

Besthorpe Conservation Area Appraisal

Draft

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NEWARK &
SHERWOOD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Document Passport

- Title:** Newark and Sherwood District Council; Besthorpe Conservation Area Appraisal
- Summary:** This document sets out in draft the Council's appraisal of the character and appearance of the village of Besthorpe, which the Council feels should have conservation area status
- Please note:** **This document is available in alternative formats on request**
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Consultation Summary:

Consultation period: 1st October – 9th November 2007

Copies are deposited at Kelham hall (open between 8.30am and 5.15pm Monday to Thursday and until 4.45pm on Friday) and on the Council's web site, www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

After the consultation

Once the round of consultations is complete on the Draft Conservation Area Appraisal the District Council will consider the responses it has received and then prepare a document for approval by Cabinet.

Estimated Date of Final Adoption: Jan 2008

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BESTHORPE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Page no

1.	Status of the Appraisal	1
2.	Introduction	1
3.	Planning Policy Framework	1
4.	Statutory Designations	3
5.	Historic Development and Archaeology	4
6.	Landscape Setting	5
7.	Spatial Qualities	6
8.	Townscape Character	7
	● The entrance from the North	7
	● The entrance from the South	7
	● Main Street	7
	● Links from Main Street to the Village	8
	● The Village Green	10
	● Low Road South of The Green	11
	● Low Road North of The Green	12
9.	General Character Analysis	14
	● Materials	14
	● Local architectural styles and features	15
	● Contribution made by trees and open spaces	16
	● Extent of loss, intrusion and damage	16
	● Community involvement	17
	● Suggested conservation area boundary	17
MAP 1	Buildings & Walls of Merit in Besthorpe	
MAP 2	Landscape Features of Besthorpe Conservation Area	
MAP 3	Besthorpe Conservation Area Boundary	
APPENDIX A	Possible relevant Local Plan Policies	19
APPENDIX B	Listed buildings in the Village	23
APPENDIX C	Management Strategy	24

1. Status of the Appraisal

- 1.1** This appraisal document is an assessment of the special interest, character and appearance of the village of Besthorpe. If the appraisal concludes that the village is of sufficient architectural or historic interest to warrant designation as a conservation area, the qualities of the village highlighted here will be a major influence on that decision
- 1.2** If a conservation area is designated the finally adopted document will subsequently be used as a tool to help in the making of decisions about future development and the making of policies for the preservation and enhancement of the village.

2. Introduction

- 2.1** The *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* requires all Local Authorities to determine which parts of their areas are of special architectural or historic interest and to designate them as conservation areas. Designation requires that special regard be taken to preserve or enhance their character and appearance.
- 2.2** It is the quality of areas, as well as individual buildings that is important. There are many factors that contribute to the character of a village:
- The historic layout of properties, boundaries and thoroughfares
 - A particular mix of uses
 - Vistas along streets and between buildings
 - Characteristic materials
 - Appropriate scaling and detailing of buildings
 - Traditional shop fronts
 - Quality street furniture and hard and soft surfaces
 - Trees and open spaces.
- 2.3** This Appraisal seeks to highlight the architectural, historic and townscape qualities in Besthorpe and has been produced using the framework of the suggested format for conservation area appraisals developed by English Heritage

3. Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1** This report relates to several policies in the Newark and Sherwood District Council Local Plan (Adopted March 1999), which are given in Appendix A.
- 3.2** If you are considering putting forward any development proposals please note that several policies and not just a single policy may be relevant. A full list of all the policies are available in the Local Plan, which can be viewed at Kelham Hall or on our web site from <http://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/>
- 3.3** There are a number of designations in the Local Plan relating to Besthorpe that merit mention here. The built up part of the village is contained within a Village Envelope Boundary. Part of this line at the southwest corner of the settlement is also the line of the Mature Landscape Area (Policy NE8). The majority of the area of The Fleet is included and the area contains land to the south of Trent Lane. A swathe of land on the eastern side of the Newark-Gainsborough road is also included.

- 3.4 A further notation considers that some parts of the area, including two stretches of land between Low Street and the Village Envelope boundary to the west of Low Road, and an area around and including Chaise House between Gainsborough Road and Low Road should be considered as an Area of no further intensification of development. This Policy (H22), was specifically introduced to protect those parts of villages outside conservation areas which retain their traditional rural form and character from further development.



The open paddock behind Plum Tree Farm



Open paddock with Chaise House in the background

- 3.5 Three separate areas inside the Village Envelope are also classified as Main Open Areas, (Policy FS7), which seeks to ensure that no built development will take place in these areas as they are considered to have an important role in defining the villages form and structure. The MOA's in Besthorpe are set between Plum Tree Farm and Willow Cottage on Low Road, the paddock between Wingroves Cottage and Maple House and a tract of land between the main road and Low Road behind Poppy, Appletree and Mead Cottages.
- 3.6 The Appraisal has been produced in line with the following Acts, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Advice Notes:

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 69 of this Act asks every local planning authority “ from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and designate them as conservation areas”

Section 71 of this Act places the local authority under a duty to “formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of [their] conservation areas.”

PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment (HMSO, September 1994)
Section 4 of this guidance note concerns Conservation Areas.

PPG16 Archaeology and Planning (1990)

Conservation Area Appraisals (English Heritage, March 1997) and **Guidance on conservation area appraisals** (draft) (English Heritage, February 2006).

The structure and content of the appraisal is based on the ‘checklist’ contained in this non-statutory advice note.

4. Statutory Designations

4.1 *Listed Buildings*

A listed building is one recognised as being of special architectural or historic interest. Listing is made at three levels of importance - Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II. Listed Building Consent is required before any alterations, extensions or demolitions can be made to a listed building which might affect its character.

In Besthorpe there are 11 entries on the Statutory List but only ten of them are within the village settlement with the Windmill at Mill Farm off Sand Lane completing the list. Two of the entries, at Chaise House on High Street and the Methodist Church on the Green, also include boundary wall and railings in the list description.

A table of listed buildings appears at the end of this document in Appendix B and are highlighted on Map 1

Listed building legislation may also apply to what are called *curtilage* listed buildings, which are normally buildings with a historic association with the main listed building, for example a barn associated with a listed farmhouse.

The listed buildings marked on the maps are only the principal listed buildings as noted on the statutory list and curtilage buildings are not often identified - please be aware of this when using these maps. Please also note that some buildings marked, as being buildings of Local Interest could also be curtilage Listed Buildings. Please seek the advice of the Conservation Officer on this matter if there is any doubt.

