

RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**BILTON
CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**



July 2008

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1 INTRODUCTION

Bilton is located some 1.5 miles south of the centre of Rugby and was originally a separate village which only became part of Rugby in the twentieth century, officially merging into the larger settlement in the 1930's. It is approached from Rugby from the north-east along Bilton Road with relatively high density suburban development all around.

The Conservation Area broadly falls into two sections. The older part of the designation centres on St Mark's Church and Bilton Hall with low density development including houses set in spacious plots. There are two modern cul de sac developments to the south-west of the church.

The second character area centres on The Green and the commercial part of Bilton. The wide open space of the recreation ground and the series of green spaces contrast with the high density and compact commercial centre along Main Street. The general form of this sub area is more uniform with buildings sited adjacent to the highway with limited land to the rear.

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

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

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

There are different planning controls in Conservation Areas and anyone proposing development should seek advice from Rugby Borough Planning Authority. The main effects of designation area are:

- all Planning Applications for development which would affect the character of a Conservation Area must be advertised in the local press and site notices posted;
- the construction of an extension over 50 cubic metres or more than 10% of the original volume, whichever is the greater, or in any case by more than 115 cubic metres, will require planning permission;
- Conservation Area Consent is often required for the demolition of buildings, or significant part of buildings, or in any case where demolition exceeds 115 cubic metres;
- Planning Permission is required for some alterations to dwellings including the installation of dormer windows and cladding;

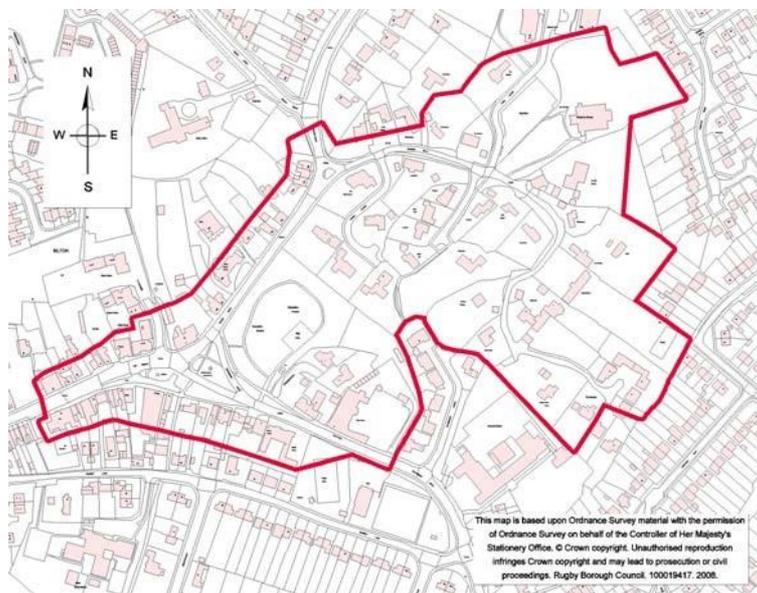
- Conservation Area designation also protects trees within the boundary by requiring owners to give the Local Planning Authority six weeks notice of their intention to carry out any tree work on trees that have a trunk exceeding 75mm in diameter measured 1.5 metres from the ground.

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

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

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

MAP 1 CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION



2 LOCATION AND CONTEXT

Bilton is a relatively small Conservation Area covering only part of the village. The designation is bordered to the west by buildings which would have formed part of the village prior to the merging into Rugby with suburban development to the east and south. There are three main approaches into Bilton, Bilton Road from the north-east, Cawston from the west and Bawnmore Road to the east.

The land and buildings within the Conservation Area are generally of good quality and well maintained. There is however potential for development pressure including infilling open spaces with new dwellings, the provision of outbuildings including garages, alterations to fenestration or architectural detailing, the removal of native planting, the planting of inappropriate tree species and the erection of alien boundary treatments such as close boarded fencing. The commercial centre brings its own pressures for change especially with branding and advertising. Such changes could adversely affect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

3 GENERAL CHARACTER AND FORM

Bilton Conservation Area is essentially characterised by two areas. To the south-west is the commercial core leading to The Green with shops, pubs, services and associated parking. The park is at the busy hub of the Conservation Area. The Green is truncated by highway and at this point is bristling with traffic. The buildings hug Main Street and the eastern part of Bawnmore Road. This contrasts to the large open undeveloped recreation ground or park. This park is partly read in conjunction with the adjacent series of green spaces at the convergence of Bilton Road, Bawnmore Road and Main Street.

Whilst the green open spaces form a significant part of the character and appearance of the second area it is of a different nature. Gardens providing relief from development, grass verges provide the setting to many buildings and the lower density nature of development is often set with a backdrop of mature trees. The more uniform pattern of development of the commercial area contrasts with the siting of dwellings in the second sub area which loosely follow the adjacent highways with significant set backs from the roads and large spaces around the buildings. This section is less developed and is far removed from the noise, traffic and activity of the commercial area.

PHOTOGRAPH 2 ASSHETON PARK



4 LANDSCAPE SETTING

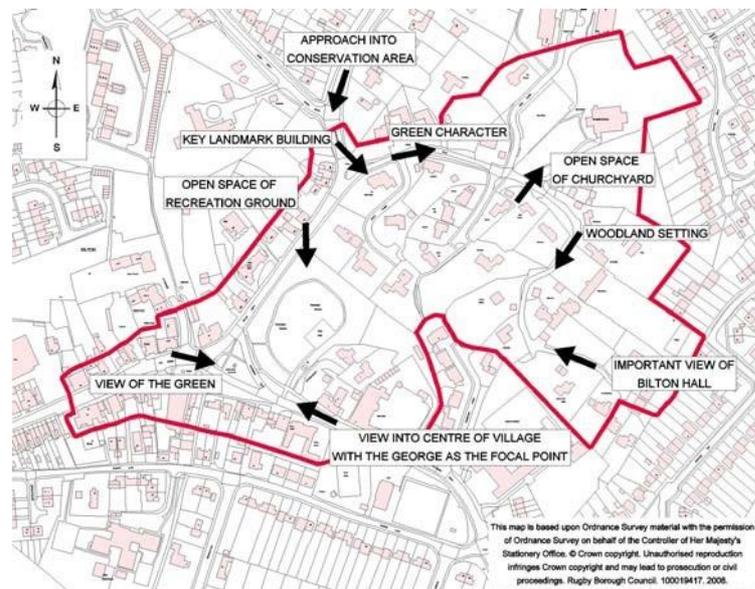
High density treed landscape and the large park/green spaces are an important characteristic of the south-western end of the Conservation Area. Gardens generally play a limited role in this part of the designation. There is a fine collection of trees within the park and on The Green areas which although separated by roads are read together as a cohesive element.

