

MARKET STREET CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER STATEMENT

**CONSULTATION DRAFT
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This is a consultation draft of the proposed character statement for Market Street Conservation Area. Comments are welcome and should be sent to June Gray, Urban Design Group, R&C, Leicester City Council, Welford Place, Leicester, LE1 6ZG, tel. 0116 252 7296, fax 0116 247 1149, e-mail june.gray@leicester.gov.uk

Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Location & context
- ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST
- 3 Archaeology, history & development
- 4 Prevailing uses
- 5 Architectural character and key unlisted buildings
- 6 Townscape
- 7 Building materials
- 8 Open spaces and trees
- 9 The public realm, including lighting and street furniture
- 10 Loss, intrusion or damage
- 11 Problems, pressures and capacity for change
- 12 DEFINITION OF THE SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE CONSERVATION AREA
- 13 Suggested boundary changes
- 14 Community involvement
- 15 Enhancement proposals and recommendations for management action

Appendices

- Appendix 1 List of buildings in the conservation area
- Appendix 2 List of listed buildings in the conservation area
- Appendix 3 Relevant Local Plan Policies
- Appendix 4 Glossary of architectural terms

List of Maps

- [Map 1 *City of Leicester Conservation Areas**
- Map 2 *Boundary of Market Street Conservation Area**
- Map 3 *Stukeley's Map of 1722**
- Map 4 *Robert's Map 1741**
- Map 5 *Leicester in 1804^{*1}*
- Map 67 *Fowler's Map 1828**
- Map 7 *Spencer's Map of 1879**
- Map 8 *Ordnance Survey Map 1885**
- Map 9 Proposed additions to the Conservation Area

[*] *to follow after formal adoption*

¹ Watts, Susannah, *A Walk Through Leicester*, reprinted Leicester University Press, 1967

1 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 enhance². 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.
- 1.2 The Council's statutory powers are supplemented by local policies, particularly the Local Plan. Leicester's Replacement Local Plan contains a number of policies designed to protect the character of conservation areas as well as the quality of the environment generally. Appendix 3 provides more details³. In addition, Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) has been adopted for A3 Uses and SPD's are being prepared for Street Cafes and Shopfront Design. The Council also requires that the design of shopfront security measures complies with its Shopfront Security Policy. The City Council has a duty to preserve and enhance the character of conservation areas and has special legal powers to do this.
- 1.3 Conservation areas are, by definition, sensitive environments where special attention has to be paid to preserving or enhancing character or appearance. This character statement will, through an appraisal of its character and appearance, set out the elements that make the Market Street conservation area special. It will also identify those features that are incongruous or damaging to its character or appearance. If conservation area status is to remain justifiable it is important that the special qualities are preserved and enhanced.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 Market Street Conservation Area was designated in March 1989 and the boundaries of the Conservation Area are shown on Map 2. The Council is proposing extensions to the conservation area in the Belvoir Street, Marble Street and Upper Brown Street areas (see Section 12.0) and this draft statement includes references to these areas as appropriate throughout the text.

² Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 section 69

³ See Appendix 3 – Relevant Replacement City of Leicester Local Plan Policies

2 Location and general character

- 2.1 The conservation area is situated on the south-western edge of the city centre, about 400 metres south of the Clock Tower in the city centre. It is about 3.9 hectares (9.6 acres) in area, 65m above sea level and generally flat.
- 2.2 The eastern half is a busy shopping area, while the western half is a mixture of professional offices, apartments, bars and restaurants.

ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

3 Archaeology, History and Development

- 3.1 The Market Street Conservation Area, while being close to the present-day heart of Leicester, originally lay outside both the Roman and the medieval town walls (see Maps 5 and 6). Indeed, the narrow block between Millstone Lane/Horsefair Street and Friar Lane/Market Place South straddles the line of these defences. There may also have been an 'extra-mural' (that is, outside the walls) suburb during the Roman period, as evidence of one such suburb has been located as far south as Bonners Lane (outside the conservation area boundary).
- 3.2 There are therefore likely to be significant buried deposits in the area. It is possible that there is at least one Roman cemetery lying beyond what was the South Gate of the Roman town as it was customary for Roman burials to be placed outside town walls. There could thus be evidence of burials for the full period of Roman occupation of Leicester (from the 1st to the 4th Centuries AD). Evidence of medieval and post-medieval occupation is also possible as the occupation of land outside the town walls is likely have carried on from Roman times into those periods. The 'informal' expansion of the town in this way was a feature of Leicester until the beginning of the 19th century.
- 3.3 The relatively open nature of the ground that is now occupied by the conservation area meant that it could accommodate cannons when Leicester was besieged twice during the Civil War (once by the Royalist side in 1645 and then, two weeks after the town fell to the King, by Parliament). Both sides would have re-built, or added to, the town's southern defences and a bastion or 'main guard' is known to have been constructed in the Welford Place area. A defensive ditch in the Newarke area is also known. It is possible that many of the 'extra-mural' buildings in these areas would have been demolished as part of the siege works to create obstacle-free fields of fire.
- 3.4 The area began to experience rapid change in the 18th century. Leicester was expanding as an industrial and commercial centre but development was still generally restricted to land within the confines of the medieval walls. During this period many unsafe and decayed timber-framed structures in the old town were being re-built in brick. But more land was needed to accommodate the growing population and the higher and better-drained land of the former Grey Friars' monastery (in what is now the New Street, Friar Lane and Millstone Lane area) offered good quality building plots. Splitting the land up for development began around 1711 and Stukeley's Map shows that many new buildings had been constructed in the area by 1722. This location was also attractive for other reasons. It was far enough away from the congestion and bustle of the town's markets and coaching inns to be undisturbed by them but not too far away to be inconvenient for access to the commercial heart of the town. This made the area attractive to the town's wealthier business classes and it was soon the most select residential district of Leicester. The town's fashionable

'destinations' were also nearby - the new Assembly Rooms (now City Rooms) of 1792, the Corporation's bowling green (1736)⁴, the new promenade of New Walk (1785) and the open countryside of the South Fields.

- 3.5 Between 1720 and 1800 Georgian houses extended from New Street and Friar Lane (in Cathedral/Guildhall conservation area) to Millstone Lane (Map 4). Even today Millstone Lane retains a distinctly 'Georgian' character which sets it apart from the Victorian development of the rest of the conservation area. Pocklington's Walk, built through the garden belonging to, and named after, Alderman John Pocklington (a former Lord Mayor), was laid out around 1765. Nearby, the track that led into some brick fields and the 'horse fayer' had become formalised by 1804 (see Map 6). Its somewhat unfortunate name, Hangman's Lane, possibly derives from the time when public executions took place at the Magazine Gateway (now at the west end of Newarke Street). Map 6 also shows that both streets linked into the main turnpike road to London 'thro Welford' and 'To Lutterworth'.
- 3.6 To the south of this area lay the South Fields. Owned by the Borough Corporation these provided not only grazing for the cattle and sheep belonging to the city's Freemen but also clay for brick making. A brick kiln is recorded on the site of the Council's offices at New Walk Centre and there were a number of other sites producing bricks for the town's Georgian expansion. The Corporation had made substantial profits from the sale of the town's bowling green and the 'Horsefair Gardens' (now Horsefair Street and the Town Hall Square) at the turn of the century and the South Fields were seen as a further opportunity to profit from Leicester's growing economy. The Corporation took the decision as early as 1806 to lay and mark out streets and plots ready for development, although their application for an award of enclosure⁵ was not confirmed until 1811. In fact, Bowling Green Street (and nearby Bishop Street and Belvoir Street) were all laid out between 1806 and 1812 and the Corporation had sold most of the plots by 1810.
- 3.7 The 'inclosure' award represented a 'landmark in the history of the town'.⁶ The land was allotted between the corporation, the freemen and a few private owners, thereby removing 'an important barrier that stood in the way of the town'⁷. Almost as soon as the award was issued 'the Corporation began to nibble at the land nearest to the town'.⁸ Fowlers map of 1828 (Map 4) and Unicume's map of the same period show how the conservation area's basic street pattern had become established by that date, although Market Street itself was not laid out until 1815. One of the oldest buildings here could be number 23-25 (with paired first floor bay windows) where there is evidence of a lime-ash floor at second floor level.
- 3.8 In 1831 the New Hall (now the Central Lending Library) was designed and built by William Flint as a meeting place for the town's Liberals, reflecting their growing power and influence in local politics. It also accommodated a public lecture hall, concert hall and the Leicester Mechanics Institute. The 'Pork Pie Chapel' (now part of the Adult Education Building on Wellington Street) followed in 1842 to serve the growing population to the south around fashionable New Walk. In 1837 Catherine Street, situated off Pocklington's Walk and named after Charles II's consort Catherine of Braganza, was re-named Chancery Street.⁹

⁴ Recorded in the present name, Bowling Green Street.