4.2 *Scheduled Ancient Monuments*

Certain nationally important archaeological sites and monuments enjoy special protection as Scheduled Ancient Monuments under the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*. This protection ensures that the case for preservation is fully considered should there be any proposals for development or other work that might damage the Monument. Any proposals are subject to Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent procedures, administered by English Heritage. There would normally be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of the monument.

In Besthorpe there is just one Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is an earthwork in a field on the south side of Sand Lane. Described as an oval mound 6metres high with two smaller mounds nearby, it is an irregular shaped E-W lying sandy ridge being the result of sand digging on either side.

5. Historic Development and Archaeology

- 5.1** There is evidence of archaeological activity in the village of Besthorpe right back to prehistoric times, with Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic finds within the village and its immediate surrounds. There is also a possible barrow associated with Neolithic pottery, clearly shown in the OS County Series map (1919) to the east of the village. A Roman coin has also been found in the village.
- 5.2** The earliest documentary reference to Besthorpe is in Domesday book where it is mentioned alongside Scarle (now North and South Scarle). In 1066 Besthorpe was part of the lands held by King Edward and also appears to have been in the Manor of Laxton.
- 5.3** Historically the place name has been written as Bestorp in 1147, Biesthorp in 1366, Beisthrope 1542, Beastropp 1557 and Beisthorpe 1578. The place name is thought to mean 'bent grass village'.
- 5.4** As well as mention in Domesday and other historical documents evidence of medieval activity in Besthorpe can be seen in excavations that took place in the rear garden of a bungalow on Trent Lane, revealing a possible midden, wall and clay floor with pottery from the C12 and C14.
- 5.5** Settlement clearly continued at Besthorpe as Slacks Farmhouse on Low Road in parts dates back to the C16, while there are two buildings of C17 origin, being Chestnut Cottage and its stable, also on Low Road. There are further listed buildings dating to the C18 and C19.
- 5.6** There does not seem to be any evidence to suggest Besthorpe had a medieval parish church and early maps are marked by their absence of a church here. The original chapel was converted into a school in 1734, the present church being rebuilt in 1844.
- 5.7** Besthorpe is shown in Chapman's Map of 1774 and is depicted having 9 buildings (although this may be intended more to represent a settlement than to be strictly accurate). At this date the village is shown as a linear village running north south along two straight roads, one of which is the modern day A1133, with two straight interconnecting lanes running east to west. This very much mirrors the form of the village seen today, and, with the exception of two cul-de-sacs, one to the north and one to the south of the village, this means the general layout of the village today can be traced back at least over two hundred years. It is perhaps significant to note that Low Road as shown in 1774 is straight, lacking the sweeping curve it has today.
- 5.8** A slight bend in Low Road can be seen in Sanderson's Map of 1835 but the village as depicted here is still of a rather more regular layout than it is today. Whether this is indicative of more accurate mapping or in fact the shape of Low Road has migrated over time is not certain.

- 5.9** By 1835 development had spread to the east of the A1133 but contained within very shallow plots hugging the main road. More typical long, thin boundary plots, probably dating from the Medieval period, can be seen running east to west between the north south roads. This east west alignment of boundaries can be still easily be traced today but with some of the narrow plots being merged into larger plots. The village as shown in County Series map of 1919 appears to have changed very little from the Besthorpe shown in 1835, with very little new development during this time.
- 5.10** Features of interest show in Sanderson's map of 1835 are a windmill at Mill Farm (apparently still standing in 1986 but now only remnants survive) and brick kilns marked to the south of the village, which presumably provided some of the bricks for the village. A Smithy can also be seen in the OS First Edition.
- 5.11** When the church was built in 1844 the village hall next door was built as a schoolroom, this in turn being replaced by the present school, which opened in 1879. The two Chestnuts in the playground were planted at about the same time. In Victorian times the manor apparently housed 'a young gentlemen's boarding school'.
- 5.12** Besthorpe was enclosed in 1836-37 by General Act. Water meadows appear to be shown to the south of the village on the map of 1835.
- 5.13** The village has several earthwork banks to the west of the village. These are undated but some are seen on the OS 1st Edition maps (1878-1889) and were presumably there to provide flood protection to the village from the River Fleet.
- 5.14** Trent Lane leads to the river and gravel works and the former hamlet of Meering was situated at the end of this lane. This is where the ferry took visitors across to Carlton on Trent. Now there is little contact with the other side of the river as the nearest crossing is at Newark.

6. Landscape Setting

- 6.1** Besthorpe village lies within the East Nottinghamshire Sandlands landscape character area, which has a simple and undeveloped character with few dramatic features, and within the *Heath Sandlands* landscape type that has a varied but typically well-wooded landscape characterised by small geometric plantations and remnant heathy vegetation.



- 6.2** The characteristic features of the *Heath Sandlands* are
- Free draining sandy soils
 - Variable pattern of land use and land holding
 - Mixed small-scale geometric plantations with birch, oak and scots pine
 - Acidic grassland and grass heaths Numerous rabbit warrens
 - Bracken, gorse and broom along hedgerows and roadside verges
- 6.3** This landscape has evolved on free-draining, drought-susceptible sandy soils on pockets of blown sand between Besthorpe and north Clifton and has a distinctive character which arises from the variable pattern of landholding and the diverse range of landscape uses that the area supports, including permanent and rough pasture, grass heath, commercial forestry and arable farming.
- 6.4** The Fleet and the fields to the west are of a different landscape character area, the Trent Washlands and the *River Meadowlands* landscape type. These are characterised by areas of alluvial meadow and river pasture, flood meadows, extensive common grasslands and meandering river channels, and have been included within the conservation area boundary as they form an important part of the setting of the village.

