

RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**THURLASTON
CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**



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1 INTRODUCTION

Thurlaston is a village some four miles south-west of Rugby and approximately one mile west of Dunchurch. The settlement is situated on a ridge overlooking the clay based valley which is now filled with Draycote Water. The village is set in countryside with the M45 to the north and the only approach is via a bridge over this road.

The village is predominantly linear in form with Main Street running the length of the settlement from north to south with a number of narrow lanes and more modern cul de sacs running to the east and west.

Thurlaston is mixed in character with a historic core based on an agricultural background with a significant amount of development from the 1960's onwards to the present day. For this appraisal four character areas have been identified: the 1960's and later modern entrance to the village, the historic central core, the nursing home and the area centring on Stanleys Farm.

The Conservation Area covers only part of the village with areas to the north-east; north-west, east and south excluded from the designation.

Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act in 1967 and a Conservation Area is defined by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an 'area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Section 69 of the act places a duty on the Local Authority to review its Conservation Areas from time to time and Section 71 to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. Thurlaston is one of 19 Conservation Areas in the Borough.

Local Authorities have a duty to identify, designate, preserve and enhance Conservation Areas within their administrative areas. The aim in a Conservation Area is to preserve or enhance not merely individual buildings but all those elements, which may include minor buildings, trees, open spaces, walls, paving, and materials etc., which together make up a familiar and attractive local scene. The relationship between buildings and spaces within Conservation Areas creates a unique environment, which provides a sense of identity and amenity for residents, and an irreplaceable part of our local, regional and national heritage.

The positive identification of areas under the designation of a Conservation Area helps focus attention on its qualities and encourages a sensitive approach to any proposed development. The Local Planning Authority will exercise particular care to ensure that change, where it occurs, will preserve or enhance the character of an area. The designation as a Conservation Area ensures that consideration is given to design quality and context and that new development respects its surroundings.

Planning legislation removes certain development rights in Conservation Areas. **In addition to current general Planning Controls** Planning Permission would be also be required for the following development:

- The cladding of any part of the exterior of a dwelling with stone, artificial stone, pebble dash, render, timber, plastic or tiles;
- An extension extending beyond a wall forming a side elevation of the original dwelling ;
- An extension having more than one storey and extending beyond the rear wall of the original dwelling;

- Any enlargement of a dwelling consisting of an addition or alteration to the roof;
- The provision of a building, enclosure, swimming or other pool or container where it would be situated on land between a wall forming a side elevation and the boundary of the curtilage of the dwelling or to the front of the principle elevation; - the bit in green is covered by the main Planning Controls.
- The installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe which fronts a highway and forms either the principal elevation or a side elevation of a dwelling;
- The installation, alteration or replacement of a microwave antenna on a dwelling, or within its curtilage, on a chimney, wall or roof slope facing onto and visible from a highway.

Conservation Area Consent is required to demolish a building which has a volume in excess of 115 cubic metres. Conservation Area designation also protects trees within the boundary by requiring owners to give the Local Planning Authority six weeks notice of their intention to carry out any tree work on trees that have a trunk in excess of 75mm in diameter measured 1.5 metres from the ground.

This document is an appraisal of Thurlaston Conservation Area. It is based on guidelines issued by English Heritage, the Government's advisor on the historic built environment, and has been prepared by Rugby Borough Council. The principal objectives of the appraisal are to:

- define and record the special interest of Thurlaston Conservation Area to ensure there is full understanding of what is worthy of preservation;
- increase public awareness of the aims and objectives of Conservation Area designation and stimulate their involvement in the protection of its character and to inform decisions made by Rugby Borough Council, the Parish Council and local residents;
- reassess current boundaries to make certain that they accurately reflect what is now perceived to be of special interest and that they are readable on the ground;
- assess the action that may be necessary to safeguard this special interest and put forward proposals for their enhancement.

It is however not intended to be wholly comprehensive in its content and failure to mention any particular building, feature or space should not be assumed to imply that they are of no interest. This assessment should be read in conjunction with the Rugby Borough Local Plan 2006 and national policy guidance, particularly Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment. These documents provide more detailed information on local and national policy relating to Conservation Areas.

MAP 1 CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION



2 LOCATION AND CONTEXT

Thurlaston is a relatively small village set in countryside and as the form is broadly linear the presence of the surrounding countryside is often apparent. Agricultural land surrounds the settlement. The countryside permeates into the village from the northern approach and from the west along Biggin Hall Lane. The village is unusual in having only one entrance, via the bridge across the M45, and as a result does not suffer from passing traffic, the impact of vehicles is accordingly minimal despite the proximity of the motorway.

The land and buildings within the Conservation Area are generally of good quality and well maintained. There is however potential for development pressure including infilling open spaces with new dwellings, the provision of outbuildings including garages, alterations to fenestration, landscaping or boundary treatment and the removal of characteristic features such as chimneys.

3 GENERAL CHARACTER AND FORM

Thurlaston is a relatively small settlement of linear form with Main Street being the central north to south spine. A number of lanes branch off Main Street with some historic development to the east and west. Modern cul de sacs mainly consisting of open plan development. Biggin Hall Lane, a narrow road surrounded by countryside, leads to sporadic development outside the village. The narrowness of the lanes provides a sense of enclosure which contrasts with the wide space of Main Street.