The character area to the north-east is set within a backdrop of mature trees and contains mature landscaping. There are a number of important groups of trees such as those around St Mark's Church. Hedges bordering highways are another essential feature in this sub section. This part of the Conservation Area retains a detached village feel which is due in part to the landscaping that enhances the buildings. Whilst in the commercial area the greenery is often limited on private parcels of land the eastern part is characterised by buildings set in a landscaped dominated environment. The buildings are in larger grounds often with substantial front gardens and open space, such as at the entrance to the cul de sac opposite Pool Close.

PHOTOGRAPH 3 LANDSCAPE SETTING TO BUILDINGS



MAP 2 KEY VIEWS INTO AND WITHIN THE VILLAGE.



5 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Bilton was historically a village in its own right; its name is derived from Anglo Saxon Beolatun, Beola's town. It is also possible that the name was a derivative of Bell, being

a stream on which the village stood, and ton, the old English meaning for village. The village was mentioned in the Domesday Book though with some confusion as references were made to Beltone and Bentone.

The oldest building in the village is St Mark's Church with the mid 14th century work probably the result of the patronage of Sir Nicholas de Charnels, Lord of the Manor of Bilton and holder of the advowson at this time. The family coat of arms appears twice on the south side of the tower.

In 1730 the village consisted of approximately forty houses and in the nineteenth century the settlement expanded to comprise the church, village green, the ancient cross and the stocks. The stocks were last used in 1866. There were large estates and some farming land in the vicinity providing employment.

Under the Rugby Urban District (Extension) Order 1931 the greater part of the ancient parish of Bilton was transferred for civil purposes to Rugby.

Amongst noteworthy men associated with Bilton are Joseph Addison who was Lord of the Manor from 1711 to 1719 and Henry Holyoake, rector from 1705 to 1731, and the first headmaster of Rugby School.

Another important association is that of the Assheton family. Mr Assheton erected the Magnet building, to be used for social and recreational purposes to attract people from pubs; this has now been converted into cottages. The work carried out by the Rev Orme Assheton and the architect G F Bodley in the 1870's is a particularly good example of high Victorian piety. The recreation ground takes the family name.

6 ARCHAEOLOGY

Sites of important historical archaeology within and in the locality of the conservation area include the following and shown on Map 3.

MWA3340 – the site of Bilton Stocks, a wooden structure in which the feet and/or hands of criminals would be have locked as a punishment. The stocks were used during the Post Medieval and Imperial periods. They are situated on The Green.

MWA3341 – Bilton Cross, a market cross that originally dates to the Medieval period. It was restored during the Imperial period, the cross is situated on The Green.

MWA3342 – The Church of St Mark's which was originally built during the Medieval period the church was largely restored during the Imperial period, it is situated on Church Walk.

MWA3359 – Bilton Hall, a house that was built during the Post Medieval period. It was largely rebuilt at the end of the 18th century, it is situated south of Church Walk.

MWA3386 – The Long Barn, a barn that was built during the Post Medieval period. It is a timber framed building situated close to Church Walk.

MWA3632 – Bilton House, which was built during the Imperial period, it is situated on the Green.

MWA3633 – the site of a fishpond, used for the breeding and storing of fish. It is marked on the Ordnance Survey map of 1886 but is of unknown date. It now lies under housing 100 metres north-east of the church of St Mark's.

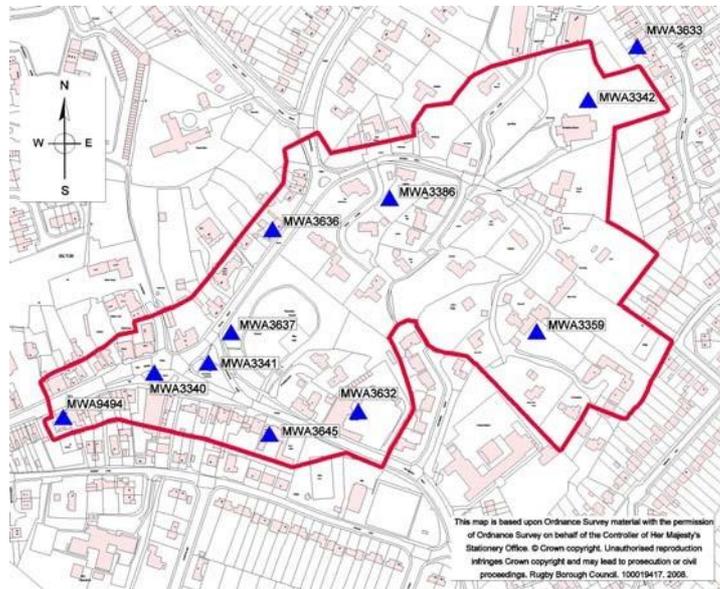
MWA3636 – the site of a quarry that was in use during the Imperial period. It is marked on the tithe map of 1840. The quarry was situated in the area of Bilton Road.

MWA3637 – the site of a forge where wrought iron was made during the Imperial period. The forge is marked on the tithe map of 1840. It was situated on The Green.

MWA3645 – Manor House, which is marked on the Ordnance Survey map of 1905, is situated on The Green. It might date to the Imperial or earlier period.

MWA9494 – The probable extent of Medieval settlement based on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887.

MAP 3 ARCHAEOLOGY



7 ARCHITECTURE, BUILDING MATERIALS AND FEATURES

Bilton has buildings dating from the fourteenth century to the late twentieth century. St Mark's Church is the oldest building in the Conservation Area dating from the fourteenth century with general restorations by G F Bodley in 1872-3. The original part of Bilton Hall dates from 1623 and there are timber framed buildings such as Long Barn on Church Walk which date from the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century.

The majority of development however took place in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The commercial area of Bilton Conservation Area is dominated by Victorian architecture with some earlier buildings such as The George Inn which date from the early nineteenth century. The Arts and Crafts buildings on Church Walk date from the early twentieth century, the buildings around part of The Green are later and are from the early twentieth century and the inter war period. Much of the cul de sac development off Church Walk dates from the latter part of that century with the latest development to take place being The Gardens.

Despite this later period of development there is coherence in the architectural style and materials. The dominant wall material is red brick. This is used on much of the commercial and domestic buildings in the western part of the Conservation Area. Much of the more recent development has also incorporated red brick. There are a large number of buildings that are whitewashed including Georgian, Victorian and some of the Arts and Crafts buildings. The timber framed buildings have whitewashed infilling. The dominant church is of sandstone ashlar and the adjacent former vicarage of a buff brick.

The roof materials include slate, dark plain tiles, red plain tiles and thatch. Some of the former slate roofs have been replaced with unsympathetic concrete roof tiles. The most used roofing material is however the dark small scale clay plain tile.

One of the key features in the Conservation Area is the mix of building styles. The architecture in the eastern section is grander, including the church, Bilton Hall and The Old Rectory. The Long Barn is an important and attractive building and the Arts and Crafts buildings along Church Walk form a group of buildings which sit well within the landscaped environment and complement the quality and historic interest of the other prominent buildings. Much of the remaining buildings within this sub section are lower key modern development.

