

## 15 Residential Outskirts

### Character Area 5: Stowe

#### Summary

**15.1** The character area of Stowe lies at the opposite end of Stowe Pool from the Cathedral Close and is to the north-east of the city centre. Stowe was once a separate village with its own church, St. Chad's, and its own grand properties. The character area encompasses the full extent of the historic village.

**15.2** There are a small number of historic buildings within the character area that, historically, were situated within substantial grounds although much of these grounds have now been developed as housing. As well as the historic buildings, the substantial tree cover and narrow roads ensure that this area retains a semi-rural feel.

**15.3** The principle character of this area is derived from its leafy, rural feel and the spaciousness of both the built forms and the spaces in between which contrast with the enclosed, narrow roads.

#### City Morphology, Archaeology and History

**15.4** Until the mid 20th century, the area of Stowe consisted of two, large landscaped gardens around Stowe Hill and Stowe House and also St Chad's Church and churchyard. Although partly broken up by post war housing, the area retains an open feel with numerous mature trees that previously formed part of these landscaped gardens.

**15.5** The site of St Chad's Church is thought to be where Chad once preached. St Chad's Well is an ancient holy well and pilgrimage site devoted to Chad.

**15.6** The topography of the character area is relatively flat immediately to the north of Stowe Pool in the area around St Chad's Church but it rises steeply to the north and east so that both Stowe House and Stowe Hill are significantly higher.

#### Landmarks and Views

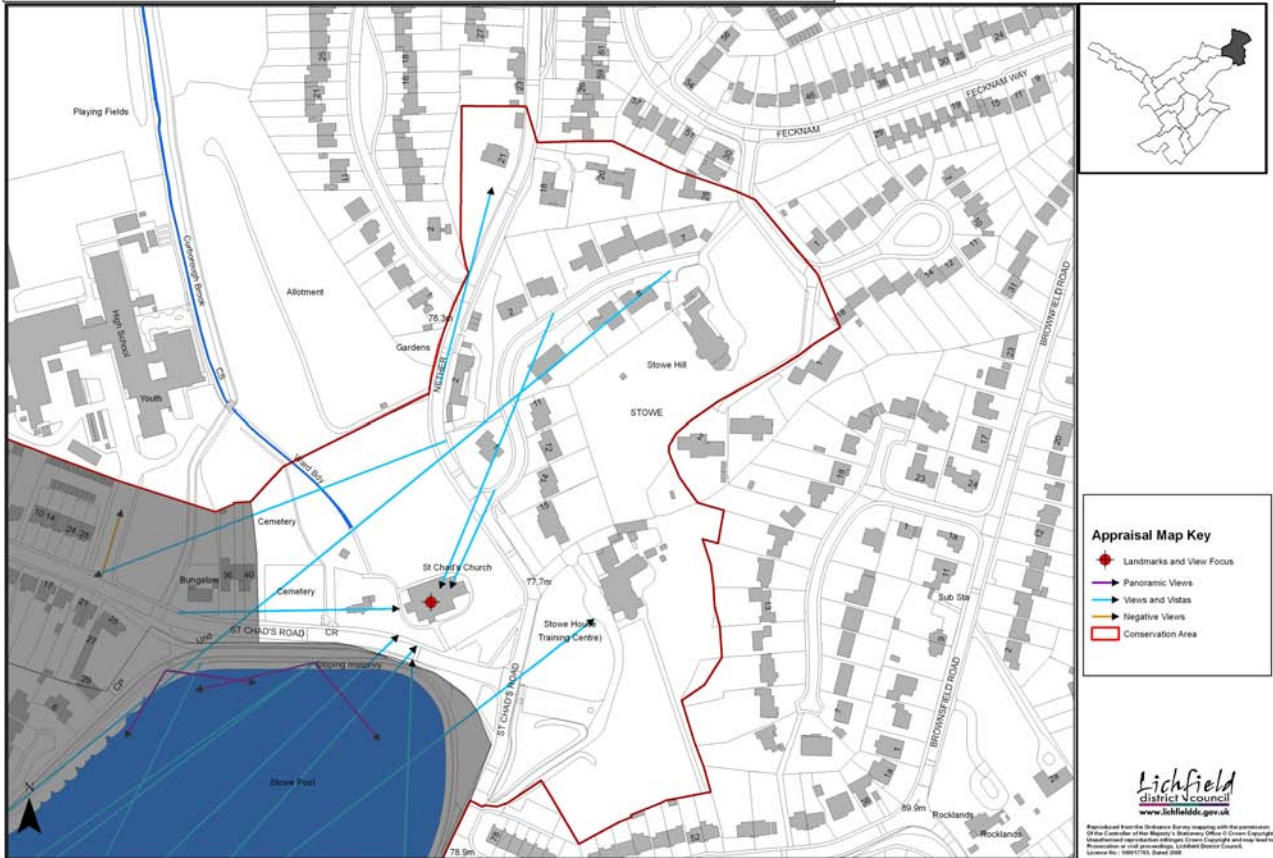
**15.7** The Church of St Chad is a landmark and is visible from across Stowe Pool. Depending on the time of year and the level of tree cover, both Stowe Hill and Stowe House can also be seen from a distance across Stowe Pool.