7. Spatial Qualities

- 7.1** Besthorpe is primarily a linear settlement set between the Gainsborough to Newark A1133 road and the east bank of The Fleet and is compressed in within a strip of land no more than 250metres deep at its widest point.
- 7.2** The influence of the Main Road on the settlement as a whole is quite limited as development tends to be located on the western side of the road and the buildings along here are sporadic more than continuous and there's only a smattering of development on the eastern side. Its importance to the development of the settlement has been primarily in keeping the high volume of traffic that uses the Main Street out of the historic centre.
- 7.3** Low Road, which is the principal street in the heart of the village runs parallel with the Main Street but has a more interesting form with gentle curves and some short linking lanes, which converge on The Green, by far the most important and attractive traditional space in the village.
- 7.4** The Fleet, curiously for its size, has generally a much less influential role on the character and appearance of the village as a whole than you would expect it to have if you view the village from aerial photographs. It is generally invisible from all points along Low Road. This is in part because it is set either at the bottom of a gentle slope, behind a small embankment or is inaccessible from public foot paths particularly at the north western end of the village.
- 7.5** The Right of Way network around the village is quite extensive but is limited with in the built up part, being restricted to two small footpaths, one to the north of the playing field and one linking Main Street and Low Road next to Maple House.

7.6 It does however show up why The Fleet has a limited effect on the character of the settlement as the Trent Valley Way swings away from the Trent just north of Springfield House a new property at the northern edge of the village. There is obviously a “missing link” to the Way south from this point, which could open up good views of the whole of the western side of the village and link up with the established footpath at the end of Church Lane.

7.7 Beyond The Fleet to the west the network is particularly extensive with an array of footpaths and tracks which link the village to the Trent nearly a mile away, in the vicinity of the now vanished hamlet of Meering. From so far out the village is totally invisible. The village is therefore best viewed on the western side from these closer areas with the footpath beyond Church Lane being the most advantageous vantage point to appreciate the villages setting in the landscape.

8. Townscape Character

The entrance from the North

8.1 From the north the assorted roofs and gable shapes of the collection of houses north of Fleet Lane are glimpsed above the hedgeline on the west side of Main Street, but although they are contemporary in character they don't disrupt the view and the tree houses fronting the street have little visual impact

The entrance from the South

8.2 The village is first sighted from the south at a point close to the entrance to West View Farm which stands to the east of the A1133 on a slight bend where the road is set in an almost northerly direction.

8.3 The most prominent village features from a distance are the back white painted wall of Wayments Keep the only building on Waddington Lane, and a high white painted bargeboard on Meering House a steeply pitched roof bungalow situated close to the junction of the lane with Low Road

8.4 The outer limits of the village are characterised by prominent hedgelines on both sides of the road. They are set on slightly raised verges, which prevents the landscape around here from truly contributing towards the villages' setting on this south side.

8.5 In fact, because of the nature of the road and the slightly set back frontages of most of the traditional buildings on the west side of Main Street, the most prominent feature is, surprisingly, the south gable of and chimney stack of Chaise House, probably the most important listed building in the village. The south gable and front face of Wingroves Cottage is also visible.

The Main Street

8.6 The A1133 skirts along the eastern side of the majority of the built up part of the village and is a relatively straight road though there is a shallow curve just to the north of The Lord Nelson public house.

- 8.7** Early maps show that the extent of built development alongside this road was concentrated in the area around the Lord Nelson with the only other buildings in the vicinity being Appletree and Poppy Cottages and Chaise House to the north and Hawthorn and Ivy Cottages on the opposite side. At this time the land behind the Lord Nelson was a series of open undeveloped paddocks stretching back as far as Low Road.
- 8.8** From both ends the primary feel of the village street is generally one of an open nature. This is obviously enhanced by the lack of any substantial development on the east side and the fact that there is a wide green verge to the north of Ivy Cottage, open fields behind and an enclosing belt of trees to the north and west of The White House.
- 8.9** The Main Street does not have a readily apparent cohesive nature. Buildings are mainly seen as detached units set slightly back from the road behind either walls or hedges and this characteristic has been continued in the way that Pings Close has been developed and knitted into the existing streetscape.
- 8.10** Generally long views along the village street are encouraged. The street is wide as befits a major county road, and the buildings on the west side act more as a backdrop proving glimpses rather than full views of the villages buildings.



*Attractive view along the main road
Chaise House in the distance*



*The Lord Nelson public house
on the eastside of the road*

- 8.11** This is due in part to the “green” nature of the long view to the north, which tends to be encouraged by the gentle curve in the road just before Wingroves Cottage. This brings a number of tree groups, individual trees of note and prominent hedgelines into prominence and these in combination produce a pleasant informal feel to the space.

Links from Main Street to the Village

- 8.12** There are four roads from Main Road that link to either the ends of Low Street or The Green.

Modern development on Fleet Lane



- 8.13** The most northerly is Fleet Lane a short, practically single-track lane, which used to demarcate the northern edge of the village, though there is cartographic evidence of a small row of cottages or a farmstead on the northern side of the lane at the junction with Low Road. In the past decade or so though a small, suburban type development has sprung up on the northern side of the lane behind the three properties facing the Main Road; Shangri-La, Rowan House and Windy Ridge. This has extended the settlement into formerly open countryside and is, overall, somewhat at odds with the fundamental character of the rest of the village.
- 8.14** At the southern end the first entrance to the village can be easily missed as the eye is rather taken by the quality of the space in front of the village school in the distance and the fine group of Horsechestnut trees which frame the view up the Main Street.
- 8.15** Waddington Lane links into the southern end of Low Street at its junction with Trent Lane and is probably used more by residents on the southern leg of Low Road and for access to the Trent. It is by Besthorpe standards a wide road, with a tall hedge on the north side containing the playing field and has just one dwelling on the south side overlooking the fields



Views across The Green to Low Street



Possibly the most attractive entry to the village close to the school

- 8.16** The most attractive looking entrance into the village is the one to the side of the village school with the trees to the south of the building helping to reinforce this view. An impression of an informal entry is reinforced by the verge and overgrown hedge on the west side whilst the east side has a more open aspect beyond the school building as the playground gives the sense of a building in a small setting
- 8.17** The only visual blot here is the use of a standard security fence arrangement set at the back of a narrow verge. There may be scope for further planting here to help alleviate its impact.
- 8.18** This is a minor point compared with the disruption to the character of this part of the village that is caused by the chalet type bungalow on a plot of land that straddles between here and Low Road. The plot is also immediately north of the playing field and its neglected appearance has an impact on the overall character of this entrance to the village. The bungalows position on the site helps to reduce its impact, as does being surrounded by the overgrown hedge, but the garden area is becoming an eyesore with extensive dumping of building rubble and other material.

8.19 The unnamed lane that comes into The Green from the Main Street just south of the Old Post Office is marginally the shortest of the entry points but only has four dwellings associated with it, but eventually the lane probably provides the best view across and around the Green.

