leaving the Fenwick car park as the only remaining weak points in the building lines.
- 10.7 The prison car park on Tower Street is also an unsightly intrusion. The uniformly terraced streets of the Holy Trinity area are the foundations of its character. The gap in the townscape that is created by the car park in the otherwise detracts considerably from this.
- 10.8 The most important of the vacant sites is that at the west end of Princess Road East, at the corner of de Montfort Square. The character of the square derives from its physical and visual enclosure by buildings. While the important diagonal views across the square are 'stopped' on the other three sides, the lack of a 'stop' on the south-west corner seriously damages the townscape and character of the square.

Boundaries

- 10.9 Most original garden walls have also been lost. Many were rebuilt during the HAA improvement programme but are not true replicas. The modern railings are rather too thin and do not reflect the 'robustness' or fine detailing of the originals (a comparison of the replacement and original gateposts at 14-16 West Street is a good example). Elsewhere some front boundary walls have been lost altogether or replaced with inappropriate designs.

Uses

- 10.10 The area is also densely populated, as many of the properties are in use as flats. There are several 'wheelie bins' per property. As there are few buildings with alleyways leading to rear yards the bins are stored on the

street. Not only is this unsightly it also narrows the footpaths. The loss of planting in front gardens at multi-occupied properties is also unfortunate as these tend to be poorly maintained and subject to occasional dumping. A Residents' Parking Scheme operates in the area and this has eliminated the intrusive effects of commuter on-street parking.

Architectural character

- 10.11 In the New Walk area loss of architectural character is mainly attributable to the poor design of new buildings. Reference has already been made to the office blocks on Regent Road but the greatest number of changes has taken place along Princess Road West. Blighted by the proposed ring road in the 1960s, a large number of terraced houses were demolished and replaced by four storey offices. Those on the west side follow the existing building line and complement the scale of the original buildings by having their fourth floors set back behind low parapets. 'Hearts of Oak House' at 9-15 Princess Road East is also designed with a strong vertical rhythm to the façade which is clad in dark red tiles to imitate brickwork. However, in most cases, the design, alignment or proportion of windows is unsatisfactory (sometimes all three, for example the ground floor of 20-28 Regent Road), creating a jarring note. The buildings cannot, therefore, be said to enhance the conservation area.
- 10.12 Where buildings have been extended (such as at 8 and 16 West Walk) little respect has been paid to the proportions of the original buildings. The loss, or poor condition, of front boundary walls is also a cause for concern as these serve to create interesting edges and define the separation of the private from the public realm. Many have been removed to provide forecourt parking, a feature that is visually intrusive in itself. The removal of rear boundary walls along 'backways' to provide access and car parking opens creates rather desolate views.

11.0 Preserving the character

- 11.1 The appraisal has shown how the character of the New Walk Conservation Area derives from its setting, landform, layout and buildings, its history, townscape, trees and the quality of its architecture. It describes how these combine to create a unique place that is worthy of special care and attention. The quality and variety of the area has been recognised by its declaration as a conservation area. It is important that these qualities are preserved and the Replacement City of Leicester Local Plan contains policies designed to protect the area's character, for example by requiring that new development takes account of the scale, form, materials and details of its surroundings.
- 11.2 Further protection comes from conservation and planning legislation. Any alterations to, or demolition of, any building in the area will need planning permission and/or conservation area consent. Listed Building Consent will be required for any alterations to any of the area's listed buildings. Conservation Area Consent must also be obtained for the demolition of all but the smallest buildings (such as outbuildings) and may also be needed

for demolishing parts of buildings, like chimney stacks or front boundary walls. There are also tighter restrictions of the installation of satellite dishes and advertisements. Where alterations or extensions are proposed early contact should be made with the Council's Building Conservation Officer.