Picture 15.1 View down Netherstowe. There is no pavement on the right hand side and the tree canopies shade the road giving a rural feel

**15.8** Within the character area, particularly when the trees are in leaf, most of the views are enclosed and channelled along the roads framed by buildings, trees and boundaries. Stowe House is a prominent building and overlooks the area in front of St Chad's Church. From certain locations within the character area there are views out across Stowe Pool towards the city centre and both the cathedral and St Mary's Church spires are visible.

CHARACTER AREA 5: STOWE: VIEWS AND VISTAS



Picture 15.2 Stowe Character Area - Map of Views and Vistas

## Key Building Groups

**15.9** Both Stowe Hill and Stowe House are high status early Georgian houses influenced by the Baroque style of architecture.





Picture 15.3 Stowe Hill

**15.10** The 20th century housing within the character area is non-traditional in terms of design and materials. However, the scale and massing does not detract from the historic buildings and it could therefore be considered a neutral feature within the conservation area.



Picture 15.4 Sandstone wall showing historical boundary and 20th century housing development

## Current Uses

**15.11** The buildings within the character area are almost exclusively residential. St Chad's still retains an active congregation. Stowe House is a commercial training centre.

## Townscape Elements

**15.12** There are substantial lengths of sandstone and red brick walls, which form the original boundaries to Stowe House, Stowe Hill and St Chad's churchyard, which are worthy of note. They form an important part of the character of the area and should be retained.



Picture 15.5 Sandstone boundary and railings to Stowe Pool showing raised level of Pool

**15.13** Netherstowe has a pavement on one side only and sections are overhung with tree canopies giving a semi-rural feel.



## CHARACTER AREA 5: STOWE: TOWNSCAPE QUALITIES



Picture 15.6 Stowe Character Area - Map of Townscape Qualities

## Building Types and Details

**15.14** St Chad's Church with its medieval origins, and its crenellated tower, dominates the area. The church has significant parts from the 12th, 13th, 17th and 19th Centuries. There are a number of interesting monuments within the churchyard, mainly of eighteenth century date, a number of which are listed.

**15.15** Stowe House is a substantial three-storey house built around 1750. It has high quality craftsmanship and is brick with ashlar dressings. Stowe Hill is contemporary with Stowe House and is again built in brick with ashlar dressings.

**15.16** In addition there are other historic buildings which contribute to the character of the area including number 2, Netherstowe, a former coach house or stabling to Stowe Hill house, which has been heavily altered and which dates to the 18th century and a two storey red brick house at number 21, Netherstowe, with a former coach house to the north, built around 1800.





