

## **Contents**

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Planning Policy Framework**
- 3.0 Definition of special interest**
- 4.0 Assessment of Special Interest**
  - 4.1 Location and setting
  - 4.3 Historic development and archaeology
  - 4.20 Character analysis
    - 4.21 Character zones
    - 4.22 Prevailing and former uses
    - 4.24 Architectural character and key unlisted buildings
  - 4.54 Building materials and the public realm
  - 4.68 Greenery and green spaces
  - 4.72 Negative factors
  - 4.83 Problems, pressures and capacity for change
- 5 Community involvement**
- 6 Conservation Area boundary**
- 7 Management Proposals**
- 8 Contacts and appendices**

## **List of Maps**

- Map 1 City of Leicester Conservation Areas
- Map 2 Market Street Conservation Area including proposed amendments
- Map 3 Spatial analysis
- Map 4 Robert's Map 1741
- Map 5 Leicester in 1804 (from Susannah Watts 'A Walk through Leicester')
- Map 6 Fowler's Map 1828
- Map 7 Ordnance Survey Map 1885

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 List of buildings in the conservation area
- Appendix 2 List of listed buildings in the conservation area
- Appendix 3 Management & Enhancement Proposals
- Appendix 4 List of persons and organisations consulted
- Appendix 5 Relevant Local Plan Policies
- Appendix 6 Glossary of architectural terms

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this character appraisal is to record and review the character and appearance of the Market Street Conservation Area and to determine whether the area remains special and deserving of its special 'conservation' status. The appraisal also identifies those features or problems that detract from the quality of the area and includes proposals for the management of the area so that its character can be preserved and enhanced.
- 1.2 The survey and appraisal was carried out in 2005 following the methodology suggested by English Heritage. Following consultation on this draft Statement with local businesses, shoppers and other interested parties, a report will be presented to the Cabinet of Leicester City Council to adopt this document as City Council Policy.
- 1.3 Market Street is a primarily Victorian commercial and industrial area on the southern edge of the city's central shopping zone. The Conservation Area was designated in March 1989 and it covers 4 hectares (just under 10 acres). It extends from Horsefair Street/Millstone Lane in the north to Welford Road in the south, and west-east from Upper Brown Street to Bowling Green Street.

## **2.0 Planning Policy Framework**

- 2.1 The concept of 'conservation areas' was first introduced in national legislation in 1967 in the Civic Amenities Act which defined a conservation area as "*an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*". It is not the purpose of conservation areas to prevent change but to manage change in ways that maintain and, if possible, strengthen an area's special qualities.
- 2.2 Current legislation governing conservation areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This places a duty on local planning authorities to declare as conservation areas those parts of their areas that they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest [s.69(1)]. It also places a duty on them to review past designations from time to time [s.69(2)].
- 2.3 The Council has a further duty to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas [s.71(1)] and must pay special attention to the desirability of fulfilling that duty when determining planning applications for sites within such areas. Conservation area status also means that there are some stricter controls on changes that can be made to buildings and land including the need for permission to demolish a building or part of a building, strengthened controls over some minor forms of development, and the automatic protection of all trees.
- 2.4 The City of Leicester Local Plan contains a range of conservation policies (see Appendix 5) to ensure that the most important aspects of Leicester's built environment are protected and enhanced. These policies also help to ensure that new developments and conservation-led regeneration reflect the character and value of the historic environment. This Appraisal will support the conservation policies in the Local Plan.