The Church Walk area contrasts with the western part of the Conservation Area which is generally characterised by Victorian development. The architecture in the commercial area is more functional, with smaller buildings located in close proximity to each other (or in terraced form) and has a more planned appearance.

The traditional fenestration is characterised by timber sash windows for the Victorian buildings and leaded lights on the Arts and Crafts buildings. There is no strong defining character found with the shop fronts as few retain the original detailing.

Chimneys also feature prominently as a whole especially on the Victorian and early twentieth century buildings. The chimneys on a number of the Arts and Crafts houses include recessed panels.

8 DETAILED ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT

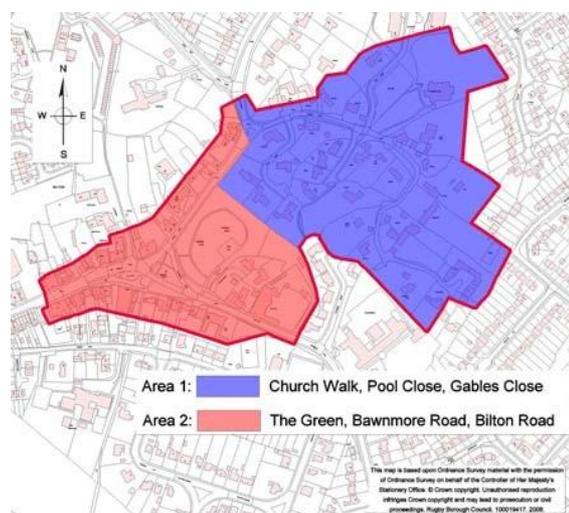
In order to make the appraisal more legible and informative the detailed assessment of the architectural and historic character has been divided into two smaller areas (see **Map 4** below). These sub areas have been chosen to incorporate buildings and spaces which relate to each other both geographically and characteristically and comprise:

Area 1: Church Walk, Pool Close, Gables Close

Area 2: The Green, Bawnmore Road, Bilton Road.

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

MAP 4 CHARACTER AREAS



AREA 1: Church Walk, Pool Close and Gables Close

This sub area is characterised by a series of historically important landmark buildings set in a well landscaped environment with low key modern infilling. The area retains its village appearance and scale with low density development and mature landscaping. An additional common theme is buildings based on the Arts and Crafts Movement. The first part of the area, up to and including the church, has a number of key buildings of different character interspersed by low key infill development all within a landscape dominated environment. The second part of the sub area, commencing with Whitehayes and Dunsmore, is dominated by Bilton Hall and the surrounding Arts and Crafts development with a lower level of infill. The environment becomes even more landscape orientated with views of buildings often blocked by the trees and hedges.

The Conservation Area commences to the west of Church Walk on Bilton Road, this approach from Rugby incorporates mainly inter war semi detached dwellings. Glimpses of buildings along Bilton Road are brought into view and to the eastern side is a mass of hedging and trees providing dominant green enclosure to the street scene.

Mature landscaping continues into Church Walk with a herringbone boundary wall serving The Gable House. This wall and landscaping is of considerable importance in providing a focal point into Church Walk.

PHOTOGRAPH 4 BOUNDARY TREATMENT AT THE ENTRANCE OF CHURCH WALK



The landmark Gable House acts as a gateway to Church Walk and gives an initial impression of the quality of design and architectural interest beyond. A large and sprawling house in the Gothic Revival style of 1896 it comprises a facade of three large gables with timber framing and white infilling with two gables jettied out above the ground floor. Brick and whitewashed wall materials are used with a dark plain tiled roof and an eclectic mix of fenestration including leaded lights. The building opens out along the side elevation with further gables visible. The architecture contains elements of Arts and Crafts movement, or style, with prominent chimneys and leaded lights.

PHOTOGRAPH 5 THE GABLE HOUSE



On the opposite side of Gable Close is a small red brick garage serving The Gable House. Of red brick and plain tile with fish bone detailing the building incorporates a chimney with lean to on the rear elevation. The building is a good example of a small scale outbuilding that complements the style of the main dwelling. The building has a landscaped setting which includes the grass verge and tree planting.

Adjacent to this garage is Long Barn, a timber framed building with whitewashed infilling and a two storey rear projection. Important features include external chimney stacks on each end gable, square leaded lights, a thatched roof and a thatched front porch.

PHOTOGRAPH 6 LONG BARN



The Spinney is a two storey white rendered house set at an angle to the road. Due to orientation this building has two important elevations. On approach from the west the front elevation, with shuttered ground floor windows and small windows on the first floor under the eaves creates a more prominent elevation. From the east the side elevation is dominant comprising a double storey bay window and a smaller gable window above.

The white walls contrast with the Westmoreland slate, laid in diminishing courses, and reflect a style based loosely on the Arts and Crafts movement.

PHOTOGRAPH 7 THE SPINNEY



St Mark's Church is the most prominent of the series of landmark structures. It is of red sandstone composed in the Perpendicular and Decorated styles. Much of the current appearance is a result of Bodley's restoration of 1872-3. At this time the northern arcade and aisle were added. The spire is recessed with lucarnes and a castellated tower at the base of the spire. The church is accessed via timber gates supported by carved timber posts set within a stone wall with copings. There is a mass of landscaping within the grounds, on the boundaries adjacent to railings and in the cemetery to the front. The spire is visible from many locations and is an attractive dominant feature projecting above the large number of significant trees surrounding the church.

Beyond St Mark's Church is The Old Rectory. Built of buff brick and slate it is an imposing Victorian building with contrasting red brick segmental arches, spider web tracery in the fanlight with timber side panels providing an imposing front entrance. The building has prominent chimneys and is set in extensive grounds to the side and rear. Within the grounds is a red brick Victorian building of smaller and less grand proportions and detailing but which complements the former rectory. Both buildings are visible from the churchyard and through the boundary railings and landscaping. The buildings demonstrate the rare use of buff brick in the Conservation Area. The formal classical architectural detailing contrasts with the more vernacular Arts and Crafts development.

Although of differing character and appearances, the key buildings are drawn into architectural cohesion by the dominant treed landscape. The soft approach provided by the hedges adjacent to Bliton Road continues with grass verges, hedges and mature trees within the designation. Gardens are visible creating a spacious setting for the buildings and there is a backdrop of mature trees. This is especially evident looking towards the church and behind Gable Close.

There are also pockets of green open space which add to the character. To the west of Pool Close are a series of small green spaces which partially offset the impact of St Mark's Court and which terminate views out of the Conservation Area. The church car park is large and contains no landscaping within the site. Although it is of limited visual importance the car park acts as a vital open space protecting the setting of the adjacent church.

