



Lichfield City Conservation Area Appraisal

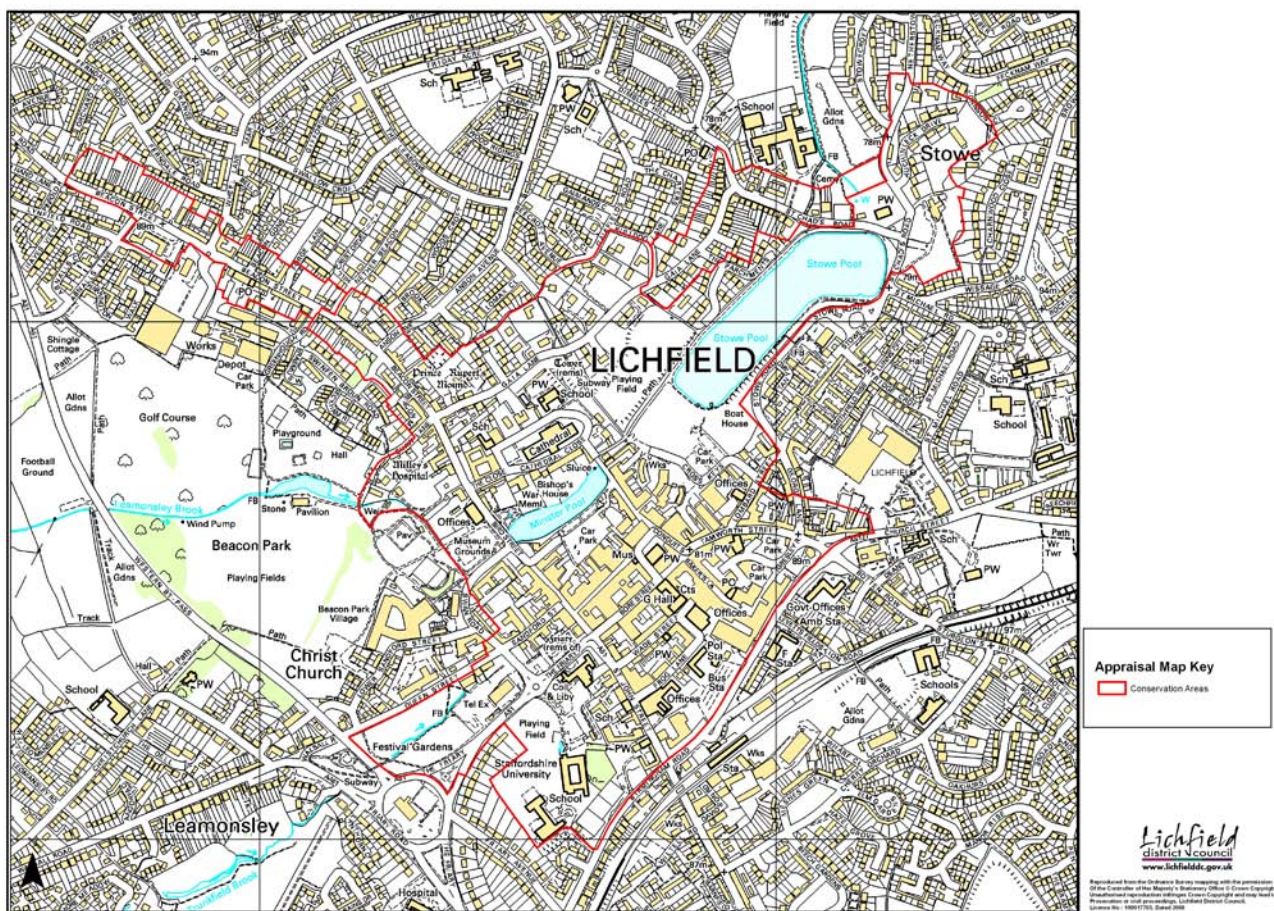
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1 Introduction

1.1 The Lichfield City Centre Conservation Area was first designated on 3rd March 1970 to cover the centre of the historic city. It was extended on 6th October 1999 to include further areas of Gaia Lane and St Chad's Road. In June 1998 the Lichfield Gateway Conservation Area was designated covering the area around Beacon Street. For the purposes of this appraisal these two conservation areas will be integrated and will be known as the Lichfield City Conservation Area. The conservation area covers a total of 88.2 hectares and includes over 200 listed buildings.



Picture 1.1 Lichfield City Conservation Area Boundary

1.2 Conservation areas are defined within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. When a conservation area is designated, the Local Authority has a duty to “draw up and publish proposals” for its preservation and enhancement. This document fulfils that duty.



1.3 The purpose of this conservation area appraisal is to provide a sound basis for determining planning applications and for developing proposals and initiatives for the future management of the area. The appraisal should inform, through a consultation process, the production of a management plan for the area and help to inform the future of the conservation area. In addition, the appraisal will form part of the evidence base which the appraisal will be used to help develop locally distinctive policies within the Local Development Framework and to update Lichfield District Council's historic resource.

1.4 In accordance with the English Heritage document "Guidance on conservation area appraisals", it is important to note that no appraisal can ever be completely comprehensive. If a building, feature, space or view is not mentioned this should not be taken to imply that it is of no interest.

1.5 Additional, more detailed historic and archaeological information on the area can be obtained from the [Historic Environment Record \(HER\)](#) held at Staffordshire County Council.

1.6 Lichfield has a unique character which is a product of its location and history. The first part of this document therefore summarises the issues which have influenced Lichfield's form and considers the key characteristics which define the city we see today. Within the city boundary there are several distinct 'character areas'. These are identified in the second part of the document and their special characteristics defined.

2 Executive Summary

2.1 Lichfield is a key regional city with a population of around 27,900 standing at the heart of Staffordshire. Lichfield is one of the smallest of England's cathedral cities.

2.2 The Lichfield we see today is the product of over 800 years of development. While Lichfield was an ecclesiastical centre by the 7th century, the physical origins of the city date from the 12th century when many of the streets were laid out. The Conservation Area is characterised by densely packed two and three storey buildings in the central shopping streets, many still on the 12th century burgage plots; staggered blocks of buildings along Beacon Street and St John Street and random, lower density development in the Gaia Lane, Stowe and Friary areas.

2.3 The Cathedral unquestionably dominates the northern half of the city and St Mary's Church, St Chad's Church in Stowe and the Friary Clock Tower are other prominent landmarks. In terms of the natural environment notable features include the heavy tree cover, particularly towards the west, north and east, and Stowe Pool and Minster Pool and their associated parks and gardens.

2.4 Lichfield is sited upon Keuper Sandstone and this geological foundation has provided both fertile soil and an important building material. The topography of the city is predominantly flat with gentle variations in height.

2.5 Lichfield's wealth grew in line with its importance as an ecclesiastical centre. The original settlement prospered as a place where pilgrims gathered to worship at the shrine of St Chad and this practise continued until the reformation when the shrine was destroyed.

