

6 EVALUATION OF THE CONSERVATION AREA BY ZONE

The character of Uttoxeter Conservation Area is diverse but can be divided into 15 component zones, each of which has developed its own character.

6.1 1 - Schools (North East)

6.1.1 Character

The Schools zone occupies the north east corner of the Conservation Area. It is primarily characterised by educational and social/leisure buildings, separated by open space. Much of this space is itself put to educational/leisure use.

The buildings are mainly of red brick with tiled roofs, although the Bradley House Club facing onto Bradley Street is rendered. Landscaping is mainly hard and rather unattractive and the zone is in part heavily dominated by traffic using Bradley Street and Dove Bank.

The zone is particularly characterised by the cluster of attractive historic buildings at its southern point and the interplay of structures and spaces more generally.

6.1.2 Listed Buildings

There are four listed buildings in this zone, with two further listed structures (the garden wall to Alleyne's Grammar School facing onto Church Street and, at the extreme western tip of the zone, a marker stone beside the site of the former St Mary's School on Bradley Street). The statutory listing of all these structures is appropriate. However, the cluster of buildings immediately alongside Back Lane are equally deserving of Grade II listing, being part of a group composition, vital to views along Back Lane in either direction, and of greater worth than mere local list inclusion.

6.1.3 Other Positive Elements

The local view along Back Lane in both directions is extremely valuable. The view eastward to housing on the east side of Dove Bank, closed by an attractive building and a fine mature tree is especially worthy of protection.



22: Clustered buildings (some listed, some not) forming part of the Alleyne's Grammar School complex



23: The Bradley House Club - harsh hard landscaping and the squat concrete bollards make a negative contribution to the overall character of the site despite its Grade II listing



24: The view eastwards along Back Lane - although degraded by car parking, this is a significant positive element in this part of the Conservation Area. The major contribution of mature trees to this vista should also be noted



25: The view westwards along Back Lane



26: The negative impact of parking beside Jervis House and basic quality standardised street furniture

The strong cluster of 17th, 18th and 19th century brick buildings viewed from both the south and the west is a particularly characterful feature of this zone.

6.1.4 Particular Negative Contributions

Perhaps the most significant negative contribution is that resulting from traffic, both in terms of noise along Bradley Street and the regrettable (if understandable) use of Back Lane for parking.

Parking to the side of Jervis House at the southern tip of the zone is visually detrimental, as is the contribution of unattractive street furniture in this area and, especially, its impact on views of the otherwise attractively clustered buildings.

6.1.5 Vulnerability and Threats

Being so dominated by educational and leisure use, this zone is most vulnerable to changes of use that might necessitate marked physical change or, equally, to increased pressures for further development.

With the exception of its southernmost tip south of Back Lane (occupied by Jervis House), this zone lies outside the principal area covered by the 2003 Uttoxeter Town Centre Master Plan. However, one of the most significant town centre developments proposed within that plan is to the Maltings Car Park site immediately to the south east of this zone across Silver Street. Sensitive development on this site (which will be discussed elsewhere in this appraisal) may well benefit the Schools zone. However, the view westwards along Back Lane to the 19th century housing that separates the car park site from this part of Silver Street would be seriously damaged by any form of development that protrudes above the roof lines of these domestic scale buildings.

6.1.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

The zone would be particularly enhanced by improvements in and rationalisation of street furniture and by the softening of hard roadside edges (for instance the car parks of Jervis House and the Bradley House Club) with soft landscaping or other ameliorative features.

The school structures along Back Lane should be statutorily protected by listing at Grade II. The mature tree in front of 54 Church Street should be protected with a Tree Preservation Order.

6.1.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

Whatever form of development is undertaken on the Maltings car park, the residential properties along Silver Street should be retained and improved to the wider benefit of the Conservation Area. New structures at the northern end of the car park behind these properties should be kept below the lowest roof line of these dwellings.

6.2 2 - Dove Bank (North East)

6.2.1 Character

This zone forms an important entry point into the Conservation Area and the approach to the town centre from the roundabout at the northern end of Town Meadows Way. The character of Dove Bank has been significantly changed by the recent construction of Town Meadows Way, having removed its residential continuation eastwards beyond the boundary of the designated Conservation Area.

Apart from acting as an entry point and approach to Uttoxeter, the zone is entirely residential in nature with a small run of well spaced semi-detached properties on the east side of Dove Bank, terminating in the somewhat hidden larger but unlisted High Croft at the southern end of the zone opposite Jervis House.

The housing is of traditional villa form in red brick with tiled roofs. Sturdy boundary walls in brick mainly survive, although some have been cut back in a rather unsightly fashion to increase vehicular access off Dove Bank and Church Street. Trees and vegetation play a greater part in this zone than many others due to its residential nature.

6.2.2 Listed Buildings

There are no statutorily protected listed buildings in this zone. Whilst this is entirely appropriate, the houses make a significant contribution to the street scene and this zone of the Conservation Area and, therefore, local listing should be considered for some or all of the properties.

6.2.3 Other Positive Elements

The views in either direction down Dove Bank and along into Castle Street are particularly valuable and give character to this approach to Uttoxeter. The framing of the inward view by the slightly projecting front elevation of



27: View down Dove Bank at the entrance to the Conservation Area - again, the vital positive contribution of mature trees to the street scene is striking



28: View through the Dove Bank zone towards Church Street, with High Croft framed by mature vegetation to the left. This and adjacent housing almost certainly warrant inclusion on a local list



29: A similar view to 28, but demonstrating the importance of visual framing provided by Jervis House and opposing trees. Street lighting and more modest buildings on the east side of Church Street degrade this otherwise impressive vista

Jervis House to the west is important, as is the general contribution of trees and vegetation. The cross view into and through Back Lane is equally valuable.