The Village Green

8.20 The Green is the focal point of the village, a place where five entry points converge and where two of the triangular grassed areas have been developed along desire lines which link each entry point to each other in a visually pleasing way. The trees in the middle of the space give the area additional focus and some depth.

8.21 The main southern and northern entry points are the two legs of Low Road, which is the spine of the old part of the village. All views from the entry points across The Green display generally good townscape quality with perhaps the view across from Church Lane towards Cherry Tree Cottage and The Hollies being the weakest. Here there is little in the way of quality traditional buildings or other features of interest to help knit the space together and link the property boundaries visually with the closest entry points. The hedge in front of The Hollies is arguably the only feature and visual reference point



Chapel Cottage and the converted Methodist Church on the Green



The listed wall at Slacks Farm

8.22 The view from The Hollies corner though, across The Green to Slacks Farm is quite expansive but isn't dominated by either trees or buildings; it is just a very pleasant view over the space. The importance of the boundary wall to the farm though is quite immense in townscape terms. From the corner of The Green the wall, which is approximately 6ft high, provides both a focal point and a feature that visually links Low Road and Church Walk together. It also provides a pleasant contrast with the wall and railings in front of the Church on the south side of Church Lane. It is also another linking feature that provides a degree of enclosure, which, when taken with the frontages of the converted former Methodist Church and Chapel Cottage, results in a high quality public space.

8.23 Slacks Farm has a steep and prominent roof and is quite impressive in stature but from across The Green the building doesn't dominate the area but, together with the wall provides a backdrop to the space and leads the eye up Low Road, with the raised gable of Chestnut Cottage providing another reference point on the street.

8.24 Entering The Green from the unnamed lane and from close to Cherry Tree Cottage the view across the space is probably the most attractive to be had in the village. It combines the best of green space, built form and building type, which results in a high quality townscape of significant importance to the overall character of the village. The Church is obviously a very significant building, and probably one not normally associated or expected in a village of such a size.



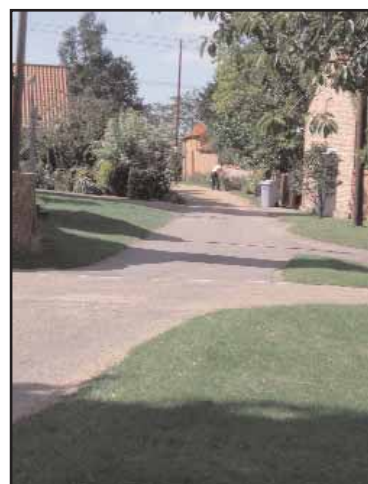
The heart of the Village, the Parish Church and Village Hall



The Village Hall and Church Lane

8.25 The churchyard behind the church is an important space in the overall context of the character of The Green and the back walls of Church Cottage adds depth to the quality of the space. The east gable of the Village Hall, even though it is set back beyond the north side of the Church, also makes a valuable contribution to the townscape quality of the area though its main impact is from Church Lane itself.

8.26 Whilst the views from here across The Green are disappointing, the view towards The Fleet and down Church Lane is quite pleasant. The wide grass verge in front of the north wall of the Village Hall and the wall running from here to the front wall of the property known as Kirklands, enclose a mini village green space, helped by the contribution made by the previously mentioned boundary wall to Slacks Farm and the two storey former agricultural barn which stands gable end to the lane. Beyond and towards the Fleet the lane narrows to a single-track private drive serving Fleet House and August House and, just beyond a roadside barn, gradually falls towards the open land at the edge of the village.



Church Lane

Low Road south of The Green

- 8.27** Low Road between Waddington Lane and The Green is a relatively tightly enclosed space with tall hedges to the east enclosing one side of the playing field. A hedgeline between Meering House and Manor Cottage reinforces this characteristic. Buildings along the western side of the road, apart from Meering House, are traditional brick or lias stone buildings. Between Meering House and Jacksons Cottage there are just two buildings, The Manor and Manor Cottage. Whilst both buildings are set in substantial grounds they each make significant contribution to the character of the area. Manor Cottage has a tall, steep roof shape culminating in raised gables, and its white painted rendered south front contrasts with the lias stone roadside and north elevations.



Manor Cottage and The Manor on Low Street

- 8.28** Viewed from the junction with Waddington Road its position on the roadside gives no clue to the character of the rest of the road but just beyond the low stone garden wall set along the eastern side of the south facing garden to The Manor, a full view of the building main elevation is achieved. The garden lends a greater sense of openness, and this quality is maintained on the eastern side as far as the former Methodist Chapel, though part of this is because of the condition and nature of the site behind it.
- 8.29** In many ways this is the most visually disappointing part of the village. Timber panel fencing just beyond Jacksons Cottage and the standing remains of the gable wall of the demolished barn on the opposite side of the road gives this small part of the village a feeling of neglect.
- 8.30** Views into The Green are muted, the back wall of the former chapel being most prominent, and the trees behind and beyond the building helps to lift the area. In fact The Green is not readily appreciated from Low Road as the longer view along the road to the north has greater emphasis. The enclosure of the space, which is apparent from the other entry points, is not particularly evident from the south and the hedgeline on the opposite side of the space tends to lead the eye beyond The Green along the northern leg of Low Road.

Low Road north of The Green

- 8.31** From The Green to Fleet Lane the northern leg of Low Road is a 100 yard long meandering lane containing a diverse range of listed buildings, traditional vernacular styles and a range of contemporary architectural developments, some of which have sought to respect the overall character of the area and some of which display an architectural style completely at odds with it. Overall however the intrusions into the village street made by the latter category has not had the visually disruptive affect that it could have done.



Views along Low Street north of The Green



Spaces between buildings contribute towards the character of the village

8.32 In some areas it also emphasises the importance of open spaces and how they can positively contribute towards the character of an area or the setting of a building. Spaces between buildings can be as important as the buildings themselves in the way they project, emphasise and shape the character and appearance of the settlement.

8.33 Opposite Slacks Farm a number of houses developed by the Council in the late 1960's do not have the disruptive impact that they might have had, mainly because they are set well back from the road in well matured gardens.



Modern development on Low Street Circa 1960

8.34 This is a characteristic of the road as far as Plum Tree Farm, with boundary features; low brick walls, hedges and trees most prominent. Buildings on the west side also tend to be more apparent than the diverse building groups on the opposite side of the road.