## **3.0 Definition of Special Interest**

- 3.1 The special interest of the Market Street Conservation Area derives primarily from its links with the early years of Leicester's economic growth and social history, and can be defined as follows:

- The area has considerable archaeological potential, being located on and close to the town's Roman and medieval walls and ditches;
- It contains visible reminders of the town's 18<sup>th</sup> century residential expansion;
- It was one of the first areas to be laid out following the enclosure of the South Fields in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century;
- It is the first area of the city to be laid out in a grid pattern;
- The area has 11 listed buildings, which also have significance for Leicester's social history;
- The area is a high quality urban environment that is adapting to the city's changing needs and demands without wholesale loss of character;
- Its buildings are generally of high quality, with attractive architectural detailing and a prevailing unity of materials;
- The diversity of the area's building designs, forms and scales has created a visually stimulating and high quality townscape;

3.2 These special historic, architectural and social qualities make the area worthy of preservation and enhancement.

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

##### Location and setting

4.1 The Market Street Conservation Area is situated on the south-western edge of the city centre's shopping core, about 400 metres south of the Clock Tower. It is about 65m above sea level, generally flat and laid out in a distinctive grid pattern with narrow plots in the eastern (shopping) streets (Map 2).

4.2 The eastern half is a busy area with shops and offices, while the western half is a mixture of professional offices, apartments, bars and restaurants.

##### Historic development and archaeology

4.3 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 defences (see Maps 5 and 6). Indeed, the narrow block between Millstone Lane/Horsefair Street and Friar Lane/Market Place South preserves the line of these defences. There may also have been an 'extra-mural' (that is, outside the walls) suburbs during the Roman period, as evidence of one such suburb has been located as far south as Bonners Lane (outside the conservation area boundary).

4.4 There are therefore likely to be significant buried deposits in the area. It is possible that these might include parts of 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 defences. There could thus be evidence of burials for the full period of Roman occupation of Leicester (from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> Centuries AD). Evidence of medieval and post-medieval occupation is also possible as the building of small houses on land outside, but close to, 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 19<sup>th</sup> century.

4.5 There was some activity by both Parliament and Royalist armies during the Civil War. Leicester was besieged twice during 1645 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.

- 4.7 The area began to experience rapid change in the 18<sup>th</sup> 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 or along existing roads. 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 of 1722 shows that many new buildings had been constructed in the area. 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) the new promenade of New Walk (1785) and the open countryside of the South Fields.
- 4.8 Between 1720 and 1800 Georgian houses extended from New Street and Friar Lane (in Cathedral/Guildhall conservation area) to Millstone Lane (Map 5). 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'.
- 4.9 To the south of this area lay the South Fields, one element of the medieval field system. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century it was owned by the Borough Corporation, these were mainly used for the grazing of cattle and sheep belonging to the city's Freemen. Some brick kilns are recorded (one being on the site of the Council's offices at New Walk Centre) and these were producing bricks for the town's Georgian expansion. At the turn of the nineteenth century the Corporation had made substantial profits from the sale of the town's bowling green and the 'Horsefair Gardens' (now Horsefair Street and Town Hall Square) 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 enclosure 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.
- 4.10 The 'inclosure' award represented a 'landmark in the history of the town'. 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' Almost as soon as the award was issued 'the Corporation began to nibble at the land nearest to the town'. Fowlers map of 1828 (Map 6) 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.

- 4.11 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.
- 4.12 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. One example of an 18<sup>th</sup> century house now remains - at 20 Millstone Lane.
- 4.13 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.
- 4.14 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" during his life both as an employer and as a Radical and Secularist. He shares the signal honour of a Victorian memorial statue with only two other eminent local people – the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Rutland (in the Market Place) and the great preacher Robert Hall (in de Montfort Square).
- 4.15 Further new streets were made, such as Berridge Street and Greyfriars, which were built in 1874 linking Pocklington's Walk with Loseby Lane. Development in the conservation area was largely complete by 1886 (Map 7).
- 4.16 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) a tram hit the John Biggs' statue, 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 in 1967, although sited to look down Belvoir Street rather than, as originally, down Welford Road. Possibly owing to its historic proximity to the houses of the wealthier classes of the town, the shopping character of Market Street tended to be 'up-market', a position it held until well into the twentieth century when it was described in 1936 as an 'aristocratic shopping centre'.