2.6 In terms of physical evidence for the history of Lichfield much of the existing layout of the city dates from the 12th century when it was laid out on a grid pattern. Built evidence from the medieval period is relatively sparse, with a few notable exceptions, but from around 1500 more and more buildings survive. Following the ravages of civil war and plague in the mid-17th century, the city was restored and reconstructed and by the beginning of the eighteenth century was experiencing a golden age. It is from this period that many of the buildings we see today date, some masking earlier buildings and some as fine examples of Georgian architecture. In the 20th century, redevelopment and demolition took its toll on the city and residential developments were built to form the city that we see today.

2.7 Throughout its history much of the wealth of the city has been generated by its many visitors, and relatively little by its industry. There was a cloth and leather industry in the medieval period when much of the area surrounding Lichfield was still open pasture. The Civil War in the 17th century and the loss of a third of the population to the plague saw a decline in the prosperity of Lichfield but, following the Restoration, the city became a desirable place to live and, by the 18th century, Lichfield had become a busy coaching centre. The invention of the railways saw a decline in coach travel and with it came a decline in Lichfield's prosperity. The Victorian and



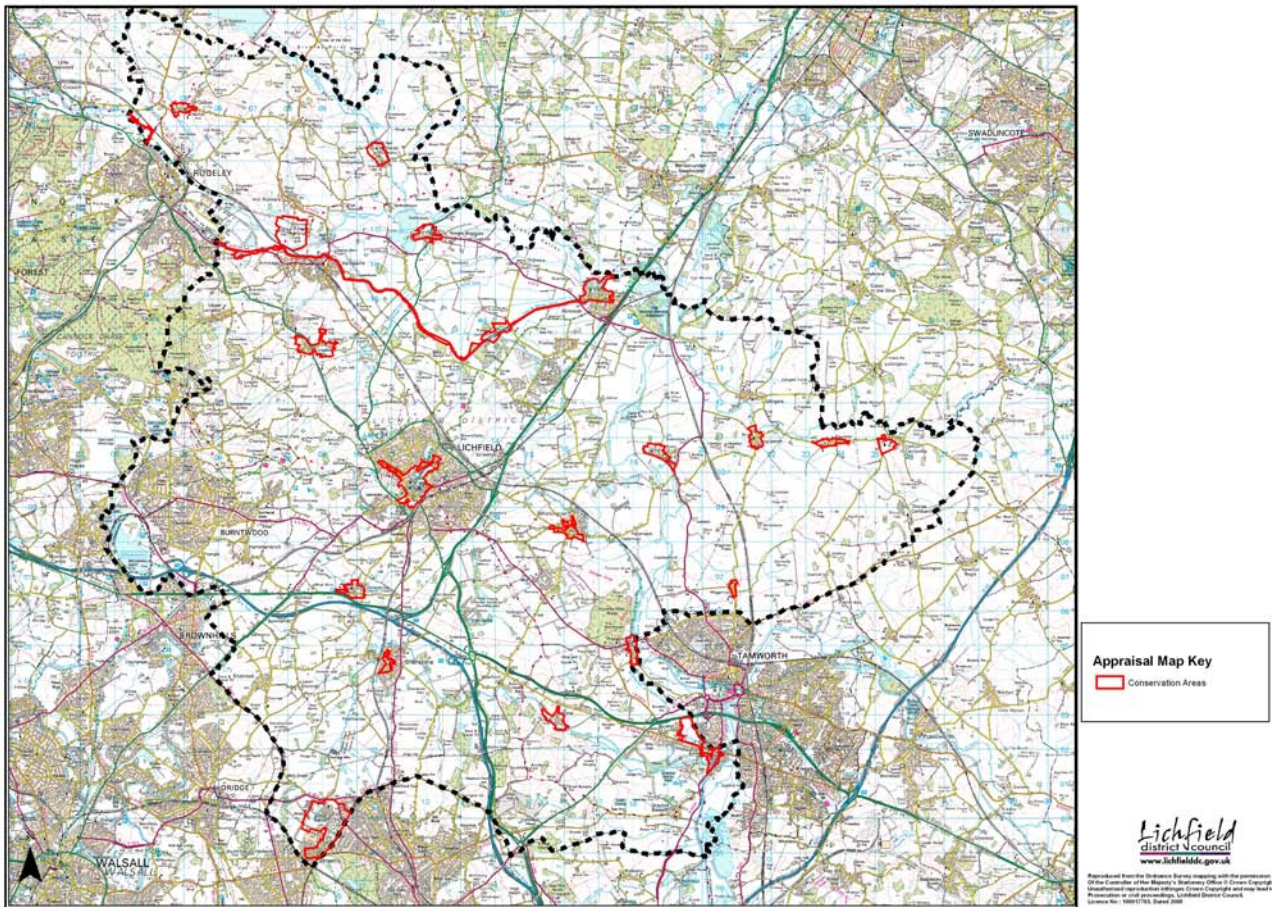
Edwardian periods had a relatively limited impact on Lichfield due to its lack of industry. However, in the second half of the 20th century, the population of the city rose rapidly from 10,619 in 1951 to 22,660 in 1971 due to a massive increase in house building.

2.8 Today Lichfield is an attractive city to live and work in. There continues to be investment in improving the city and encouraging redevelopment where it is appropriate and it is hoped that this appraisal will help to guide this investment towards preserving and enhancing the historic core of the city.

2.9 Lichfield clearly has a strong identity and 'sense of place'. However, its character varies within the city. The Lichfield City Conservation Area covers the historic core of the city including the full extent of the medieval city and parts of the more recent residential areas that have grown up along the principle routes into the city. The conservation area can therefore be divided into a series of 'character areas' which are identifiable because of their distinctive townscape, greater concentrations of a particular building type or material, or presence of open spaces or more modern buildings. These areas are defined, and their key characteristics are described in the second section of the appraisal.

3 Location & Context

3.1 Lichfield is situated in the county of Staffordshire and is located 16 miles from the county capital of Stafford. Lichfield is a small city and civil parish, one of only six single parishes with city status in England.



Picture 3.1 Map of the District showing the distribution of conservation areas

3.2 The population of the city of Lichfield at the last census in 2001, was approximately 27,900 with the population of the District as a whole standing at around 92,232. The earliest estimate for the city's population is from 1327 when it is estimated that about 108 people lived in Lichfield. The population then increased to around 1,642 by the 15th century. Plagues and civil war affected the population of the city but, by the end of the 17th century, it had once more become a desirable place to live. In 1685 the population is estimated at around 3,040 people and from this point onwards the population grew rapidly to 4,840 in 1801, 7,900 in 1901, 10,200 in 1951, 14,090 in 1961 and 22,660 in 1971.



3.3 Lichfield has always relied on its road network for its communications bringing pilgrims and other visitors as well as traders and their wares into the city. The two main roads the A5 and A38 pass close to the City and both have their origins in the Roman period. In 1729 Lichfield became the centre of the turnpike network which made travel easier and more comfortable.

