

# ~~Interim~~ Planning Guidance

Hospital Street  
Conservation Area  
Statement of Designation  
& Reasoned Justification

## **INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE**

As part of the Local Plan process, supplementary planning guidance was prepared to supplement policies and proposals in the Local Plan. The Borough Council consulted the public on the guidance at the draft deposit and revised draft deposit stages of the Local Plan preparation process. Some of the comments on the Draft Deposit Guidance were taken into account in formulating the Revised Draft Guidance.

It was not appropriate for the Borough Council to adopt the guidance as supplementary planning guidance because this can only supplement an adopted local plan and the Tamworth Local Plan 2001-2011 will not be adopted until 2006. Furthermore, under the new development plan system, supplementary planning guidance has been replaced with supplementary planning documents.

This guidance was approved as interim planning guidance by the Borough Council's Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2005. It contains information about the special character of the Hospital Street Conservation Area, a justification for its designation and guidelines for development. Appropriate guidance will be replaced with supplementary planning documents in due course. This is in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme that came into effect in March 2005.

August 2005

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is important to preserve or enhance. The Borough Council has a duty to decide which areas are special and designate them as Conservation Areas. It is not only individual buildings that are important but the way they are grouped together and the spaces between them that gives an area its special character.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides the legislative backing for such designations stating that:

*'Every Local Planning Authority should from time to time determine which parts of their area are of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and shall designate those areas as Conservation Areas.'*

It also imposes a duty on Local Authorities to review their areas from time to time.

The Hospital Street Conservation Area was originally designated in October 1990. A comprehensive review of both the reasoned justification for the conservation area and the boundary was therefore carried out taking into account recent changes which have occurred and also the reasons for the development of the area.

In the review of Hospital Street Conservation Area, it was considered that the designated boundary as determined in 1990 remained appropriate and no changes to the boundary were proposed. The individual characteristics of the area have however been identified and as such a comprehensive statement of designation has been produced.

This reviewed conservation area boundary and associated statement of designation were presented to and approved by the Borough Council's Programme and Monitoring B Committee on 24 November 1998.

## 2. THE NEED FOR CONSERVATION

The Hospital Street area of Tamworth retains much of its original character from its period of major development, at the turn of the century.

The aims of conservation are not confined to keeping areas and buildings pleasant to look at, or as a record of some aspect of history. They must also involve the continuing life and function of an area and be receptive to change. Much of the intrinsic quality of the area is the product of changing social and economic attitudes spanning a considerable period of time. To interrupt this process by curtailing new development or insisting on rigid limitations will only serve to call into question the future validity of such areas

for residential and commercial interests alike.

In designating the Hospital Street Conservation Area the Borough Council has therefore recognised the demands of progress and preservation. Conservation to be effective requires the commitment of a wide range of interests in the community. In this respect the works of both the Tamworth Civic Society and the Conservation Area Advisory Committee are welcomed by the Borough Council.

### **3. CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES**

The conservation area of Hospital Street is located to the north of Aldergate and extends from Upper Gungate in the east to the Moorgate Junior School in the west. It includes Hospital Street, Cherry Street, Barbara Street and part of Orchard Street.

### **4. REASONED JUSTIFICATION**

The Hospital Street Conservation Area, as the name suggests is based around Hospital Street and roads around it.

The area remained largely undeveloped until the turn of the century and it was the lying out of the streets and houses around this time which gave the area the character it has today.

The boundary has been designated to preserve this character and include the principal buildings that provide an

important historical record of the development of the area.

Designation status emphasises the importance of this area and its relationship with the town centre as a whole. It illustrates the acceptance its individual character, and is intended to protect the special architectural and historic character of the buildings and their settings. It also goes some way to promoting the area as a separate entity from the surrounding residential development.

The designation gives a more positive context to the restoration of older properties of character, and owners and occupiers should be more confident that retention, repair and restoration of the original buildings and their appearance is worthwhile.