- 4.17 In the era of comprehensive slum clearance and redevelopment plans in the 1960s and 70s several noteworthy changes took place. 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 (1974) and Newarke Street multi-storey car park. 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. 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. The end block 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.
- 4.18 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 so that the increased investment was not achieved at the expense of the character of the historic parts 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.
- 4.19 The conservation area remains an important part of the commercial heart of the city and actively contributes to the renaissance of the city centre. 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.
- 4.20 Character analysis
- Character Zones
- 4.21 The historical description of the area in above shows that the conservation area has always been characterised by a range of mixed land uses. The area divides naturally into two distinct areas, each of which is characterised by particular functions and architecture, but which is linked historically to the other. To the east are the area's shops and professional offices, while the western half is characterised by former factories, houses and offices. The Character Analysis is therefore divided along similar lines into the **Eastern** (proposed Market Street Conservation Area) **zone** and the **Western** (proposed Newarke Street Conservation Area) **zone**.
- Prevailing and former uses
- 4.22 Nearby these 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. 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.

- 4.23 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 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

#### 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.)

- 4.24 The townscape of the Market Street Conservation Area stems primarily from the grid layout of its streets and the scale of buildings to street widths. Where the north-south grid is cut by east-west streets particularly fine visual 'stops' are created by the Pork Pie Chapel on Belvoir Street and the mock-Tudor building at the King Street/Wellington Street junction. Elsewhere, views are deflected by subtle changes of direction (such as northwards down Market Street and Pocklington's Walk to Hotel Street and Berridge Street). The tower at 47 Market Street and the big projecting gables at Fenwicks corner are landmarks that attract the eye and add further visual interest. 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. Most twentieth century buildings have been finished with flat roofs and there are a few slate-hung mansard-type roofs.
- 4.25 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. 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.

#### **Eastern Zone**

- 4.26 The eastern half of the conservation area displays a wealth of ornament and many different architectural styles. Regular-sized plots widths, a particular feature, 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. 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. Shopfronts of varying designs and degrees of quality dominate the ground floors.

- 4.27 Along Market Street the buildings are between 2 and 4 storeys high and most date from the mid- to late Victorian period. Some early 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings can still be seen such as 6 and 8 Market Street (the offices of the Goddards, the well-known local architects' practice, between 1830 until well into the twentieth century). 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.
- 4.28 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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** (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 **10-12 Market Street**.
- 4.29 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 timber and painted decoration and **23-25 Market Street** is a very domestic scale building with a pair of attractive oriel windows (and is perhaps one of the oldest buildings in the conservation area, there being evidence of a lime-ash floor). In contrast, Po-Boys occupies a 1930s building with a concrete and steel façade at **31 Market Street**.
- 4.30 There is a wide variety of shopfront styles and designs, most of which are modern installations.
- 4.31 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 Street 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**.
- 4.32 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

- 4.33 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.
- 4.34 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 1842. 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 junction". The 1930s steel windows, balconies and Vitriolite panels of the central part of Fenwick's façade add a further decorative dimension to the street.
- 4.35 The proposed extension to the conservation includes **45-49 Belvoir Street, 34-38 and 40-48 Belvoir Street/1 Albion Street**. The first of these 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 three storey building at 34-38 Belvoir Street is designed in a simple classical style with a very tall ground floor, a deeply moulded stringcourse between first and second floor level and half-round window arches to the third floor windows, the whole being overhung by projecting eaves.
- 4.36 However, 48 Belvoir Street, by contrast, is larger and much more ornate. Originally built as a factory to the design of the well-known local architect, Arthur Wakerley, it 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.

- 4.37 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.

#### **Western zone**

- 4.38 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.
- 4.39 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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.
- 4.40 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.