3.4 In the mid 18th century there were a number of unsuccessful proposals to create a canal linking Lichfield to the Trent and Mersey canal. However, by the 1770's there was a wharf at Kings Bromley which served the city. The Wyrley and Essington canal opened in 1797 joining the Birmingham Canal to the Coventry Canal and this ran to the south of the city. The Lichfield stretch of the canal was closed in 1954. In 1847 the Trent Valley Railway arrived in Streethay and in 1849 the South Staffordshire Railway arrived in Lichfield and the Lichfield City station was built. The railway and canal network passed outside the historic core and so had a relatively limited impact on the fabric of the city.

4 Topography & Landscape

4.1 Lichfield is sited upon Keuper sandstone, between the high ground of Cannock Chase to the west and the valleys of the Trent and Tame to the east. Lichfield's city centre is formed on rocks from the Triassic period, mostly Keuper red marls, which have provided the basis for a fertile soil. The sandstones of the region have also provided an important building material.

4.2 The ground within the city slopes down from 382m above sea-level in the north-west to 282m on the sandstone shelf where the cathedral stands. The market place lies at 265m while the south and east of the city centre stand on a ridge which reaches 341m at St. Michael's Church on a spur at Greenhill. To the south-east the levels drop to 226m where the Tamworth Road crosses the city boundary into Freeford. There is another ridge in the south-west of the city where the level reaches 423m on the boundary at Aldershawe and Harehurst Hill.

4.3 The city sits within a dip, so views across the city can be seen from a number of high points surrounding the city. Furthermore, because the city has not spread beyond the containment of this landform longer distance views of the spires are not spoilt by other buildings. From within the city the appearance of much of the city is flat with little variation in height. There are a few locations where there is a notable change in levels in particular, along Beacon Street to the north of the city and along Tamworth Street and George Lane to the east. There are more subtle variations in height in a number of locations which often only become apparent when views are glimpsed between buildings.

4.4 The land is fertile and there are large areas of open space for flora and fauna which are a notable feature and environmental strength of the city. There is limited vegetation within the city core itself due to building densities but the city is surrounded by a belt of mature tree cover which is vital to its character.

4.5 The belt of open space and trees that runs through the city just to the north of the commercial core includes Beacon Park, Minster Pool through to Stowe Pool and is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. Other significant open areas include the Cathedral Close, Market Place and the Festival Gardens.

4.6 The setting of the conservation area is enhanced by the large number of mature and maturing trees within private gardens, particularly to the north-west and north-east of Stowe Pool. These trees form one of Lichfield's principal treescapes and are predominantly the result of Victorian and Edwardian plantings.

4.7 Areas just outside of, and on the approaches to the conservation area provide an important context to the area affecting views to and from the area. These areas include Greenhill and Upper St John Street and as such development within these areas can be considered to affect the setting of the conservation area.



5 History & Archaeology

Early Evidence

5.1 Little archaeological evidence has been recovered to suggest early occupation in the Lichfield area although Neolithic flints have been recovered from St Michael's Church and evidence of a Neolithic settlement has been identified on the southern side of the sandstone terrace occupied by the cathedral. Scattered finds of Romano-British date indicate activity in the area although, to date, no structural evidence dating to this period has been recovered.

Sub-Roman and Anglo-Saxon Developments

5.2 Recent work close to Stowe Pool in the centre of Lichfield has revealed evidence of a two celled structure, partially built of reused Romano-British rubble, dating to the 5th/6th century AD. This structure was destroyed by fire and was overlain by two phases of Anglo-Saxon sunken floored building both of which were destroyed by fire. The area then appears to have been abandoned sometime after the 11th century, as the area close to the pools became increasingly waterlogged. This is the first evidence of pre-12th century occupation outside the immediate environs of the ecclesiastical complex.

5.3 Records first identify Lichfield as being an ecclesiastical centre during the 7th century when Bishop Chad founded an Episcopal See at the site (c.670AD). Prior to this the Mercian bishops had been peripatetic in nature. It is thought that Lichfield commended itself as a central place because of the presence of an early church and its proximity to the Roman Ryknild and Watling Streets. The early church hypothesis may be associated with the recent sub-Roman and Anglo-Saxon finds close to Stowe Pool.

5.4 The thriving cathedral community at Lichfield must have suffered considerably at the hands of the Danes in the late 9th century. Evidence for this comes from several sources; Domesday records indicate that by 1086 the religious community had dropped from 20 cannons to 5. The final destruction phase of the Stowe Pool sunken floored buildings (779-971AD) may also relate to this period. The impact of the Danes is also clear through Lichfield ceasing to be the seat of a Bishop and indeed in its demotion to the status of a 'Minster church'.

Medieval Prosperity

5.5 By the early 12th century, Lichfield had been restored as an ecclesiastical centre and the Cathedral Close was fortified by Bishop Clinton. Clinton also developed a new town to the south of Minster Pool with the settlement laid out on a grid or ladder plan. A central market place was provided with St. Mary's Church probably being founded centrally within the market at the same time. Subsequent encroachment has taken place on the southern side of the church. A market and mint were granted to Bishop Durdent by King Stephen (later confirmed in 1154), although the mint had closed by 1198.

5.6 Bishop Clinton also enclosed the town with a bank and ditch with gates erected where the main roads entered the town. He is thought to have founded the hospital of St. John outside the gate in St. John Street (1208). Recent excavations in the car park of the council offices on Frog Lane have revealed the ditch (5m wide and 2.6m deep) and the remnants of what may have been the bank. The defences not only provided protection for the town but also prevented free access and egress to merchants, who were encouraged to only enter through the main gates and thus pay the appropriate tithes.

5.7 The Council Office car park excavations also extended out beyond the defences. Results indicate that agricultural land extended right up to the defences during the medieval period. It may therefore be the case that little medieval urban development occurred beyond the medieval borough as identified by the town's defences. Only along the main roads into the town did medieval suburbs extend out beyond the defences. Within the historic core of Lichfield excavations have revealed evidence of intensive and substantial rebuilding on individual plots, from the thirteenth century through to the present day, resulting in complicated and potentially deeply stratified archaeological deposits.

5.8 The town continued to thrive during the 13th and 14th centuries. Growth was encouraged through the proximity of the cathedral to specialised service industries including goldsmiths, glaziers and a bell founder located in the town. Other more worldly trades such as tanning, parchment makers, leather production and shoe making were also important industries. Lichfield was an important mercantile centre and this was enhanced during 1307 when the three day Whitsun fair was extended to fifteen days with a separate four day fair added in November.

5.9 Lichfield's location on several major roads attracted many important personages and Royal visitors including Edward II as Prince of Wales (1296), Edward III (1328) and Richard II (1397). Numerous public houses were present within the town and the secular importance of the town was maintained throughout the period, with assizes held here until the 16th century.

The Reformation and Civil War

5.10 The Reformation resulted in the dissolution of Coventry Priory and the award of full diocesan control to Lichfield Cathedral (1541). Church guilds and the Franciscan Friary were also dissolved, although both Milley's and St John's hospitals survived through this period of unrest. Agriculture continued to be important to the economy of Lichfield, although in general the 16th and 17th centuries were a period of economic decline.