### **5. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The Hospital Street area forms part of an area known as the Leys, and lies just outside the town centre. It remained undeveloped until comparatively recently and at the end of the last century, when Moorgate Junior School was built, the area was called Hilly Field, because of the presence of a grassy bank which survived for just over a thousand years, since the time of Ethelfleda, Lady of the Mercians. She had surrounded the town with a system of fortified banks and tall wooden fences or palisades in the year 913 to create the Saxon 'burh'. Although this feature has been known locally as 'Offa's Dyke' and although it followed the line of

an earlier earthwork it had nothing directly to do with Offa, King of the Mercians who reigned from 757 to 796.

This grassy bank survived until houses were built and the ancient lane of 'Walfurlong' was redeveloped as Orchard Street. Up to this time the area was mainly orchards, the exception being Leys House, Field House (since demolished to make way for playing fields) and the Cottage Hospital.

It was the laying out of the streets and houses around 1900 that gave the area the character it has today. This original street pattern remains today although the area is now physically separated from the land to the north by the railway line.

## **6. EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE AREA**

The Conservation Area of Hospital Street is focused on the turn of the century terraced housing together with a number of principal buildings. Today most of the terraced houses retain original features including tall chimneys, clay roof tiles and bay windows with sliding sash windows, typical of the late Victorian period.

The overall character can be subdivided into three main areas:

- the close knit complex of streets with traditional terraced houses,
- the open playing fields to the rear of Moorgate Junior School which sustains to an extent the visual qualities of the orchards which used to exist,

- Moorgate Junior School itself which is of important local architectural interest.

More recently the major redevelopment of the Tamworth General Hospital site to create sheltered accommodation has resulted in modern development designed in sympathy with the surrounding buildings.

## **7. EXISTING LAND USE AND CHARACTER**

There is only one main land use within the area, residential. The area was developed at the turn of the century as a residential area adjacent to the town centre and has remained so ever since. Terraced houses line the streets with many blocks of terraces named and dated individually. Small gardens to the front and larger rear gardens accessed through shared alleys are also a common feature.

The overall character is one of domestic scale and is typical of much Victorian residential development.

## **8. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

The need to appreciate and conserve the existing built environment does not preclude new development. Potential exists for both new development and redevelopment, and the intention here is to provide guidance that will accommodate flexibility in design while maintaining the essential character of the conservation area.

### **1. New development**

It is not practical here to give design guidance relating to every situation which might arise. However broad principle can be established to ensure that new development seeks to compliment the domestic scale prominent throughout the area in terms of scale, form, proportion, massing and elevational treatment.

### **2. Refurbishment & Conversion**

Refurbishment and conversion of existing properties is becoming increasingly important as properties age and essential repairs become necessary. The Borough Council will encourage the retention of the historical characteristics important within the conservation area and there is a presumption against the removal of boundary walls that add much to the overall feeling of enclosure. Emphasis should therefore be placed on the features and restoration of individual architectural features that give each building its individual character.

### **3. New Materials**

The use of new materials and elevational treatments can have an interesting effect on building elevations and often determine whether alterations will be acceptable or not.

The colour, pattern and texture of materials in many cases make the difference between success and moulded modern materials are rarely successful and should be avoided. Materials are rarely successful with traditional materials