⁵ *Victoria History of the Counties of England, Vol. 4, History of Leicestershire*, University of London, 1958

⁶ Simmons J., *Leicester The Ancient Borough to 1860*, Alan Sutton 1983

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ Banner, J., *Out and About in Leicester*, Leicester City Council 1994

- 3.9 By the mid-nineteenth century the availability of cheap coal from outside the county was helping to turn Leicester's growing hosiery industry away from its traditional domestic production methods to a machine-powered factory system. The boot and shoe industry was also expanding rapidly and small factories and warehouses began to appear west of Pocklington's Walk. The proprietors, having lived in Georgian elegance in this area, were moving out towards the newer suburbs such as New Walk and factories began to replace elegant Georgian homes.¹⁰ Only one example of an 18th century house now remains - at 20 Millstone Lane.
- 3.10 During the second half of the nineteenth century the conservation area attracted many new public institutional buildings because of its proximity to the heart of municipal government. The Water Board Offices (1865) in Bowling Green Street, the Poor Law Offices of 1883 (now the Registry Office) in Pocklington's Walk and the Constitutional Club (1898) next door are some important examples. The Borough Corporation bought the New Hall in 1869 and adapted it for use as a Municipal Free Library – a function it retains today. The large department store now occupied by Fenwick's dates from 1880. These large and distinctive buildings reflect the importance of the conservation area in the commercial life of the city and add to the mixed architectural character of the area.
- 3.11 In 1873, a Sicilian marble statue to John Biggs (1801-1871) was unveiled in Welford Place and for three generations this junction was known locally as 'John Biggs'. Biggs had had a "marked and profound influence on the town"¹¹ during his life both as an employer and as a Radical and Secularist. He shares the signal honour of a memorial statue with only two other eminent local Victorians – the 5th Duke of Rutland and the great preacher Robert Hall.
- 3.12 Further new streets were made, such as Berridge Street and Greyfriars, which were built in 1874 linking Pocklington's Walk with Loseby Lane (see Map 8). However, development in the conservation area was largely complete by 1886 (Map 9).
- 3.13 In the 1920s a 'fancy hosiery works' at the corner of Pocklington's Walk and Welford Place was replaced by the present building - offices for the Leicester Permanent Building Society. That same decade (in 1928) the John Biggs' statue was hit by a tram, damaging the marble figure so badly that it had to be re-made. The replacement was cast from the original in bronze and re-installed in 1930. Moved to de Montfort Square in 1952, the statue was returned to Welford Place, although sited to look down Belvoir Street rather than, as originally placed, down Welford Road, in 1967.
- 3.14 In the era of comprehensive slum clearance and redevelopment plans in the 1960s and 70s several noteworthy changes took place. A large warehouse and factory (1882) on Pocklington's Walk/Chancery Street was converted for education purposes in 1970 (South Fields College) then replaced in 1989 by the present Magistrates Courts building. To the south of Newarke Street, the factories and small courtyard dwellings behind Welford Road were swept away in the 1960s to be replaced first by a bus station and then by the Phoenix Theatre (1964) and Newarke Street multi-storey car park. A new gas showroom (designed by Pick Everard Keay & Gimson and expected to be "one of the best in the country") was built at 3-5 Market Street in 1960, then replaced in 1980s by new shop units. A site on Horsefair Street between Market St and Bowling Green Street was redeveloped in 1967 and in the mid-1980s Market Street became a pedestrian priority zone.

¹⁰ *Victoria History of the Counties of England, Vol. 4, History of Leicestershire*, University of London, 1958, Map page 261: New Building 1850-60

¹¹ Leicester Museums pamphlet, *John Biggs (1801-1871)*, Leicester Corporation

- 3.15 During the 1980s the city centre became subject to increasing development pressures. This raised concerns that the character of particular areas might be lost. The Council considered that it was important that a balance was maintained between increased investment and protecting the character of the city. As a result, the Market Street Conservation Area was declared in March 1989 to afford the protection of conservation status to this sensitive part of the retail core.
- 3.16 The conservation area remains an important part of the commercial heart of the city and actively contributes to the renaissance of the city centre. In addition, the south end of Market Street/Belvoir Street has been identified as a key element in the Leicester Regeneration Company's "Retail Circuit". The function of the Retail Circuit is to encourage more pedestrians to travel from the High Street area to a new, yet-to-be created retail anchor around the south end of Market Street. As this area retains much of its Victorian character it is important that any buildings or townscape worthy of preservation are identified early to ensure that their importance is recognised in future development proposals that are designed to deliver this 'anchor'. This is addressed in Chapter 13.

4 Prevailing Uses

- 4.1 The historical description of the area in Section 3 above shows that the conservation area has always been characterised by a range of mixed land uses. Professional or commercial offices and shops were, and still are, to be found mainly in the eastern part with factories, warehouses and small houses behind Pocklington's Walk to the west. Possibly owing to its historic proximity to the houses of the wealthier classes of the town, the shopping character of Market Street has tended to be 'up-market', a position it still held until well into the twentieth century when it was described in 1936 as an 'aristocratic shopping centre'.¹²
- 4.2 Nearby, the small domestic-scale buildings on Millstone Lane and Welford Road adapted well to office use and generally remain in this use today. However, most of the Victorian public buildings are no longer used for civic purposes and have been adapted for public use (para.3.8 above gives two examples) or commercial purposes. The last survivor, the Registry Office, relocated to the Town Hall in May 2005.
- 4.3 While Market Street remains a popular and vibrant shopping area, the western part of the conservation area suffered badly when Leicester's traditional hosiery and boot and shoe industries declined in the 1970s and 80s. The industries and warehousing gradually moved away or closed down and slowly buildings became vacant and to deteriorate.
- 4.4 However, in the late 1990s, the potential for re-use or redevelopment of these buildings for apartments was stimulated by the growing interest in city centre living. As a consequence, the character of the western half of the conservation area has changed significantly. There are apartments, restaurants and bars in both 19th and 20th century industrial buildings on Newarke Street, Millstone Lane and Rupert Street. Street cafes have become a feature of Market Street where traffic, other than bicycles, has been largely excluded for most of the day.

¹² *City of Leicester Official Guide*, Corporation of Leicester, 1936

5 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 Based on the types and sizes of buildings the conservation area naturally divides around Pocklington's Walk with the shops to the east and residential/offices to the west. For the purposes of this section each area will be considered separately.