6.2.4 Particular Negative Contributions

Although not especially detrimental, the increasing perforation of traditional boundary walls to the properties is a slight negative aspect of the zone (see 27 and 28).

6.2.5 Vulnerability and Threats

Clearly, vehicular pressure along Dove Bank and Church Street is an ongoing issue, although the relief provided by the bypass in recent years has had a significant beneficial effect upon the zone. Otherwise, the greatest vulnerability to the character of the zone is likely to be either in changes brought by changed use of the Maltings car park and other sites in the north and west of the Conservation Area and pressures for development affecting individual residential properties. Significant changes to the villa style properties and their frontages could have a deleterious impact on the character of the zone, as could the loss of soft landscaping and trees.

6.2.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

Local listing of the properties and application of Tree Preservation Orders on mature specimens will provide protection if not enhancement to the zone. Otherwise, there are no distinct opportunities for enhancement and positive development relating to the Dove Bank area at the present time. The zone lies immediately within the boundary of the 2003 Uttoxeter Town Centre Master Plan, although there are no specific proposals for it.

6.2.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

Not relevant.

6.3 3 - Town Meadows (East)

6.3.1 Character

The escarpment shaping this eastern flank of the old town is its single most important geographical feature, delineating and establishing a defensible site for the original settlement. The existing skyline formed by the church and (mainly residential) rooftops provides an important view of

Uttoxeter from the east, unmatched from any other quarter (see 14). The lower slopes of the escarpment are dominated by the eastern arm of the bypass, Town Meadows Way.

The 1971 appraisal marked out the western edge of this zone (opposite the end of Silver Street) as being an area in need of improvement. This has not changed and the site has been identified as an opportunity for development in the 2003 Town Centre master plan.

The construction of Town Meadows Way has clearly changed the context of this zone. Until recently, its character might best have been described as being run down and detrimental to the town centre and its Conservation Area. Such is the extent of redevelopment that is presently taking place in this area, guided by the Town Centre Master Plan, that with care the problem of decline and misuse will be overcome. However, it remains vital that the ancient origins of the town and the attractiveness of its approaches are recognised. Ongoing new development on the skyline must always be in sympathy and proportion to its surroundings.

6.3.2 Listed Buildings

There are no listed buildings within the zone.

6.3.3 Other Positive Elements

None.

6.3.4 Particular Negative Contributions

The straggle of buildings and poorly planned sites on the eastern side of Town Meadows Way – immediately adjacent to the boundary of the Conservation Area do little to enhance local views in either direction along the bypass. This impacts upon the wider perception of Uttoxeter and, therefore, its Conservation Area.

6.3.5 Vulnerability and Threats

This is a key zone for Uttoxeter and the eastern side of the Conservation Area. Inappropriate, out of scale or poorly designed and planned redevelopment of the various sites will have a strongly detrimental impact for the long term upon views into the town or across it and on important routes such as Church Street and Dove Bank. Careless disruption of the silhouette formed by St Mary's Church and adjoining buildings from the east may also occur.

Conversely, failure to develop the potential of the zone properly must also be regarded as an equally potent long term threat to the Conservation Area.

6.3.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

The 2003 Uttoxeter Town Centre master plan deals with development potential in the zone in two packages: the Angus MacKinnon site and the Church Street infill/builders yard. The master plan identifies residential usage as being the preferable option for the Angus MacKinnon site, with some small scale live/work units adding to its vitality and the viability of the town centre. Much of this is under construction as this appraisal is being revised (in late 2007 and early 2008). The potential for the Church Street site is less clear. The master plan looks to short term environmental improvements, but recognises that the electricity substation may limit its reuse. This may in itself represent a long term threat to the core of the zone and its appearance from Church Street and Silver Street.

6.3.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

Residential development on the Angus MacKinnon site along Town Meadows Way is in progress. The essential development principles for the site demand planning and design with considerable sensitivity in order to break up massing into relatively small and interesting blocks. These subdivisions should allow for protracted views into and through the residential quarter. Massing should not affect the view of the town's skyline from the east. Preferably, materials and detailing should reflect historic traditions that are so prevalent within the core of the town.

Both this and the Church Street site should incorporate substantial landscaping and carefully planned banks of vegetation and screening. Planted species should be appropriate to the locality.

The redevelopment of the Church Street site should be of scale and materials appropriate to permit the current and former residential character along the eastern side of Dove Bank and Church Street to be knitted back together successfully. The site represents a focal point at the end of Silver Street and should be occupied by one or more buildings that give a strong architectural line to the visible urban grain and are of pleasing and accomplished design.

6.4 4 - The Church and Church Street (Central – East)

6.4.1 Character

Once again, this is a key zone within the historic Conservation Area. It is characterised by mainly substantial housing clustered around the parish church on Church Street. 21-27 Church Street are slightly smaller and generally earlier residential properties. The buildings are mostly of red brick, although 27 Church Street at least is timber framed and rendered. The church is of sandstone. At the eastern end of the north side of Church Street, the urban grain is damaged by the absence of a built edge to the street where brewery buildings were demolished in the 1960s and replaced with the Maltings Car Park.

The churchyard is the sole area of public open green space within the town centre and this forms a vital characteristic of the zone. Further softening is contributed by relatively small scale planting in the gardens of the Old Vicarage to the south of the road and Bank House to the north.

6.4.2 Listed Buildings

Every structure within this zone is listed. This is entirely appropriate.