8.35 Set behind a wide grass verge the walls and hedges which enclose the street are an important linking feature, particularly as the buildings on the west side of the road are generally set well back. The sheer size of Manor Farm tends to draw the eye but overall the mix of boundary features, spaces in front of the buildings and the impact of various trees define the character. Beyond the single storey block attached to the front of Chestnut Cottage, a large square paddock gives even more depth to the road frontage and presents an unexpected setting to a number of buildings set behind the line of the established street frontage.



Buildings behind the Church give depth to the views



Church Lane

8.36 Whilst this part of the village is quite attractive, the character of the spaces change as the road beyond Manor Farm narrows. The Bungalow immediately to the north of Manor Farm has a quite damaging visual impact which is somewhat lessened by the presence of the boundary wall in front. It also serves to emphasise their overall importance in the context of the village as a whole. The road curves away slightly to the north east but sufficient to project the end of the agricultural block at the end Fleet Farm Cottage and the south gable to Plum Tree Farm barn into prominence. Plum Tree Farm itself is an immense building that contributes little from the south but has greater presence viewed from the north.

8.37 The barn has an important role to play, the long roadside elevation enclosing the space which could have been quite open as the paddock to the south of Chaise House projects into the view. Maple House is a more modern dwelling set opposite the barn but it is only really contributes when viewed from the north end of the road. The group of trees along the north side of the paddock terminate a pleasant view.



Willow Cottage presents a pleasant south facing front



The Cottage, one of the villages listed buildings in need of attention

8.38 The road beyond is a very narrow space, a grass verge beneath a tall roadside wall giving a bit of additional width. The scale of the cottages is significantly smaller than the buildings around the barn but the three main buildings contribute significantly to the character of the area close to the junction with Fleet Lane. The informal feeling is greatly helped by the disposition of the blocks in their own grounds and the presence of mature trees and hedges in abundance. The condition of the only listed cottage on Low Road is a cause for concern

9. General Character Analysis

Materials

9.1 Besthorpe is a typical Trent Valley settlement with predominantly red brick and orange pantile buildings but in places the use of Blue Lias stone can be seen which is also a distinctive feature of this part of our District. Bricks vary in size dependant upon the age of the building with older bricks tending to be narrower as on Chestnut Cottage to larger and generally smoother bricks as on the Parish Church on The Green which also has a distinctive bonding pattern with buff coloured headers. The stone dressings, verge and tower are impressive features but the roof displays both Welsh Slate and Stone slabs which are probably unique in the District.

- 9.2** Smaller, usually two storey vernacular cottages generally conform to the brick and pantile of domestic village architecture but some of the more substantial 3 storey houses make use of both Blue Lias stone panels (Slacks Farm & Manor Cottage) or has a small amount of stone detailing (Chaise House) enhancing the status and appearance of the building. A number of cottages have been totally or partially rendered and painted but this is not the norm for the village.
- 9.3** The modern interventions in the village generally reflect in style and materials the generation to which they belong. The former Council Houses have settled in behind mature hedgelines and respond to the gable dominated shaded roofs of the rest of the village. The 1970's grouping at the south end of the village is generally unnoticed overall and other individual cottages of more recent date have tried to mimic in style and materials the good examples of traditional cottages in the village.
- 9.4** The later group of cottages on the Main Road are typical of many recent developments in the area, using new materials introduced in the past 15 or so years which compliment the older bricks and tiles. The use of natural materials, in this case non interlocking clay pantiles helps to show the use of concrete tiles as a replacement material on some roofs does affect the character of the building and surroundings.

Local architectural styles and features

- 9.5** The majority of buildings in core of the village are detached blocks, varying in style and scale, with the larger ones occupying substantial plots (Chaise House & Fleet Farm). The only semi detached blocks are the former Council Houses and a collection of newer houses fronting Fleet Lane.
- 9.6** Most buildings follow the style of simple gable roofs with plain gable verges. There are significant examples of quite high raised verges like Chestnut Cottage and Manor Cottage, which with their steep roofs could indicate an early timber framed building.
- 9.7** Hipped roofs are few in number with one end of the Manor House having one on a later addition and one on the northwest corner of the converted Methodist Chapel on The Green. The listed Plum Tree Farm is the only full-hipped roof though it is now covered in pantile profiled concrete tiles.
- 9.8** Most of the smaller cottages display pleasantly proportioned windows, the listed Myrtle Cottage and chapel Cottage on The Green probably being outstanding examples of this.
- 9.9** The simple proportions of the Yorkshire sliding sash windows and simple brick on edge arch detail contrasts with the larger windows with a more vertical emphasis on the higher status buildings such as Chaise House and the Manor House at opposite ends of the village. Chaise House in particular has significant architectural detailing befitting such a fine house with rubber brick heads and keystones over glazing bar sashes and panelled doorcase with reeded pilasters.

- 9.10** Whilst most of the smaller cottages in the village maintain a more simplistic character overall, the gable detailing at Corner House bucks this trend and deserves particular mention with the exuberant detailing standing out from the majority of other gables.
- 9.11** Boundary walls are essential to the character of the village, linking frontages and enclosing spaces. There are a variety of finishes on them including iron railings and copings on the Parish Church wall. Walls are predominantly no more than a metre high though the walls surrounding Fleet Farm closest to The Green are slightly higher. The walls on the west side of Low Road beyond Fleet Farm are around the metre in height with a mixture of brick and Lias stone and an unfortunate length of concrete block walling. There is also a Lias stone wall off the northeast corner of Manor Cottage.

Contribution made by trees and open spaces

- 9.12** Trees and open spaces make a major contribution to the character and appearance of the village. Individual trees (to the south of the school) and important groups of trees (all along the west side of the village alongside The Fleet), help to define the villages' rural character. They also provide focal points, enhance already attractive spaces and contribute to the "softening" of the townscape in crucial areas, to the north of Chaise House and around the later development at the southern end of the village.
- 9.13** Open spaces punctuate the townscape and give added interest to an already attractive area. Good trees and extensive hedgelines play their part and enclose spaces like The Green, to the south of the school and around the playing field.
- 9.14** Intermediate though less formal spaces such as those between The Fleet and Low Road and Low Road and Main Street also play their part in contributing to the character of the area. The adopted Local Plan acknowledged the importance of these areas and this Appraisal confirms that they are valuable not only in their own right but also in the way they contribute to the character of the village street, emphasising that gaps in village street can be as important as the buildings and other structures.