East

- 5.2 The eastern half of the conservation area displays a wealth of ornament and many different architectural styles. Shopfronts of varying designs and degrees of quality characterise Market Street, Pocklington's Walk (east) and Bowling Green Street, dominating the ground floors.
- 5.3 Along **Market Street** the buildings are between 2 and 4 storeys high and most date from the mid- to late Victorian period. Some early 19th century buildings can still be seen such as 6 and 8 Market Street¹³ (the offices of the Goddards, the well-known local architects' practice, between 1830 until well into the twentieth century)¹⁴. Originally two buildings, these three storey Regency properties are faced in brick and stucco with fine detailing to the windowheads at number 6 and classical references at number 8 in the thin stuccoed pilasters, moulded cornice and panelled parapet. The semi-circular oriel window is a particularly notable feature.
- 5.4 Bay windows, balconies, overhanging eaves, gables and dormers punctuate the street facades and, with the exceptions of **33-47 Market Street** (an Isaac Barradale 'set piece' with Fenwick's corner at **32-36 Market Street**), the street is composed of a collection of highly individual buildings. For example, a fine classical-style facade at **22-24 Market Street** (Oxfam and Panasonic) is juxtaposed with an 19th century 'Italianate' building (by Kirby & Bromley of Nottingham) at **20 Market Street** (Leicester Book Clearance) that itself sits beside a quite severe 1920s design based on ancient Roman architecture at **18 Market Street** (O'Brien's Sandwich Bar). Millican & Smith's exuberant 1876 Italianate façade to the former Midland Auction Mart at **16 Market Street**¹⁵ (now occupied by Manpower) is juxtaposed with an 'Arts and Crafts' style at **14 Market Street** (Greggs Sandwich Bar). Next door to that is another highly individual twentieth century rendered brick building with tall steel windows with moulded lead panels at **8-10 Market Street**.
- 5.5 A similar eclectic mix of designs and styles can be seen on the opposite side of the street. The grand triple-bayed façade at **1-7 Market Street** dominates its modern two storey neighbour at 9-11 Market Street. Between this and the Barradale terrace mentioned above the visitor can see such styles as 'Queen Anne' at **13 Market Street** and turn of the century 'Italianate' with decorative stuccowork at **27 Market Street** (The Hogshead). Elsewhere Tarratt's **21 Market Street** façade displays unusual decoration and Po-Boys occupies a 1930s building with a concrete and steel façade at **31 Market Street**.

¹³ Grade II listed

¹⁴ G. Brandwood & M. Cherry, *Men of Property : The Goddards and Six Generations of Architecture*, Leics Museums, Arts & Records Service, 1990

¹⁵ Building of local interest

- 5.6 There is a wide variety of shopfront styles and designs, most of which are modern installations.
- 5.7 Bowling Green Street is another location that is dominated by ornament and enhanced by many buildings of high architectural quality. The former Water Board Offices of 1865 by Shenton & Baker at 8 Bowling Green Street¹⁶ is nationally recognised for its architectural interest as a Grade II listed building. It is one of Leicester's earliest examples of the fashionable Victorian Gothic Revival style but mixes three different period designs in the one building - Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular. Its original highly carved oak front door and stone tympanum is a particular feature. It makes a marked contrast to the simple Gothic style of its next-door neighbour at **10-14 Bowling Green Street**.
- 5.8 On the other side of the street there is another varied and interesting collection of designs. Two examples of the 'Queen Anne' style stand out at **17** and **25 Bowling Green Street**. The contrast between the former, with its restrained decoration and domestic scale, and the latter, which is exuberantly decorated with stone detailing, square bayed and horseshoe arched windows, timber balustrading and carved stone finials along the parapet, could not be stronger. The façade over Waterstone's bookshop (**27 Bowling Green Street**) is a well-proportioned 3-bay design with stone pilasters, elliptical tympanae containing decorative cartouches and three dormers with triangular pediments. Its neighbour at **29-31 Bowling Green Street** is smaller and has less decoration but is nevertheless of architectural merit, having two oriel windows, bull's-eye windows in the pedimented gables and brick and stone round-headed arches over the door and carriage entrance. The early 20th century rebuilding of the Durham Ox public house (**19 Bowling Green Street**) includes a moulded leadwork panel (a hallmark of its architects, Everard & Pick, at that time) that has, unfortunately, been obscured by a new signboard.
- 5.9 Fenwick's department store at **33 Bowling Green Street** occupies the rest of the street. The façade, as in Market Street, is built in three different styles. The Belvoir Street corner is in a 'Classical' style in red brick with stone quoins and window mouldings; the north end is more obviously Victorian with double height brick and stone bay windows with Tuscan column-style mullions and double pedimented gables. Separating the two is a narrow piece of infill in a fashionable style typical of the 1950s – narrow vertical timber 'fins' broken by deep horizontal boxes containing the windows.
- 5.10 A short stretch of Belvoir Street is within the conservation area boundaries. Its buildings also display a wide range of styles and designs. The oldest part of **Fenwick's** department store (built for Joseph Johnson & Co in 1880) occupies the junction of Belvoir Street with Market Street and is designed in a rather 'Germanic' style with squat columns and a large projecting gable. Two of the city's most important listed buildings can be seen on the opposite side - the former Liberal Club (now the Central Lending Library) of 1831 by William Flint and the Baptist (locally, the "Pork Pie") Chapel by Joseph Hansom (now part of the Adult Education College) of 1842¹⁷. Though separated from Fenwicks by only 50 years, the differences in architectural styles and materials could not be more marked. The elegant Classical stuccoed facades on the south side of Belvoir Street are calm and restrained compared with massive stone and timber work 'of Fenwick's "beetling ponderously over the

¹⁶ Grade II listed

¹⁷ Both Grade II listed

junction"¹⁸. The 1930s steel windows, balconies and Vitriolite panels of the central part of Fenwick's façade add a further decorative dimension to the street.

- 5.11 The proposed extension to the conservation includes **43-49 Belvoir Street** and **40-48 Belvoir Street/1 Albion Street**. The former dates from about 1910 and was built as an extension to Shenton and Baker's Water Board Offices at 8 Bowling Green Street. Above the modern shopfronts the symmetrical two storey red sandstone façade has a central bay flanked by twin flat pilasters with a Venetian window below the central gable. The latter is a former factory by the well-known local architect, Arthur Wakerley and dates from 1887. Its cast-iron frame is faced in red bricks with stone detailing in the stringcourses, voussoirs, parapet finials and window surrounds. The elevation to Belvoir Street has 5 bays, with 6 on Albion Street, each bay defined by flat brick pilasters. The main entrances appear to have been on the Albion Street side as it is here that the biggest windows and the initialled and dated cartouches are to be found. The original elegantly carved timber gate to the wagon entrance remains and is set into the central bay. The top two storeys are highly decorated with moulded brick panels above the windows, creating a frieze. They have hoodmoulds in the form of shaped arches with foliate patterns and cartouches in the spandrels and tympanae. Classical 'egg and dart' patterns decorate the junction of pilaster and stringcourse with foliate designs at the fourth. Stylized leaves also decorate keystones and the spaces below the bull's-eye windows. There is also a range of window types - large timber sashes, 3 bull's-eyes, 4 vertical ovals, 2 horizontal ovals set in finely carved stone and, at the top of the building, 5 Diocletian openings over the central bays.
- 5.12 The east side of Pocklington's Walk has no buildings of such elaborate design or presence. Decoration on the two and three storey buildings between **8** and **26 Pocklington's Walk** is provided in the form of first floor bay windows (some with leaded lights) in the Vernacular Revival style. However, where they appear, features such as the shaped brick gable with central oval window at number **8** and the half-round oriel window at number **20** are of great architectural value. The Portland stone used at **34 Pocklington's Walk (Welford House)** contrasts markedly with the red brick seen elsewhere. The building is 'neo-Roman classical', a style that was popular in the 1920s and 1930s. It has two pedimented gables, windows and doors emphasised by the use of aediculae and a bull's-eye window decorated with carved foliate sprays and swagged keystone. Architectural punctuation is provided at the end of the row by the four storey Welford House, a plain painted brick building, again from the 1920-30 period. Although of little architectural quality, it nevertheless makes concessions to the classical style with flat pilasters, keystones and an eaves course with dentil decoration.