6.4.3 Other Positive Elements

Over and above the grander domestic architecture and that of the Church (rebuilt in 14th century style in the early 1800s) and the importance of the churchyard as an open space, the most positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area as whole is provided by views along, into and through this zone. These are equally important looking east and west along Church Street, where, for the latter, the pronounced bend within the zone provides strong closure of views (see 31). Looking southwest from the end of Silver Street, the church itself provides the visual focal point for the view, whilst, in the other direction from the end of Bridge Street, the listed Eastfield performs the same function successfully.

6.4.4 Particular Negative Contributions

The loss of atmosphere and character bleeding through the missing street edge on the north side of Church Street to the east of Bank House is far and away the most negative aspect of this otherwise most characterful zone. As elsewhere, unsightly street lighting and other street furniture also



30: St Mary's Church viewed along Church Street from the north - a significant landmark building and important focal point, providing closure to this local vista



32: View across the churchyard - an important and rare green space in the town centre – see also (20)

contribute negatively towards the character of this section of the Conservation Area.

6.4.5 Vulnerability and Threats

The redevelopment of the Maltings Car Park site may have a damaging impact upon this zone in particular. Increased vehicular use of Church Street will undoubtedly impact upon its character, but the greatest danger is that poor design of the development edges or inappropriate massing of the structures on the car park site may severely damage the views into and through the Church Street zone. The loss of the Blackshaw's Old Mill to the west or the ill-judged redevelopment of Crown Yard and the neighbouring areas may also detrimentally impact upon the zone due to their proximity and the views through from Church Street.

The other most obvious threat to the character of this part of Church Street is more substantial development of any of the former residential properties or their material alteration in an inappropriate way. Determination of future planning applications for such development needs to be considered very carefully for likely impact on the Conservation Area and the character of this particular zone.

6.4.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

By implication, the greatest enhancement to this zone can be achieved by careful reformation of the built edge of the north side of Church Street to appropriate design and massing.

6.4.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

Overdevelopment of the Maltings Car Park site will risk serious damage to the character of Church Street. Buildings at the edge of any development recreating the morphology of the north side of Church Street should use traditional materials and respect the prevailing height, massing and separation of buildings on both sides of the street. It will be very unfortunate if development elsewhere on the Maltings Car Park site is visible over the rooflines of any existing or new structure on the north side of Church Street.

Views along Church Street into the Blackshaw's Mill/Lion's Antique site to the west must be carefully considered during the development of this further area identified for change in the 2003 master plan. Again, materials used on the eastern fringe of the site should complement those that already exist within the Church



33: Looking northeast along Church Street, the bending road and Eastfield provide essential closure of the view and a positive focal point



34 The listed Eastfield and the Old Vicarage make very positive contributions to the character of the zone

Street streetscape. The site should not be overdeveloped so as to ensure that Blackshaw's building remains as a focal point of the westward view from the Church along Church Street.

6.5 5 – Blackshaw's Old Mill and Adjacent Yards (Central)

6.5.1 Character

The present character of this zone is that of backland to the Market Place. Blackshaw's Old Mill stands as an important survival of Uttoxeter's industrial heritage. Otherwise, the zone consists of a mixture of untidy and unloved structures, recent additions to Market Place properties, and unkempt yards and former gardens. There is a flourishing pedestrian movement through these rough open spaces using passageways reflecting the medieval pattern of plots linking the rear of the Maltings Car Park with Market Place and Bear Hill.

Generally, despite being at the very heart of Uttoxeter Town Centre and its Conservation Area, this area is in need of further enhancement and identification of long term sustainable uses.

6.5.2 Listed Buildings

There are no listed buildings within this zone. Arguably, because of its importance to Uttoxeter as a surviving example of industrial/commercial heritage, Blackshaw's Mill itself should be statutorily protected as a Grade II listed building. At the very least, it should be part of a local list of important structures worthy of protection and conservation. Other buildings to the rear of Crown Yard may also warrant local listing.

6.5.3 Other Positive Elements

The framing of the open space by rear additions and buildings potentially makes an interesting and important contribution to this zone and to the wider Conservation Area. However, in their current state, this is hardly entirely a positive contribution for the moment. The view out into Church Street and along the remainder of Church Street westwards to its junction with Carter Street and the High Street are important and need to be protected and enhanced by any future development.



35: *The Old Mill building - the key structure and focus in the south western section of Church Street*



36: *Lion's Buildings' parking and the rear of Market Place buildings in 2004 - a void at the heart of the Conservation Area and this zone which leaches life and character*



37: *The view into Crown Yard - an important and heavily used space and connection that lacks sense of place despite its potential due to clutter and poorly maintained buildings*

6.5.4 Particular Negative Contributions

Clearly, the overriding negative contributions to this zone are its under-use and the state of a number of structures. Some of the back additions and ancillary structures within the zone are unsightly and unlikely ever to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Nonetheless, their removal should only be contemplated when appropriate development of the site has been properly planned.

6.5.5 Vulnerability and Threats

Future redevelopment of the site that makes up the principal part of this zone will make or break the character of the very heart of the Uttoxeter Town Centre Conservation Area. The zone will benefit from careful development of the Maltings car park site, but equally failure to consider the repair and re-knitting of the urban grain on the north side of the zone represents a significant threat to its enhancement.

6.5.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

This complete zone represents a development opportunity for all the reasons already cited. In particular, there is a great opportunity to encourage still further pedestrian movement through the passageways leading off Market Place. This would make the heart of the town more permeable and significantly more interesting.