A further important area of landscaping lies to the sides of the cul de sac opposite Pool Close with grass and tree planting. Together they provide a green and open element along Church Walk and on the approach into the cul de sac. This gives rise to a rural village appearance with low key development set within heavily landscaped areas.

The final dominant characteristic is the modern infill development. Although of different styles, comprising bungalows and two storey development, the theme utilises low key architecture within a spacious landscape dominated environment. The majority of these buildings are on Gable Close and the cul de sac to the east. Gable Close is narrow and accommodates four low level bungalows set behind landscaped boundaries with mature trees as a backdrop.

The cul de sac has a rather more suburban appearance with tarmaced pavements to both sides bordered by concrete kerbstones. The buildings comprise single and two storey dwellings dating from the 1960's or 1970's.

Beyond the church and rectory there is a series of buildings where the architectural expression moves towards the Arts and Crafts style. Little Thatch is a two storey thatched house with prominent gable to the front, chimneys with recessed panels to the sides, white render and leaded lights. The site is well landscaped with a mature holly hedge which prevents full views of the building. The entrance gates are underneath a dominant thatched canopy.

The hedge leads to the narrower segment of Church Walk. Surrounded by mature trees and landscaping a view of Whitehayes emerges. Again full views are not possible of this whitewashed two storey dwelling which incorporates a plain tiled roof, heavy stone detailing on the window surrounds, leaded lights, exposed timber from the roof structure and brick chimney stacks with the same recessed panels as on Little Thatch. The building has a gable to the front with the size of fenestration diminishing on the upper floors. The setting of the building is enhanced by the cottage style garden.

PHOTOGRAPH 8 WHITEHAYES



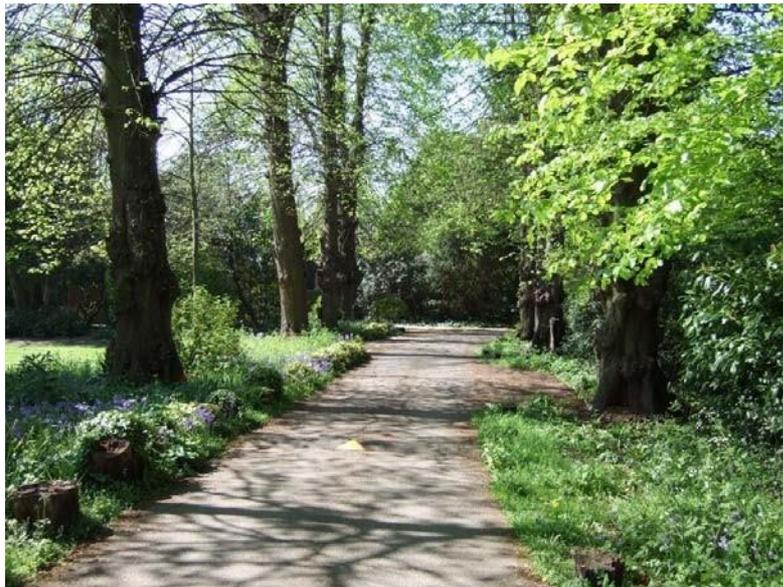
The building is an important focal point forming part of the view on the approach into this part of Church Walk. The building terminates the view on the exit before Church Walk turns north-west. It appears to have been the work of the same architect who designed others in the vicinity including Little Thatch and Church Walk House.

The theme of Arts and Crafts continues with Addison Cottage, a red brick two storey dwelling with sharply pitched roof, heavy stone window detailing, brown plain tiled roof, leaded lights, chimney and dormers. To the south-east is Church Walk House, a brick white painted dwelling with a prominent gable to the front, stone window surround, leaded lights, plain tiled roof, chimneys and garage. Although separated by other buildings, the Arts and Crafts theme runs throughout, although full views are not possible due to the landscape setting.

The dominating structure is Bilton Hall and its curtilage. As Church Walk meanders southwards the narrow highway is bordered by grass verges and a line of mature trees. The cottage, a red brick and stone building which formed part of a group of buildings serving Bilton Hall, is sited at the entrance of this heavily landscaped environment. With a gable facing the road the building is of limited height and of relatively small proportions. The cottage appearance is reinforced by the black and white timber panelling and infilling in the upper part of the gable. The building is set behind a small area of landscaping.

Stable House is a one and a half storey stone building with dominant chimneys and several dormers. The windows to the ground floor are mullioned and transomed with leaded lights. The building is set well back from the highway with two accesses. The trees and the landscaping prevent a full view of the building from the road. The building is important in being the former stables to Bilton Hall.

PHOTOGRAPH 9 LANDSCAPING ON CHURCH WALK



Bilton Hall dates from 1623 and incorporates alterations and additions from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is of two and three storeys with attics and incorporates a prominent gable to the front adjacent to the projecting porch with pediment to the front. The windows are mixed in character and include some casements with mullions and transoms. To the rear the main elevation divides into three sections, a red brick two storey part with dormers in a loose Queen Anne style, a central section of three storeys including a dominant gable with balcony on the second floor, all of which is rendered, and a third section furthest from the road of two storeys and of red brick. The roofline is varied with changes in levels, gables, finials and numerous chimneys.

The Hall's architectural status derives from its size and location. The landscaping prevents clear views of the building which emerges unexpectedly as a dominant and

large structure. The building is more open to views from the side and rear and dominates the setting of the cul de sac at the end of Church Walk.

Church Walk terminates in a cul de sac which is a mix of styles and materials including red brick, timber panelling and leaded lights and more standard estate development including canopies to front and paved driveways. Due to the landscaping and the lower land levels this group of buildings is relatively unobtrusive. Although the cul de sac is highway dominated and lacks the intimacy of the earlier part of the Conservation Area, the greenery (including the backdrop of mature landscaping) softens the character.

This subsection of the Conservation Area can therefore be characterised by an Arts and Crafts theme running with other prominent landmark buildings of mixed character and low key, low density modern infill development. The thread holding these three main elements together is the landscaping. Hedges, trees and grass verges either complement the buildings or dominate the street scene. The affect intensifies around Bilton Hall with its woodland setting. A number of buildings have trees as a backdrop and the landscaping often allows only glimpses of buildings.

Overall this part of the Conservation Area retains a feel of a village and once well within this area the proximity to the approach to Rugby and the commercial heart of Bilton seem distant.

AREA 2: Bilton Road, The Green and Bawnmore Road.

This sub area contains the commercial centre of Bilton and the open expanses of the recreation ground and 'Green'. Whilst the village appearance continues the character is contrasting to Church Walk with a more spacious appearance.