5.11 The Civil War also seriously impacted upon the economy and infrastructure of the town. Three separate sieges caused considerable damage through artillery fire, burning and looting; the Cathedral and Close suffering in particular.



The 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries

5.12 Following the Restoration of Charles II work began on the reconstruction of the town, and visitors such as Celia Fiennes (1697) and Daniel Defoe (1720) were remarking upon the quality of Lichfield's urban environment. Fire frequently plagued medieval towns which were dominated by timber framed buildings in close proximity to each other. Lichfield was ravaged by fire in 1681 and again in 1697 and in response the Corporation ordered that all thatch be replaced by tiled roofs. Brick buildings started to be built in Lichfield from the late 17th or early 18th century and this process has continued up until the present day.

5.13 During the 18th century Birmingham became the industrial and commercial centre of the Midlands, but in the absence of any regional university, Lichfield could claim to be its cultural capital. This was a remarkable achievement for a city where the population was only 3,088 in 1695 and 4,842 according to the 1801 census. Samuel Johnson emphasised its importance when he told his biographer Boswell that Lichfield was a city of philosophers; "we work with our heads, and make the boobies of Birmingham work for us with our hands". This was a caricature, but Lichfield was the intellectual heart of the region in at least two different respects.

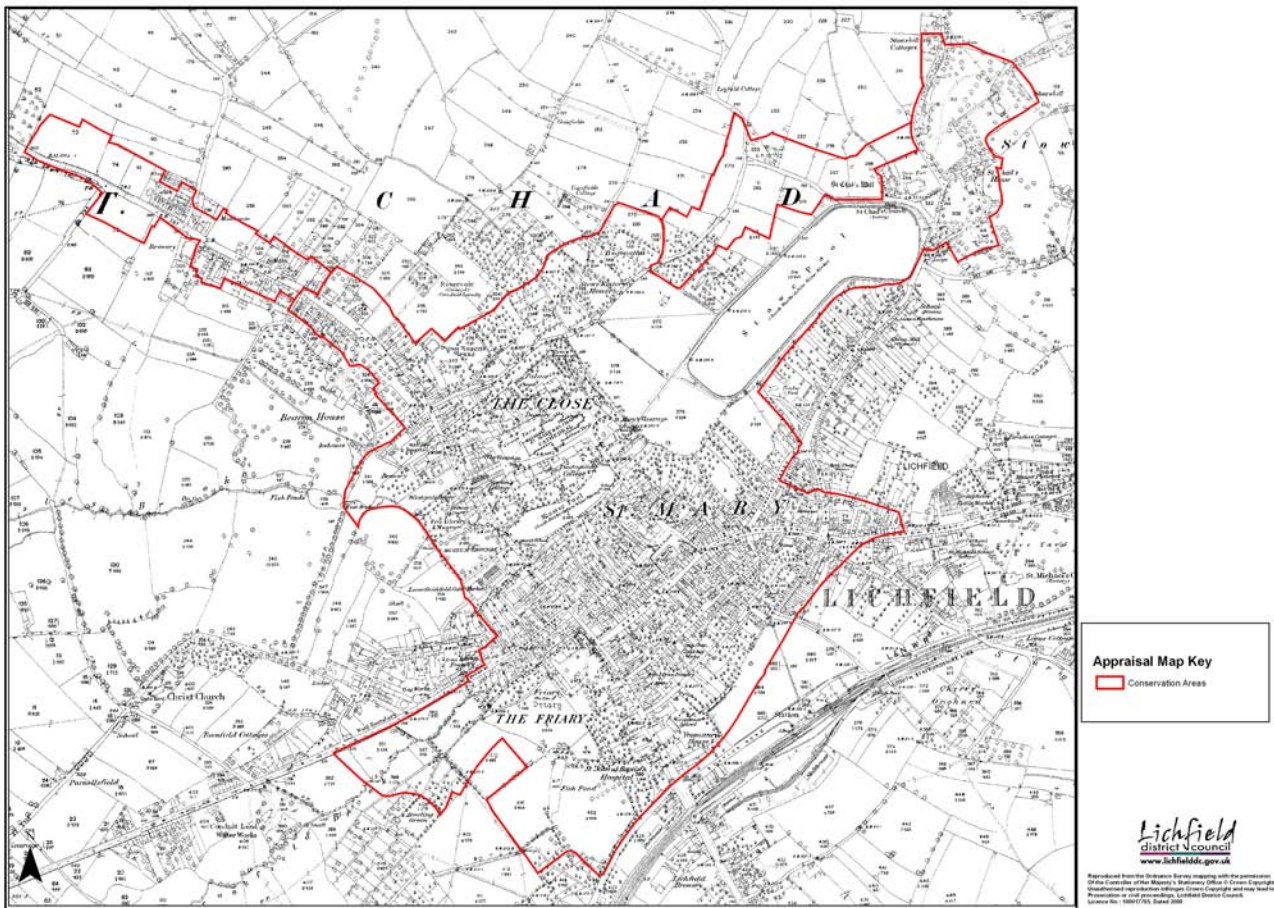
5.14 First, a number of individuals who made their impact on British cultural life were born in Lichfield or educated locally. They included Elias Ashmole, the antiquarian, Gregory King, the statistician, Joseph Addison, the essayist, Samuel Johnson, the writer and David Garrick, the actor-manager.

5.15 Secondly, Lichfield became the home of several residents who achieved intellectual importance whilst living in the city. They included the physician, Sir John Floyer, the antiquarian Richard Greene, Erasmus Darwin, doctor and scientist, Anna Seward, the poet, Thomas Day, the humanitarian campaigner and Richard Lovell Edgeworth, the inventor and educationalist. Darwin, Day and Edgeworth were members of the Lunar Society who were part of a wider network of creative individuals in Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire. The "Lunatics" met at each others homes at the time of the full moon and made central contributions to Enlightenment thinking and industrial innovation.