6.5.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

Future development of this zone must seek to maintain a balance between built form and interesting courtyards and passageways. The medieval plot layout of sites running off Market Place must be respected and enhanced. Views along Church Street in both directions are vital and the perimeters of the zone should be planned and designed to provide architectural interest without detracting from the Old Mill as a focal point.

6.6 6 - Bridge Street (South East)

6.6.1 Character

Bridge Street forms an entry point into the Conservation Area, as well as a critical approach to the Market Place and the town centre. Its character has been altered fundamentally by the construction of a roundabout at its south eastern end linking Town Meadows Way to the southern section of the bypass.

The greater part of the eastern side of Bridge Street comprises secondary retail premises in 19th century small scale terraces. At the northern end of this side of the street, rough open yards and a terrace comprising a 1960s public house and an attached Victorian building on the southern edge of the churchyard form an unsatisfactory northern tip to both this zone and a poor focal point to the eastern end of Market Place (Bear Hill). The public house has recently been rebuilt following fire damage. The western side of Bridge Street falls into two distinct parts. At its northern end, turning into Bear Hill, is a terrace of secondary retail properties in 19th century buildings. Although extremely modest and somewhat down-at-heel, the upper west and east sides of Bridge Street frame views up towards the church and provide a strong built grain to the area. To the south of this, however, a modern blank brick supermarket structure, set back from the former building line, has destroyed any remaining character and, to the south of Trinity Row, open land at the end of the engineering works site is equally damaging to the zone. All this marks an unsatisfactory entrance to the Conservation Area.

6.6.2 Listed Buildings

There are two listed buildings facing each other across Bridge Street at its northern end. These are both appropriately designated. There are no other buildings in the zone worthy of statutory or local listing.

6.6.3 Other Positive Elements

The view northward from the northern end of Bridge Street past the war memorial and towards the Church is a relatively important internal vista within the Conservation Area. Otherwise, the lateral views along tracks and alleyways towards the edge of the escarpment are also important in epitomising a typical characteristic of the central part of the town.



38: View southeast down Bridge Street to the new traffic roundabout



39: The east side of Bridge Street



40: *Poor streetscape at a significant focal point, damaging sense of place around the War Memorial and the character of the northern end of Bridge Street (2004)*



41: *Low rise Victorian buildings of considerable townscape value at the northern end of Bridge Street*



42: *The traumatic impact of a poorly designed and planned modern structure on the Conservation Area (2004)*

6.6.4 Particular Negative Contributions

The high detrimental impact of the structures and open spaces on the lower western side of Bridge Street have already been noted. Similarly, the northern tip of the zone is badly damaged by unkempt yards and the run down Wheatsheaf public house. The view down Bridge Street towards the southeast is unattractive and leaves an unsatisfactory lasting impression on departure from the Conservation Area.

6.6.5 Vulnerability and Threats

Many of the properties along Bridge Street are in need of maintenance and repair to safeguard their future. As is common in a secondary situation such as this, on-going neglect represents a significant threat to the zone. This is likely to increase development pressures in the long term and could lead to substantial redevelopment of the remaining older buildings on Bridge Street. The risks involved in such redevelopment are plainly demonstrated by the recent building on its western side.

6.6.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

Bridge Street should not be regarded as a 'lost soul' within the Conservation Area. With investment and careful planning and design, the properties at the northern end and along the eastern side of the street can be enhanced and improved. With vision, new development on the vacant site at the southern end close to the roundabout could provide a new and attractive focal point at the entry to the town and Conservation Area. In this light, it is surprising to note that the 2003 Uttoxeter Town Centre master plan does not include any proposals for the future of this site.

As elsewhere in Uttoxeter, the street materials and street furniture are of poor quality and very unsightly. Bridge Street would benefit greatly from an environmental programme to upgrade pavement and other finishes.

6.6.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

The recent development on the western side of Bridge Street ably demonstrates the damage that can be caused to the character of a street by inappropriate design and massing. The character of Bridge Street is such that it requires new developments to respect building lines and the modest domestic scale of the eastern side of the street. The site at the south western end of the zone between Trinity Road and the bridge calls out for a strong attractive but small scale design which will act as a focal point when looking down the street to replace the attention that the roundabout and bridge now commands. The importance of improving the quality of street furniture and materials has already been mentioned.



43: This vacant site at the southern end of Bridge Street offers the opportunity to begin to repair the damaged urban grain and to strengthen townscape value at this point of entry to the Conservation Area and the town centre

6.7 7 - The Maltings and the Maltings Car Park (Central)

6.7.1 Character

The Bunting's Brewery site was cleared in the 1960s and construction of the Maltings shopping mall had already been completed by the time that the Conservation Area was designated and the first appraisal produced in November 1971. In that appraisal, concerns about the impact of the new shopping precinct were raised noting that it had departed from the traditional form of the High Street and broke the "continuity of the facades and [detracted] from the climax of the Town Hall". On the northern flank of the zone, the 1971 appraisal identified the importance of the continuous curve in Bradley Street and established proposed development criteria, including that "the new town centre [on the Maltings car park site] must exploit the curve". Clearly, in 1971, it was anticipated that within a relatively short time scale the car park site would have been redeveloped for retail and commercial use. Thirty six years later, this has yet to occur.



44: This desolate and dispiriting vista into and across the Maltings car park from Church Street epitomises its lack of sense of place and the negative impact of this major block of land at the heart of the Conservation Area

The Maltings Shopping Centre and car park together occupy the greater part of one of the two substantial medieval plots of land that so characterise the centre of Uttoxeter. It appears never to have been dissected by roads. The shape of the zone is identical to the medieval form. The character of the site is strongly defined by the pronounced curves in Bradley Street to the north and east and Church Street to the east and south.