Commencing in the northern part of the Conservation Area the main character is of the countryside permeating around buildings which are post 1960. These buildings include bungalows, two storey detached dwellings, all set in a landscaped environment with prominent grass verges, trees and hedges. The village then moves into the historic core with buildings in a more compact layout, the western side characterised by buildings close to the road, the eastern side by a more informal layout with dwellings set further from the highway in larger plots. The village then changes again to the larger scale development of the nursing home set in extensive grounds.

Landscaping is a dominant feature in the Conservation Area. The rural setting of the village is reflected within the village with mature trees, shrubs, hedges and grass verges. The result is a landscaped dominated character with many views framed by a backdrop of mature trees.

The Conservation Area is also defined by its historic buildings which include the church, small houses and the dominant Stanleys Farm which lies at the heart of the village.

PHOTO 2 ST EDMUND'S CHURCH



4 LANDSCAPE SETTING

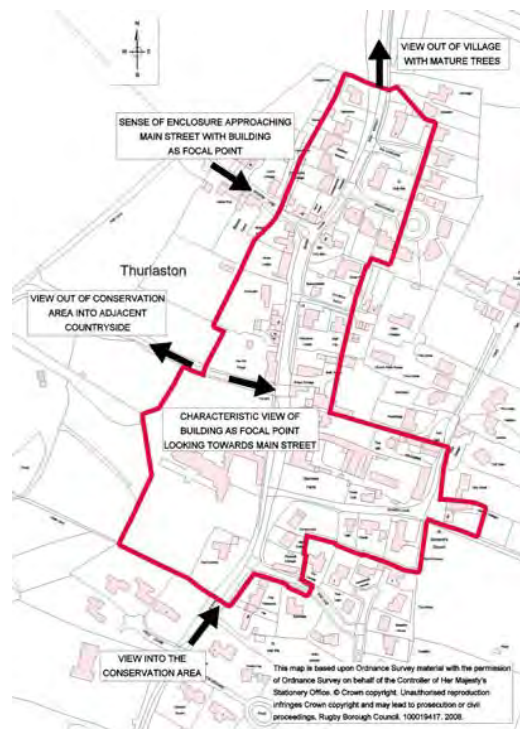
The village remains strongly linked to the countryside setting. From outside the village the landscaping prevents views of the majority of buildings, trees on the approach effectively screen the buildings. From Biggin Hall Lane views of buildings are limited other than the nursing home. From the southern end of the village the route of Main Street and the landscaped boundaries prevents clear views of many buildings. There is a close relationship between Main Street and the countryside on the western side since development is narrow and butts up to the highway. Along the eastern side of Main Street there is greater depth to the settlement and therefore the surrounding countryside has less of an impact.

PHOTO 3 THE COUNTRYSIDE SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA



Open and undeveloped land forms part of the Conservation Area. Many of the buildings are served by relatively large gardens to the rear or side. The land forming Stanleys Farm is an extensive parcel of largely undeveloped space viewed from Main Street and Church Lane. The largest open space is around the nursing home. This land to the north and south of the complex provides a spacious setting, a dominant garden and agricultural feature within the Conservation Area.

MAP 2 VIEWS INTO AND OUT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA.



5 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Thurlaston may have derived its name from a grandson of King Alfred the Great called Turchitel with ton being Saxon for house. However, Thurlaston was also mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 where its name Torlausetone may indicate original ownership by a Scandinavian, Thorleifr, the Danelaw boundary being a few miles to the east.

The earliest plan of the village is from 1717 illustrating a large number of narrow plots on the eastern side of Main Street, the boundaries on the western side of Main Street were generally broader. Main Street served as the core of the village with lanes branching off. Houses were built right up to the boundary and this remains evident within the historic core of the Conservation Area. Thurlaston formed one of the main settlements of the farming community in the area and its agricultural base is apparent in the imposing complex at Stanleys Farm and the Mill. The importance of Main Street is evident by the fact that it contains the majority of the older buildings and has a wide carriageway.

Prior to the twentieth century Thurlaston was a thriving village owned by the Duke of Buccleuch and had a number of community facilities. These included a church built in 1848 and used as a school until 1905 before being licensed for public worship. The village also included shopkeepers, blacksmith, miller and four pubs.

Although Pipewell Cottage has origins dating from the fifteenth or sixteenth century the majority of the historic buildings within the village date from the eighteenth century such as Stanleys Farmhouse, the Old Forge and The Mill. Many of the other buildings date from the mid nineteenth century suggesting different methods of agriculture led to modernisation and expansion of the village. The village also experienced significant growth in the 1960's with open plan housing along Main Street, open plan cul de sacs and infill development.

PHOTO 4 PIPEWELL COTTAGE



6 ARCHAEOLOGY

Sites of important historical archaeology within and surrounding the Conservation Area include the following:

Undated linear feature, situated 500 metres north east of Thurlaston – a linear feature of unknown date is visible as a crop mark on aerial photographs.

Site of windmill, 600 metres north east of the church – the site of a post mill, a type of windmill mounted on a post, it was built during the Imperial period. The mill was built by 1787, ceased by the early nineteenth century; there is no trace of this site on the ground.

A ring ditch of unknown date is visible as a cropmark on aerial photographs; the ring ditch is situated 500 metres north east of Thurlaston. It is not certain that this is archaeological; if it is it could be Neolithic/Bronze Age or may be the ditch surrounding a windmill mound.