The northern side of Bilton Road is characterised by Victorian buildings set close to the highway with occasional buildings set further back into sites. This results in a generally strong street scene with a sense of enclosure. Numbers 306-310 Bilton Road is a two storey terrace of red brick set close to the highway. The building incorporates a prominent front gable, dormers of different styles and a non symmetrical facade with leaded lights and timber panelling. The side elevation of the building is highly visible from the approach from Rugby and the facade dominates the view when leaving Church Walk. This distinctive late Victorian building acts as a gateway into the Conservation Area.

PHOTOGRAPH 10 VICTORIAN DEVELOPMENTS ON BILTON ROAD



A number of buildings continue the pattern of development close to the highway. Numbers 314, 316, 324 and 326 Bilton Road comprising a mix of Victorian/Edwardian red brick buildings abutting the pavement.

This historic character is interspersed by relatively modern infill development set further into the sites. Bilton Church House, a single storey building of red brick and plain tile roof with four louvered eyebrow dormer windows, is also set back. Its gothic type composition with feature chimney complements the vernacular character of other historic buildings in the area. The building is set back from the road with landscaping to the front. The size of the building provides a strong presence within the street scene.

In contrast the south-eastern side of Bilton Road is dominated by the Assheton Recreation Ground. This large and predominantly grassed area sits behind a boundary comprising metal fence and planting. The park runs along Main Street and into The Green and Bawnmore Road. The recreation ground is an important open space within the Conservation Area at the centre of the settlement. It provides a break from the higher density development and commercial element of the area and is a focal point on all approaches. The space is read in conjunction with the green spaces at the junction of Main Street, Bilton Road and Bawnmore Road and softens the whole area. Surrounding buildings can be glimpsed through the mature trees.

The Green to the south-west is funnelled in shape (being wider at the busier west end) and has a more built up enclosure in contrast. The space enclosed by buildings is dominated by mature trees. The historic importance of the Green is reinforced by the market cross.

The 'Green' also provides prominence to The George. This pub is of three storeys, with two storey wings, and dates from the late Georgian period. It is a striking building with contrasting white walls and black painted windows and shutters. It occupies a commanding position at the head of the 'green' and abuts the road. The George terminates views and provides a strong focal point on entering the village from Bawnmore Road. The setting of the building to the side and rear compromises the vehicular entrance, concrete bollards and exposed car park. This provides a stark and harsh appearance, in contrast to the green leafy character of the other large open spaces.

PHOTOGRAPH 11 THE SETTING OF THE GEORGE



In the commercial centre, on the northern side of The Green, there is a mix of dwellings and commercial properties which have a greater variety in architectural form than the development on the southern side which has a more cohesive appearance.

Modern residential development adjacent to The George, comprising two and three storey accommodation, complements the scale of The George and reinforces the sense of enclosure on the 'Green'. The mix of brick and render responds to other properties along Main Street and those on Bawnmore Road.

The group of commercial buildings along the northern part of Main Street are of a mix of design, materials and size. The buildings include the single storey surgery building, a two storey red brick building with single storey flat roof elements incorporating shops, and two storey dwellings and buildings abutting the highway. Although there is no common architectural theme buildings have a strong street scene presence. Buildings such as 22 and 26 The Green are attractive Victorian buildings sited close to the highway. The garden to number 22 provides a rare green space in the commercial part of the Conservation Area. The outbuildings to the rear provide an uncommon sense of depth to development.

Despite the difference in materials and style this group of buildings have a consistent building line abutting or adjacent to the road, are predominantly two storey and mostly of red brick and slate or plain tile. The buildings, whether in commercial or residential use, have prominent ground floor windows, gables to the side and incorporate chimneys. The collection of buildings provides a strong sense of enclosure, the only respite being accesses and the garden serving 22 The Green. There are few gap sites, the only depth being provided by small spaces which allow views of the buildings which are located behind the front line buildings. The setting of these buildings, when viewed from the west, is however affected by the open space immediately adjacent to 30 The Green which is a car park with a wide entrance. This site presents a space with no strong boundary treatment adjacent to an almost continuous line of development and does not complement the established character within this part of the Conservation Area. The commercial buildings are clearly identified through the fascias and shop fronts, none of which are especially attractive or representative of the age of the buildings.

The buildings on the southern side of The Green contrast with those to the northern part through a greater cohesion, consistency in architecture and provide an even stronger sense of enclosure. The buildings are also given an enhanced setting as although they abut the pavement they are separated by off street parking which allows enhanced views of the buildings.

The Black Horse public house is a two and single storey white painted building with plain brown tiles, incorporating a hipped roof and leaded lights. The appearance is more akin to the Arts and Crafts style than the more functional Victorian architecture seen in the adjacent buildings. The car parks abutting the highway lose the sense of enclosure to the street and the degree of greenery found in the other public spaces within the Conservation Area.

The adjacent terrace of buildings provides a strong sense of enclosure to the street scene. The variety in scale and composition creates an attractive historic group.

The unit adjacent to the Fish Bar is an imposing three storey structure. It has a central door flanked by bay windows to the ground floor and has two windows on the first and second floors of diminishing sizes. The building is more imposing than its neighbours as a consequence of its additional height and double fronted facade. The building incorporates more architectural embellishment than its neighbours with arched lintels above small paned windows and dentilated eaves. This building, accommodating a chemist, dwarfs its neighbour which is a low two storey white painted structure with a

projecting ground floor flat roof and single window to the limited height of the first floor. To the other side is a more traditional Victorian red brick and slate two storey building with shop to the ground floor and three traditional Victorian sash windows to the first floor. The series of projecting/hanging signs adds additional interest to the facades.

PHOTOGRAPH 12 STREET SCENE ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF THE GREEN



The terrace is fronted by a parking area for vehicles which detracts from the setting of the historic terrace.

As The Green turns north-east the character becomes more fragmented and the sense of enclosure and cohesion in building style and scale is lost. The commercial section ends with a single storey timber framed building of white painted brick infill with two windows in the front gable and a plain tiled roof. The building is small and detached yet is important in completing the commercial area in a characterful manner. Although the building is not characteristic to the Conservation Area it is one of the oldest in the area and, as with The George, is important in providing a sense of historic development.

Heading towards Bawnmore Road the character returns to domestic vernacular forms. The Moat is a detached two storey dwelling of red brick with a rendered area between the ground and first floor bow windows. The eaves overhang significantly with leaded lights under a plain tiled roof. Number 7 The Green is similar.

The last building along the southern side of Bawnmore Road in the Conservation Area is Manor House. This is a large two storey rendered Victorian terrace in a Tudor style with imposing gable and drip moulds, chimneys with shallow recesses, slate roof and leaded lights. There is landscaping in the narrow front garden which gives visual relief to the facade and reflects the garden setting to neighbouring properties.

PHOTOGRAPH 13 DEVELOPMENT ON BAWNMORE ROAD



The group of buildings to the southern side of Bawnmore Road are eclectic and close knit. They form an attractive framework to the Green.