45: The marked curve in Bradley Street - a survival of the medieval street pattern and an important characteristic of the town centre, despite the paucity of parts of the streetscape (see also 45)



46: *The uninspired architecture of the former Kwik Save supermarket (now the Co-op), with its derivative and empty motifs and decoration does little to improve the character of the Maltings zone in this crucial part of the Conservation Area*



47: *The Maltings Shopping Centre from Bradley Street*

A group of 18th and 19th century housing survives on the north eastern edge of the zone at the junction between Bradley Street and Silver Street. Otherwise, the site is divided between the 1960s Maltings Shopping Centre, the bus station and other facilities, and a large area of cleared space used for the town's central car park. This leaves unsatisfactory gaps in the built edge and urban grain along Bradley Street, Silver Street and Church Street in two places. The architectural style of the Maltings Shopping precinct, the Co-op supermarket (formerly Kwik Save) and the bus station is in each case low rise but of moderate quality and uninspired.

6.7.2 Listed Buildings

There are no listed buildings present in this zone. None of the existing structures are worthy of statutory protection in this way. Equally, there are no buildings in the zone that would qualify for local listing.

6.7.3 Other Positive Elements

None

6.7.4 Particular Negative Contributions

In just about every respect, the structures and clear space within the zone are unsatisfactory. This block of land represents the very core of Uttoxeter town centre and its Conservation Area, yet it presents a woeful sight of obliterated urban grain, parked vehicles and uninspired planning and architecture.

6.7.5 Vulnerability and Threats

Whilst it is difficult to conceive that this site/zone could have a very much greater depressive effect upon the character of the Conservation Area, there are some foreseeable threats and issues of vulnerability.

Further loss of historic buildings in the form of the housing on the northeast edge of the zone should be resisted at all costs. At the very least, this gives some indication of the former urban form, whilst positively contributing to views along the neighbouring Back Lane. Redevelopment of the site, however, could have a detrimental impact upon this housing and the willingness of people to live there. New architecture should not turn its back on the buildings and must be inclusive. Vehicular access, unloading and other issues must be resolved sensitively for the same reasons.

Redevelopment of the car park site is of vital importance, yet its planning must be considered in the light of other proposed changes in Uttoxeter. A powerful threat to the Maltings Shopping Precinct is that retail development elsewhere will leave it as a backwater. The poorly used Trinity Walk retail development on the southern side of the Conservation Area gives a worrying glimpse of what this might entail for the Maltings site in the future.

6.7.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

It is fair to say that every aspect of this zone is in need of enhancement or development. The surviving older housing requires repair, maintenance and some tender loving care; the existing Maltings retail precinct, whilst reasonably lively and popular, would be dramatically improved and enhanced by a facelift and environmental improvements to upgrade hard and soulless materials. Reinstatement of the built edge to both voids along Church Street and round into Silver Street would have a dramatic positive impact upon local views within many parts of the Conservation Area.

6.7.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

There are a number of important principles that need to be followed to protect and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.

Any development on the Maltings car park site must reinstate the built edge and urban grain along Silver Street and Church Street opposite Eastfield and the Blackshaw's Mill with high quality buildings of appropriate scale. Opposite Blackshaw's, this means recreating the line of the street with low two storey mixed retail/residential properties, whilst along the Silver Street/Church Street eastern edge of the site two storeys or a mix of two and three storeyed buildings following the curve of the road would be preferable.

Design of structures within the core of the site should produce architecture of character and high quality, with courtyards and passageways adding interest and leading the user in directions they need and want to travel. The site is best developed with individual buildings, perhaps of varying height and skyline, avoiding large and monotonous blocks such as the Co-op supermarket building.

Soft landscaping is important and community art, statues and the like will add interest alongside high quality street materials and signage.



48 & 49: The fringe of the Maltings car park along the western end of Church Street - considerable potential exists to repair the damaged urban grain by continuing the line of small two storey buildings in a new terrace opposite Blackshaw's Old Mill



50: A glimpse of the former now-demolished Cattle Market from the High Street - an important part of the character of the town and an evocative historical juxtaposition that has been lost (but in so doing has opened up major potential for redevelopment)



51: View southwards down the High Street showing important variations in the building line and building heights

The importance of maintaining the existing rooflines of housing along Silver Street when viewed from Back Lane has been mentioned elsewhere. This will dictate the height of buildings across much of the western half of the Maltings car park site.

6.8 8 - High Street (Central)

6.8.1 Character

Just as in 1971, the High Street does still retain much of its traditional form, despite ill judged and poor quality intrusions from the 1960s and 1970s. The Town Hall retains its pivotal importance and the arched passageway through to the former Cattle Market site still gives a sense of linkage and context, despite currently being closed to pedestrian access. Variation in architectural form and roofline is important along the street, especially with the tall three gabled former Cross Keys Hotel slightly south of the Town Hall on the western side of High Street.

Little or no attention has been paid until recently to the standard and form of shop fronts and signage and hence few if any of the shop fronts contribute positively in this way to the character of the zone. Many of the buildings are in need of maintenance and repair, especially at upper storey level. This too detracts from the character and quality of the zone.

6.8.2 Listed Buildings

There are six listed buildings in the High Street zone at the present time. All of these are appropriate, with the exception of 10 High Street, a late 18th century three storey property, which seems unremarkable from external view.

However, in other respects, the grade of listing of each building seems satisfactory. There are a number of buildings along the length of this section of the High Street between Carter Street and Smithfield/Bradley Street which merit local listing.