Buildings

- 11.3 The character statement has shown how some buildings can detract from the character of the conservation area. It is equally important that proposed extensions or redevelopment respect the original character of existing buildings (such as window proportions, the ratio of solid to void) and scale of surrounding buildings.
- 11.4 The statement has also shown how the details of individual buildings are important elements of that character and visual quality. The wholesale loss of such details would therefore detract from the building's and the area's special quality. Owners will be encouraged to retain the original appearance of buildings through careful restoration and repair.
- 11.5 The height, massing and scale of buildings are also important in forming the character of the conservation area. Generally, building heights are two and three storeys in the New Walk and Princess Road areas, three storeys in the Holy Trinity area. The mass and scale of the various buildings complement, rather than overpower, each other while the consistency of building heights serves to create the area's particularly 'human' scale.
- 11.6 Conservation areas are, by definition, sensitive environments and special attention has to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the area's character and appearance¹⁹. This character statement has shown how various elements such as layout, materials, scale and architectural details combine to create the special character of the New walk conservation area. It is therefore of important that new development is sympathetic to these qualities and that design proposals take particular account of, and respect, the height, scale and massing of existing buildings. This means that new buildings should not exceed the height of their neighbours (generally 3 storeys with pitched roofs).

Vacant sites

- 11.7 The conservation area's vacant sites, as have been described above, make no contribution to, and indeed detract from, the area's character and appearance. Their redevelopment should be seen as an opportunity to preserve or enhance the area through imaginative high quality designs. New buildings need not imitate earlier styles but they should be designed with respect for their context, so that they positively contribute to the well-established character and appearance of the larger whole. Special regard must therefore be had to matters of scale, height, form, massing, respect for traditional frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, and detailed

¹⁹ Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1991, s.72

design (such as the scale and spacing of window openings, the nature and quality of materials etc).

Site coverage and use

- 11.8 One of the characteristics of the conservation area is the relatively small size of building plots and the small size of front and rear gardens. Mention has already been made of the detrimental effect that the loss of front gardens (for car parking, for example) has on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The public and private green spaces in the conservation area are important parts of its character. Further loss of such features would compound the loss of character and will therefore be resisted. Wherever possible, owners will be encouraged to remove parking etc on original front garden areas and to restore front gardens.

Materials

- 11.9 The predominant building material within the conservation area varies from the use of stucco to red and cream brick and stone. Other materials are alien to the character of the area and should be avoided in any new development.
- 11.10 Repair and restoration work should always try to retain the original appearance of buildings by using materials that match the originals. In particular, the use of upvc to replace original timber windows or doors is not normally acceptable, especially on elevations facing the street. Not only is upvc an alien material in the area but the proportions, details and thickness of upvc glazing bars seldom replicate the intricacy and fine detail of the original windows. Similarly the use of outward opening 'mock sash' windows, even when made of timber, are rarely a satisfactory substitute for sash windows. Not only are the traditional sash boxes lost in such alterations but the outward opening of the window can also visually disrupt the rhythm of a terrace. Wherever possible, therefore, existing window frames should be repaired rather than replaced.
- 11.11 Equally important is the retention of original roofing materials, such as Welsh slates, clay tiles and, in a few instances, Swithland slate. Wherever possible, the originals should be re-used, supplemented if necessary with second-hand ones, rather than replaced with alternative types. Swithland slate represents an important part of Leicestershire's local distinctiveness and should be retained. Artificial slates, in particular, have a shiny, regular appearance at odds with the appearance of natural slates. Cast iron gutters, downpipes and hopper heads are also important. Chimney stacks are important to the appearance of a property and contribute to skyline interest. They should be retained and, if necessary, rebuilt or repointed rather than capped.

Article 4 Direction

- 11.12 Conservation area designation alone does not prevent minor alterations to houses that could spoil the character or appearance of the whole area. For instance, original sash windows and doors could be replaced or re-roofing carried out in modern materials without the need for planning permission.

Alterations such as these are 'permitted development' under the Town and Country Planning General Development Order.

11.13 In order to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, the City Council declared an Article 4 Direction on the residential properties in the Holy Trinity area in 1980. This removed permitted development rights so that planning permission is required for any external alterations likely to affect the appearance of the property, such as:

- Extensions, improvements or alterations such as new windows and doors
- Construction of porches
- The removal of gardens and garden walls to make a hardstanding for parking vehicles
- Rendering or painting brickwork

Trees

11.14 Trees and open spaces are the defining elements of the northern part of the New Walk conservation area but also have visual quality in their own right. It is therefore important that these features are protected and enhanced so that the 19th century legacy we now enjoy can be sustained for future generations. Trees in conservation areas, with a few exceptions, are protected by law and anyone intending to carry out works to a tree must give the Council notice of their intentions. The Council then has six weeks to consider the proposal.²⁰ There are also eight Tree Preservation Orders in force (see Map 2). Most of the trees are on public highway land and the Council is responsible for their maintenance. A tree maintenance and care plan will be developed as part of the management plan for the conservation area. The owners of other trees deemed to be of townscape significance will be encouraged to maintain them.