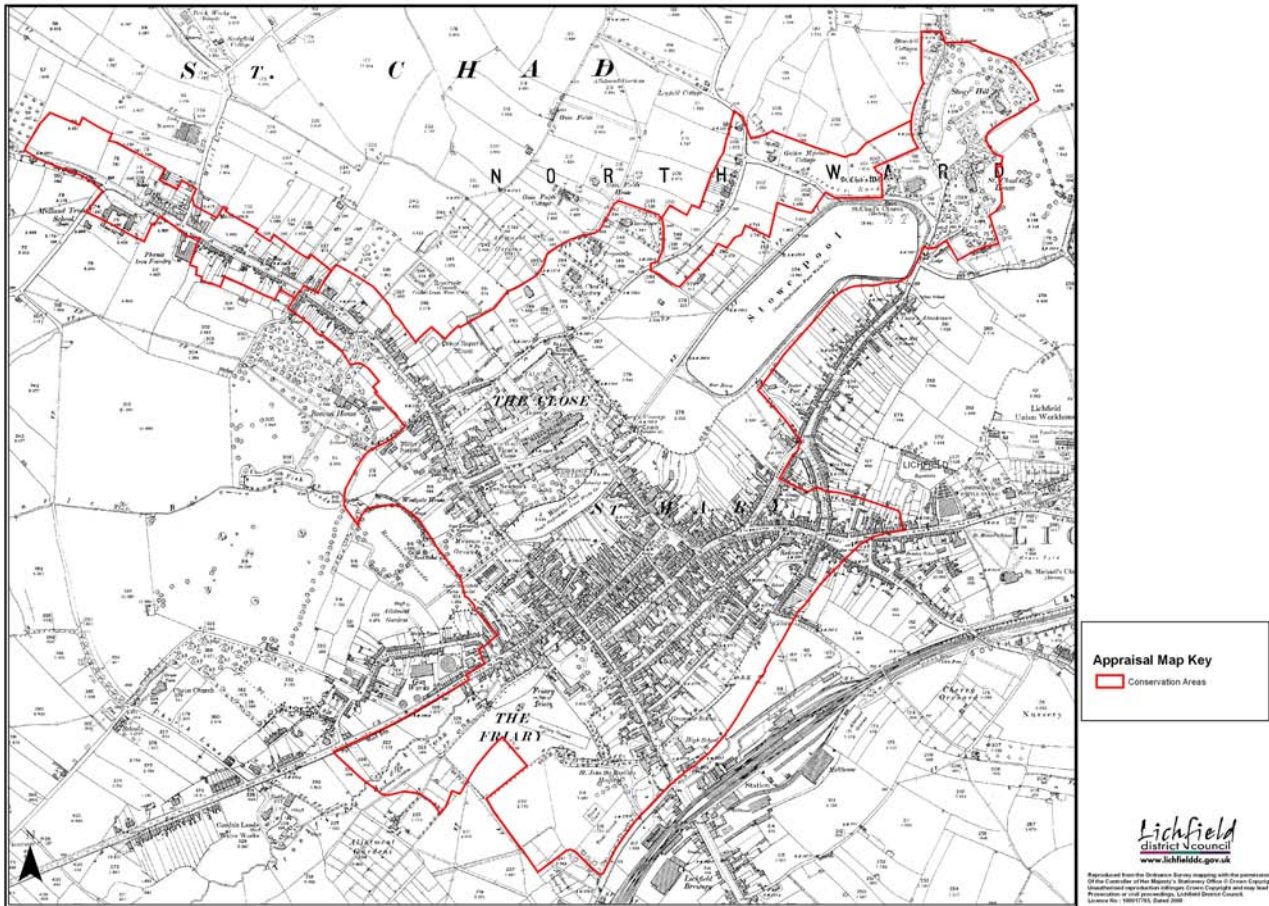
5.16 Despite raised expectations following the Restoration, Lichfield does not appear to have expanded significantly beyond its medieval town defences until the 19th century. The town's economic focus continued to be retail led and little industry beyond coach making, tanning, leatherworking and cloth manufacture appears to have located close to town during the 18th and 19th century.

5.17 The population of Lichfield had remained largely static up until the end of the 18th century; in 1801 the population was measured at 4,840 and this had risen to 7,900 by 1901. The completion of the railway at Lichfield significantly reduced the quantity of coach traffic passing through the town. Within Lichfield itself, rebuilding occurred at many of the municipal and religious sites, including the guildhall, St. Mary's Church. New buildings were constructed such as the Corn Exchange and Savings Bank on Conduit Street (1849), a public library and museum in Bird Street (1859). Many of the 16th and 17th century buildings within the historic core of

Lichfield have survived to some extent. This may be as below ground remains or, in some cases, as standing structures where previous owners have re-fronted in more modern materials to save the expense of a completely new building. During the 19th century many of the medieval suburbs were significantly extended out into the surrounding agricultural landscape. This process of expansion beyond the medieval core resulted in the town defences being levelled and ditch filled in.



Picture 5.1 OS Map from 1884 showing the area of Lichfield City conservation area



Picture 5.2 OS Map from 1901 showing the area of Lichfield City conservation area

5.18 During the 20th century the road system around Lichfield was altered with a new road extending across the Friary site and into the heart of the medieval settlement. Much of the building during the 20th century occurred on the outskirts of Lichfield with several housing estates and industrial parks constructed to service the growing population. The growth of rapid rail transport into Birmingham and London has resulted in Lichfield's growth as a commuter settlement.

6 City Landmarks

6.1 Landmarks are the punctuation marks of a city. In the case of Lichfield the three spires of Lichfield Cathedral are visible from the surrounding countryside and provide a guide for those travelling towards the city. Within the city itself smaller landmarks provide focal points and guide the visitor around the city. Given the gentle topography of the city, the principle landmarks are all man-made rather than natural.

6.2 From several important approaches and angles of view, the Lichfield city skyline is formed by mature trees, punctuated only by spires, reinforcing a traditional image of the historic centre which has green space running right up to and through its heart.



Picture 6.1 View from Southern By-pass to the south and Grange Lane to the north

6.3 The main landmarks in the city are Lichfield Cathedral with its three spires, St Chad's Church, Stowe and St Mary's Church. St Michael's Church in Greenhill, while situated outside the conservation area is also visible from a number of locations. These landmarks are principally viewed as a spire or spires rising above the tree canopy.

6.4 Other locally distinctive landmarks include the Market Place which contains two statues and is dominated by the Johnson Birthplace Museum which is housed in a fine example of a Queen Anne style three storey house.

6.5 The Library and Record Office on the corner of the Friary and St John Street and the Hospital of St John without the Barrs on the corner of St John Street and Birmingham Road are also local landmarks on prominent locations at road junctions.

6.6 Lichfield has been fortunate in that much of its historic core remains intact. Areas of new development have generally been in character with the historic city. This is particularly important when it comes to landmarks and views and it is a notable, positive aspect of the city today that no modern building draws attention away from the historically important buildings.



7 Building Materials

7.1 Prior to 1500 all but the most important buildings would have been constructed of timber framing with wattle and daub infill panels and thatched roofs. Thatched roofs have now disappeared from the city centre but timber framing is still much in evidence. Timber was one of the cheapest and most convenient sources of building material being grown locally.

7.2 From the sixteenth century onwards red brick began to be used throughout much of Lichfield, beginning with the more prestigious buildings and gradually being used for even the most humble dwelling. The bricks were made from local clay. Bricks were considered very fashionable and allowed buildings to be constructed in line with the latest fashions.

7.3 Lime render has been used throughout the city for surface treatment or infill of panels in many sixteenth century properties as well as being a decorative finish for some buildings within Lichfield.

7.4 Stone continued to be used for the most prestigious buildings including the Cathedral and parish churches. The stone was sourced from local quarries and is Keuper sandstone.