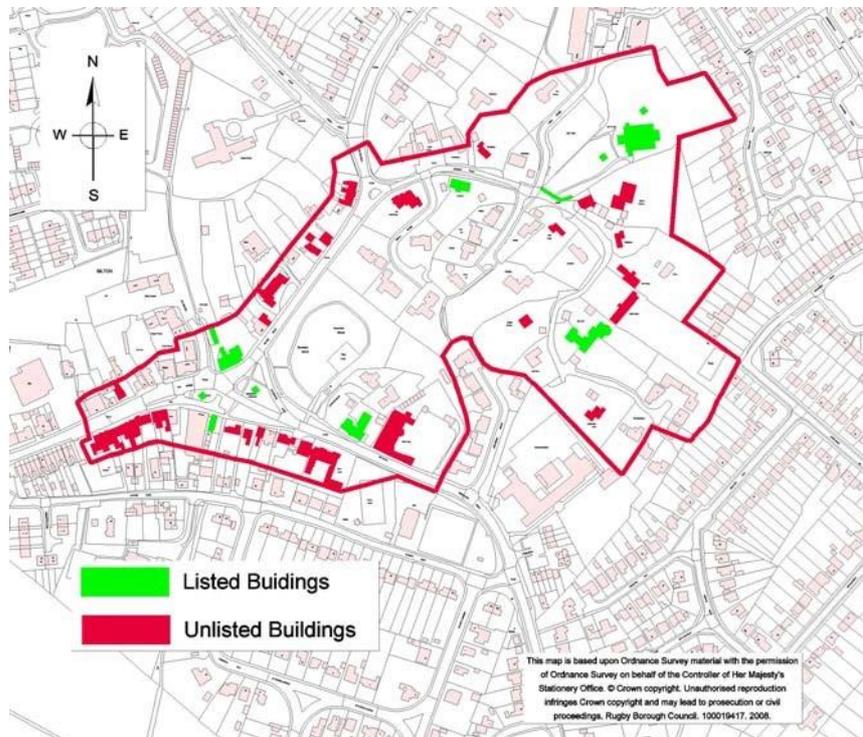
The character is more fragmented along the northern side of Bawnmore Road. There is an imposing three storey red brick and plain tile building with two storey bay windows. The building is important due to its dominant scale. The architectural motifs of the large hipped roof, the size and number of chimney stacks and overhanging eaves suggest a historical building of some importance and grandeur. The origin of Bilton House dates possibly from the seventeenth century. To the rear the building has been extended and incorporates a car park, these are however not in view from the public realm.

Number 1-3 The Green is a cream painted brick dwelling which is set close to the highway behind a narrow and well planted front garden. With the black painted windows, the red/brown roof tiles and the chimneys the building has a gothic vernacular appearance. This property and Bilton House are significant elements in the street scene.

This sub area can be defined as being the busy hub of the settlement. The quiet village feel of the around the church gives way to busy roads and commercial activity adjacent to a large green public space. The architecture is varied from the more formal Victorian to Arts and Crafts influenced buildings.

9 CONTRIBUTION OF UNLISTED BUILDINGS

MAP 5 LISTED BUILDINGS AND IMPORTANT UNLISTED BUILDINGS



Unlisted buildings can make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by complementing the listed structures and providing interesting, varied townscape. Bilton House is one such structure. It has significant scale and historic interest.

Manor House is another important unlisted building. As with Bilton House it is an imposing structure at the entrance to the Conservation Area along Bawnmore Road. Its size and detailing makes a valuable contribution to the area.

Numbers 306-310 Bilton Road is visible on the approach from Rugby and provides the visual termination to Church Walk, setting the tone for that section of the Conservation Area buildings.

Opposite is The Gable House. This red brick and timber framed building is a good example of Victorian gothic revival. It occupies a prominent corner plot and forms an entrance to the sub section of the Conservation Area.

The importance of the Victorian era is complemented by The Old Rectory and the adjacent outbuilding. Although these structures do not respond to the general character of buildings in Church Walk they represent a good example of design at that period and are historically connected to the church.

The Cottage and Stable House contrast in form and style to Bilton Hall. It is clear from the architecture that these buildings were formerly part of the estate and although in separate use remain important to the setting and understanding of the Hall.

The buildings on Church Walk, such as Little Thatch, Whitehayes and Church Walk, House are an important group of non listed buildings, forming a cohesive collection of

Arts and Craft influenced dwellings. They have similar detailing, such as the chimneys, and following the design principles of that movement.

10 STREET FURNITURE

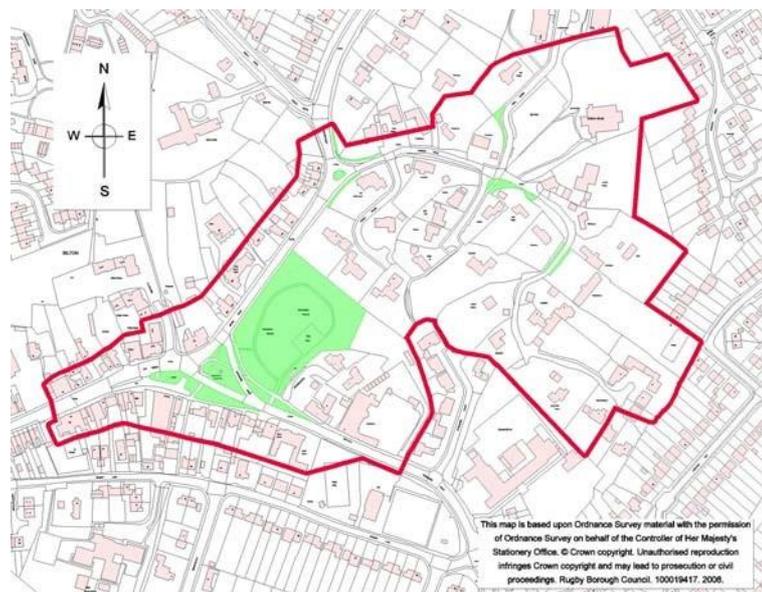
Street furniture is an important element in the Conservation Area reinforcing local identity. Positive elements such as the village stocks and cross are part of the history of the settlement as well as a visual feature within the street scene. Furthermore, the use of traditional street name signs, or the placing of such signs on walls, as at the entrance to Church Walk, enhances the street scene. The use of more traditional street lighting, for example along Church Walk, introduces a rural character and a move away from the standard modern street lighting.

In the area around the church street furniture is relatively limited although there is a degree of clutter on the green at the entrance to Church Walk. In places, such as around Bilton Hall, the lack of street furniture aids the rural character.

Although much of the street furniture is positive in character enhancements could take place. These could include the undergrounding of the wires currently on telegraph poles, a more traditional bus shelter and all street signs being consistent in appearance, type and material, e.g. through the use of cast iron signs on buildings or boundary walls. This would reduce clutter and provide a stronger sense of place.