West

- 5.13 The west side of Pocklington's Walk is dominated by two listed buildings of 1883 and 1893 (numbers 3-5, the former Poor Law Offices, by Redfern & Sawday, and number 1, the former Constitutional Club, respectively¹⁹). They are typical of the high Victorian fashion for designing institutions in dramatic and romantic styles²⁰. In brick with highly carved stone decoration in the form of pilasters, window surrounds, stringcourses, capitals, keystones, pediments, oriel windows, balustrades and even a cupola, these buildings are fine examples of their type. The new Magistrates Court takes its architectural lead from these buildings in its use of brick, stone and gable details but omits any large decorative flourishes. These materials continue on to Welford Place where the former Leicestershire

¹⁸ Gill, R, *Walks Through Victorian Leicester*, Leicester Victorian Society, 1994

¹⁹ Both Grade II listed

²⁰ *Leicester's Architectural Heritage*, Leicester City Council, 1975

Club (1875-77) by Joseph Goddard²¹ presents its curved façade in a 'rather curious mix of 'Jacobethan' and Italianate styles'²².

- 5.14 To the west of Pocklington's Walk the architectural character changes again. Here are some of the physical remnants of the area's industrial past. Small red brick factories and warehouses, in relatively simple designs and ranging between 2 and 4 storeys in height, line the narrow roads of Marble Street, Chancery Street and Rupert Street. The modern brick and rendered infill on Marble Street behind the Rutland & Derby Arms is of very poor visual quality, perhaps reflecting the status afforded to the area in the 1960s and 1970s. However, the architectural quality of the four storey building at **24-26 Chancery Street** stands out amongst its neighbours. Well built in local red bricks, it has stone and corbelled brick stringcourses and eaves, a frieze of square sunflower terracotta panels, segmental window arches with brick hoodmoulds and two gables to the top storey, each with Venetian windows surmounted by a decorative brickwork tympanum.
- 5.15 The grand Constitutional Club²³ on the corner of Pocklington's Walk marks the western boundary of the municipal heart of the town. West of this point the architectural character of Millstone Lane derives from the late 18th and early 19th century houses at numbers 9, 11, 20 and 20a (all of which are listed buildings). These are all that remain of old Leicester's Georgian district. The buildings are small, of two or three storeys and quite plain. Decoration is limited to window heads and eaves, with perhaps a simple, projecting brick stringcourse.
- 5.16 However, other buildings also contribute to the architectural quality of the street scene. The hotel at **12-14 Millstone Lane** has several interesting features, such as decorative brick eaves courses, projecting stone first floor window sills supported by carved stone brackets and finely jointed rubbed brick window heads with stone keystones. Square dormers project from the mansard roof. The former warehouse at **16-18 Millstone Lane**, set gable end on to the street, has a large round-headed window with a blue brick hoodmould at second floor level and segmental window arches built in a decorative pattern using red and blue brick headers. The 'Tudorbethan' style of **22 Millstone Lane** is an interesting contrast with its flat arches doors and windows and oriel window complete with leaded panes. The stone window surrounds and the pattern created by the dark stretchers and lighter headers of the Flemish Bond brickwork of **24 Millstone Lane** adds interest at this end of the conservation area.
- 5.17 On the south side, the façade of **19-23 Millstone Lane (the Rutland & Derby Arms)** makes an important contribution to the quality of the street. Its stone framed windows and doors, sash windows, brown glazed tiled plinth and slightly recessed off-centre bay are in scale with, and complement, the buildings opposite. While the loss of the original ground floor windows and brickwork is regrettable at **7 Millstone Lane**, the first floor of remains as built and the curved corner 'feature window' is of particular architectural value.
- 5.18 The architectural environment of the Newarke Street area is created from a mix of 19th and 20th century buildings, ranging from the traditional red brick multi-storey warehouse to modern concrete frame construction. At the corner with Marble Street is 'Enfield Buildings',

²¹ Grade II listed

²² G. Brandwood & M. Cherry, *Men of Property : The Goddards and Six Generations of Architecture*, Leics Museums, Arts & Records Service, 1990

²³ Grade II listed

17-19 Newarke Street²⁴, a four storey building in red brick with stone stringcourses and panels of moulded brick sunflowers. It retains its original sash windows and has four sets of paired rustic Italianate windows in the top storey, each surmounted by a gable containing a bull's-eye window with multifoil tracery. To its east, but maintaining the window lines established at 17-19, is the former Stibbe factory, now 'Stibbe Lofts', at **11-15 Newarke Street**. It is a concrete framed building dating from the 1920s or 30s with a rendered and painted finish. Its minimal decoration is relieved by moulded lead panels below the second floor windows.

- 5.19 The south side of Newarke Street is dominated by a 1980s red brick multistorey car park. It is not a feature that enhances the conservation area. However, it makes a few concessions to the traditions of the area with the use of arched windows and flat brick pilasters articulating the façade. Buildings of more interesting design are located on Upper Brown Street, most notably the 'Germanic' two storey brick and stone property at **1-3 Upper Brown Street**. Its elaborate stonework corner, with some finely carved details, double-height oriel window, copper-roofed dome and hipped roof is of particular architectural interest.
- 5.20 A simple concrete framed and steel glazed factory from the 1930s, **21 Upper Brown Street**, forms the corner with York Road. The façade is repeated after the building curves round to form **27 York Road** and is an valuable architectural contrast with its neighbours.
- 5.21 From 1-13 Welford Road the former residential character of this part of Leicester again makes an appearance. However, only 11 Welford Road²⁵ remains from the 18th century, the rest being 19th or early 20th century in date. These six buildings create an attractive terrace with interesting architectural details. At **1 Welford Road** the central bay projects slightly, giving visual emphasis to the stone aedicules around the windows, the carved stone doorway with its broken pediment and the stone quoins. The Georgian style doorcases at **3-5 Welford Road** and **7 Welford Road**, the former with fluted pilasters and a semi-circular fanlight, the latter with plain flat pilasters with a Greek key design, add interest to these facades. The spaces between the windows in the 3 storey high bay windows at **13 Welford Road** are decorated with moulded brick panels.

6 Townscape

- 6.1 *Townscape* is a difficult term to define but can generally be said to mean the way in which various elements of the built environment combine to create a "meaningful three-dimensional composition that is satisfying to those who live in it, work in it or simply look at it".²⁶ Some of the elements are the scale and 'mass' of buildings, their pattern and decoration, the layout of streets and spaces, the colour of building materials, the textures of floorscapes and facades, and the views into and out of streets and spaces.
- 6.2 The townscape of the Market Street Conservation Area is defined by the *grid layout* of its streets, the scale of buildings to street widths and the *severance* of its south-western corner by the diagonals created by the *busy* Newarke Street and Welford Road. The character and functions of the area to the east of Pocklington's Walk are different from those on the western side but they remain linked because of their development history. For ease of description, however, each part will be considered separately.