6.8.3 Other Positive Elements

As photographs from the 1980s demonstrate, the High Street has benefited significantly from the reduction in traffic resulting from the construction of the bypass. Today, it is a more pedestrian friendly place. Views up and down the High Street are important and pleasing, although far too frequently damaged by unsatisfactory modern buildings, unsympathetic signage and other changes.

The small Old Saddler's Yard development has considerable potential to provide an interesting diversion and short cut for pedestrians. At the present time, it appears not to have fully established itself as a favourite place for shoppers. Effort should be put into improving its image and interest still further, since spaces like these are crucial to Uttoxeter's future character.

6.8.4 Particular Negative Contributions

Attempts have been made in the very recent past to improve and co-ordinate the use of street materials. This has been to advantage but the proliferation of bollards and signage, especially at the northern end of the High Street, is unfortunate.

Although reasonably lively, the Maltings shopping precinct is architecturally and environmentally uninspired, as are views of the service yard alongside. The building at the southwest corner of the High Street, 2 Carter Street, offers a very unsatisfactory foreground to the view up the road. Nearby 6 High Street, currently occupied by Boots, is another modern building highly damaging to the street scene.

Finally further mention must be made of the negative impact on the character of this important thoroughfare of the condition of many of the buildings and shop fronts along High Street.

6.8.5 Vulnerability and Threats

The High Street must be regarded as being at a critical point in its history. It has been stabilised and improved by recent works, but could easily be degraded by ill-considered additional change. Further decline would be unfortunate, since this impacts upon the wider perception of Uttoxeter and its character. A decaying High Street reflects upon civic pride and economic stability.



52: *The non-traditional form of the Maltings Shopping Centre's High Street facade means it has still not blended in more than 30 years after construction. The streetscene is also affected detrimentally by out of scale streetlights, insensitive signage and the scattering of bollards and other street furniture*



53: *Poor quality 1960s buildings degrade the character of parts of the High Street*



54: *4 High Street makes a considerable contribution to the streetscape and warrants local listing*



55: *Old Saddler's Yard off the High Street - an opportunity to develop further Uttoxeter's special character*

The redevelopment of the Cattle Market site offers potential for enhancement of the High Street, but represents a substantive threat to its future as well as to its character. There are already a number of worrying secondary-type retail businesses occupying prominent positions in the High Street and this trend may continue or increase if Uttoxeter cannot support the level of total retail space that results in redevelopment of adjoining sites.

A fundamental part of Uttoxeter's character rests on the interest provided by the historic survival of passageways through to back lands. The High Street is a good example of this. Reduction in pedestrian use of the link through to the Cattle Market site would be very damaging. Equally, a view of mass retail premises through the Town Hall arch will impact upon the character of the High Street. The same potential threats exist to Old Saddler's Yard to the south.

6.8.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

There are a number of very positive enhancements that could be made to the character of the High Street zone.

In the long term, redevelopment of all post-1960 insertions with carefully planned and designed replacements would be highly beneficial.

Coordination of shop fronts and retail signage in the way proposed by the recent shop front design guide will dramatically improve the impact and character of the High Street.

Old Saddler's Yard and redevelopment of the Cattle Market site offer considerable potential for the future of the High Street, just as they represent a threat. Pedestrian movements must be encouraged, drawing people through these narrow passageways to and from the High Street.

6.8.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

The development principles to be followed on adjoining sites have essentially been defined by perceived threats to the High Street and opportunities for its enhancement. The High Street will benefit from increased pedestrian throughput and by increased perception of safety and security. The High Street may well be damaged by excessively large developments on sites to its west and east and by loss or detrimental alterations to lateral sightlines along passageways and the like.

6.9 9 - Market Place (Central)

6.9.1 Character

The Market Place is the jewel of Uttoxeter - a visually interesting and unusual area made up of three distinct parts. The main Market Place is a triangular space and, as the 1971 appraisal noted, has “intriguing glimpses out along several streets, with interesting buildings and diverse styles but of generally uniform height adequately define the space”. The northern side of Market Place curves strongly. The upper brick storeys are of uniform appearance whilst there is variety at street level. Perhaps correctly, the 1971 appraisal suggested “that it would have been preferable for there to have been a similar unifying treatment carried through the shop fronts below”. The recent shop front design guide may bring that a step closer, although between 2004 and 2008, changes to two shop fronts have worsened not improved the situation.

At the eastern end of Market Place is a square known historically as Bear Hill, with its central war memorial (15). On its northern side, this square is defined by the solid yet rather grand Uttoxeter Advertiser building (17). Attractive but lower three storey buildings on the southern and western side provide an intriguing view into the third space, Queen Street, which is separated from Market Place by a varied but important block of taller, largely gabled, three storey buildings. At its western end, this range is terminated well by the attractive mid-18th century red brick house, 21 Market Place. As with a number of other buildings in this zone, the interest and character of the building has been slightly diminished by the insertion of a rather brash modern shop front; again this emphasises the critical importance of implementation of the recent shop front guidance.

Although red brick predominates, there are a number of rendered buildings around the Market Place and remnants of timber framed structures (often hidden behind later facades) on most sides.

Today, Queen Street is sadly a slightly lifeless space. This is partly due to loss of its built edge on the southern side and the unsuccessful Trinity Place precinct that feeds into Queen Street at this point. However, it is difficult to explain the very low usage of this route by pedestrians in comparison to the number who use the small alleyways leadings through from Market Place to Crown Yard and Church Street.