Pond and possible moat to the west of Manor House, the site of a possible Medieval moat, some earthworks are visible 300 metres west of the church, the area is now called Moat Close, there is a small pond forming part of the garden which may be the surviving traces of sandpits or a moat.

Quarry, south east of the Church, 100 metres west of Main Street. The site of a quarry or sandpit that was in use during the Imperial period, it is marked on the Ordnance Survey map of 1886 and is visible as an earthwork.

7 ARCHITECTURE, BUILDING MATERIALS AND FEATURES

Thurlaston has buildings dating from the 15th/16th century to the present day. Despite this wide period of development there is coherence in the architecture and materials. Pipewell Cottage is possibly the oldest building in the Conservation Area comprising a timber frame with whitewashed infill. Although not the prevalent material timber framing is found elsewhere in the village.

The dominant wall material is red brick and is used on the key buildings such as Stanleys Farm and the church/school. The majority of older buildings are of red brick, although some have been whitewashed, and the development in the latter part of the twentieth century is largely of red brick.

The predominant roofing materials are plain tile and slate with occasional thatch roofs. The more modern development also pick up this theme with tile and slate used. There are a limited number of buildings with thatched roofs and these form a distinctive feature in the Conservation Area.

The modern development generally takes two forms. The first is the planned development such as The Gardens where houses are of matching styles and materials and provide a cohesive form of development. The other is more organic infilling resulting in variation of styles but on a theme of red brick and plain tile.

Timber is the traditional material used for doors and windows in the older properties. Many buildings have retained the traditional openings and window styles although the glazing style is dependent on the age and style of the building.

8 DETAILED ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT

In order to make the appraisal more legible and informative the detailed assessment of the architectural and historic character has been divided into four smaller areas (see map below). These sub areas have been chosen to incorporate buildings and spaces which relate to each other (both geographically and characteristically) and comprise:

Area 1: Modern buildings in the north

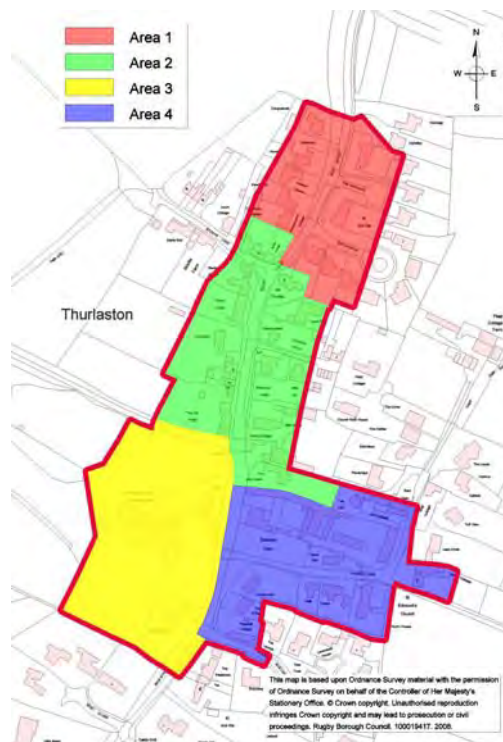
Area 2: Historic core of Conservation Area on Main Street

Area 3: Nursing home

Area 4: Stanleys Farm and surrounding area.

It must be noted that sub areas can overlap and transition can take place. The zones are therefore used as a tool to analyse and understand the area rather than to define whole areas as separate entities.

MAP 3 CHARACTER AREAS



AREA 1: Modern buildings in the north

This part of the Conservation Area is characterised by modern late twentieth century buildings set within a well landscaped environment. The buildings are not of individual merit but, together with the mature landscaping, create a neutral gateway to the older core of the village.

The approach is via a bridge over the M45 and this necessitates an incline in levels. However, although the road is bordered by concrete kerb stones and crosses the motorway, the mature trees, including Corsican and Scots Pines, provide a woodland feel on approach. This rural character is enhanced by the post and rail fencing running

parallel with the highway and views of the surrounding countryside to each side. This landscaping provides a transition from countryside to village and softens the impact of the first group of buildings.

On the eastern side of Main Street buildings comprise 1960's bungalows with dominant sloping roofs, flat roof dormers and integral garages, all set within open plan grounds and well back from the highway. Whilst alterations have taken place the buildings maintain the original integrity. Number one The Gardens has a strong form of boundary treatment with a brick wall which was part of the Manor House boundary, a building that previously occupied the site.

PHOTO 5 THE OPEN PLAN CHARACTER



The open plan character continues into The Gardens with buildings of a similar period and layout. The dwellings on the southern side of Beech Drive comprise two storey detached dwellings with large windows, prominent roof profiles and double garages.

To the western side of Main Street is a row of five detached dwellings from the 1960's and 1970's. Although of different designs there is cohesion derived from similar style and materials. The buildings offer a variety in form and comprise dormer windows, large scale windows and garages set forward of the dwellings. Red bricks and tiles are used and the buildings are bound together by landscaping (with hedges and grass verges on the front boundaries). Some of the landscaping is rather suburban in nature but the more structural trees, such as the Silver Birches, are the dominant and cohesive element. There is often a lack of delineation between public and private space, with grass verges merging into front gardens. This does not respond to more traditional rural designs.