²⁴ Building of Local Interest

²⁵ Grade II listed

²⁶ Cullen, G. *Townscape*, The Architectural Press, London 1961

East

- 6.3 Regular-sized plots widths, a particular feature on Market Street, have imposed a pattern of short vertical *rhythms* along the straight street frontages. However, this pattern is broken by varying roof lines, staggered and projecting cornices, bay and bow windows, pilasters and columns, chimneys and projecting shop signs, all of which contribute to the visual interest and variety of the area. A unity of *scale*, into which larger buildings such as Fenwicks fit happily, is also apparent in Market Street.
- 6.4 *Colour*, both natural and applied, also features strongly. It ties buildings together – such as at Fenwicks – or creates contrasts, such as between 18 and 20 Market Street. Visual *punctuation* is another feature of townscape, for example the large red brick gable at 1-7 Market Street that towers over the adjoining 2 storey neighbour. The visual *contrast* in both height and architectural style add a further dimension.
- 6.5 The grid pattern layout also means that *views* along streets are ‘stopped’ at each end by buildings, creating a sense of *enclosure*. The Pork Pie Chapel and the mock-Tudor building at the King Street/Wellington Street junction create particularly fine visual ‘stops’ to the views southwards along Bowling Green Street and Market Street respectively. Elsewhere, views may be *deflected* by a change of direction (such as northwards down Market Street and Pocklington’s Walk to Hotel Street and Berridge Street), hiding what lies beyond and, to the stranger, inviting further exploration. Alternatively, *landmarks* may attract the eye, such as the tower at 47 Market Street and the big projecting gables at Fenwicks corner.
- 6.6 The *function* of each street also affects the quality and vitality of the townscape. Bowling Green Street has little in the way of shopping and associated activity and is therefore somewhat of a backwater, a place for passing through rather than lingering. The dominance of motor traffic and the narrow street width make the tall buildings appear more dominant, closing in the space. Pocklington’s Walk is wider and the ratio of building scale to road width is more balanced. However, like Belvoir Street, it is a main traffic artery and its *image* is therefore dominated by moving vehicles.
- 6.7 Market Street, however, is different. Its role as the main shopping street is clear from the number, sizes and types of different shops. Although few are sympathetically designed, each shopfront is different and provides visual interest in the form of window displays or views into the shops. The heavy pedestrian flows produce a bustling *atmosphere* that is an important part of the street’s image. During the warmer months, this busyness is interspersed with a series of quieter, street café zones.
- 6.8 The well-maintained buildings testify to the importance of the area in the commercial life of the city. There are a few discordant elements, such as the loading bay on Bowling Green Street and the break in the building line between 2 and 8 Pocklington’s Walk, but run down properties do not detract from its appearance.

West

- 6.9 Until recently many factories and warehouses in the western half of the conservation area were vacant, neglected or run-down. However, the last 10 years have seen increased investment in refurbishment or redevelopment for other uses and the image of neglect has largely gone. Where buildings have been converted their *massing* and *scale* remain unchanged but redevelopment has not always respected the townscape. The large block of cluster flats built in brick and steel at the southern end of Marble Street is an example of how inappropriate scale can overwhelm a street.

- 6.10 In contrast, the visual quality of Millstone Lane is high. Different rooflines and chimneys create interesting *skylines*, while the scale, design, materials and uses of the buildings give the street its own particular identity. The dormer windows at number 20, the big arched window at number 16-18 and the curved sash at number 7 are important visual elements as are the patterns and rhythms created by glazing bars, sashes, brickwork and carved stone. Buildings on cross-streets act as visual stops containing the observer's view. The view north on Rupert Street to the early 18th century façade of 20 Millstone Lane is particularly fine, a view enhanced and punctuated by the spire of the Cathedral rising behind it. In contrast, the view westward to the end of Millstone Lane is not enclosed and extends to distant trees and sky. The forward projection of number 32, and against the paired and arched chimneys at number 27 and the roof and gable of number 35 adds further interest by 'pinching in' the view.
- 6.11 The character of Newarke Street, Pocklington's Walk and Welford Road is defined by their use as important traffic routes. In these busy spaces pedestrians take second place to moving vehicles. The buildings themselves, however, are large enough to make their presence felt and to create interesting townscape. The medieval Magazine Gateway is a dramatic visual stop at the western end and is a complete contrast to the neo-classical façade of Welford House in the east. Tall chimneys and domes break the skyline and many buildings have decorated facades that add considerable visual interest and pattern to the streets. The few trees in the conservation area are found here also – at Phoenix Square and Welford Place. They soften these hard urban spaces and introduce greenery into an area of red brick, concrete and stone. The trees also compensate for the rather overwhelming scale of the multi-storey car park in relation to its neighbours, the theatre and the Square. However, generally the area of Square remains very exposed and of little environmental or townscape value.
- 6.12 In Pocklington's Walk the most obvious townscape feature is the amount of vertical rhythm created by pilasters, columns, window patterns and projecting gable ends and pediments. As a result of most buildings being only two storeys high the street also appears to be wider than it is (at its maximum it is actually the same width as Bowling Green Street). This affects the sense of scale that the street creates for the user, and contributes to the real and imagined image of it encouraging faster traffic flows.
- 6.13 Gable pediments, chimneys and the Registry Office cupola add skyline interest and the view south is terminated dramatically by the curved façade of New Walk Centre. Entry to the street from the south is hinged around the he curved façade of 9 Welford Road and the view to the north is diverted along the off-set line of Greyfriars where chimneys and gables add more visual interest.
- 6.14 From Upper Brown Street there is a wholly unexpected and dramatic view to the cathedral spire which, framed by buildings, rises above the rooftops to act as a visual punctuation mark. The chimney tower and tankroom on the roof of 21 Upper Brown Street perform a similar function.

7 Building materials

The development of the railways in the 1800s had a major effect on the appearance of the conservation area. Cheap bricks, granite, stone and Welsh slate became available and these materials now create the conservation area's character. There is a general consistency in the use of red brick and stone building materials across the conservation area.

Brick

- 7.1 The conservation area is built predominantly in red brick and those used in the earliest buildings (in the area of Millstone Lane) are likely to be local (see paragraph 3.6). However, there are also more 'alien' colours evident, particularly on Market Street where red-purple 'multis', blue, grey and pale cream bricks can be seen. Generally laid in Flemish Bond the texture, colour and patterns of the brickwork adds considerably to the character of the conservation area. Moulded brickwork in the form of name plaques (for example, 'Victoria Buildings 1887' on Bowling Green Street) or for decoration (sunflowers, concentric circles, egg and dart etc) create small details of particular value.
- 7.2 A few brick facades have been painted or rendered, such as 21 Bowling Green Street, 18 Pocklington's Walk and 23-25 Chancery Street, but such applied finishes are not yet of a sufficiently large scale to damage to the overall brick character of the area. However, similar changes elsewhere should be discouraged, not only because of the effect this would have on the character of the area but also because of the potential for visual damage because of inadequate maintenance.

Timber

- 7.3 Timber is used extensively in the conservation area for decorative effect. It is seen in the form of columns, bargeboards, balconies, bay and bow windows, soffits, brackets and decoration (for example, the egg and dart pattern below the soffit at 17 Bowling Green Street or the applied vertical and diamond timbers at 21 Market Street). Market Street has the greatest range of timber decoration. Many properties in the conservation area also retain their original timber sash windows and well-proportioned glazing bars as well as their original doors. These are particularly important aspects of a building's appearance as they reflect its history and the design fashions of the period. The ornately carved oak door at 8 Bowling Green Street is particularly noteworthy as are the original wagon gates at 1 Albion Street and the timber doorcases on Millstone Lane, Bowling Green Street and Welford Road.

Roofs

- 7.4 The roofs on Market Street tend to be hidden behind parapets and are not particularly prominent but roofs are a feature of Newarke Street and Millstone Lane where the scale of the buildings and the width of the streets make them visible. The majority of roofs are of Welsh slate but stone Swithland slates can be seen at 20 Millstone Lane, 1 Welford Road (incl leaded hips) and 13 Welford Road. The red clay roof and ridge tiles on the de Montfort University building at the Newarke Street/Upper Brown Street junction are used to great visual effect, and plain or decorated clay tiles can also be seen at various locations. Most twentieth century buildings have been finished with flat roofs and there are a few slate-hung mansard-type roofs.