Picture 15.7 Number 2 Netherstowe

**15.17** The predominant materials are brick and sandstone. Stowe House has a slate roof but all the other historic buildings have clay tile roofs.

### **Opportunities and Constraints**

**15.18** There are some opportunities for improvements in the public realm, by the gradual replacement of galvanised lamp posts with the heritage green lamp posts and also potentially by re-surfacing some of the informal parking areas in front of the church.

### **Boundary Changes**

**15.19** It is proposed to extend the boundary of the conservation area to include number 25, Netherstowe. This is an attractive mid to late 18th century house with a tile covered, double pitched roof, horizontal sliding sash windows and a hooded door frame.

**15.20** Further minor boundary changes are proposed to ensure that the conservation area boundary follows a logical and clearly definable line. These are all marked on the map.



Picture 15.8 Number 25 Netherstowe

## Character Area 6: Beacon Street (north)

### Summary

**15.21** The majority of this character area was formerly the Lichfield Gateway Conservation Area but for ease of management this conservation area is now incorporated into the Lichfield City Conservation Area. It includes the area from the junction with Anson Avenue and Beaconfields up to the junction with Stafford Road and Cross-in-the-Hand Lane.

**15.22** This part of Beacon Street historically has been an important entrance to the city. It is now a predominantly residential area with some other uses scattered throughout.

**15.23** The character of this area is defined by a linear street, built up on both sides with relatively few gaps, and most of the properties are built to the back edge of the pavement. Almost all the buildings are two storey residential houses.

### City Morphology, Archaeology and History

**15.24** Just outside the north-western tip of the conservation area is the last remaining Pinfold in Lichfield. Pinfolds were built to contain stray animals and were located on the main entrances into towns and cities. The first OS map dating to 1884 shows a number of buildings along this stretch of Beacon Street and that although there was some housing, this was also an area of industry. The relics of this remain today in some of the road names for example, Foundry Lane. Former uses include a smithy, a malt house and a brewery. After the First World War the street



became more built up and the industrial uses continued with the construction of engineering works and a foundry. Beacon Street is a good example of linear development along a main route into the city.

## Landmarks and Views

**15.25** The topography peaks at either end of the character area; to the south-east at the junction with Anson Avenue and Beaconfields and to the north-west at the junction with Pinfold Road and Cross in the Hands. The road slopes downwards from these points to the lowest point at the roundabout with the supermarket. The topography also slopes downwards from north to south which is most clear when looking along the side roads which lead off Beacon Street.



Picture 15.9 View down Beacon Road into the city with the Cathedral spires visible in the distance

**15.26** The principle landmark in this character area is Beacon School which has been converted into residential units. Other than this, the public houses and former St Chads School, now a private day nursery, represent the only local landmarks. The main views are down Beacon Street where the line of sight is framed by buildings on either side of the street all of which have a degree of uniformity in terms of scale and massing such that no single building stands out.



**CHARACTER AREA 6: BEACON STREET NORTH: VIEWS AND VISTAS**



Picture 15.10 Beacon Street Character Area - Map of Views and Vistas

## Key Building Groups

**15.27** There is a single listed building in this character area and this is Beacon Street School, built in 1883. Public houses remain a dominant feature and reflect the road's importance as a route and relative proximity to the centre.



Picture 15.11 The former Beacon Street School, now converted into residential apartments

**15.28** Residential houses form the largest building group and are predominantly two storey and either semi-detached or terraced.



Picture 15.12 Different styles of houses along Beacon Street

## Current Uses

**15.29** The principle use is residential with a mixture of houses and apartments. There are a small number of commercial uses including three pub/hotels, a garage and two shops.





## Townscape Elements

**15.30** The boundary treatments mainly consist of low level red or blue brick boundary walls some with hedges behind. There are a few examples of low level stone walls. These boundary walls are important to the character of the area, and while there is pressure for off road parking, where this would require the removal of front boundary walls this would have a notable negative impact on the area.