- 4.41 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.
- 4.42 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.
- 4.43 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.
- 4.44 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, respectively). They are typical of the high Victorian fashion for designing institutions in dramatic and romantic styles. 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 Club (1875-77) by Joseph Goddard presents its curved façade in a 'rather curious mix of 'Jacobethan' and Italianate styles'.
- 4.45 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. Other former factories that front onto Marble Street and Millstone Lane are also of some architectural interest, such as **25 Millstone Lane** and **5-7 Marble Street**. These three and four brick buildings are simply detailed with decorated stringcourses, half-round and segmental window arches, bracketted eaves and brick pilasters. The junction of Millstone Lane and Marble Street is marked at 25 Millstone Lane by a 45° canted corner with a recessed moulded brick name panel ('Tudor Chambers') at first floor level and the date '1900' in a roundel in the centre of a triangular pediment at roof level.
- 4.46 The grand Constitutional Club 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 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

- 4.47 However, other buildings also contribute to the architectural quality of the street scene and it is in this zone that the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings are to be found, giving the northern edge of the conservation area its Georgian character and scale. 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.
- 4.48 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.
- 4.49 The architectural environment of the Newarke Street\_area is created from a mix of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 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', **17-19 Newarke Street**, a four storey building in red brick with stone stringcourses and panels of moulded brick sunflowers. It retains virtually all of 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.
- 4.50 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.
- 4.51 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.
- 4.52 From 1-13 Welford Road the former residential character of this part of Leicester again makes an appearance. However, only 11 Welford Road remains from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the rest being 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

- 4.53 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.

#### Building materials and the public realm

- 4.54 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*

- 4.55 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.

- 4.56 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*

- 4.57 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). 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.

- 4.58 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. The style and design of original windows are particularly important aspects of a building's appearance, reflecting its history and the fashions of the period. Unfortunately, plastic windows are becoming increasingly evident, to the detriment of the character of both buildings and the area.

### *Stone*

- 4.60 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.
- 4.61 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.

### *Other Materials*

- 4.61 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. 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.
- 4.62 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*

- 4.63 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.

### *The public realm*

- 4.64 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.
- 4.65 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. However, the appearance of the main shopping and pedestrian

streets will evolve over the next few years as part of the Council's 'Streets and Spaces' strategy. Surfaces will be relaid in combinations of grey and pink granites to reflect their current function and importance as well as their place in Leicester's history. This will have a major, but beneficial, impact on the appearance of parts of the conservation area

- 4.66 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.
- 4.67 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. The Council's 'Streets and Spaces' project will include replacement of many of these seats, bins and other street furniture.

#### Greenery and green spaces

- 4.68 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. 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.
- 4.69 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.
- 4.70 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.
- 4.71 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 and a 3m maidenhair tree surrounded by seasonal horticultural planting. 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.

### Negative factors

#### *Loss of details or architectural features*

- 4.72 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. Unfortunately both have been marred recently by the installation of plastic windows (thus losing the visual interest created by the original timber sashes) and blocked gutters and downpipes have contributed to the deterioration and staining of the brick facades.

#### *Scale*

- 4.73 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.
- 4.74 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*

- 4.75 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 such as at 5-9 Upper Brown Street, 25 Millstone Lane and 5-7 Marble Street. The use of uPVC, the colours chosen and the arrangement/widths of the glazing bars have changed the character of these late 19<sup>th</sup> 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.
- 4.76 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. Their replacement in grey and pink granites will do much to



improve the appearance of this important street. Yellow 'no parking' lines, whilst necessary to limit daytime parking, are also unsightly. The standard galvanised pedestrian guardrails at the Welford Place/Pocklington's Walk junction are functional but unsuitable in a conservation area.

- 4.77 Applied colour, in the form of paint or render, usually has some effect on the character and appearance of a building. Not only might it obscure subtle architectural detailing it will also require regular maintenance to avoid looking shabby. Some colours can be appropriate but large areas of bright or strong colours in architecturally sensitive locations can damage the character and appearance of a conservation area (see the 'before' and 'after' of 53 Bowling Green Street). The rendered facades at 23-25 Chancery Street have introduced a bland and graffiti-prone element into an otherwise interesting street of red brick buildings.

#### *Shopfronts and signs*

- 4.78 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.

- 4.79 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*

- 4.80 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*

- 4.81 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*

- 4.82 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.