Extent of loss, intrusion and damage

- 9.15** Generally the historic building stock is varied and quite well preserved. However, there has been some erosion of traditional features, especially in non-listed buildings, by the replacement of original or traditional details and finishes with inappropriate materials, for example the use of concrete roof tiles instead of natural clay pantiles and replacement UPVC windows instead of timber ones. Even where traditional materials have been used for replacements it is still very important to be accurate with the detailing and there are several examples of poorly detailed replacement timber doors and windows, but in terms of Besthorpes consideration as a suitable candidate for conservation area status the extent of any loss to the fabric of the village.

- 9.16** The recent loss of the small brick barn just to the north of the playing field footpath is unfortunate, and a development which incorporated the structure could have had a positive influence on the character of this entrance to The Green. The existing chalet style of bungalow on the site has definite negative affect on the generally attractive part of the village. On the opposite side of Low Road the untidy nature of the wooden fencing behind The Manor presents an opportunity to make a positive improvement to the appearance of the lane.
- 9.17** Whilst Besthorpe has had a number of new dwellings built in the past 30 years or so none of them have had an adverse affect on the character of the village, and even the most prominent house or bungalow has had no more than a neutral affect. The developments at the north end of the village have probably had a more intrusive affect, mainly because they are set on flat land at the extreme edge of the village.
- 9.18** The village has a number of listed building nearly all of which are in good order. There is concern though about the small listed cottage at the north end of Low Road noted on the Statutory List as “The Cottage”
- 9.19** The building has not been occupied for a number of years and its general air of dilapidation is a cause for concern. Myrtle Cottage as it is known locally, is set in substantial grounds which is unusual in the village for such a small building and is an 18th century brick and pantile building with slightly raised gables, Yorkshire sliding sash windows and overall a wealth of character. Its setting would obviously be improved if the grounds were attended to and the Low Road frontage tidied up.

Community involvement

- 9.20** Conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities as part of their statutory responsibilities, following consultation with local communities. An Appraisal is written to make an assessment of the special interest, character and appearance of the conservation area. There is a statutory consultation period of not less than four weeks, during which time anyone can submit representation on the contents of the Appraisal. The Council advertises the existence of any draft Appraisal in the local press and copies are available in local libraries, on the District Council web site and for reference at Kelham Hall. All comments received within the consultation period will be considered and the Appraisal amended if it is considered appropriate.
- 9.21** In the case of Besthorpe the District Council also met at an early stage with the Parish Meeting, attended an open meeting in the village and “walked” the village with representatives of the Meeting and agreed the line of the boundary of a Conservation Area.

Suggested conservation area boundary

- 9.22** It is clear from the foregoing consideration of the character and appearance of the village that a considerable case can be made for the village to gain conservation area status. The District Council is therefore proposing that a boundary be drawn quite generously around the western side of the settlement, which acknowledges the importance to the village of the surrounding agricultural landscape

- 9.23** The boundary is however quite tightly drawn along the eastern side of Gainsborough Road between Fleet Lane and Waddington Lane, but includes Ivy and Hawthorne Cottages. The boundary follows the north side of Fleet Lane and includes Corner House before crossing to the western side of The Fleet.
- 9.24** Turning south the boundary follows the public footpath that meets Meering Lane before turning south along the west side of the Lane to Trent Lane. The boundary skirts the south side of Trent Lane as far as Wayments Keep before meeting the boundary on the east side of Gainsborough Road.

Appendix A Relevant Local Plan Policies

Policy C1 (Development in Conservation Areas) states:

“Planning permission will not be granted for development which would harm the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Development should be designed to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Conservation Areas - in terms of scale, form and massing, and the use of traditional materials.”

Policy C2 (Outline Planning Applications in Conservation Areas) states:

“Outline planning permission will not normally be granted for development within Conservation Areas.”

Policy C3 (Demolition in Conservation Areas) states:

“Where a proposal for development would involve the demolition of an un-Listed building in a Conservation Area, the District Council will have regard to the architectural and historic contribution of the existing building in considering whether the development proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of a building in a Conservation Area will not be granted if the building makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area and could be put to effective use. If a building makes no positive contribution, or is not reasonably capable of effective use, Conservation Area Consent will be granted only if there are acceptable detailed proposals for the redevelopment of the site, or demolition would itself enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.”

Policy C4 (Natural and other Features of Interest in Conservation Areas) states:

“The District Council will seek the retention of open spaces, trees, hedges, walls, fences and other features upon which the character and appearance of a Conservation Area depends. Planning permission will not be granted for development which involves the loss of such features - where they are considered to be important to the character or appearance of the area.”

Policy C5 (Environmental Improvement Schemes) states:

“The District Council will promote and implement environmental improvement schemes in Conservation Areas, such as re-paving, planting or provision of high quality street furniture. Private owners or tenants of land will be encouraged to implement appropriate schemes of hard and soft landscaping using traditional materials.”

“Planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent will not normally be granted for development which involves the demolition or partial demolition of Listed Buildings.”

“Planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent will not be granted for development which involves internal or external alterations, or extensions to Listed Buildings, or changes of use to such buildings - which would adversely affect their architectural or historic interest.”

Policy C11 (Setting of Listed Buildings) states:

“Planning permission will not be granted for development which adversely affects the setting of Listed Buildings or involves the loss of features which contribute to the setting of such buildings. Planning permission will also not be granted for development within the curtilage of, or adjoining, a Listed Building, where this would threaten the viability of the historic building.”

Policy C12 (Under-utilisation of Historic Buildings) states:

“Planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent will not be granted for development which would result in the under-utilisation of the upper floors of Listed Buildings, and buildings of character, within Conservation Areas - and the under-utilisation of redundant, large volume buildings of character elsewhere.”

Policy C13 (Relaxation of Planning Policy) states:

“In exceptional circumstances, the District Council will accept a relaxation of the relevant planning policies, including car parking standards, to help ensure that significant buildings of character, considered to be at risk, are fully and properly maintained.”

Policy C14 (Retention of Buildings of Character) states:

“The District Council, when granting planning permission for major development proposals, will seek to secure the retention and restoration of significant buildings of character - through the use of legal agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.”