**15.31** While there are a mere handful of street trees in the character area almost all the views include substantial mature trees most of which are in the grounds of residential dwellings.



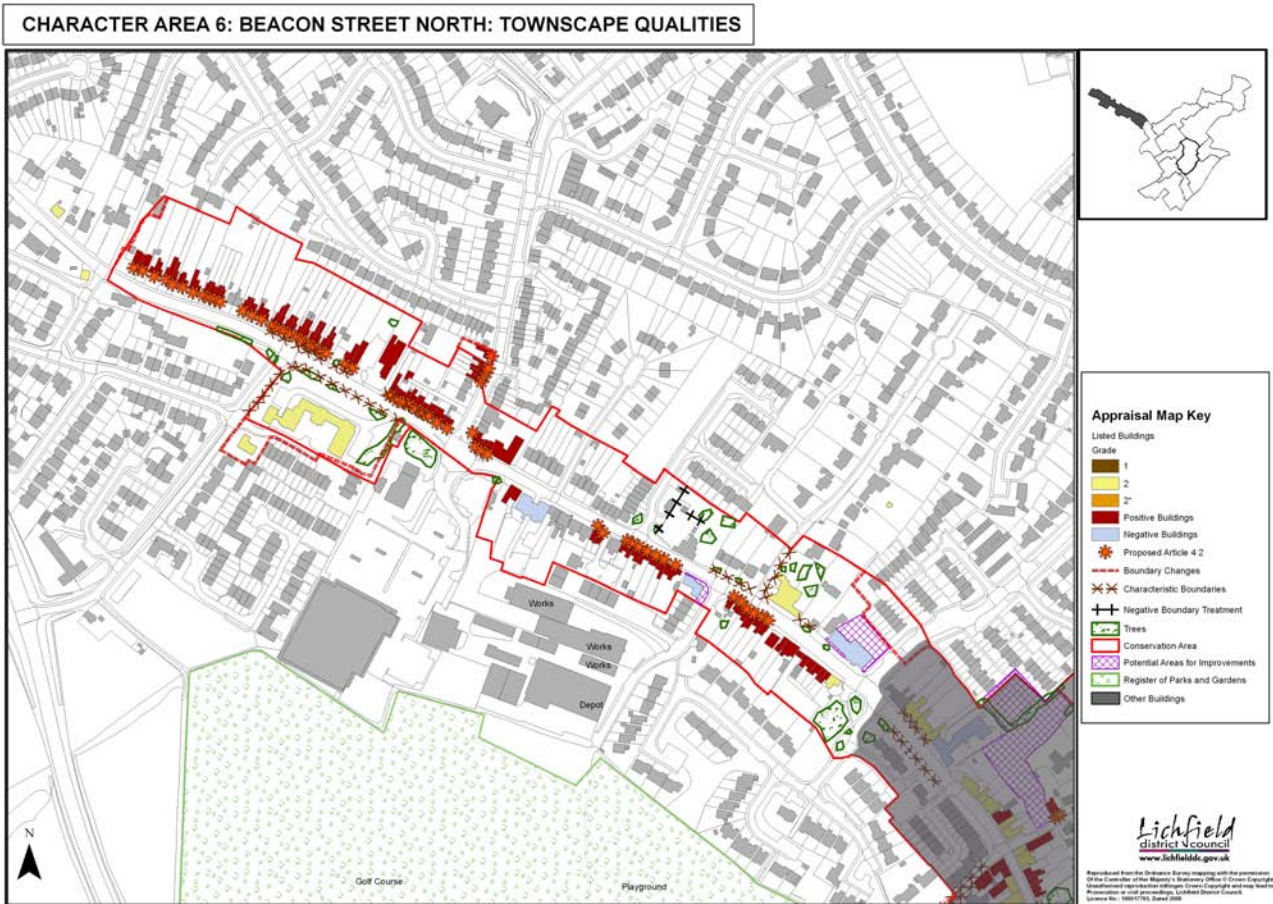
Picture 15.13 Substantial trees and hedges

**15.32** The public realm consists of tarmac pavements and concrete kerbs with little embellishment except for small areas around bus stops. These areas should not be over embellished as this presents too much of a contrast, but simple white lining and asphalt treatment would suffice. The landscaping around the supermarket, which is just outside the conservation area, does much to screen the buildings and to minimise their impact on the street scene.