#### Problems, pressures and capacity for change

##### *Buildings and sites*

4.83 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 good advice and information is available to ensure that future alterations preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area. This advice should cover such aspects as the need for designs to respect original detailing such as window proportions, the profile of glazing bars, the ratio of solid to void, the scale of the surroundings etc.

4.84 It is likely that the Phoenix Theatre will relocate when the new theatre currently under construction on Rutland Street is completed and its current site will therefore have potential for redevelopment. Bearing in mind recent new development in the area, site development guidance for the site should be a priority. In addition, the west side of Upper Brown Street is included within the boundaries of a Potential Development Area (PDA Area 6) in the draft Replacement City of Leicester Local Plan. The Council's 'Streets and Spaces' project will deliver an extension to New Walk, the 18<sup>th</sup> century route leading from the southern edge of the city centre to the central shopping zone. This will connect the King Street end of New Walk with a route leading along Market Street to Highcross Street and the Waterside Regeneration Area beyond.

##### *Shopfronts*

4.85 The Market Street area is a thriving shopping area and supports many national, and high quality local, businesses. Alterations to shopfronts are therefore likely to continue to be a common occurrence. Good quality shopfront design is critical to maintaining the quality of the conservation area and the Council's shopfront and security design guidance should be updated as a priority.

##### *Street furniture and streetscape*

4.86 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 its planned refurbishment will provide the opportunity to improve its appearance and introduce better street furniture.

## **5 Community Involvement**

5.1 The views of businesses, shoppers and residents were sought as part of this appraisal process. Appendix 4 lists others. A publicity leaflet, giving some background to the history, problems and potential in the area, was distributed to all occupiers together with a request for their views on the area and its conservation status/value. Posters listing where and when the draft could be consulted were also placed around the area. There was an exhibition at the Council's offices in New Walk Centre with comments/ideas forms available, as well as a Press Release. The full text of the draft character statement was available on the Council's website with a quicklink. Invitations to a drop-in meeting to discuss the draft management proposals were sent out to all occupiers in the conservation area and the meeting arranged at the Council offices after business hours.

5.2 The views or comments that were received were included in the report to the March 13<sup>th</sup>

2006 Cabinet, with an indication as to how/where they were incorporated into the Appraisal. If they were not relevant to conservation issues, the report indicated to whom they were forwarded for action or reply.

## **6 Conservation Area boundary**

6.1 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*

6.2 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 as does its neighbour opposite at 34-38 Belvoir Street. As both buildings frame the entrance to Albion Street it is therefore logical to include each of these corners. The Central Lending Library and the Pork Pie Chapel are also integral to the character of the south side of Belvoir Street and their inclusion would therefore also be logical extension to the conservation area.

### *Area 2*

6.3 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/Upper Brown Street area. These have been described in Chapter 5 and are considered to make positive contributions to character and appearance of the area and the conservation area should be extended to include them.

## **7.0 Management proposals**

7.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Councils to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of conservation areas when considering planning applications. They must also prepare and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of such areas.

7.2 Based on the issues identified in the foregoing appraisal, a management strategy has been drawn up to address the following :

- Improving the appearance, design and quality of the public realm in the area generally;
- Improving the quality and design of shopfronts where these do not enhance their sites or the environment;
- Drawing up design guidance for the Phoenix Theatre site prior to it becoming vacant;
- Publicising the need to retain, restore and maintain original features such as windows, chimneys, roofing materials, architectural details etc

7.3 The strategy and proposals for managing and enhancing the conservation area are set out in Appendix 3, together with indications as to sources of possible funding and timescales [short (1-2 years), medium (3-5 years) and long-term (over 5 years)] where appropriate.

## **8.0 Contacts and Appendices**

8.1 For further information on this, or other, conservation areas you can contact the Council's Building Conservation Officers by phone, letter or e-mail at the following addresses:

- Urban Design Group, Regeneration and Culture, Leicester City Council, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester, LE1 6ZG;
- Fax 0116 2471149
- [urbandesigngroup@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:urbandesigngroup@leicester.gov.uk)

There is also information on all conservation areas on the Council's website ([www.leicester.gov.uk](http://www.leicester.gov.uk)) including Character Appraisals where adopted.