PHOTO 6 THE WESTERN SIDE OF MAIN STREET



In summary this part of the Conservation Area is characterised by a planned form of development to the eastern side with more organic development on the west. The planned form has an open plan theme with low profile buildings within a landscape dominated environment with large spaces between buildings. The development on the western side has a less planned feel but is linked to the open plan area by the dominance of landscaping and materials. The real focus is the trees, such as the Western Red Cedar on The Gardens, and overall there is little sense of enclosure.

AREA 2: Historic core of conservation area on Main Street

This sub area covers the historic core of the village with a relatively high density of development. The buildings on the western side of Main Street are more closely sited with larger spaces between dwellings on the eastern side. The buildings follow the course of the road and are linear in siting.

The area contains a number of focal points commencing with 120 Main Street on the eastern side which acts as a pinch point abutting the highway. A building of Victorian origins it has been much altered but the scale and composition responds to vernacular precedents and creates a dynamic statement at the entrance to the historic core. The prominence of the building is enhanced by the dominant brick garden wall which provides an important sense of enclosure adjacent to the highway. The building is also important as it acts as a focal point when approaching the village from Stocks Lane.

Beaconsfield, Malt House and Grays Cottage are all Victorian in origin and are set in relatively spacious grounds with gardens to the front, side and rear. These gardens provide attractive areas of open space and are a feature in this part of the Conservation Area.

Church Walk serves a number of buildings. The road has small, banked grass verges to each side with hedging along the northern boundary and a close boarded timber fence to the south. Its scale and appearance reflects the character of the other lanes. The village's relationship with the surrounding countryside is reinforced by the views at the end of Church Walk.

A prominent area of open space to the south of Welcome Lodge contains stone remains set on different levels. This is important in providing an open space between dwellings and which characterises general development along the eastern side of Main Street.

PHOTO 7 THE EASTERN SIDE OF MAIN STREET



On the western side of Main Street there is a more consistent appearance and character. The sub area commences with Stocks Cottage, a red brick and slate two storey building which is side on to the road and fronts onto Stocks Lane. The building dates from the mid Victorian period. Chimneys are prominent and the building has small paned windows. Attached to the dwelling is a similar style building but incorporating dormers. These buildings play a vital role in framing the view around the small village green, which accommodates the stocks, and when viewed from further south on Main Street they act as a delineation mark between two character areas.

PHOTO 8 MAIN STREET LOOKING TOWARDS STOCKS COTTAGE



Stocks Lane is a relatively narrow road characterised by buildings on each side sited close to the highway but with no development at the end there is a rural appearance with open space and trees as the focal point. At the top end of Stocks Lane is the village green. This triangular space accommodates a significant oak tree and the recreated village stocks. Its elevated level above the road enhances its important visual role. The green is a focal point from Stocks Lane and looking north from the heart of the village.

The distinctive architectural character continues with Stocks House and White Lodge. Both are two storey and have been altered. The original ground floor element of Stocks House dates from the eighteenth century with the upper floor and extension being mid Victorian. White Lodge has a lower ridge height, prominent chimneys and a large number of openings which suggest the building was originally a number of separate dwellings. The building is painted white with small paned black painted windows and is attached to a taller structure which has two garages to the ground floor. Taken with Stocks Cottage these buildings provide an attractive and varied roofline with a pleasing rhythm of fenestration. The group create a strong sense of enclosure due to the terraced nature and proximity to the road.

The cohesion is aided by the surface treatment adjacent to the highway which is cobbled. This surface extends in front of the adjacent buildings, providing an attractive foreground to the buildings.

The sense of enclosure is maintained by Kensh Cottage, a small one and a half storey building of cream painted brick with a corrugated roof over an originally thatched roof. The original part of the building has an end chimney stack and original windows and retains the workers cottage appearance. It characterises the generally smaller buildings that typify this part of the Conservation Area with the larger houses being sited further into the village. Other examples include the attached mid Victorian semi's of red brick, with traditional window openings and a brick stack to each end, and The Old Forge, a one and a half storey red brick building with thatched roof and gables to the sides. The thatch dominates as it rises above the first floor windows and drops down to the porch with a higher eaves line to the side elevation. Again there are a number of prominent chimneys including an external stack to the side elevation onto Biggin Hall Lane. As a whole these buildings form one of the most important groups within the Conservation Area in terms of street scene. They provide a terrace appearance abutting the highway with cohesion of architecture and preventing views through to the countryside.

The buildings in this sub area on the eastern side can therefore be classed as being mixed in character, of a more informal nature than the buildings on the western side. The eastern side generally has views between buildings whereas there is more of a terrace character to the western side with narrower plots. Overall, this sub area of the village is dominated by small scale workers-type cottages.

AREA 3: Nursing home

This sub area commences with Biggin Hall Lane, a narrow road with grass verges to both sides bordered by hedges. The land level drops away from the village and the scene contains views of gardens to the north and the field adjacent to the nursing home to the south. Views of occasional buildings beyond the village are partially blocked by the landscape dominated environment. Looking into the village the nursing home is a dominant building of considerable depth, in contrast with the scale of other buildings in the locality. The field pattern gives a sense of the countryside becoming absorbed into the village. At the end of Biggin Hall Lane, on the eastern side of Main Street, Grays Cottage acts as a strong focal point and signals a return into the village.

Further south along Main Street the Conservation Area takes on a more rural character with an absence of pavement on the eastern side and a narrow pavement with grass verge planted with horse chestnut, sycamore and red chestnut trees to the west. This is bordered by a prominent red brick wall which acts as an enclosure to buildings within the nursing home complex. This wall is the most dominant boundary feature in this part of the Conservation Area. The wall is visually attractive and prevents most views into the nursing home site.