Picture 15.14 Public realm and railings boundary treatments





Picture 15.15 Beacon Street North Character Area - Map of Townscape Qualities

## Building Types and Details

**15.33** In the eastern section the main building type is a small two storey cottage, mainly with casement windows and little detail or ornamentation. These are mainly built to the back of pavement and have pitched, clay tile roofs.

**15.34** Further away from the city centre the houses become larger and mainly semi-detached with some detached houses. They are still relatively simple in design being influenced by the Arts and Crafts style with front facing gables breaking up the roof line. They are also mainly two storey but are still significantly taller than the cottages. They are generally set back from the road with front gardens bounded by brick or stone walls and landscaping.

## Opportunities and Constraints

**15.35** There are areas of hard surface car parking, in particular that adjacent to The Feathers public house that would benefit from enhancement.

**15.36** There are some relatively poorly designed modern developments, including that on the corner of Greenhough Road and Pavillion Court and Langton Court, that while maintaining the overall massing of the street, use inappropriate materials and details. If the opportunity arises the Council would work with the owners to encourage the enhancement of these sites.

**15.37** Traditional boundary treatments should be maintained to ensure that dwellings retain their enclosure and the street scene is preserved.

**15.38** The Council will consider the use of Article 4 (2) directives on traditional residential properties.

## Boundary Changes

**15.39** It is proposed to amend the boundary of the conservation area to include the former sanatorium which is included in the listing of Beacon School.

**15.40** Further minor boundary changes are proposed to ensure that the conservation area boundary follows a logical and clearly definable line. These are all marked on the map.





Picture 15.16 The former sanatorium to the south-west of Beacon School

## Character Area 7: Gaia Lane

### Summary

**15.41** The character area of Gaia Lane is situated to the north of the Cathedral Close. The boundary of the character area extends from the rear of the properties facing Beacon Street to the junction of Gaia Lane and The Parchments.

**15.42** It is characterised by large, principally detached, residential dwellings set back from the road in large grounds. Most of the properties date to the early 19th century although there is a variety of ages and styles of buildings.

### City Morphology, Archaeology and History

**15.43** Gaia Lane itself was originally a country lane running below the walls of The Close. It is an old road thought to have been in existence from medieval times. In the early 19th century, villas set in large grounds, were built on the north side of the lane. Their mature gardens give an illusion of a rural setting both for these houses and the Cathedral.

**15.44** An important historic site within the character area is Prince Rupert's Mount which is also a Scheduled Monument. It was the location of a battery set up by Prince Rupert in April 1643 when he undertook the second siege of The Close which he captured for the King in two weeks. The bombardment from this platform proved ineffective and Rupert recruited miners to tunnel beneath the north-west tower where they successfully laid the first land mines ever to be used in Britain.



Picture 15.17 Car park with Prince Rupert's Mount behind the line of trees

**15.45** Some of the spaces between the historic properties have been in-filled in the 20th century with residential properties. This has led to the loss of many of the open spaces and the sub-division of plots. As these properties now sit within the character area further subdivision of plots would not be desirable.