Policy C15 (Advertisements in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings) states:

“Where advertisement consent is necessary, this will not be granted in Conservation Areas or on Listed Buildings for:

- 1. Internal or external illumination of fascia signs or internal illumination of projecting box signs;*
- 2. Signs which use excessively bright or intrusive colour schemes or highly reflective synthetic materials;*
- 3. Excessively large or obtrusive signs; and*
- 4. High level signs, other than hanging signs, above normal fascia level, including blinds and canopies.”*

Policy C16 (Existing Shopfronts of Architectural Value) states:

“Planning permission will not be granted for development which results in the loss or obliteration of original architectural features of quality in existing shopfronts. Wherever possible, existing shopfronts of high architectural value in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings shall be retained and restored complete with all traditional features.”

Policy C17 (New Shopfronts in Conservation Areas) states:

“Planning permission will only be granted for new shopfronts in Conservation Areas, if they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and respect the character, scale, proportion and detailing of the building into which they are to be inserted.”

Policy C18 (Use of Traditional Materials in Shopfronts) states:

“Planning permission will only be granted for new shopfronts in Conservation Areas, if they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area and respect the character, scale, proportion and detailing of the building into which they are to be inserted.”

Policy C19 (Access to Upper Floors) states:

“Planning permission will not be granted for new shopfronts which result in the loss of independent access to upper floors.”

Policy C22 (Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites of Major Local Importance) states:

“Planning permission will not be granted for development which would destroy or detrimentally affect Scheduled Ancient Monuments and their setting. In addition, planning permission will not normally be granted for development which would adversely affect archaeological sites of major local importance.”

Policy C24 (Archaeological Evaluation Elsewhere) states:

“In assessing planning applications elsewhere within the District, the District Council will take account of the effect of development upon sites of known archaeological interest. Where such proposals are likely to disturb/destroy important sites, the District Council will normally request an archaeological evaluation prior to determining the application.”

Policy C25 (Archaeological Record) states:

“Where damage to suspected archaeological deposits by development is felt justifiable in light of the benefits brought about by a particular proposal, planning permission will be granted only where satisfactory provision for an archaeological record has been made, involving (where appropriate) funding, time and access for excavation and/or salvage, recording, publication, treatment and custody of finds. This will be secured by means of a voluntary agreement or through the imposition of a negative planning condition.”

Policy NE8 (Mature Landscape Areas) states:

“Development which would have an adverse effect on the visual or nature conservation importance of a Mature Landscape Area will be permitted only where it can be shown that there are reasons for the proposal that clearly outweigh the need to safeguard the area’s intrinsic value. Where development is permitted, proposals should minimise the harm to the area. The District Council will make use of planning conditions or negotiate planning obligations in order to secure appropriate conservation measures.”

Policy FS7 (Main Open Areas) states:

“Planning permission will not be granted for built development in the Main Open Areas, defined on the Proposals Map.”

APPENDIX B

Listed Buildings in the Village

There are 11 entries for listed buildings and structures in the statutory list in Besthorpe. The Mill at Sand Lane stands outside the conservation area boundary.

The Green

- Chapel Cottage, an early 19th Century cottage
- Methodist Church & railings, a former Methodist Church now converted to residential use and dated 1832
- The Parish Church & Boundary wall, dated 1844

High Street

- Chaise House & Boundary wall, an 18th Century house, brick with stone dressings
- Stable Block at Chaise House, an 18th Century brick and pantiled building in the grounds of the main house

Low Road

- The Cottage (also known as Myrtle Cottage), a small 18th Century cottage with a small later lean-to extension
- Plum Tree Farm, a former farm dated c1800 with a concrete tiled hipped roof
- Chestnut Cottage, a late 17th Century former farmhouse with steep pitched pantiled roof
- Stable at Chestnut Cottage (now belongs to Fleet Farm House) a late 17th Century building incorporating a first floor pigeoncote
- Slacks Farm, a house with 16th & 18th Century origins, built in blue lias rubble and brick with a steep pitched pantiled roof

Sand Lane

- Windmill at Mill Farm, dated to 1746 & 1831, re-roofed late 20th Century

APPENDIX C

Management Strategy

As well as defining the character of the conservation area and what makes it special, it is important to develop proposals for the future management of the conservation area. The Management Strategy will be updated and reviewed on an approximately 5-year basis.

There are several mechanisms through which the Council can manage the future of the conservation area:

1. Application of policy
2. Design guides
3. Guidance leaflets
4. Design briefs and Informal Planning Statements
5. Application of an Article 4 Direction
6. Monitoring change
7. Monitoring the condition of the historic buildings and developing a strategy for repair
8. Enforcement proceedings
9. Proposed enhancement schemes
10. Proposals for economic development and regeneration (including grants)

Conservation Area Character Appraisals and the application of policy guidance

There are several Local Plan policies already in place that deal with the issue of historic buildings and conservation areas specifically - these are given in Appendix A. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal will therefore be a material consideration in any planning decision. It is anticipated that the Conservation Area Character Appraisal will help inform and therefore strengthen decisions made in line with these policies, which will be one of the most direct and effective means of managing the conservation area long term.

Policy C1 of the Local Plan, for example, states that planning permission for development will not be granted that would harm the character and appearance of the conservation area. However, it follows that without a detailed appraisal of the character and appearance of a conservation area that decisions made in line with policy C1 are more likely to be ill-informed and made on an ad hoc basis. The Appraisal, therefore, can help guide development by defining the plan form of the area, the typical scale, form, massing and materials of buildings, traditional detailing, important views, significant trees etc – all elements that must be considered when looking at any development proposal.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal can also be used to inform other decisions made in line with Local Plan conservation policies, for example with regard to demolition within conservation areas and decisions that effect natural features. By defining and identifying significant buildings and areas of open space, trees etc the Conservation Area Character Appraisal provides a good base line of information for informed and justifiable decisions.

It is anticipated that the information provided in the Conservation Area appraisal advises and informs not only those making the planning decision but also anyone considering development within a conservation area.

Design Guides

The District Council currently has Supplementary Planning Documents on 'Extensions to Dwellings' and 'Conversion of Traditional Rural Buildings'. Already adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance is 'Shopfronts and Advertisements - Design and Policy

All these design guides may be relevant to anyone thinking of undertaking development within conservation areas. It is hoped that these documents can help guide development and help make informed planning decisions and in this way they contribute directly to the positive management of conservation areas.

If you would like a copy of any of these design guides please contact the Conservation Officer.