7.5 Clay tiles largely replaced thatched roofs and were widely used throughout Lichfield due to their durability and strength. The material would have been sourced locally to the city and then fired in a kiln and produced on a mass scale for the area.

7.6 Slate was first introduced during the mid-eighteenth century and was primarily used for the roofing on houses or buildings which were less important or less central. However, as prices inflated and the quantity of materials required increased it became more expensive to build and so slate, which was the cheaper alternative, became more popular and is now seen frequently around the new areas developed within the city, or areas post 18th century.

8 Building Types

8.1 The city can be divided up into different character areas, each of which is typified by different building types.

8.2 Ecclesiastical buildings generally form significant landmarks and their location and surroundings compliment and enhance their setting. The Church buildings represent some of the oldest buildings in the city with St Chad's Church and the Cathedral having 12th century and 13th century origins respectively. St Mary's Church, however, was re-built in the 1860's.

8.3 Residential houses are mainly found to the north of the city along Beacon Street and in the Gaia Lane and Stowe areas. These vary from small terraced housing, to large townhouses and to modern detached houses set in large grounds. Within the boundaries of the medieval city almost all buildings had a residential function as well as a commercial function. The large townhouses generally date from the Georgian period and are two or three storeys high with brick or stuccoed facades, timber sash windows and tiled roofs. The smaller, terraced housing spans a greater period with examples dating from the 18th century along Beacon Street to the early 20th century houses along Gaia Lane. They are principally two storeys, with simple brick or rendered facades, timber sash or casement windows and tiled roofs. The more recent terraces are much more ornate in design being heavily influenced by the Arts and Craft style. The detached residential housing generally dates to the late Victorian and Edwardian periods and is often heavily ornamented. There are a large number of mid to late 20th century houses within the conservation area, these have been included as they have been constructed on previously undeveloped land close to the city boundaries and are often distributed between older buildings. These houses vary in style and architectural merit but generally are now an established part of the conservation area.



Picture 8.1 Houses dating from the 15th to the 18th century and 15th century framed houses



Picture 8.2 Mid 18th century townhouses and a c1750 house in the Baroque style



Picture 8.3 Early 20th century housing and Late 19th century cottages



Picture 8.4 Mid-Victorian house

8.4 Commercial buildings dominate the centre of the city but are also found dispersed all over the city. Shops, banks, offices and leisure uses such as bars and restaurants prevail in the centre, again spanning the spectrum from small shops to large hotels. The ages and styles of these buildings vary enormously. The impact of shopfronts and associated signage is very important in defining the character of the conservation area as this is the level that most people see as they navigate through the city. There are a number of very fine examples of shopfronts and signage and the principles for the design of new or altered shopfronts can be found in the adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Shopfronts within Lichfield City Conservation Area' 1992.

8.5 In many cases the ground floors of commercial buildings have undergone much more significant alterations than the upper floors. In some instances the ground floor alterations have removed much of the historic features, more often than not by the insertion of an unsympathetic shopfront. However, in almost all these cases, by looking at the upper floors it is possible to see the architectural and historic interest of a building. In terms of preserving and enhancing the character of the area, the improvement of the ground floors that have been the subject of such alterations would be welcomed.



Picture 8.5 Early 20th Century shop and Mid 18th century houses now offices



Picture 8.6 Late 20th Century Public House and Early 20th Century Shopping arcade

8.6 Public buildings are found throughout the conservation area. They tend to be substantial in scale and use quality design and materials making them prominent local landmarks. They include very modern as well as historic buildings. A selection is illustrated below.



Picture 8.7 Late 19th Century Corn Exchange and Early 20th Century Guildhall



Picture 8.8 Public buildings as local landmarks



9 Building Pattern

9.1 The grain of development within Lichfield is vital to its character. This includes plot sizes, the size of a building within its plot and buildings lines, i.e. whether a building is set back or not. Clearly this grain varies greatly and this is described in greater detail within the individual character areas, however, as a broad description within the historic grid layout of the city, plots still relate to the historic burgage plots with a consistent building line and closely spaced buildings with only the occasional narrow alley to provide access to the rear of the plots. Further away from the centre the plot sizes are generally, but not always more generous with the more high status of buildings sitting within larger plots but the smaller properties still being situated on smaller plots.

10 Public Realm

10.1 The spaces in between the buildings contribute as much to the character and appearance of an area as the buildings themselves.

Paving

10.2 The quality of paving throughout the city varies. The recent repaving scheme (completed in 2007) centres on the Market Place and also includes Conduit Street, Tamworth Street, Breadmarket Street, part of Bore Street and part of Market Street and is a good example of a well thought out scheme that puts pedestrians at the heart of the city and uses good quality traditional materials. The success of this paving scheme highlights the fact that some of the adjacent areas of paving now look worn and in need of some improvement. In the areas of Gaia Lane and Stowe the lack of a pavement on one or both sides of the road provides a more rural character to these areas which is very significant.



Picture 10.1 Examples of paving within the conservation area

Boundary Treatments

10.3 Throughout much of the city centre the buildings are built at the back of the pavement and so there are no boundary treatments as such. Where there are boundary treatments, either at the front of some of the more prestigious buildings or at the rear of buildings, these are almost always constructed of red brick, with a few exceptions being stone. There are also a small number of railings. In the locations where there are front boundaries, these are mainly found in the residential outskirts where buildings are set back there is a greater variety of boundary treatments. They are predominantly red brick, either with or without cast iron railings. There are some stone walls and some boundaries in the more suburban areas of Beacon Street and Gaia Lane have hedges. There are also non-traditional boundaries of timber fencing in some locations; however, but these do not generally positively contribute to the area.

10.4 The importance of boundary treatments is illustrated by the fact that sections are listed, either in their own right or as an integral part of a listed building (all boundary walls attached to listed buildings are automatically included in the listing but these examples have been specifically mentioned in the listing description). Listed boundary treatments include the balustrades to the Museum Gardens, Beacon Street and the balustrades attached to the former Public Library and Art Gallery also on Beacon Street and also the balustrades and gate to the war memorial

on Bird Street. The front walls, railings and gates to Angel Croft House, Beacon Lodge and Westgate House all on Beacon Street and the railings at Donegal House, Bore Street are also listed, as are sections of brick gardens walls and railings along Lombard Street. Large sections of boundary walls and railings within the Cathedral Close are also listed.



Picture 10.2 Examples of boundary treatments within the conservation area



Street furniture

10.5 There is an inconsistent use of street furniture throughout the conservation area. In some locations the lampposts are painted dark, juniper green and have a slightly more traditional design but in other areas, standard galvanised street lamps are still used. The quality of other street furniture such as bins, benches, bollards, railings and signs varies significantly and the character of the area would be greatly enhanced by a consistent and high quality style of street furniture being introduced.

10.6 There are some elements of historic street furniture remaining which should be conserved and remain in use. Some of the most important elements are actually listed in their own right and these include, amongst others, two K6 telephone kiosks near the Corn Exchange on Conduit Street and another K6 telephone kiosk near to number 20 St John Street. Two lamp posts in the Cathedral Close are also Grade II listed.