11 GREEN AND OPEN SPACES

MAP 6 IMPORTANT GREEN AND OPEN SPACES



Open space is crucial to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Although surrounded by suburban development open and green spaces play an important but different role in the two sub areas of the Conservation Area. In the first area grass verges, front gardens and mature trees create a village feel. The main road, Church Walk, is dominated by hedges and attractive landscaped front gardens to create a landscape dominated environment where the houses emerge into view. The second cul de sac with the grassed approach echoes the landscaped character of Church Walk and the cemetery provides the extensive setting for the church. Further into Church Walk the landscape character becomes more dominant and enclosed, with an almost woodland setting around Bilton Hall. Front gardens in the cottage garden style add to

the setting of buildings and reduce their visual impact. Overall the spaces in this sub section tend to be more informal than the commercial area.

Open and green space remains a key feature in the second sub area. The recreation ground is the largest single land use with open views to the park on approaches from all directions. This park complements the series of green spaces in front of The George at the main highway junction. These areas provide a green and open setting which contrasts with the busy and more developed commercial area ensuring that the settlement retains its village character. Front gardens play a smaller role as buildings are often close to the road, however, they remain important in creating a green edge by the highway.

Trees and hedges play an important role in the Conservation Area, in both sub areas. The approach into Church Walk is characterised by the Holly hedge bordering The Gable House and a hornbeam on the grassed area at the junction with Rugby Road. The setting of the approach is completed by the yew tree on the northern corner of Church Walk. A further important group of trees is located in the churchyard with oak, hawthorn, douglas fir, pines, yews and a hazel and beech hedge bordering the site. The well treed theme continues towards Bilton Hall with the approach dominated by the line of limes. There are impressive oaks further into Church Walk. Mature trees also provide a backdrop to this part of the Conservation Area with prunus, silver birch and sycamore trees to the north of Pool Close and Wellingtonia to the north of Bawnmore Court.

The trees on the green spaces at the junction of Bawnmore Road and The Green include lime, oak and walnut. In the recreation ground there are a fine collection of trees such as oak, red oak, lime, beech, sorbus and silver birch.

Hedges along highway boundaries and to front gardens should be maintained and could be planted on currently open boundaries or where close boarded fences are in situ. These provide a softer green appearance to the area, reinforcing the relationship between the development and the wider landscape and provide a defined boundary between the public and private space.

12 EXISTENCE OF ANY NEUTRAL AREAS

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

The Gardens has a neutral impact. Although planned around a courtyard, using materials that respond to the locality, the buildings are isolated at the eastern end of the conservation area and are not of significant character or appearance to warrant Conservation Area status.

The majority of the buildings on the two cul de sacs of Church Lane are also neutral. Although responding to the leafy setting and low key in appearance and density the buildings are not of sufficient merit to contribute positively to the Conservation Area. However, due to the landscape setting and unobtrusive appearance they do not detract from the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

13 CONCLUSIONS

The overall historic character of Bilton Conservation Area has been well maintained and most architectural details in the older buildings have been preserved. The settlement character can be divided into two sections, the area around the church and the

commercial area. Church Walk is more leafy and quiet and retains almost an isolated character and appearance, the commercial area is more densely used and developed. However there are also many common themes. The Arts and Craft architecture runs through both sub areas along with Victorian brick buildings. Despite the differences in character landscaping, mature trees and green and open spaces feature strongly throughout the Conservation Area.

More recent development has often incorporated elements from the traditional character and maintained a high level of open space and landscaping. However, additional landscaping and softer surface treatment would enhance the Conservation Area. Furthermore, future development in spaces which currently provide a break from buildings, should be restricted in order to protect this character.

14 PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

General Condition

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

Problems, pressure and capacity to change

Incremental changes to buildings can erode the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Alterations to original traditional roof materials, fenestration and architectural motifs such as chimneys would affect the individual building and have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area. The removal of trees, grass verges, hedges or the use of front gardens to park cars would also harm the setting of buildings and reduce the dominance of the landscaped environment.

Boundary treatment is a further important consideration in the Conservation Area. Removal of hedges and the replacement with close boarded fencing for example would introduce an alien feature into the street scene, to the detriment of the area.

An essential characteristic of Church Walk is the space between buildings. Pressure to develop these areas for further housing would result in an increase in density and lead to built development competing with the established landscaped environment.

The commercial area is under pressure from change in use and advertising. This could lead to inappropriate fascia boards, large area of advertising and non traditional shop fronts to fit into corporate branding. At the street level this could erode the appearance and further remove the village character. Accordingly, care should be taken in proposing and approving new shop fronts, fascias, the number and size of advertisements and hanging signs together with minimising the illumination of signs.

Future management proposals

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

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

fenestration details, scale drawings of 1:5 or 1:10 may be required. A Design and Access Statement will also be necessary.

Opportunities for enhancement

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

- The church car park would benefit from further planting or landscaping e.g. a central bank of trees and hedge. Planting could include mixture of oak, silver birch and pine;
- Plant a beech or holly hedge in place of the fences opposite the car park on Pool Close;
- Consider revising the Conservation Area boundary to stop at the end of the Bilton Hall gardens and omit The Gardens;
- Remove the park boundary fencing to achieve more of a common appearance rather than an enclosed park so that the recreation area responds more to the series of open spaces adjacent;
- Reduce the number of highway signs to cut down on clutter;
- Cast iron type street names to be on timber boards on buildings or timber posts;
- Unnecessarily wide vehicular accesses serving dwellings to be reduced and replaced by appropriate landscaping;
- Close boarded fencing abutting the highway should be removed and replaced by native hedge and tree planting;
- More hedge planting on boundaries to provide stronger sense of enclosure;
- Better planting on public space such as adjacent to footpath on Pools Close;
- Fencing to the side of Bilton Hall to be replaced by native hedge planting;
- Use of traditional timber style windows and doors in place of PVCu;
- Car park to The George – re-site the access onto the side road, close the existing access, carry out tree and hedge planting to increase sense of enclosure and to link more effectively to the series of greens and park;
- Plant a native hedge along the rear boundary of the churchyard to minimise the intrusion of the estate to the rear;
- Enhanced boundary treatment to the large entrances into car parks in the commercial area;
- Remove advert hoarding to side of butchers shop;
- All shop signs to be commensurate with the historical and architectural character of the building and street scene;
- Use of slate or clay tiles on roofs in place of concrete tiles.

15 APPENDIX 1

Summary of listed buildings in Bilton Conservation Area

The George Inn (Grade II). Early 19c, stucco, Welsh slate roof. 3 storeys, 3 sash windows with glazing bars under rusticated lintels and keyblocks, rusticated quoins, central 6 fielded panelled door with oblong fanlight in surround, 2 storey 1 window wings either side, recessed on right.