Guidance Leaflets

The District Council produces several leaflets for the public that are relevant with regards to conservation areas:

- How to Repair Historic Buildings (2001)
- Tree Surgeons & Arboriculturists/Woodland & Forestry Contractors/Advisory Services (2004)
- Living in a Conservation Area
- Listed Buildings – A Guide for Owners and Occupiers

It is hoped these leaflets will inform the public about relevant planning constraints (and so avoid unauthorised works) and advise on what kind of development would be appropriate within conservation areas. Through the advice on repairs to historic buildings is hoped that carrying out repairs to historic buildings will be encouraged and that ill-advised, and often damaging, repairs can be avoided.

If you would like a copy of any of these leaflets please contact the Conservation Officer.

Design Briefs

It is intended that the Conservation Area Character Appraisal will, where appropriate, identify any sites that would benefit from a design brief. This might be a gap site, buildings under pressure for demolition and re-development, or perhaps areas that have a neutral impact on the conservation area where there is pressure for redevelopment. The definition and characterisation of the conservation area can be expanded to form a detailed design brief to help promote an appropriate form of development on the site.

There would appear to be no sites in the proposed conservation area that would benefit from a Design Brief

Application of an Article 4 Direction

Common to most conservation areas is the damaging cumulative effect of small but significant alterations to the architectural features of historic, but non-listed, properties. The prime example is the exchange of traditional timber windows for UPVC replacements. Alterations like this can be very harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is possible to bring such alterations under planning control by the implementation of an Article 4 Direction, which would require an application for planning permission for alterations which otherwise fall outside normal planning control, like altering windows and doors, cladding, changing roof covering etc.

An Article 4 Direction can have a big impact on helping preserve the character and appearance of a conservation area through the additional protection it provides for traditional architectural features.

The implementation of an Article 4 Direction requires a detailed survey of the area, a strong justification for proposing the Direction and local support. There are, therefore, significant resource implications in the implementation of an Article 4 Direction and while often desirable it is not often practicable.

If Besthorpe is designated a conservation area it is considered that at this stage that as there has already been some significant changes to a number of unlisted buildings the introduction of an Article 4 Direction would not be a priority in any future work programme.

Monitoring Change

Monitoring change, both positive and negative, is very important in the long-term management of a conservation area. It can help highlight problems that can be best tackled with an Article 4 Direction (see above) or show how effective Policies have been, for example. By monitoring change it can assist in identifying where more resources are required and in modifying priorities.

A conservation area is thoroughly surveyed and described when an appraisal is carried out. Local Authorities are then supposed to review conservation areas from time to time and update appraisals. The District Council does not currently have a timetable for reviewing existing conservation area appraisals, as the priority is to

carry out appraisals in conservation areas currently lacking them. In time, however, resources will become available to review existing appraisals, allowing detailed monitoring of change.

Through the Buildings at Risk Survey (see below) a survey is undertaken approximately every 5 to 10 years of every Listed building, and some unlisted buildings, within the County. This is designed to monitor the condition of the buildings (see below) but may also record any alteration to traditional features, which can be useful in seeking an Article 4 Direction (see above). The survey is usually accompanied by a photographic record, which when compared with earlier photographs provides a very useful way of monitoring change in Listed, and some unlisted, buildings in conservation areas.

Monitoring the condition of the historic buildings and developing a strategy for repair

A Countywide survey is carried out approximately every 5 to 10 years of the condition of every listed, and some unlisted, buildings. This identifies buildings that have fallen into disuse, dereliction or disrepair, commonly referred to as 'Buildings at Risk'. While this survey is largely limited to Listed buildings, this does provide a very good means of monitoring the condition of a significant proportion of the historic buildings within conservation areas.

A 'Buildings at Risk Register' for the whole County has been produced, giving the result of survey work completed in 2004. This can be compared to previous survey results to monitor change and can be used to identify problem areas or problem building types, for example, and to therefore help target resources. These resources may be in the form of grant aid or can also be the serving of a notice by the Local Authority on the owner, to bring about works to a building to either repair it or make it wind and water tight.

There are no buildings at risk within the proposed conservation area

Enforcement Proceedings

Unauthorised works and breaches of planning control can cumulatively harm the quality of both the built environment and surrounding spaces within a conservation area.

An obvious example of this sort of damage is unauthorised works to Listed buildings. A Listed building is a building of special architectural or historic interest and it has Listed status to protect this interest. Listed Building Consent is required for any works of alteration to a Listed building and it is a criminal offence to carry out unauthorised works to Listed buildings. It can be very damaging when misguided and authorised alterations are carried out to a listed building, like the removal of traditional timber windows and doors and their replacement with UPVC or poor modern imitations, for example. If unauthorised works to Listed buildings are not pursued it cumulatively damages the building stock of conservation areas.

It is not only alterations to Listed building that can damage the character and appearance of conservation areas - the unauthorised demolition of buildings, or unauthorised works to unlisted buildings, through for example the use of non-approved modern materials, can all erode the special character of a conservation area.

It is, therefore, important that the District Council follows up breaches of planning law within conservation areas, as this can help preserve the quality of the environment.

The survey process that goes into producing a Conservation Area Character Appraisal may highlight breaches in planning law and anyone can confidentially report a suspected breach. The District Council regularly follows up reports of unauthorised work and may take enforcement action. Breaches of Listed building law and other issues in conservation areas are regularly reviewed across the District and prioritised so action is taken.

There are currently no known breaches of planning control at this time that directly affect the character and appearance of the proposed conservation area

Proposed enhancement schemes

Policy C5 of the Local Plan states that the District Council will promote and implement environmental improvement schemes in conservation areas. The benefit of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal is that it can firstly highlight where such schemes would be beneficial and secondly guide the nature of the works to ensure they are appropriate.

There are no planned enhancement schemes for Besthorpe at the moment. If the opportunity arises then reference will be made to the Appraisal in developing priorities and an appropriate approach.

Proposals for economic development and regeneration (grants)

The District Council has managed various conservation grant schemes in the recent past and these often target buildings within conservation areas. The Appraisal can be used to help identify a list of properties that would benefit from repair, reinstatement of traditional features, or improvements required to bring the building back into use, for example.

At the moment there is one conservation grant scheme running in the District that can be used to help regenerate conservation areas. The grant can be used towards the cost of repairs and improving the appearance of buildings by reinstating traditional features where these have been lost. A variety of buildings are eligible, they do not have to be listed, but they do need to be historic buildings of architectural or historic merit (and for residential properties these must be within a conservation area). For more information contact the Conservation Officer.