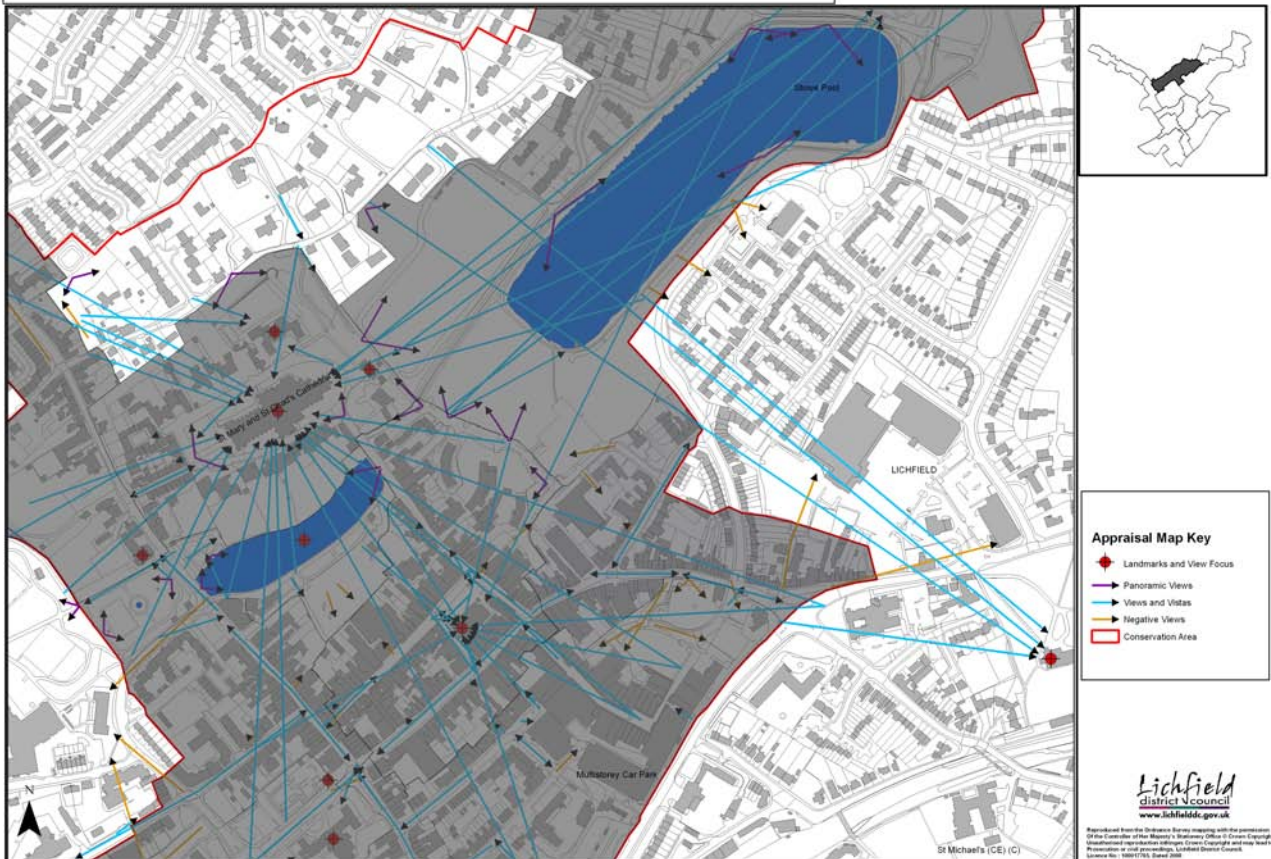
## Landmarks and Views



Picture 15.18 View along Gaia Lane  
with the high brick wall of the rear of The Close on the left hand side

**15.46** Views within this character area are generally framed by the mature vegetation and trees that line the road and also by the boundary treatments. The slightly curved route of the roads also limits most views.