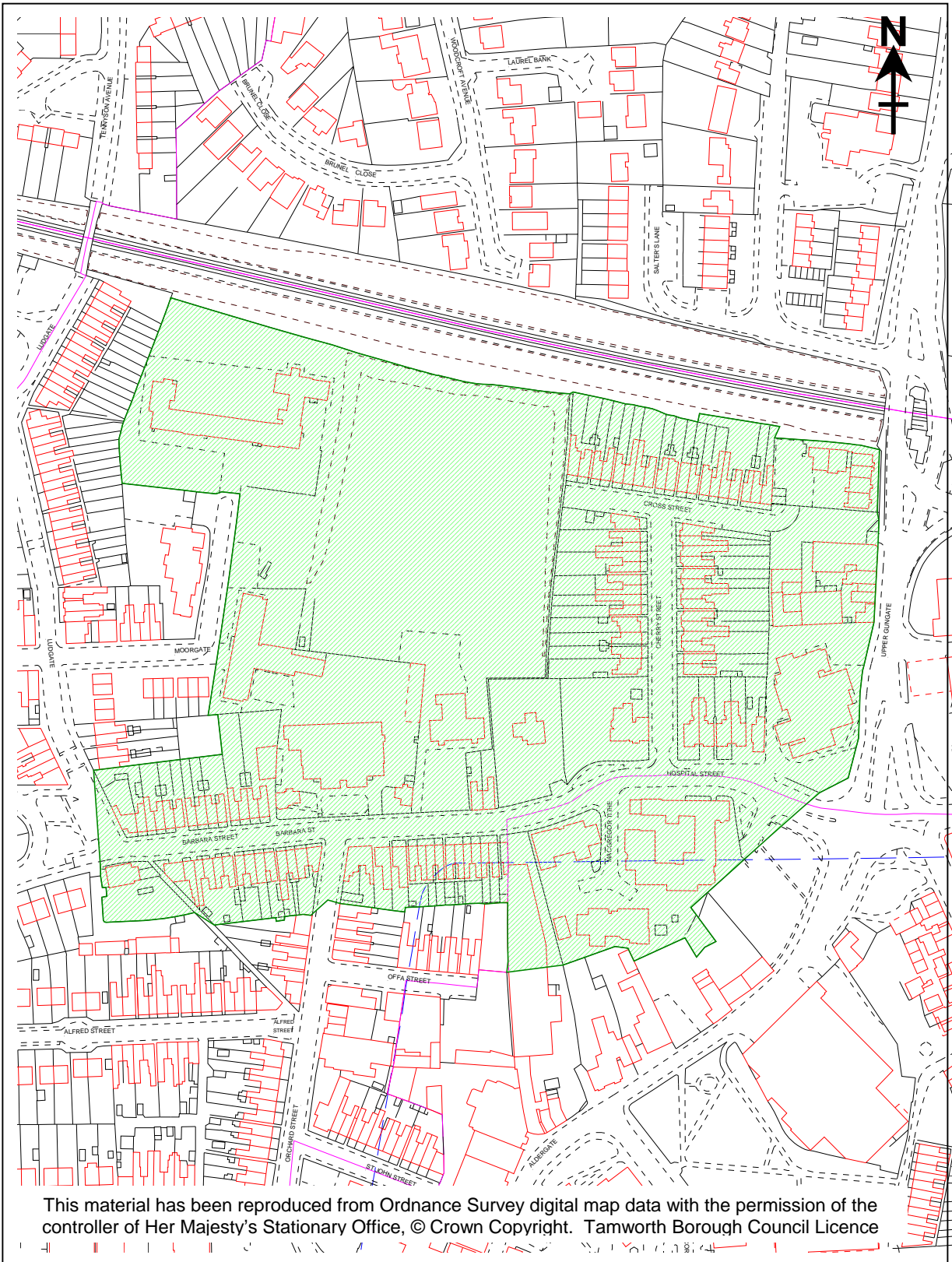
used in older buildings should also be avoided.


This principle should also be employed when looking at roadway and footway surfacing. Although tarmac seems the only option for the road surface, the retention of original materials on footpaths should be encouraged whenever possible. Where original materials have been removed in the past, new works or repairs should seek to replace original materials wherever possible.

### **4. Tree Protection**

The retention of existing mature trees throughout the Conservation Area should be considered as primarily important when looking at any proposed works. Existing trees add much to the mature character of the area and any application to remove them should be discouraged as a matter of priority.

# Hospital Street Conservation Area



 Boundary of Hospital Street Conservation Area