PHOTO 9 THE NURSING HOME



The most dominant building in the village is the Warwickshire Private Nursing Home, which was formerly a substantial private house with Victorian origins. The building has been much altered and extended with the original now overtaken in scale by the later additions. The building is large and sprawling yet responds to the prevailing character of the Conservation Area through the use of red brick, tile/slate, incorporating dormer windows and sharing similar heights to surrounding buildings.

The buildings are set within large undeveloped grounds which provide an important open space. The grounds are all within the Conservation Area and are the largest undeveloped space within the designation. The field to the north of the complex is less formal and has an unmanaged appearance.

AREA 4: Stanleys Farm and surrounding area

This area is dominated by Stanleys Farm. Of red brick and tile the building incorporates formal detailing including a Greek style porch, elongated central window and wide ground floor windows and an imposing M-shaped roof. The side elevation has two ground floor windows with lead hoods supported on posts. There are prominent gables to the sides and the status of the building is conveyed by the height and proportions of the facade and the scale of the roof and chimneys. The building continues to the rear with each successive element reducing in scale further into the site. The building is listed and is an important example of the village's agricultural heritage. It's commanding presence contrasts with the other more functional farm buildings.

PHOTO 10 STANLEYS FARM



The fine range of farm buildings adjacent includes a single storey building with gable abutting the highway, a two storey building with an external brick staircase and a two storey building with a lean to roof which joins a single storey building. The buildings are red brick with a combination of the original slate and brown concrete tiles. The farm buildings incorporate a series of openings with single and double doors and timber windows with prominent metal work. The buildings front onto the farmyard which is surfaced with river washed cobbles. The buildings on the farmstead form a distinctive and dominant group. The yard gives prominence to the barns and the farmhouse, and provides a striking setting to the complex.

The site along Main Street and running into Church Lane is bordered by a prominent red brick wall with limestone copings. To the front of the house the wall is punctuated by an attractive pedestrian gate with unusual gate posts, brick steps to the front door and a hedge over part of the brick wall. The wall is attractive and important visually, mirroring the wall bordering the nursing home and in providing an impressive boundary to the farmstead.

To the side and rear the large garden is prominent and bordered by the brick wall. The garden, which accommodates a large number of trees, provides an important undeveloped space and allows significant view across to the mill.

The site also accommodates other farm buildings. These include a two and single storey brick and concrete tile farm structure forming the eastern boundary of the farmstead with Dutch barns and other brick buildings further into the site. Such a collection of buildings and surrounding undeveloped farm land is rare within villages. The farmstead provides an unusually well preserved example of a traditional large agricultural complex.

The Conservation Area runs further south to Pudding Bag Lane, a narrow road with grass verges to the southern side. Pipewell Cottage is the only building within the designation and comprises a cream painted, cruck, timber framed cottage of two storeys with a thatched roof. Its position immediately abutting the road and occupying a spacious corner location gives prominence to the building. The building however rather sits in isolation with modern dwellings immediately to the north and east.

At the entrance of Church Lane the grass verge widens and accommodates a water pump and a group of trees, presenting an open foreground to the farmstead beyond. To the southern side is a collection of buildings including the village hall, a timber clad single storey structure and two dwellings. The key building in this area is the church, St Edmund, which terminates development on the southern side of Church Lane. The school was built by Carpenter in 1849 to the design of William Butterfield and has served as both a church and school. The dwelling in the tower was built to accommodate the school master. The church is set behind a pavement with small granite kerbstones and a boundary wall of red brick and metal railings. The church is built of red brick and red tile and comprises a prominent gable facing the highway supported by brick buttresses with a tower behind. The three storey tower has a broached roof with a glazed bellcote above with a chimney to the side. The building is a landmark feature where Church Lane turns north

PHOTO 11 ST EDMUND'S CHURCH



On the opposite side of Church Lane is a timber framed and thatch cottage dating from the eighteenth century with oriel windows to the ground floor of leaded lights and one larger window in the first floor where the thatch lifts. As with Pipewell Cottage the building stands in isolation and compliments the local vernacular theme.

The two groups of buildings, to the east of the church, and to the north of the mill, are mixed in character and range from the mid Victorian period to the twentieth century. The most prominent building in this part of Church Lane is the Mill. Of dark red brick and of five storeys the conical tower is accessed via an external staircase with canopy over and a driveway of paviers. The tower mill does not have the sails and incorporates a number of small windows. The building is highly visible throughout the Conservation Area and is a landmark feature. The mill is also important in being read as part of the village's working industrial heritage and from its close proximity to Stanleys Farm.

PHOTO 12 THE MILL



This sub area is dominated by the farmstead which is surrounded by red brick wall boundaries and is prominent on Main Street and Church Lane. The Mill is visible from various locations and is read in conjunction with the farmstead. There are a number of important buildings set within a rural environment with grass verges, hedges and views into the open countryside beyond. The remaining buildings are varied in form and character and do not detract from the main focal points. However, the area does not have a cohesive or legible form of development.