Church of St Mark's, Church Walk (Grade II*). Parish Church. C14, north aisle and general restoration by G F Bodley in 1872-3, south aisle 1962. Pink sandstone ashlar, steep pitched slate roofs with stepped coped verges, foliated crosses and corner pinnacles to east end of chancel. Nave and chancel in one with 4 bay north arcade and 5 bay south arcade overlapping chancel, west tower with spire, north and south porches and north east vestry. Tower, in 3 stages on chamfered plinth with stepped corner buttresses terminating in crocketed empty statue niches to 3 corners and slightly projecting staircase tower with grotesque at base to north east, embattled parapet and corbel table with grotesques and gargoyles, 2 light window with curvilinear tracery and hoodmould to west on ground stage, similar but shorter windows without hoodmoulds to belfry on all sides and broad leafed trefoil headed lancets to all faces on second stage. Spire, recessed and of octagonal plan with 2 tiers of lucernes and foliated cross and weathercock. South aisle, built in 1962 (datestone on wall), but reusing medieval masonry and windows approximating to their original positions on south wall of nave in new south wall, this has gabled stoned porch (1962) in west bay and alternating 3 light curvilinear and reticulated windows with hoodmoulds in remaining 4 bays, square lowside window beneath second window from east and low double chamfered pointed doorway with head stops beneath window in east bay, 3 light windows in east and west walls with reticulated and curvilinear tracery respectively both 1962. Chancel, only one bay projects beyond south aisle and north vestry, east window (datestone 1873) in 6 lights with curvilinear tracery, hoodmould and blind panels to base, the other datestone (1609) in east wall refers to an earlier east window, 3 light window with curvilinear tracery and hoodmoulds, also 1873, in north and south walls. North aisle, 3 eastern bays have 3 light windows with hoodmoulds and alternating reticulated and curvilinear tracery. 20th century timber framed porch with roughcast and brick infill to west bay, 3 light window in west wall with reticulated tracery is former east window (1821) of chancel, moved to present position in 1872, east wall has high level 3 light window with 3 centred arch and reticulated tracery above lean to vestry (1873) in angle with chancel, vestry has pointed doorway and chamfered rectangular window in north wall and 2 windows in east wall, one directly above the other, both of 2 lights with curvilinear tracery, upper steeply pointed, lower square headed, prominent gables corner buttresses. The church is notable for its fine collection of mainly Victorian stained glass, much is by Burlison and Grylls, and includes the east window of the chancel (1874), the west window of the tower, the west window of the south aisle and the window immediately to the east of the south porch (1884). Amongst other glass is the east window of the south aisle (1882), which was made by Richard Orme Assheton, both rector and patron of the church during Bodley's restoration, and who was also responsible for collecting C14 glass from throughout the church and installing it in the north window of the chancel and the east window of the north aisle, to which he made his own additions.

Gothic Tomb to North of North Aisle of Church of St Mark's, Church Walk (Grade II). Churchyard monument in the form of a canopied shrine on 2 low steps. Limestone ashlar. Mid C19. Rectangular plan with open fronted trefoil arched gable ends to east and west and 3 pointed moulded arches, also open, to long sides. Roof is of limestone slabs, carved to resemble fishscale tiles with roll moulding and decorative iron cresting to ridge, grave slab to base has raised cross lid, chamfered plinth. Brass plaques to base of each arch have amorial shields to gable ends and inscriptions to the remainder,

now all missing save one commemorating Julian Hibbert family (d 1834) and another, Dorothy Marsfield (d 1848). The tomb may have been designed by Pugin.

Classical Monument to south west of tower of Church of St Mark's, Church Walk (grade II). Headstone. Mid C18. Local pink sandstone with classical style headstone with semi circular top. West face is divided into 2 rectangular panels by 3 Doric pilasters resting on plain plinth with entablature and the words "In Memory of" to segmental pediment, the letter N of the In is backwards. Inscriptions to panels now largely illegible but the words "Sarah? Wavell" can be made out on the southern panel. Eastern face of headstone plain save for the inscription commemorating John Bosworth (d.1759) and his wife Mary (d. 1749). A handsome headstone showing the growing influence of classical forms while retaining a rustic appearance.

Long Barn, Church Walk, South Side (Grade II). Late C16 or C17, timber framed whitewashed brick nogging, thatched roof. Two storeys, flush leaded casement windows, modern thatched door hood.

1/3 Bawnmore Road (Grade II). Bilton Cottage on Ordnance Survey map. C18 altered early C19. Whitewashed brick, old tiled roof with ornate bargeboards. Two storeys, 1st floor band. 3 flush casement windows and similar window. 6 fielded panelled door under cut bracketed open pediment hood.

Bilton Hall (Grade I). Mainly 1623, incorporating some C16 fabric. Red brick with sandstone dressings, built for Edward Boughton of Lawford (monument in Newbold Church). 2 storeys and attics. 3 bay north block, gabled on left, has central gabled porch with 4 centred arch under later panel with interlocking triangles. Casement windows with mullions and transoms. Much altered section on right, west block at right angles has heraldic panel in gable end. In angle between blocks a tower like projection gabled on 2 sides with finials and kneelers. East garden front altered, said to contain C18 staircase and panelling. Joseph Addison, poet and essayist, lived here 1711-19.

13 The Green (Grade II). C16 or C17, timber framed and whitewashed brick nogging, corrugated roof, 1 storey and attics, flush casement windows with glazing bars.

Stocks, The Green (Grade II). C17 or C18 wooden stocks.

Wayside Cross, The Green (Grade II). Medieval, part of stone shaft, reset in 1897 in stone base of 3 steps, Market Cross on OS map.

APPENDIX 2

Useful Contacts

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

For specific information about the Conservation Area and conservation issues please contact:

Development Strategy
Borough Council Town
Hall
Evreux Way
Rugby
CV21 2RR

Tel: 01788 533533
Email: localplan@rugby.gov.uk

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

Historic England
The Axis
10 Holliday Street
Birmingham
B1 1TG

Tel: 0121 6256888
Email: midlands@HistoricEngland.org.uk

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

The Georgian Group
6 Fitzroy Square
London
W1T 5DX

Tel: 087 1750 2936
Email: office@georgiangroup.org.uk

For "Care for Victorian Houses" leaflet, contact:

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

Tel: 020 8994 1019
Email: admin@victoriansociety.org.uk

For a range of technical advice leaflets, contact:

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

Tel: 020 7377 1644.

Email: info@spab.org.uk

APPENDIX 3

Bibliography

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|---|--|
| The Warwickshire Village Book | Warwickshire Federation of Women's Institute |
| Warwickshire Towns and Villages | Geoff Allen |
| Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15) | |
| Archaeology and Planning (PPG16) | |
| Rugby Borough Local Plan 2006 | |

GLOSSARY

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

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

Casement: window hinged at the side.

Corbel: block of brick projecting from a wall.

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

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

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

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

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

Vernacular: the traditional local construction style.