11.15 The most important trees are those on New Walk and in the associated open spaces. The scale and grandeur of the buildings requires that trees be of a substantial size to have a positive visual effect. However, space for trees is generally limited and there can be pressure from neighbouring occupiers for trees to be pollarded or severely lopped. Any requests for such works will be resisted unless a compelling case is made.

11.16 Along New Walk and its open spaces, there is no pattern to the distribution of the various species of trees and future planting will be carried out with the aim of working towards a measure of unity and a common theme in tree cover for the avenues and open spaces. Plane and Lime should predominate and decisions on replacement trees will be made on the basis of a long-term plan to be drawn up by the City Council as part of the management plan for the conservation area.

²⁰ Town & Country Planning Act 1990, s.211

Wildlife

- 11.17 New Walk supports a variety of wildlife, including bats. Bats and their roosts are also legally protected. If bats are found in buildings in the conservation area, advice should be sought from the Council's Ecology Officer before any major structural building works are undertaken.

Streetscape

- 11.18 At various locations throughout the conservation area, original paving materials can still be found, such as granite kerbstones, granite setts, limestone or sandstone wall copings, fencing and gates. As with building details, these features contribute to the overall character and appearance and should be retained.

12.0 Conservation area boundary

- 12.1 The Council is required to review the boundaries of conservation areas and to consider changing them as appropriate. The Council must also review areas of special advertisement control at least once every five years to see whether the boundaries should be revoked or modified.
- 12.2 The boundaries of the New Walk Conservation Area have been considered and the Council does not propose to add to, or to remove any, parts of the area it presently covers.
- 12.3 The present boundaries of the area of special advertisement control cover most of the conservation area (the land south of Regent Road and west of The Crescent is excluded). Although the uses of some buildings have changed from commercial to residential since the special control designation was made in 1979, these changes have not yet made such an impact as to alter substantially the land-use character of the area. The Council does not therefore propose to revoke or amend the Order.

Appendix 1

List of buildings in the Conservation Area

De Montfort Street	nos. 3-35 (odd), 4-38 (even)
De Montfort Square	nos. 1-11 (odd), Statue of Robert Hall
Duke Street	nos. 22, 42
Granville Road	nos. 1, 3, 5, 11
King Street	nos. 7-19, 35, 41, 45, 61-81(odd); 2, 4, 4a, 6-10, 14-16, 20-24, 36-54, 54, Cramant Cottages, 54a, 56 (even), 1-14 The Crescent (inc)
Lancaster Road	2-42 (Even)
Lower Hastings Street	19-43 (odd)
Museum Square	nos. 1-5 (odd)
New Walk	nos. 1, 3, 7-29, 37-47 (odd), New Walk Museum, 55, St Stephens Church, 2a, 2-6, 6a, 6b, 8, 10, 16, Holy Cross RC Church & Priory, Blackfriars Hall, 20, 30, 40, 58-84 (even), 94, 96, 98a, 98-144 (even)
Newtown Street	nos. 1-11 (odd), 2-42 (even)
The Oval	57 New Walk
Princess Road East	nos. 77-113 (odd), 44, 48, 54, 51-57 (odd), 59, 61
Princess Road West	4, 4a, 6-28, 32-38 (even), 9-15, 17, 43, 45-61(odd)
Rawson Street	nos. 3-17 (odd), 23, 25, 35, 20
Regent Road	1, Holy Trinity Church, 53-95 (odd), 28, 38-42, 46-58 (even), Kenneth Holmes Gall, Fielding Johnson Building, 86-104, 108-120, 128-140 (evens)
Salisbury Road	nos. 1a, 1b, 1-9 (odd), site of Arlen House, 2-16 (even)
Tower Street	nos. 1-19(odd), 2-8, 28-36, 44-56, 62-70 (evens)
Turner Street	nos. 1-7 (odd), 2-16 (even)
University Road	nos. 2, 6-12(even), 5-15 (odd), 21
Upper King Street	nos. 1-29 (oddd), 2-8 (even), 22, 24
Upper New Walk	nos. 146-170 (even), 145-155 (odd)
Wellington Street	nos. 1-3, 3½, 5-23,(odd), St Clements Hall, 53, 53a, 85-93 (odd)
Welford Place	no. 4
Welford Road	nos. 78, 80, 82-112 (even), HMPrison
West Street	nos. 1, 5-51 (odd), 2, 6-46 (even)
West Walk	nos. 1, West Court Flats (1-25), 2-16 (even)