56: Looking into Market Place from the High Street/Carter Street junction - the curving terrace to the left builds expectation of the partly concealed open market space. The eye-catching higher 'bookend', 21 Market Place, in the centre of the triangular space makes a significant positive contribution as the focal point of this vista



57: The curved facade of 30-36 Market Place - a crucial component of this town centre space. Greater co-ordination of shop front designs would be visually beneficial. Note also the detrimental impact of bird netting draped over the chimney stacks



58: The heart of the triangular Market Place with the Conduit and, to the right, the varied but imposing 'shambles'-like row separating Market Place from Queen Street



59: *Queen Street looking west - there is a strange disparity in life between the two intimately linked public spaces*

At the south west corner of the triangular Market Place, the visitor is drawn to explore the side street, Market Street, by attractive historic structures on both sides of the road. As elsewhere in central Uttoxeter, historic passageways through to back land and backyards are common, especially on the north and west sides of Market Place. Some potentially fine early timber framed buildings survive down a number of these passages.

Acting as a focal point in the very centre of the Market Place is the Conduit, a domed structure in classical style which, as the 1971 appraisal noted, is “reminiscent of an 18th century parkland” structure.

The final point to make about the character of Market Place is of fundamental importance. It is still used every week as a market place; this gives the space immense vitality and value.

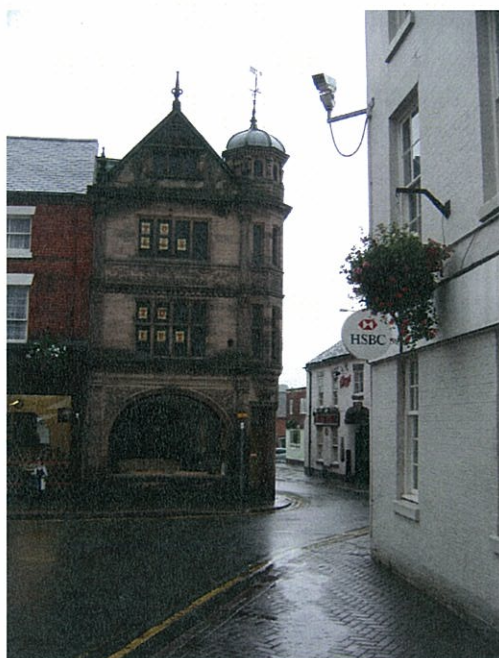
6.9.2 Listed Buildings

There are 12 listed buildings and structures in this zone. Most of these are concentrated on the west side and in the south west corner of Market Place. All these buildings merit statutory protection and they are appropriately graded. Given the character of the space, arguably other buildings might well merit consideration for statutory listing for their group value. This includes the Uttoxeter Advertising building, for example. For these reasons, at the very least, a significant number of the unlisted structures in this zone should be included on a local list to reflect their considerable importance.

6.9.3 Other Positive Elements

The Market Place is an important space and this has been reflected in the discussion of its character. It retains much of its medieval street and plot patterns, along with the passageways giving access to backyards or through to other streets. These are important not only for movement and use of the area, but (as has been remarked already) also for the brief glimpses and added character and vitality that they bring.

Views out of Market Place are also important. There are important views westwards along Carter Street and northwards up High Street (although the poor quality and condition of several buildings tempers the latter). The view along Queen Street in either direction is potentially a positive attribute, although the damage caused by the lack of life and the entrance to Trinity Walk diminish this for the



60: *The visitor is encouraged to explore Market Street from the southwest corner of Market Place by this intriguing snatched view. All buildings in this part of Market Place are listed*

moment. At the eastern end of the zone, there are important views of the church and its tree-lined approach and also to the side an enclosed view up to Church Street.

The variation in age, building style and detailing around this zone give it considerable interest and life, although perhaps lacking the grandeur of some market squares in other towns of a similar size. Environmental improvements recently carried out have generally benefited the character of the zone.

6.9.4 Particular Negative Contributions

The problems associated with Queen Street and the entrance to Trinity Walk have already been described. The eastern side of the Bear Hill square is degraded by the life-sapping open space to the south of the reconstructed Steeplechase public house (41).

A worrying number of secondary-type budget shops occupy parts of the north side of Market Place. This suggests that the economic position of retailing in this critically important core zone is vulnerable. Amongst other things, this is leading to gaudy and unsightly shop fronts and to signage that is eroding the character of the Market Place substantially.

6.9.5 Vulnerability and Threats

There is a significant risk that retailing in Market Place will continue to go down-market encouraging proliferation of shop types and signage of an unsuitable nature, given the historic importance of this zone. In tandem with this, property maintenance will continue to be neglected, leading to visible deterioration in the character of the buildings that define this space.

Ongoing inability to overcome the problems with the lifeless Trinity Walk precinct may lead to an increase in vandalism in the Queen Street space. This in turn will reduce the usage of this narrow street.

The final obvious threat to Market Place is the loss of the weekly market. Again, this could result from the substantial changes that are taking place in other parts of the town centre. This would be a serious impairment to its character.



61: *The barren and aggressively degrading environs to Trinity Walk in the centre of Queen Street*

6.9.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

Increased co-ordination of shop fronts and signage around the Market Place will bring cohesion and an enhancement of character to the whole zone.

Whilst currently a negative element and a significant threat to the Market Place, resolution of the problems with Trinity Walk and increased usage of Queen Street would bring significant benefits.

6.9.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

The recent shop design guide set out development guidance for retail premises that will protect and enhance the nature of this zone.

Wider redevelopment of the Trinity Walk/Queen Street junction should aim at bringing life to Queen Street, whilst re-knitting the lost urban grain along its southern edge.