9 CONTRIBUTION OF UNLISTED BUILDINGS

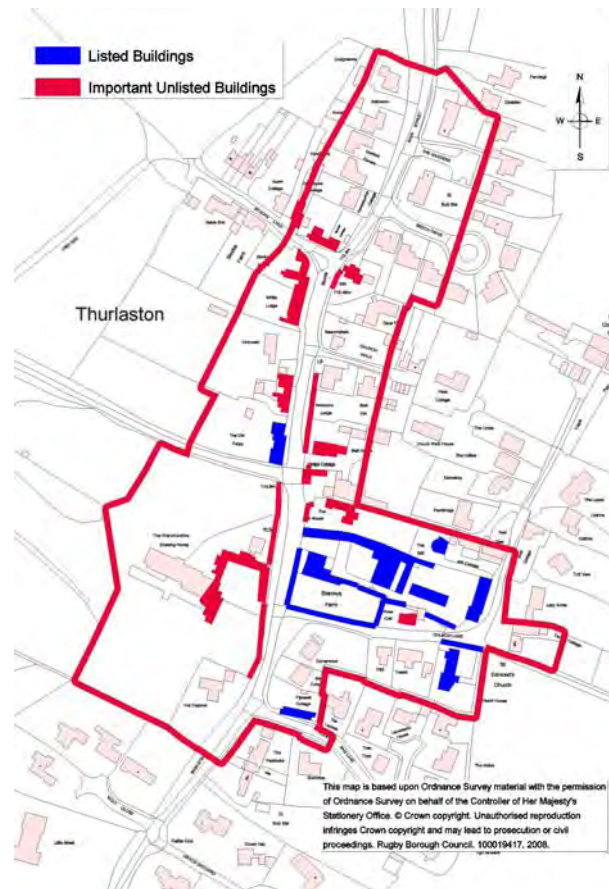
Unlisted buildings can make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through complimenting the listed structures and providing good townscape. Stocks Cottage and the attached semi is such a building. Of red brick the building is attractive in appearance and is a focal point at the end of the older part of the village. It acts as a visual stop for the sub area and frames views from the south with the village green to the foreground.

Stocks House, White Lodge and terracing to the north of The Old Forge form an important group of buildings characterising this part of the Conservation Area, providing a strong sense of enclosure and incorporating a varied roofline with buildings set close to the highway.

120 Main Street is a much extended and altered building which whilst possessing individuality acts as an important focal point looking north from Stocks Lane. Grays Cottage achieves the same role on Biggin Hall Lane.

Grays Cottage is a visual focal point on the approach into the village from Biggin Hall Lane.

MAP 4 IMPORTANT UNLISTED BUILDINGS AND LISTED BUILDINGS



10 STREET FURNITURE

Street furniture is an important element in the Conservation Area reinforcing local identity. Positive elements such as the village stocks are part of the history of the settlement as well as a visual feature within the street scene. The rural character is reinforced by the rustic timber bus shelter and the old style post box near to Church Walk. There are also a number of street lamps in a Victorian style which reflect the character of the village. Street name signs are either cast iron attached to buildings or freestanding modern signs on a steel frame.

Although much of the street furniture is positive in character enhancements could take place. These could include the undergrounding of the wires currently on telegraph poles, a more traditional telephone box and all street signs being consistent in appearance, type and material. Cast iron signs could be located on buildings or boundary walls. This would reduce clutter and provide a stronger sense of place.

11 GREEN AND OPEN SPACES

Trees and general natural landscaping is an essential element of the Conservation Area's character and appearance. The settlement is surrounded by countryside and this natural rural character is reinforced within the village. The following features make an important contribution to the area.

The small village green adjacent to Stocks Cottage is an important open space being a focal point from the south and acting as the foreground to the adjacent Stocks House.

The undeveloped land around the nursing home is the largest open space in the Conservation Area and is visible from Main Street and Biggin Hall Lane. From the lane it provides a gradual transition from countryside to village and the open space allows full view of the nursing home building. The land also provides an important contrast with the higher density of development and sense of enclosure along the lanes and Main Street.

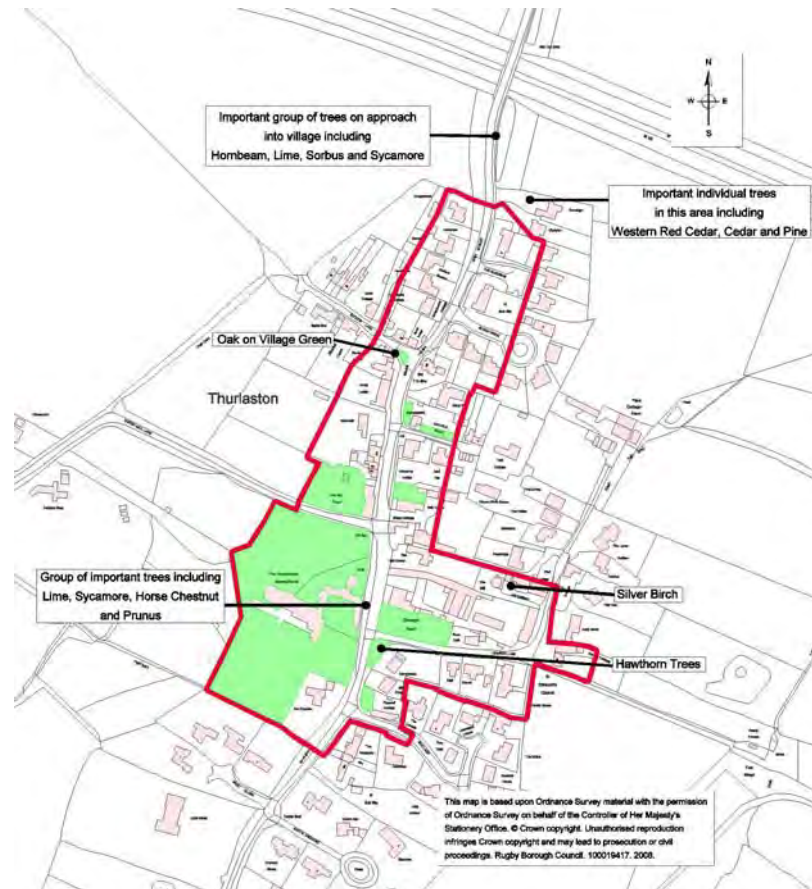
The grass verge to the south of Church Lane leads the eye from Main Street into Church Lane, acts as a foreground to the boundary wall of Stanleys Farm and incorporates three Hawthorn trees.