## CHARACTER AREA 7: GAIA LANE: VIEWS AND VISTAS



Picture 15.19 Gaia Lane Character Area - Map of Views and Vistas

## Key Building Groups

**15.47** There are four large villas to the north of Gaia Lane that are of local historical importance 47, the former Stowe Rectory House, and Trenogotha are the first being on the first OS map. Overstowe and Star Croft are slightly later. Towards Beacon Street there are a number of historic properties that appear on the first OS map of 1884. Overstowe and Star Croft are slightly later. Towards Beacon Street there are a number of historic properties that appear on the first OS map some of which have been significantly altered. Numbers 7 and 9 on the north side of Gaia Lane and number 60 to the south side epitomise the turn of the century development which occurred within this character area.

**15.48** There are a number of later 20th century buildings most of which can be considered as neutral buildings.





## Current Uses

**15.49** The character area is exclusively a residential area with some recreational use of the green space near the remains of the battery platform of Prince Rupert's Mount and where Gaia Lane meets the fortifications of The Close. This is used in part by the Lichfield Cathedral School for outdoor facilities.

## Townscape Elements

**15.50** Natural elements contribute greatly to the character of the area. There are green elements throughout with high hedges and mature trees both set in groups and individually, hedges around properties, small open spaces such as the site of Prince Rupert's mount and large open spaces particularly around the large suburban villas.



Picture 15.20 Views along roads with no pavements and overhanging tree canopies shading the road giving a rural feel

**15.51** Boundary treatments are very important to the character of the area consisting mainly of low level walls topped with hedges. Where new boundary treatments are proposed they should be in keeping with the traditional boundary treatments.

**15.52** There is also a number of interlinking public footpaths between the residential areas.

CHARACTER AREA 7: GAIA LANE: TOWNSCAPE QUALITIES



Picture 15.21 Gaia Lane Character Area - Map of Townscape Quality

## Building Types and Details

**15.53** The large villas date to the Victorian period and are relatively ornate constructed principally of red brick with clay tiled roofs. They vary considerably in appearance with number 47 Gaia Lane being Gothic in style with Gothic arches over the window and doors with blue brick detailing and stone window surrounds and mullions. Overstowe is Mock-Tudor with white render and black half-timbering at first floor level and Star Croft is Classical in style.





Picture 15.22 47 Gaia Lane



Picture 15.23 Star Croft

**15.54** The smaller historic buildings are situated closer to Beacon Street and these are early to mid 19th century cottages of red brick with clay tiles roofs and very simply designed.

**15.55** The modern housing is scattered amongst the historic housing. The buildings vary in style depending on the age of the property although they are generally all constructed of red brick. The scale and massing of the modern housing is generally in character with the scale and massing of the historic housing and these modern houses are now an established part of the area.

## Opportunities and Constraints

**15.56** The setting of Prince Rupert's Mount would benefit from being enhanced for it has been infringed upon by 20th century development.



**15.57** Future incremental development proposals should respect the historic features, particularly those relating to the Cathedral Close.

**15.58** Future incremental development proposals should respect the well-vegetated nature of the area and the importance of trees in the area for the immediate setting and the contribution that the trees in this area make to longer views of the city. There should be no net loss of trees as a result of development proposals.

## Boundary Changes

**15.59** Cathedral Rise is a cul-de-sac of late 20th century houses. It is proposed to remove numbers 2 to 10 Cathedral Rise from the conservation area. Numbers 1 and 11 will remain in the conservation area, to protect the setting the walls of The Close which are on the opposite side of the road.



Picture 15.24 Cathedral Rise

## Character Area 8: Gaia Lane Extension

### Summary

**15.60** The Gaia Lane Extension Character Area is located immediately to the north of Stowe Pool. It extends north-west from the junction of Gaia Lane with Parchment Lane to include St Chads Road and part of Curborough Road.

**15.61** The character of the area is defined by early 20th century residential houses in a combination of mostly semi-detached houses with a small number of short terraces and some detached houses almost all of which are distinctly Arts and Crafts in style. There is a range of later 20th century housing within the character area principally on the north side of St Chad's Road and in The Parchments off Gaia Lane.