Stone

- 7.5 Stone is another common building material in the conservation area. It is seen in, sometimes very elaborately, carved form as window mullions, transoms, doorcases, pediments, parapets, arches, and as ashlar blocks forming plinths, stringcourses and quoins. Portland stone is used for the main facades of the former Leicester Permanent Building Society offices at the south end of Pocklington's Walk. The pedestal of John Biggs' statue is in polished Shap Fell granite on a modern limestone base and the commemorative panel at 5 Millstone Lane also combines limestone and polished granite.

Other Materials

- 7.6 Various other are evident across the conservation area. Stucco, cement rendering, steel, concrete and concrete aggregate form the facades of some buildings. Small amounts of lead or cast iron for rainwater goods can still be seen at Fenwicks and 17 Bowling Green Street. Decoration is expressed by the use of other elements such as leaded lights, lead panels (Durham Ox and Stibbe Lofts), coloured glass (8 Bowling Green Street), Vitriolite (Fenwicks), bronze (John Biggs' statue) and copper (on the corner dome at Upper Brown Street). Some materials, particularly the grey-green slate used to face the ground floor façade of 7 Millstone Lane are incongruous.
- 7.7 Where building materials are original, such as stucco, cast iron, steel windows and balconies, coloured glass, lead (in all its forms), copper and Vitriolite, these should be retained as they form an integral part of the character of both the building and the conservation area.

Shopfronts

- 7.8 Very few original shopfronts remain; it is possible that there are only two - the finely detailed shopfront at 10-12 Market Street and the façade of the Durham Ox. Most shopfronts were installed relatively recently and constructed in modern materials such as softwood or hardwood (such as the Brazilian mahogany shopfront at 18 Market Street), aluminium, glass and steel.

Paving and Ground Surfaces

- 7.9 Road surfaces are generally laid to tarmac with most still retaining their original granite kerbstones. These red and grey granite kerbstones are a particular feature and are both visually and historically important. Market Street has been surfaced in red and grey clay block paving with details picked out in reconstructed stone. Pavements are mainly surfaced in concrete paving slabs or black tarmac with newer block paving in Bowling Green Street, Belvoir Street and Pocklington's Walk.
- 7.10 Across the conservation area there is much evidence of damage to the floorscape. Many paving slabs are cracked and broken as a result of unauthorised parking or loading and the Market Street pavers are uneven, causing ponding in wet weather. Pedestrian crossing points tend to be somewhat unsightly where they are made up of two or three different materials (such as the grey block paving and red tactile paving slabs at the corner of Bowling Green Street/Belvoir Street). The glazed pavement light outside 10-12 Market Street is one of the few remaining in the area and stands out because of its black and white tiled border.

8 Open spaces and trees

- 8.1 The Conservation Area is built to a very high density. Consequently there are few trees and there is very little space available to support additional trees. There are no green open spaces, although Market Street is closed between 10.00 and 16.00 daily and provides an alternative public space. Two sponsored circular planters have been installed at the north end of Market Street and these are planted up with annuals and Chusan palms (*Trachycarpus fortunei*). The impact of this planting is, however, minimal but, because there are many service runs under the highway, there is little opportunity for effective tree planting.
- 8.2 There are five rowan trees in the pavement of Horsefair Street between Market Street and Bowling Green Street. Four of these are about 5m high, the fifth a younger tree planted in

2003/04. They contribute positively to the street scene, although their scale in comparison to the nearby buildings is less than impressive. As elsewhere in the conservation area, the lack of space for large trees means that choice is limited to such small-growing species. They have also been subject to some damage to their lower stems; the tree grilles and adjacent pavements are also uneven.

- 8.3 The three plane trees in the courtyard area outside the Phoenix Theatre, which are up to 10m high with good, spreading, symmetrical crowns, are of considerable visual importance. They soften the hard edges of Newarke Street and help to enclose, and give character to, the paved space in front of the Phoenix Theatre. Planes were also planted along Upper Brown Street but did not survive (the reasons for their loss has not been established). The loss of these trees has made an impact on Phoenix Square, which is now somewhat less attractive and enclosed. Areas of uneven surfaces that have a tendency to 'pond' during wet weather also detract from its appearance and useability. Nevertheless, the retention and improvement of this open space, including replacement of the original trees along the Upper Brown Street frontage, would be of much value in enhancing the appearance of this part of the conservation area.
- 8.4 The "John Biggs" traffic island at the junction of Newarke Street, Welford Road and Welford Place is a raised planting bed that supports a small unimpressive 5m whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*) and a 3m maidenhair tree (*Gingko biloba*) surrounded by seasonal horticultural planting (sponsored). There is also the statue of John Biggs and a very tall camera pole. Surrounded by tall buildings the small trees on this important junction do not, and will not, provide any significant visual impact. The profusion of underground services, and the difficulty of providing adequate and food supplies, precludes the planting of any tree species that grows large, either in the planter or in the pavement. There may be opportunities to reconsider the design and function of this space.

9 The public realm including lighting and street furniture

- 9.1 For many years street lighting in the conservation area has been discreetly mounted on buildings. This has been of considerable benefit to the appearance of the conservation area. Standard steel columns remain in Newarke Street. However, general street clutter is one of the biggest problems in the conservation area. Direction signs, 'fingerpost' signs, traffic lights, traffic regulation order signs, Pelican crossing lights, A-boards outside shops, bollards, litter bins, pedestrian control barriers etc all contribute to the sense of untidiness and lack of co-ordination.
- 9.2 Market Street and Belvoir Street have the highest number of A-boards, as well as hanging basket poles, seats and planting boxes. Combined with the number of summer street cafes, these features create considerable visual impact and obstacles to free pedestrian movement. New, large capacity litter bins have been installed in Market Street but elsewhere the older style 'Wybone' bins are still much in evidence.

10 Loss, intrusion or damage

- 10.1 Small changes can damage the character of an area as easily as large ones. In the Market Street conservation area the greatest loss of character has been caused by the relatively small changes that have been made to buildings. These are not yet of such a scale that their cumulative impact has seriously damaged the character of the area to the extent that its continued designation as a conservation area is in question. However, it remains important to ensure that alterations to buildings are sympathetic to each building's scale,

details, rhythms and materials. For example, the garage door at 14 Millstone Lane is badly proportioned and, thus, detracts from the symmetry of the façade. Nearby, the slate facing to the ground floor of 7 Millstone Lane fails to enhance the building or its surroundings because an unsympathetic and non-traditional material has been introduced to the street scene.

Scale

- 10.2 Although Market Street conservation area has not been subject to major redevelopment pressures some new buildings have been constructed, notably the small two storey infill development at 3-7 Market Street and the Newarke Street multi-storey car park. The former replaced a single storey showroom and the latter the concrete shelters of a bus station. However, the scale of the Market Street development is not entirely appropriate and a three storey building might have been a better complement to the scale of the street. The car park building/Phoenix Theatre grouping did little to remove the large and rather bleak gap in the townscape at this end of Newarke Street.
- 10.3 Development that affects the conservation area, but is located outside it, can also affect its character and appearance, either for good or bad. One example of this is the new student housing development at the corner of Newarke Street and Marble Street. This eight storey building dominates and overwhelms the scale of Marble Street and Chancery Street.