A number of gardens are also important in providing open spaces between dwellings and these should be preserved in order to retain the character and relationship between dwellings and open space. Such buildings include Malt House and the rear garden of The Old Forge.

Hedges along highway boundaries and adjacent to front gardens provide a softer green appearance to the area, reinforcing the relationship between the development and the wider countryside and provide a defined boundary between the public and private space.

The village accommodates a large number of trees which are a defining feature of the Conservation Area. There are an important group of trees to the north of the village on the approach including Hornbeam, Lime, Sorbus and Sycamore which present a gradual transition from the countryside to the village and reduce the impact of the adjacent motorway. To the more modern part of the Conservation Area on the east are some important individual trees such as a western red cedar, cedar and pine. The oak on the village green is an impressive structural tree and the group of trees to the north, which include birch, are important in integrating the development along the west of Main Street. Furthermore there are important trees to the front of the nursing home site with a combination of lime, sycamore, horse chestnut, prunus and sycamore. The central core of the village also contributes with important Hawthorns on the grass verge at the entrance of Church Lane and a birch in close proximity to the mill.

MAP 5 GREEN AND OPEN SPACES AND IMPORTANT TREES



12 EXISTENCE OF ANY NEUTRAL AREAS

The environmental quality of the Conservation Area is generally good but there are neutral elements. A number of the more modern buildings do not closely reflect the vernacular red brick development and appear out of keeping in terms of design. However, the majority of the later development does not have a strong impact on the Conservation Area due to siting, design and landscape screening.

The modern development at the northern end of Main Street has a neutral impact. Although of architectural merit the open planned development to the east and organic development to the west is not of significant character or appearance to warrant Conservation Area status, it does however provide a pleasant gateway into the older core.

The area to the south of the approach to Church Lane and the buildings on the eastern and northern parts of Church Lane are a group having a varied architectural character and do not have significant cohesion. The buildings are of different ages, style and siting and have a neutral impact.

13 CONCLUSIONS

The overall historic character of Thurlaston Conservation Area has been well maintained and most architectural details in the older buildings have been preserved. The

settlement's economy was mainly based on agriculture and this is evident in the scale of Stanleys Farm and by the number of historic workers cottages. The rural economy was also served by The Old Forge and windmill.

The main character is formed by low density linear development within an agricultural setting. The Conservation Area has a main street running north to south with lanes to the east and west within a setting that is highly landscaped. The settlement also incorporates important green spaces, hedges, trees and private gardens which soften the appearance of the built development. Overall the character of the Conservation Area falls into four main categories, a modern element, the historic core, the nursing home and the area dominated by Stanley Farm.

More recent development has often incorporated large areas of open space and landscaping. However, additional landscaping and softer surface treatment would enhance the Conservation Area. Additional development which would enclose spaces should be resisted in order to protect local character.

14 PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

General Condition

The Conservation Area is in a generally good condition in terms of building and maintenance of open spaces and landscaping. There are no buildings at risk or any in a serious state of disrepair.

Problems, pressure and capacity to change

The pressure to develop additional dwellings in the village could erode its character. Potential infill plots, such as the side garden serving Grays Cottage, would not only increase the density of the settlement but remove important open spaces between buildings. The erection of inappropriately designed and sited outbuildings could have a similar effect. There may also be development pressure to convert the farm buildings on Stanleys Farm in the future. Any such scheme would need to respect the historic appearance and cohesion of these buildings and incorporate the farmyard as part of an overall design strategy. The setting of the farmhouse should also be respected.

The replacement of traditional windows, removal of chimneys or the introduction of alien materials, such as replacing plain tiles with concrete tiles, would have a major adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Although there is variation in the architecture the similarity of materials acts as a binding harmonious feature in the settlement. This also applies to the hedges, grass verges and trees within the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area incorporates large undeveloped open spaces around the nursing home. Development of this land would erode an important element within the village's distinctive character.

Features such as the narrow pavements, granite setts and grass verges should also be retained as they play a major role in creating a sense of place.

Alterations and extensions to unlisted buildings could, if carried out in an unsympathetic manner, erode the fundamental character of the Conservation Area. In order to enhance the area careful consideration must be given to materials, scale and design of new

development and extensions. Inappropriate surface treatment in public areas and unsympathetic street furniture would also erode the special character of the area.

Future management proposals

The Local Planning Authority has a duty to ensure that proposals for development either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Rugby Borough Council is committed to this duty.