## City Morphology, Archaeology and History

**15.62** Prior to the end of the 19th Century there was only one building within this area, Golden Meadows Cottage on the north side of St Chad's Road which survives today. This was surrounded by open fields. The 1901 OS map shows a number of buildings on the west side of Gaia Lane and Curborough Road. Between 1908 and 1909 the south side of St Chad's Road and the east side of Gaia Lane were built up.

## Landmarks and Views

**15.63** There are no significant landmarks within this character area. In fact much of the character comes from the domestic scale of the buildings and their relative uniformity.

**15.64** Within the character area views are framed by the houses on either side of the road. There are a small number of vantage points within the area which enable views out across the city. The best of these is from The Parchments which gives a wonderful view across Stowe Pool to St Michael's Church, Greenhill.



Picture 15.25 View from Gaia Lane across Stowe Pool to St Michael's Church



Picture 15.26 View down Curborough Road



Picture 15.27 View down Gaia Lane towards the junction with Curborough Road, depicting some buildings that have Article 4 (2) directives on them.





## CHARACTER AREA 8: GAIA LANE EXTENSION: VIEWS AND VISTAS



Picture 15.28 Gaia Lane Extension Character Area - Map of Views and Vistas

## Key Building Groups

**15.65** The two main groups of historic buildings are the late 19th century cottages to the west of Gaia Lane and Curborough Road and the early 20th century houses to the south of St Chad's Road and the east side of Gaia Lane.

**15.66** A further group of buildings are the later 20th century houses. These are now an established part of the character of the area but were built on previously undeveloped spaces between the historic buildings. Further sub-division of the remaining open spaces would erode the character of the area.



Picture 15.29 Late 20th century houses, screened from the road by trees

## Current Uses

**15.67** The properties within this character area are all residential.

## Townscape Elements

**15.68** The topography of the area is almost totally flat.

**15.69** There is a substantial amount of tree cover within this character area although much of this is within the rear gardens of the houses. There is a belt of trees to the north of St Chad's Road that screens some modern housing from the road. There is also an individual tree at the junction of Gaia Lane, St Chad's Road and Curborough Road which enhances the road junction.



Picture 15.30 Junction of St Chad's Road, Curborough Road and Gaia Lane





**15.70** The vegetation including the soft landscaping in front gardens and hedges all positively contributes to the character of the conservation area and compliments the domestic style of the houses giving the whole area a suburban feel.



Picture 15.31 Gaia Lane Extension Character Area - Map of Townscape Qualities

**15.71** All the buildings are set back from the road and have small front gardens. The boundary treatments are predominantly low brick walls often combined with hedges. These are integral to the character of the area and the loss of boundary treatments has a detrimental effect on this character.

## Building Types and Details

**15.72** The late 19th century cottages are relatively simple in design, either red brick or render, with a pitched roof in clay tiles and brick chimneys.





Picture 15.32 Late 19th century cottages

**15.73** The early 20th Century houses are Arts and Crafts in style with ornate timber work including bargeboards, half-timbering, and decorative porches. All are constructed of red brick with some, limited, areas of render. All the buildings are two storey in height.



Picture 15.33 St Chad's Road



Picture 15.34 Curborough Road, the design details of the late 20th century houses on the left are not traditional but the massing of the house is in keeping with the character of the area

## Opportunities and Constraints

**15.74** The reinstatement of lost boundary treatments, such as brick walls, would enhance the character of the area.

**15.75** Future incremental development proposals should respect the well-vegetated nature of the area and the importance of trees in the area for the immediate setting and the contribution that the trees in this area make to longer views of the city. There should be no net loss of trees as a result of development proposals.

**15.76** Parts of this character area including properties on St Chad's Road, Gaia Lane and Curborough Road have an Article 4.2 Directive. The Council will consider whether there are other properties that may also benefit from an Article 4.2 Directive and consult with the property owners where appropriate.

## Boundary Changes

**15.77** There are no proposed boundary changes within this character area.