Materials and colour

- 10.4 Poor design or the use of non-traditional materials can also have an effect on the character of the area. Two examples are given in paragraph 10.1 above. A further case is the installation of replacement windows at 5-9 Upper Brown Street. Here the use of uPVC, the colours chosen and the arrangement/widths of the glazing bars have changed the character of these late 19th century buildings as well as the appearance of the street. Similar damage occurs at 23-25 Chancery Street where the arrangement, proportions and design of the windows, as well as the use of pale render on the ground floor façade, is visually unsatisfactory.
- 10.5 Ground surface colour is also important and can either enhance or detract from the quality of a space. In Market Street the red-purple mix of pavers is perhaps too close to the colours of the adjacent red brick buildings with the result that the two elements conflict with one another. The addition of yellow 'no parking' lines, whilst necessary to limit daytime parking, is nevertheless unsightly. The standard galvanised pedestrian guardrails at the Welford Place/Pocklington's Walk junction are functional but unsuitable in a conservation area.

Shopfronts and signs

- 10.6 The Council recognises that buildings need to adapt to changing circumstances and patterns of use, but this has often been at the expense of the architectural or historic character of the buildings. Many replacement shopfronts have been unsympathetically designed, using inappropriate materials and, because of their prominent locations at ground floor (eye) level, tend to contribute disproportionately to the area's loss of character.
- 10.7 On Market Street many shops have overly deep fascias that destroy the original building proportions and/or introduce discordant horizontal rhythms. This is particularly apparent at numbers 20-24 and 33-43. Elsewhere, fine details have been lost, such as the original ground floor Corinthian capitals and full height fluted pilasters at 16 Market Street (the former Midland Auction Mart) or the moulded lead panel at the Durham Ox on Bowling Green Street.

Shopfront security

- 10.8 The installation of external security shutters can also damage the appearance of a building. There are very few shutters in the conservation area and external shutters have only been installed on two shops – 40-42 and 48 Belvoir Street. Internal shutters protect the windows of Fenwicks and the various jewellery stores.

Unused upper floors

- 10.9 The upper floors of commercial premises often remain unoccupied, for a variety of reasons. It could result from the removal of the means of access to the upper storeys during alterations to ground floor retail space, or that the commercial leasing arrangements extend only to the lowest storeys, for security reasons, or for some other reason. However, lack of occupation of upper floors can have serious implications for the quality of both the visual and physical environments, particularly sensitive environments such as conservation areas. It will lead to an appearance of neglect because of lack of maintenance, which in turn could lead to deterioration of decoration and, ultimately, the building fabric.

Visual clutter

- 10.10 The growing number of advertising A-boards and the problems they pose both to the quality of the visual environment has already been mentioned. However, they can also be a hazard to visually-impaired people. When A-boards are added to the number of other items of street furniture the impact on the appearance of the street can be significant, particularly in shopping streets like Market Street where street cafes occupy large areas of the highway. While greater control is being exercised over street cafes through the issue of licenses and proposals to standardise the design of the barriers around them, little effort has been made to remove A-boards.

11 Problems, pressures and capacity for change

Buildings

- 11.1 The character statement above has shown how easily damage can occur to the character of a building or an area by ill-considered alterations, use of inappropriate materials or vacancy of upper storeys. It is therefore important to ensure that any alterations are designed to respect original features such as window proportions, the profile of glazing bars, the ratio of solid to void and the scale of the surroundings. Original detailing is also an important element of character and loss of such details (such as timber sash windows) should be avoided wherever possible. The Council will always encourage careful and honest restoration and repair.
- 11.2 It is also important that, where redevelopment is proposed, the design should take account of the scale and character of neighbouring properties. Unless they are located on prominent or 'landmark' site, new buildings in the Market Street Conservation Area should not be more than four or five storeys high.
- 11.3 Upper floors represent an important asset (for new small businesses or living accommodation) and their use should be maintained or encouraged wherever possible. Where there is access, or the potential for access, to existing upper floors, alterations should make suitable allowances to preserve this.
- 11.4 Where extension or redevelopment is proposed, the design will need to respect the height, scale and massing of the surrounding buildings. The addition of extra floors or the construction of extensions that are higher than existing eaves lines would tend to result in over-development and would not be acceptable in the conservation area.

Shopfronts

- 11.5 Good quality shopfront design is critical to the attractiveness of street frontages and many original shopfronts are evidence of how good design can be harmonious and visually stimulating. Such qualities should be the aim of all alterations to, or the design of new, shopfronts and signs. Market Street is particularly sensitive to the impact of alterations to shopfronts and the potential for improvement is indicated in Appendix 7 “Some Design Suggestions for Improvements to Market Street shopfronts”.
- 11.6 Shopfronts must be sympathetically designed using appropriate materials, colours, proportions and levels of illumination and every opportunity should be taken to rebalance facades by reducing the size of over-deep fascias. Where existing shopfronts are original, or were integral to the original design of the building (such as at 10-12 Market Street), they should be regularly maintained to ensure their continued survival. If replacement is unavoidable new shopfronts should match the originals as closely as possible. Existing details such as pilasters, stall risers and decorative features should be taken as the cues for the new design. In addition, the design of new shopfronts or alterations to existing ones must take account of the need to provide access for everyone, particularly disabled people.
- 11.7 External security shutters should be installed only where absolutely necessary and where it can be shown that other options have been unsuccessful. In such cases, shutter boxes must be installed behind flush fascias or inside the shop window so that the shutter rolls down the outside of the window. In the city centre Council policy is to require that shutters are transparent so that the vitality of the street is retained at night. Polycarbonate inserts in the shutter laths are encouraged.
- 11.8 These issues are considered in the Council's Shopfront Security Policy which, together with Supplementary Planning Guidance on Shopfront Design, is currently under review.

Street furniture and streetscape

- 11.9 The permanent removal of all A-boards from the street would mean substantial benefits for both the environment generally and the shopping environment particularly. Litterbins should be replaced with a more attractive design. The streetscape in Market Street is beginning to look rather dated and uneven and should be replaced with modern materials of a more suitable colour and texture. This would also provide an opportunity to replace the existing planters in a form and design more in keeping with the character of the area.

12 Definition of the special interest of the conservation area

- 12.1 In this appraisal of the Market Street Conservation Area the important features of the built and historical environment have been described and analysed. However, the special interest of the area is not only a product of its physical form but also of its image and role in the life of the city, past and present.
- 12.2 The special character of this conservation area derives from its 19th century commercial, industrial and civic roots. It reflects the general character of Leicester's Victorian built environment – buildings are relatively modest in size but densely packed together in a regular grid pattern to create a finely grained and detailed townscape of local red brick and grey slate. The building plot sizes, and the varied designs of the buildings on these plots, also remind us that the area was built up piece-meal as each of the small narrow plots was sold and developed. Its ability to adapt to changes in shopping habits and other social demands without wholesale loss of that special character is also part of its character and indicates that the area can continue to fulfil an important function in the life of the city.

13 Suggested boundary changes

- 13.1 The Council is required to review the boundaries of conservation areas from time to time and to consider changes as appropriate. This has been done as part of this character statement and the following extensions to the boundary are proposed:

Area 1

- 13.2 The buildings at 45-49 Belvoir Street are extensions of the Water Board offices at 8 Bowling Green Street (already within the conservation area boundary) and have been included for that reason. The large ornate building that forms 40-48 Belvoir Street/1 Albion Street is of particularly high quality and makes a positive contribution to the character of the area. Its appearance and prominent corner location make it worthy of inclusion within the conservation area boundary. The inclusion of the Library and the Pork Pie Chapel would therefore also be logical extension to the conservation area.

Area 2

- 13.3 The western boundary of the conservation area is poorly defined and there are a number of buildings of considerable architectural quality in the Chancery Street/Marble Street area. These make positive contributions to character and appearance of the area and the conservation area should be extended to include them.

Sub-areas

- 13.4 The descriptions in Chapters 5 and 6 have shown that there are two distinct parts to the conservation area as a result of different land uses and types of development over time. The proposed boundary extensions will reinforce the scale of this difference. However, their historical and social linkages remain. For this reason, it is proposed that the differences be recognised and that the Market Street Conservation Area be divided along the line of Pocklington's Walk into *Market Street East* and *Market Street West*.