Picture 10.3 Examples of street furniture within the conservation area



Trees and Vegetation

10.7 The presence of trees throughout the conservation area is a very important, positive contributory factor to its character. Within the core itself there are a relatively small number of individual trees which provide a natural element to the townscape. Toward the outskirts of the core there are substantial areas of tree cover, such that, from a distance the city looks very green with the Cathedral and church spires being the only built features that protrude above the tree canopies.

10.8 All trees within the conservation area benefit from a specific level of protection, in that six weeks notice must be given to the Council, in writing, of any works proposed to be done to any tree within a conservation area, but a significant proportion of trees within the conservation area are also covered by Tree Preservation Orders.



Picture 10.4 Examples of important examples of trees within the conservation area

Monuments and Memorials

10.9 A significant number of important historic structures within the conservation area would fall into the category of monuments and memorials.

10.10 Listed structures within this category include the War memorial on Bird Street, the Edward VII statue and the Captain John Smith statue both in the Museum Gardens on Bird Street and also the Fountain in the Museum Gardens. In the Market Place there is the Boswell Statue and also the Dr Johnson Statue which is Grade II* listed.

10.11 Within the graveyard of St Chad's Church, Stowe there are five Grade II listed gravestones.

Evolving public realm

10.12 Lichfield District Council is working, together with other interested bodies, to enhance and improve the public realm. This is an ongoing process and is highlighted in the opportunities and constraints sections of each of the character areas.



11 Policies & Guidelines

11.1 Lichfield District Council is the Local Planning Authority and as such it determines applications for Planning Permission, Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent as well as other planning related applications. Some of the key policies and guidelines that are used to determine such applications are outlined below.

11.2 This information is correct at time of publication.

Local Development Framework

11.3 The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a folder of Local Development Documents that will replace the existing land use planning system of District-wide Local Plans. Some of the Local Development Documents in the LDF, including the Core Strategy, are known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs) because they are part of the statutory Development Plan setting out the Local Planning Authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the Authority's area. Decisions on planning applications are required to be made in accordance with particular policies in the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

11.4 The Core Strategy will be the first Document to be produced, likely to be adopted in early 2010. When prepared, the Lichfield District Core Strategy will form a key part of the LDF for Lichfield District. It will contain a vision and strategic objectives for the District, leading to a small number of Core Policies that will set the basis for directing change in the District for the next 15 to 20 years. The Core Strategy will provide the framework for future LDF documents which will then detail plan policies and specific sites for development in the District. The Conservation Area Appraisals form an important element of the evidence base that will be used to inform policies and proposals in the LDF.

Local Plan

11.5 Until the LDF is adopted Lichfield District Council have a number of policies that are contained within the adopted Local Plan of which a number relate to building conservation. The key Local Plan policies are set out below.

Local Plan Policies

Character of Conservation Areas

Policy C.2

Development Proposals

11.7 Development will be permitted in Conservation Areas provided it would enhance or preserve the character of the Conservation Area. Development will not

11.8 be permitted where:-

11.9 (a) Development would prejudice the essential features of the Conservation Area, including historic plan form, relationship between buildings, the arrangement of open areas and their enclosure, grain, or significant natural or heritage features.

11.10 (b) The detailed design of buildings, including height, density, mass, layout, proportions, or materials would not respect the character of an area.

11.11 (c) The development would prejudice the setting and surroundings of a Conservation Area or spoil the inward or outward views.

11.12 (d) Where a proposed use of land would prejudice the appearance or ambience of a Conservation Area.

11.13 (e) In order to determine the effect of proposed building and engineering works in Conservation Areas the District Council will require the submission of detailed Plans and will not grant outline planning permission.



Policy C.3

Demolition

11.14 The District Council will seek to secure the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of buildings within Conservation Areas. The District Council will not grant consent for demolition of buildings which are of architectural or historic merit or which contribute positively to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area unless it can be demonstrated that the buildings are incapable of reasonably beneficial use through alteration or extensions for which the Council would normally grant permission and which would be consistent with the land use policies of this plan or unless Policy C.7 applies. The District Council will not grant consent for such demolition until planning permission has been granted for a replacement building and a contract for the redevelopment of the site has been let unless the condition of the building represents a danger to the public.

Policy C.7

Buildings out of scale or character

11.15 The District Council will encourage the redevelopment or refurbishment of individual and groups of buildings which are out of character or scale within Conservation Areas subject to the achievement of a high standard of design and to meeting the Council's development control standards.

Policy L.46

Shopfronts

11.16 In the Conservation Area the design of new, replacement or alterations to shop fronts will be required to be sympathetic to the remainder of the building and to the character of the street as a whole. The District Council will not permit the replacement of those shopfronts which date from the nineteenth century or earlier or are of architectural merit.

Policy L.47

Cathedral Close

11.17 The District Council will not permit the change of use of buildings within Lichfield Cathedral Close which involve the introduction of commercial activities unrelated to the existing functions of The Close, or the loss of residential accommodation. See also Cathedral Parking and Traffic Management - Policy L.30.

Policy L.48

Protection of Views

11.18 When considering new development proposals special care will be taken to ensure that views from public places from and into the city, and in particular long distance and local views to the Cathedral remain unspoilt. New development will be encouraged to incorporate such vistas within their layout and conversely development which would materially detract from views of the Cathedral spires from public places will not be permitted.

Shopfront Design Guide

11.19 Lichfield District Council has a design guide for shopfronts within the Lichfield City Conservation Area. This was published in 1992 and copies are available. This document details the main guidelines that the Local Planning Authority will use when assessing applications relating to shopfronts or advertisements within the conservation area.

National Legislation and Policy

11.20 At the time of publication of this Conservation Area Appraisal the principle legislation that covers conservation, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is being reviewed. It is expected that a White Paper will be presented to Parliament during the 2008-2009 the parliamentary session. If made law, the new legislation will significantly alter the terminology and consent procedure for listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments, although the fundamental conservation principles will remain unchanged.

11.21 Until the White Paper becomes law Lichfield District Council will continue to refer to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment 1994.



English Heritage guidance

11.22 English Heritage has published a number of documents that are relevant to this appraisal. These include:

- [Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals 2006](#)
- [Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, 2006](#)
- [Streets for all, 2005](#)
- [The Heritage Dividend, 2008](#)
- [Suburbs and the Historic Environment, 2007](#)
- [Heritage Works, 2005](#)
- [The Heritage Dividend, 2008](#)
- [Climate Change and the Historic Environment, 2006](#)
- [Suburbs and the Historic Environment, 2007](#)

Local List of Buildings of Special Interest (Lichfield City Conservation Area), 2008.

11.23 This document lists buildings that whilst not considered suitable for national listing, are nevertheless of special local interest and make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area. The local list will gradually be extended to cover the whole of Lichfield District.