Appendix 2

List of listed buildings in the conservation area

De Montfort Square	nos. 1-11(odd), Statue of Robert Hall
King Street	nos. 35, 69-81(odd), 14, 16, Cramant Cottages, 56, The Crescent (1-14 inc)
Museum Square	nos. 1-5(odd)
New Walk	nos. 7-17(odd), 19-29 (odd), 37, 47, New Walk Museum, pair of Lamp Standards, 55, Pair of Lamp Standards, 58-64, 72-80, 96a-104 (evens)
Newtown Street	nos. 10-12
Princess Road East	nos. 38, 51-61 (odd)

Regent Road	nos. 38, 54-58(even), Fielding Johnson Building, Holy Trinity Church
Tower Street	no. 8
Upper King Street	nos. 1-29(odd)
Upper New Walk	nos. 146-154 (even)
Welford Place	no. 4 (façade)
Welford Road	HMP Prison, 102-4 (even)
West Street	nos. 1 & 2

Appendix 3

List of Tree Preservation Orders

Granville Road	5 Granville Road
King Street	The Crescent
Newtown Street	4 Newtown Street
New Walk	opp. 155, 120-126
Regent Road	car park West St/Regent Road
Rawson Street	20 Rawson Street
Upper New Walk	166 Upper New Walk

Appendix 4

Glossary of Architectural Terms

Arts and Crafts	A late-nineteenth/early twentieth century architectural style that attempted to revive traditional English vernacular styles and techniques, notably in the use of traditional building crafts, feature and local materials.
bargeboard	projecting boards placed against the outside incline of the roof of a building, often used decoratively
baluster	upright support for a balcony or railing
bracket	a small piece of stone or other material supporting a weight eg eaves bracket [console or scroll bracket – in the form of a scroll]
canted	having splayed sides
capital	the head or crowning feature of a column
cornice	horizontal projecting section at the top of a building or wall
crenellation	alternate high and low walls on a parapet resembling battlements
doorcase	decorative timber or stone framing a doorway
Doric	one of the 'orders' of ancient Greek architecture
endstop	a decorative feature at the end of a hoodmould
entablature	the entire horizontal mass that is carried immediately above columns and pilasters
fanlight	a window over a door
finial	a formal ornament at the apex of a gable or spire
fishscale	a pattern created by overlapping the semi-circular edges of decorative tiles or slates
Flemish	a style which incorporates Dutch or north German architectural details such as stepped or shaped gables etc

Greek key	geometrical pattern of horizontal and vertical lines joining at right angles
mock half-timbering	timber applied externally to suggest a timber framed building
hoodmould	a projecting moulding over a door or window designed to throw rain off the face of the building
moulding	a continuous groove or projection used decoratively to throw shadow on, or water away from, a wall
mullion	the vertical post between the panes of a window
pediment	a low pitched gable shape over a door or window
plinth	plain projecting surface at the base of a wall
single aspect	having windows only on one side
palace front	main elevation of a terrace of houses where the central part projects forward slightly, usually with a decorated pediment above
pilaster	a shallow rectangular column which is attached to and projects slightly from a wall
polychrome	decoration created by the use of coloured bricks or stone
quoin	dressed stones laid on the external corners of buildings, usually in alternating large and small blocks
segmental arch	a very shallow arch [of a bay window – a very shallow curved bay]
spandrel	the triangular space that is created between a horizontal line drawn from the apex of an arch and a vertical line drawn from the point from which the arch springs
stringcourse	a continuous decorative horizontal band projecting from a wall and usually moulded
stucco	a cement-type render used for facing external walls
tile-hanging	a covering of overlapping rows of tiles on a vertical surface
Tuscan	used to describe a column with a plain base and shaft and a simple cushion-like capital
tympanum	(plural tympani) the area contained by an arch over the lintel of a door or window
Venetian window	a window comprised of three parts – a central window with a semi-circular arch with pilasters on each side and two side windows with flat arches
Yorkshire sash	a sash window which slides open horizontally