14 Community involvement

- 14.1 The views of businesses, shoppers and residents will be sought as part of this appraisal process. A publicity leaflet, giving some background to the history, problems and potential in the area, will be distributed to all occupiers together with a request for their views on the area and its conservation status/value. The leaflet text can be found at Appendix 6. If possible, posters listing where and when the draft can be consulted will also be placed in shop windows.
- 14.2 There will be a week-long public exhibition in the foyer of the Central Lending Library on Bishop Street, with more comments/ideas forms, as well as a Press Release and articles in the Leicester Link newspaper (distributed city-wide) and Council in-house magazine FACE. The full text of the draft character statement will be placed on the Council's website with links to a generic response form.
- 14.3 The Council's Conservation Advisory Panel, and the city's Victorian Society and Chamber of Commerce will also be consulted.

15 Enhancement proposals and recommendations for management action

- 15.1 The enhancement of the character or appearance of a conservation area can be defined as 'the reinforcement of the qualities providing the special interest that warranted designation'. Such reinforcement could be secured, for example, through the sympathetic development

of sites, or by other physical improvements such as traffic calming, rationalisation of street signage, restoring architectural features etc.

- 15.2 Local Planning Authorities, such as the City Council, are required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their district and to consult the local community about these proposals.
- 15.3 The preceding appraisal has highlighted developments or alterations that have detracted from the quality of the conservation area. Wherever and whenever the opportunity presents itself the Council will make efforts to ameliorate the elements that detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area, including grants where appropriate and where funding permits. Specifically, although not necessarily an exhaustive list, the Council considers that the conservation area could be enhanced by the means set out below. These proposals are subject to consultation as part of this character statement and will be built into the Council's policies and practices where appropriate and possible. Opportunities will also be taken to procure funds for enhancement works as budgets permit.

Location	Enhancement Proposal
Conservation Area generally	<p>Prepare guidance on Shopfront Design (including signage and lighting) and adopt as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD);</p> <p>Publish an explanatory leaflet on the Market Street Conservation Area for distribution in the area.</p>
Market Street	<p>Consider improvements to the quality and materials used on the highways so that they are more sympathetic to the environment;</p> <p>Prepare a leaflet on suggestions for improvements to shopfronts in Market Street and circulate to owners and occupiers</p>
Phoenix Square	Re-design landscaped area to improve appearance and useability
Conservation area generally (public realm)	<p>Reduce visual clutter by integrating traffic signs, direction signs, traffic regulation signs and fingerposts. Replace remaining galvanised pedestrian barriers to match new wave-top design. Improve and co-ordinate street furniture designs. Repair or replace broken slabs in footways. Establish a co-ordinated approach to street café design in agreement with operators.</p>
Conservation Area generally (private land & buildings)	<p>Improve the appearance and safety of the environment for all users by pursuing the removal of all 'A' boards from the public highway</p> <p>Seek improvements to the design of existing and proposed shopfronts to ensure they are in sympathy with the architecture of the buildings to which they relate</p>
Market Street, Bowling Green Street, Horsefair Street	Remove existing planters and replace with others of more appropriate design and planting.

Appendix 1 : List of buildings in the conservation area

Albion Street	Nos. 1
Belvoir Street	Nos. 45-53 (odd), 40-48 (even), Adult Education Centre, Central Lending Library
Berridge Street	Nos. 1
Bowling Green Street	Nos. 1-11 (odd), 17, Durham Ox PH (19), 25,27, 8-14 (even)
Chancery Street	Nos. 1, 9 (Rupert Street corner), 11-15 (odd), 23-25 (odd), r/o 9 and 11-15 Newarke Street, 26-28 (even)
Horsefair Street	Nos. 22-30
Marble Street	Nos. 2-16 (even)
Market Street	Nos. 15-21 (odd), 21, 25-43 (odd), 6-36 (even)
Millstone Lane	Nos. 5-23 (odd), 12-24 (even)
Newarke Street	Nos. 9-19 (odd), Phoenix Arts, Newarke St multi-storey car park
Pocklington's Walk	Nos. 1-9 (odd), 18 (Town Arms PH), 20-32 (even)
Rupert Street	Nos. Former warehouse, No. 2
Upper Brown Street	de Montfort University, 5-21 (odd)
Welford Place	Nos. 3, Welford House, 9 (former Leicestershire Club), Statue of John Biggs
Welford Road	Nos. 1-11 (odd), 11a, 13
Wellington Street	Nos. 2-4 (even)
York Road	Nos 27-31 (odd)

Appendix 2 : List of listed buildings in the conservation area

Belvoir Street	Adult Education Centre, Nos. 50-54 (City Lending Library)
Bowling Green Street	No. 8
Market Street	Nos. 6-8
Millstone Lane	Nos. 9-11, 8-10, 20-20a
Pocklington's Walk	Nos. 1, 3-5
Welford Place	No. 9, Statue of John Biggs
Welford Road	No. 11

Appendix 3 : Relevant Local Plan Policies

<i>Plan Strategy -</i>	PS01 (a)(d)
<i>Urban Design -</i>	UD01 (High Quality Building Design and Local Context)
<i>Built Environment –</i>	BE01 (preservation of the city's Archaeological Heritage), BE02 (Alterations and Extensions to Listed Buildings), BE03 (Changes of Use of Listed Buildings), BE05 (Demolition of Listed Buildings), BE06 (New Development and Changes of Use in Conservation Areas), BE07 (Demolition in Conservation Areas), BE08 (Buildings of Local Interest), BE10 (Shopfront Design), BE12 (Shopfront Security), BE14 (Advertisement Design), BE15 (Projecting Signs), BE23 (Noise) BE24 (Outside Lighting)

Appendix 4 : Glossary of architectural terms

aedicula	(plural – aediculae) an architectural frame around a door or window with columns or pilasters and an entablature with pediment
bargeboard	projecting boards, often pierced or carved, lying against the outside incline of the roof of a building
bracket	a small support carrying a projecting weight
bull's-eye window	elliptical window, usually with four keystones
cartouche	a carved element resembling paper or parchment with rolled ends or corners, usually containing carved decorations or names
cornice	the horizontal projecting element at the top of a building or wall
cupola	a dome on a roof or turret
doorcase	decorative stone or timber framing around a doorway
finial	a formal ornament on top of a canopy, pediment, gable etc
flute	the shallow concave groove that runs vertically along the shaft of a column
header	a brick laid so that its shorter face is exposed
hoodmould	a projecting moulding over a door or window used decoratively to throw rain off the face of the building
keystone	the central wedge-shaped stone at the top of an arch that locks the arch in place
lintel	a horizontal beam bridging an opening
mansard	a double-sloped roof, the lower part being more steeply pitched than the upper
moulding	a continuous groove or projection used decoratively to throw shadow on, or water away from, a wall
oriel	a curved bay window projecting out from an upper floor
parapet	a low wall along the edge of a roof
pediment	a low pitched gable over a roof or opening
pilaster	a shallow column attached to, but slightly projecting from, a wall
quoin	dressed stones laid up the corners of buildings, usually large and small alternately
rusticated	of a wall – masonry cut in massive blocks with deep joints
stretcher	of a column – square blocks that interrupt the shaft at regular intervals
spandrel	a brick laid so that its longest face is exposed
stringcourse	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
stucco	a continuous decorative horizontal band projecting from a wall and usually moulded
swag	a cement-type render applied to the face of external walls
tympanum	carving resembling draped flowers or fabric
Venetian window	(plural – tympani) the area contained within an arch or pediment
vousoir	a three-part window – the central section being higher with a semi-circular arched top, the adjoining outer windows being lower with flat arched tops
	a wedge-shaped stone which forms part of an arch