12 Opportunities & Constraints

12.1 There are opportunities within current legislation and policy to provide additional protection to certain historic buildings within the conservation area. Unlisted, historic buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area have been highlighted on the maps associated with each of the character areas. These buildings have been chosen based upon the criteria published by English Heritage in Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals, 2006 in Appendix 2.

12.2 Consideration will then be given, where appropriate, to include particular building on the Council's Local List. In addition where the building is in residential use and faces the public highway the Council has the opportunity to introduce an Article 4.2 directive to tighten controls over important buildings that are not listed.

Boundary Changes

12.3 It is proposed to merge the Lichfield Gateway Conservation Area with the Lichfield City Conservation Area to create a single conservation area which will be known as the Lichfield City Conservation Area.

12.4 There are a number of proposed boundary changes to the Lichfield City Conservation Area. These are described in detail and marked on the maps associated with each separate character areas.



13 Introduction to Character Areas

Methodology for defining character areas

13.1 The Lichfield City Conservation Area is large and diverse. In order to undertake a meaningful appraisal, the conservation area has been divided into fourteen smaller, more manageable, character areas which, in turn, can be put into three broad categories based on the principle land uses. A detailed appraisal of each character area has been undertaken.

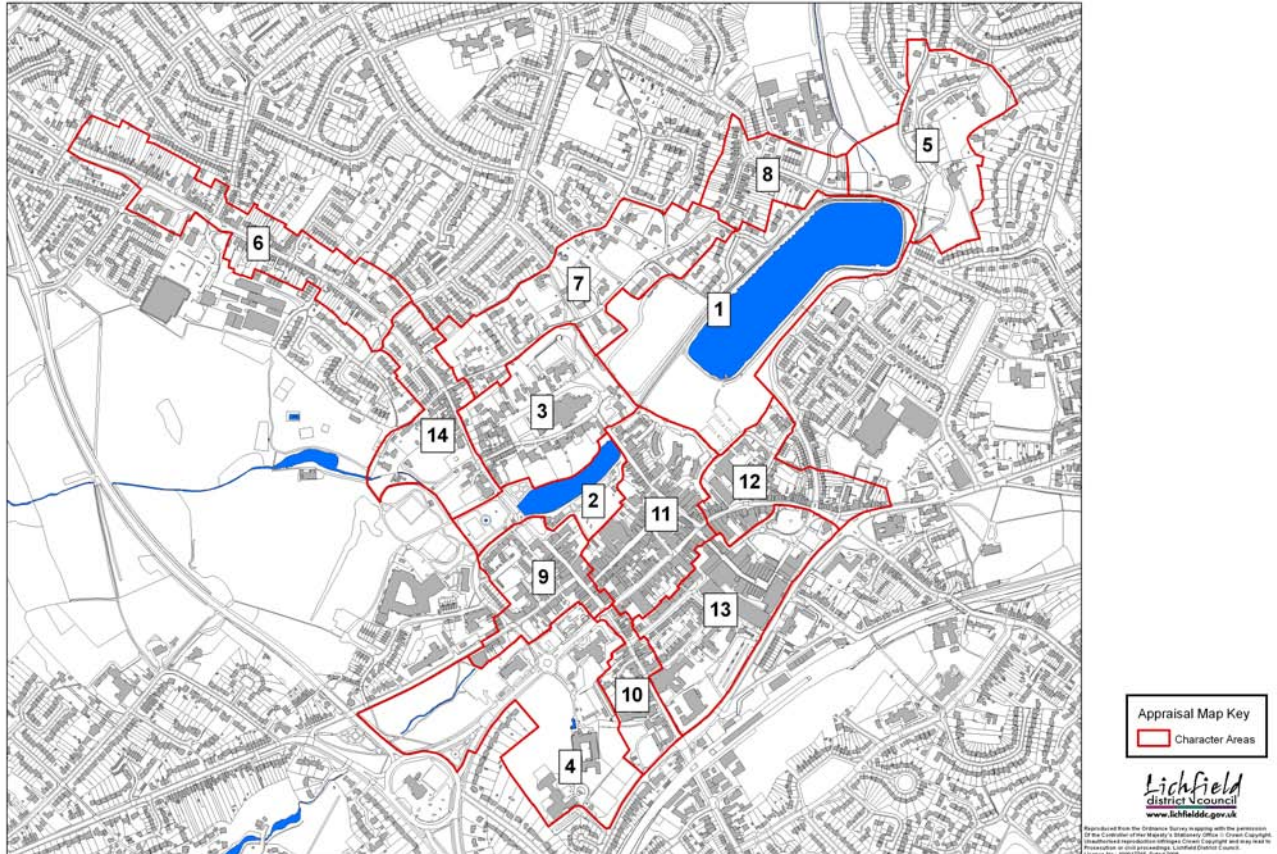
13.2 The character areas are based on the areas defined in the Lichfield City Conservation Area Document published in 1997. Some of these areas have been grouped together and some boundaries have been revised to ensure that the character areas reflect the conservation area today.

13.3 By dividing the conservation area into smaller character areas, the intention is to allow for a more informed and relevant appraisal but also to make the appraisal document more accessible. Character areas should not, however, be seen in isolation as they all contribute to the character of the wider conservation area.

13.4 The three categories into which the character areas can be divided are “Cultural Spaces” which include buildings and spaces used by the community, “Residential Outskirts” which include the areas of the city which are principally, although not exclusively, residential and “Commercial Core” which includes the mainly commercial core of the city.

13.5 The Lichfield City Conservation Area has been divided into the following fourteen character areas.

Character Areas



Picture 13.1 Lichfield City Conservation Area - Character Areas

Cultural Spaces Character Areas

13.6 The cultural spaces include buildings and places from which the community can benefit and derive enjoyment.

13.7 Within Lichfield City Conservation Area these consist of the following four character areas:

1. Stowe Pool
2. Minster Pool and Museum Gardens
3. Cathedral Close
4. Friary and Festival Gardens

13.8 These areas represent some of the most historically interesting and important areas as well as areas that are used for recreational purposes and provide Lichfield with open expanses, landscaped areas and many of the most significant views.



Residential Outskirts Character Areas

13.9 Residential areas frame the commercial and cultural core of the city. Of these it is the areas immediately to the north and east that are included within the conservation area.

13.10 Within Lichfield City Conservation Area these consist of the following four character areas:

5. Stowe
6. Beacon Street (North)
7. Gaia Lane
8. Gaia Lane Extension

13.11 These areas retain the historic building lines and street patterns enabling the wide variety of ages and styles of properties to present a coherent character.

Commercial Core Character Areas

13.12 The commercial character areas are situated in the centre of the city. These include many of the streets laid out in the 12th century and today form the busy core of the city.

13.13 Within Lichfield City Conservation Area these consist of the following six character areas:

9. Bird Street
10. St. John Street
11. Core
12. Tamworth Street and Lombard Street
13. Birmingham Road
14. Beacon Street (South)

13.14 These areas retain the historic building lines and street patterns enabling the wide variety of ages and styles of properties to present a coherent character.