In order to ensure that proposals for development can be adequately addressed the submission of detailed plans and elevations will be required with the submission of any planning application within the Conservation Area. This is likely to require the submission of drawings relating to new building within its context and street scene. 1:50 scale drawings of plans and elevations are considered an appropriate scale. For more detailed proposals and for specific elements of a proposed scheme, for example fenestration details, scale drawings of 1:5 or 1:10 may be required. A Design and Access Statement will also be necessary.

Opportunities for enhancement

Although the general visual quality of the Conservation Area is significant there are areas where improvements could take place.

- It is important that the Coppice retains its character, planting new trees to replace older ones and by planting a hedge along the boundary with Main Street;
- New tree planting should be native species set along grass verges and within gardens;
- Any new development should be sensitively designed with walls preferably of red brick and roofs of natural slate or small red/brown plain tiles. Materials and landscaping of external areas around buildings should be part of an overall design philosophy which responds to local historic identity;
- Any new development should vary the design and size of the individual houses;
- It is essential that the view from Main Street down to New Biggin Lane remains a country lane retaining verges and hedgerows with open views beyond;
- Boundary walls along Main Street, including the nursing home and Stanleys Farm, should remain as important street scene elements;
- The generally low key highway engineering should be maintained to allow the predominance of grass verges. Where kerbs are of granite setts these should be retained. Setts could be used along Main Street to differentiate between carriageway and adjoining footway/parking areas in place of white lines;
- Surfacing footway/parking areas could incorporate a material of more rural character such as fine bound stone. This would reduce the area of tarmac and reduce the apparent road width;
- A prevalence of overhead cables detract from the street scene and the lines could be laid underground;
- Where there are close boarded fences these could be replaced with hedging of native species;
- Driveways serving dwellings could be enhanced where required through a more rural surface treatment and additional planting to reduce the impact of parked cars.

15 APPENDIX 1

Summary of listed buildings in Thurlaston Conservation Area

Stanleys Farmhouse – Grade II, C18 farmhouse with early C19 right wing alterations, small late C19 range at rear. Flemish bond brickwork and some chequer brickwork and small plain tile roof. Central early C19 porch with tall 18 pane staircase sash window above. Sash windows with moulded frames.

The Old Forge – Grade II, C18 cottage and former forge in three unit plan. The left hand cottage is one storey and attic. The former forge is probably the single storey central unit. The right hand unit is a C20 addition. Flemish brickwork and a thatched roof. Left hand gable is timber framed with brick infill.

The Mill – Grade II, late C18 windmill, converted into a house in 1970's. English bond flared brickwork with C20 small plain tile conical roof. Tapering circular plan five storeys high. Mid C20 glazed door, timber steps and open porch. Mid/late C20 one light casement windows, some with brick segmental arches.

St Edmund's Church and Church House – Grade II, built as a chapel/school, to be used as a school during the week and a church on Sunday, with schoolteacher's house attached. Designed by William Butterworth, 1849. Flemish bond brickwork and small plain tile roof with ridge cresting. Three light east window with Gothic tracery. Limestone tracery throughout. Tower has pyramid roof and arched wood bellcote.

Pipewall Cottage – Grade II, probably C15/16 origins with later additions. Cruck construction, large timber framing with whitewashed brick infill. Right return wall and rear wall rendered and possibly rebuilt, thatched roof with deep boarded eaves. C19 whitewashed brick ranges to left has slate roof.

APPENDIX 2

Useful Contacts

A copy of this appraisal will be available at the Rugby library, the Rugby Borough Council office and on the Council's website at www.rugby.gov.uk.

For specific information about the conservation area and conservation issues please contact:

Conservation Officer
Rugby Borough Council
Town Hall
Evreux Way
Rugby
CV21 2RR

Tel: 01788 533766
Email: Rob.Parker-Gulliford@rugby.gov.uk

For further information relating to listed buildings and conservation areas contact:

English Heritage
The Axis
10 Holliday Street
Birmingham
B1 1TG

Tel: 0121 6256820

Email: westmidlands@english-heritage.org.uk

For detailed advice on repairing and restoring Georgian houses, contact:

The Georgian Group
6 Fitzroy Square
London
W1T 5DX

Tel: 087 1750 2936

Email: office@georgiangroup.org.uk

For "Care for Victorian Houses" leaflet, contact:

The Victorian Society
1 Priory Gardens
Bedford Park
London
W4 1TT

Tel: 020 8994 1019

Email: admin@victoriansociety.org.uk

For a range of technical advice leaflets, contact:

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
37 Spital Square
London
E1 6DY

Tel: 020 7377 1644.

Email: info@spab.org.uk

APPENDIX 3

Bibliography

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|---|--|
| The Warwickshire Village Book | Warwickshire Federation of Women's Institute |
| Warwickshire Towns and Villages | Geoff Allen |
| Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15) | |

GLOSSARY

Bargeboards: board at the gable of a building covering the ends of the horizontal roof timbers and forming a 'V', often pierced and decorated.

Bay window: window of one or more storeys projecting from the face of the window at ground level.

Casement: window hinged at the side.

Corbel: block of brick projecting from a wall.

Dormer window: window standing up vertically from the slope of a roof.

Framed building: where the structure is carried by the framework.

Mullion: vertical member between the lights of a window opening.

Rendering: the process of covering outside walls with a uniform skin to protect from the weather.

Transom: horizontal member between the lights of a window opening.

Vernacular: the traditional local construction style.