<b>Appendix 1 : List of buildings in the conservation area</b>
--

Albion Street	Nos. 1
Belvoir Street	Nos. 45-53 (odd), 34-38, 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. 5-7 (odd), 2-16 (even)
Market Street	Nos. 15-21 (odd), 21, 25-43 (odd), 6-36 (even)
Millstone Lane	Nos. 5-23, 25, 27-29 (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)

<b>Appendix 2 :</b>	<b>List of listed buildings in the conservation area</b>
---------------------	--

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. 1

**Appendix 3 : Management Strategy and Enhancement Proposals**

Location	Strategy, Proposals and delivery mechanism
<p>Conservation Area generally (the public realm)</p>	<p>1. Improve the quality of the public realm in line with the Public Realm Strategy as approved;</p> <p>Delivery - <b>short term</b> : Market Street is part of the Council's £19 million 'Streets and Spaces' project on which site work will begin in 2006. Works in Market Street should start in 2007.</p> <p>2. Prepare Shopfront &amp; Shopfront Security Design Guide (including signage and lighting) as a supplementary guidance to the Local Plan;</p> <p>Delivery – <b>short to medium term</b> : a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will need to be included in the 2006 or 2007 Local Development Scheme (LDS)</p> <p>3. Publish an explanatory leaflet on the conservation area, including advice on repairs, restoration and alterations, and distribute to owners and occupiers;</p> <p>Delivery – <b>short term</b></p> <p>4. Prepare Site Development Guidance for the Phoenix Square site.</p> <p>Delivery – <b>short to medium term</b> : guidance should be available by the time that the site becomes wholly vacant.</p> <p>5. Reduce visual clutter wherever possible by integrating traffic signs, pedestrian barriers, direction signs, traffic regulation order signs, fingerposts, A Boards etc;</p> <p>Delivery – <b>short term</b> : see 1. Above</p> <p>6. Secure regular pressure washing of highways and paths to remove stains and chewing gum;</p> <p>Delivery – <b>short to medium term</b> : as part of the delivery of the 'Streets and Spaces' project.</p>
<p>Conservation area generally (private land and buildings)</p>	<p>Identify shopfronts, historic features etc requiring improvement/restoration and seek funds for grants to replace or restore these elements.</p> <p>Delivery – <b>short to medium term</b> : funding may be available from the Council's capital programme, English Heritage, Leics Strategic Economic Partnership etc.</p>

**Appendix 4 : List of persons or organisations consulted**

All relevant City Council departments	Ward Councillors
All building occupiers (and owners/agents where known)	Police Architectural Liaison Officer
Conservation Area Panel	Leicester Asian Business Association
Victorian Society	Chamber of Commerce
Leicester Civic Society	Estate agents marketing property in the area
English Heritage	

**Appendix 5 : Relevant Local Plan Policies**

Subject	Policy No.	Details
<b>City of Leicester Local Plan 2006</b>		
The Plan Strategy	PS01(d)	Conservation of the City's buildings, spaces etc
Urban Design	UD01	High quality building design & local context
Retailing	R04	Offices for Financial and Professional Services
	R05	Development for Food and Drink Purposes
Built Environment	BE01	Preservation of the city's archaeological heritage
	BE02-05	Listed Buildings
	BE06-07	Conservation Areas
	BE08	Buildings of Local Interest
	BE10-14	Shopfronts & Advertisements
	BE21	Noise
	BE22	Outside Lighting

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Guidelines for A3 Class Uses in the City Centre

**Appendix 6 : 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 of a column – square blocks that interrupt the shaft at regular intervals
segmental arch	a very shallow arch
stretcher	a brick laid so that its longest face is exposed
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 applied to the face of external walls
swag	carving resembling draped flowers or fabric
tympanum	(plural – tympani) the area contained within an arch or pediment
Venetian window	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
vousoir	a wedge-shaped stone which forms part of an arch