6.10 10 - The Smithfield/Bradley Junction (Northwest)

6.10.1 Character

This is a small zone to the north of the main High Street, representing the medieval junction between the High Street, Smithfield Road and Bradley Street. Today, this has a very distinct character of its own.

Generally, this zone is slightly down-at-heel and is dominated by unattractive small scale late 20th century secondary retail and other premises and by considerable amounts of traffic entering the town centre area from the northern arm of the High Street and along Bradley Street and from the west down Smithfield Road.

All buildings in this zone are of small scale: many are lacking in character, with the particular exception of those historic buildings on the north side of Bradley Street. Red brick predominates, but the style of the 1960s/70s insertions jar with the traditional forms of the 19th century and earlier buildings either side.



62: Looking east along Smithfield Road to the main road junction - poor quality architecture, street materials, signage and lighting predominate



63: View down Bradley Street across the road junction

6.10.2 Listed Buildings

There are no listed buildings within this zone. The Smithfield Hotel on the south west corner of the road junction should undoubtedly be entered on a local list, as perhaps should be 48 and 50 High Street to the east, although this is dependent upon the quality of refurbishment that is currently being undertaken on these properties.

6.10.3 Other Positive Elements

The only additional positive elements of character are views in either direction from the Smithfield/Bradley junction along High Street.

6.10.4 Particular Negative Contributions

As has already been described, the character of this part of the Conservation Area is badly degraded by traffic, by unsightly buildings, and by the proliferation of basic quality and unattractive street furniture and materials. The recent environmental improvements at the head of the High Street, with large signage and bollards, have not been beneficial to the character of the zone.

6.10.5 Vulnerability and Threats

The principal threat to this zone is almost certainly the potential for substantial increase in vehicular movements caused by redevelopment of the cattle market and Maltings car park sites. The more that this zone turns into a thoroughfare, the less opportunity there will be to salvage its character. Conversely, it is the focal point of historic access routes into the north of the town centre and it may be impossible to alter this long term issue without having negative impact elsewhere. Nonetheless, so close to the heart of the Conservation Area, the overwhelmingly negative and rundown feel of this zone is a matter of some considerable concern.

6.10.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

There is little doubt that further environmental improvements, incorporating better natural materials would greatly enhance the appearance of this zone, although not removing the problems that its function as a vehicular thoroughfare impose.



64: The Smithfield Hotel - warrants local listing



65: General view northwards from the road junction into the upper High Street



66: The listed Manor House

In the long term, redevelopment of all the 1960s/1970s infill sites with carefully designed replacements would perhaps be of pivotal importance to effecting any change here.

6.10.7 Essential Development Principles to Protect Character

Planning associated with the proposed redevelopment of the Maltings car park site will need to focus considerable attention on the impact of increased vehicular movements in this zone, resulting from the need to access this and the redeveloped former Cattle Market.

Wherever possible, zones like this will benefit from small-scale new developments that incorporate traditional materials and detailing. This does not have to restrict the inventiveness and design flair of the designer.



67: Listed buildings towards the northern end of the zone along the upper High Street

6.11 11 - Manor House and the Upper High Street (Northwest)

6.11.1 Character

This zone constitutes the northern approach to Uttoxeter Town Centre and its Conservation Area. It is characterised by a number of large residential and civic structures at its southern end and, on its western side, with historic housing that becomes of increasing modesty further north.

The zone provides excellent views in both directions but particularly up the rise southwards to the framed view of the High Street beside the council offices.

Somewhat perversely, the existing boundary cuts through the interesting former cinema building that now functions as the Pentecostal Church.



68: The former cinema, now the Pentecostal Church

6.11.2 Listed Buildings

There are 11 listed buildings and structures in this zone. In each case, listing is appropriate and each grading appears to be suitable.

6.11.3 Other Positive Elements

The larger historic houses set back from the road towards the crest of the hill bring a particular character and style to this zone. Additionally, mature trees in the gardens of these properties are important, being a relatively rare sight within

the Uttoxeter Conservation Area. They contribute greatly to views in both directions along this upper stretch of High Street.

6.11.4 Particular Negative Contributions

Towards the south end of the zone, there is a rather unsatisfactory detached 1960s insertion set back from the High Street, which detracts locally from the enclosed nature of views northward towards the crest of the hill. Traffic is a continual presence along this road, but not so as to diminish its character entirely.

The boarded up Wellington public house degrades the centre of the zone and may prove a threat to its character in the future.

The problems with street furniture and materials, unsightly litterbins and the use of concrete bollards (especially outside the former cinema) degrade the quality of the environment, just as they do elsewhere in Uttoxeter.

6.11.5 Vulnerability and Threats

As with the Smithfield/Bradley junction zone, this section of the High Street may suffer detrimentally from increased traffic brought into the area by redevelopment of the Cattle Market and the Maltings car park sites.

Pressure to infill gardens to historic houses with new developments needs to be resisted, especially towards the crest of the hill. The effect that this can have can be seen both at the southern end of this zone and elsewhere in the Conservation Area.

The loss of the mature trees in the Manor House area would impact detrimentally on the views along this section of the High Street.

6.11.6 Opportunities for Enhancement and Development

The most obvious improvements to the character of this zone could be made by upgrading of the environment and especially by improvements in the standard design of street lighting and litterbins. The Conservation Area itself would benefit from rationalisation of the boundary so that it does not cut through the former cinema (the Pentecostal Church).



69: Looking south along the upper High Street - mature trees and vegetation and prominent good quality architecture combine to make a strong positive contribution to the character of this approach to the town centre