

Talbot Street/Lichfield Street, Rugeley Conservation Area Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document 2019



Introduction

This area-specific Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) follows from the Council's generic Conservation Areas Management Plan which sets out the package of measures available to the Council to apply to all of its Conservation Areas. The area-specific Plans relate to each of the individual Conservation Areas, based on the recommendations in the individual Conservation Area Appraisals, and should be read in conjunction with the generic Plan.

Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area

Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area was designated in 2002 and covers one of the older, mainly residential, areas around the town centre of Rugeley. Its boundary is shown on Plan 1. Rugeley stands between Lichfield and Stafford on the south bank of the River Trent on ground rising from the valley to the forest and heath of Cannock Chase. The Rising Brook flows down from the Chase through the centre of the town. During the 19th C Rugeley developed from a busy market town to a busy industrial one and it was at this time that new streets, such as Talbot Street and Lichfield Street were built up.

The townscape of Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area is defined by its historic development of well built houses and community buildings (historic school, churches, public houses and cinema, many no longer in their original uses) around a 'planned' street pattern. Its diverse building types and detailing include the tightly built up Horsefair frontage, two substantial brick arched railway bridges and abutments and significant tree planting including the wooded railway embankment which creates a green 'backdrop'. The Conservation Area includes Rugeley's Catholic Church and buildings constructed by people with connections to the Church, such as Heron Court. Much of the Conservation Area appears to date from the 19th and early 20th C and its main use today is residential.

Issues identified in the Talbot Street/Lichfield Street Conservation Area Appraisal

An Appraisal for Talbot Street/Lichfield Street was adopted at Cabinet in 2005 and has now been updated and accompanied by this Management Plan in 2019. The Appraisal defines the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area and identifies its negative features. These are illustrated on the Townscape Plans 4 and 5. It makes recommendations for future management and enhancement opportunities arising from this assessment, aiming to reinforce and positive features and eliminate the negative to ensure the continued quality of its special interest over time. The Management Plan takes these recommendations forward through a Delivery Plan.

Summary of its Special Interest

- **Its historic development of well built houses** with buildings and groups of individual interest
- **Its historic community buildings** – schools, churches, public house and cinema
- **Its ‘planned’ street pattern** forming a grid with parallel back lanes
- **Its townscape of diverse building types** and detailing
- **Its tightly built up ‘urban’ frontage to Horsefair**
- **Its substantial brick arched railway bridges** and abutments on Horsefair and Arch Street



Main Issues

1. **The retention and enhancement of buildings and characteristic features** making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, including architectural detailing which is vulnerable to decay and modern replacement (e.g. timber sash windows, timber doors, historic brick walls and boundary treatment, significant trees)
2. **The treatment of new development** and new additions to existing buildings within and affecting the setting of the Conservation Area, including building lines, design, materials, hard and soft landscaping, views of landmarks, uses and densities.
3. **The potential for enhancement** of the Conservation Area into the future to ensure it remains an attractive place. Conservation of some of the community/larger buildings to alternative uses poses specific issues in meeting modern requirements whilst retaining essential features of character and appearance such as window design etc. Changes will need to be balanced against the positive impacts of bringing vacant buildings back into use, albeit with alterations to appearance.

Delivery Plan/Targets/Resources

A package of measures as set out in the Council's generic Conservation Areas Management Plan is available to deal with the above issues in a way beneficial to the Conservation Area. Their effective use is dependant not only on the Council but on a partnership approach, including the commitment of developers, development professionals and the local community. This area-specific Management Plan seeks to stimulate debate on how the issues might be addressed.

1. The retention and enhancement of buildings, boundaries and characteristic features

The Council will encourage the retention, repair and maintenance of the following characteristic features on all buildings making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area including the unlisted buildings of particular interest:

- timber windows and doors to traditional design and details
- predominance to brick buildings
- blue slate and small red and blue clay roof tiles
- pitched, gabled and hipped roofs, mostly facing the street
- decorative window heads and cills and quoin detailing
- some polychromatic (multi coloured) brickwork detail
- cast iron or cast metal rainwater pipes and gutters
- brick boundary walls, some high and enclosing private gardens, with blue brick cappings
- mature garden hedges and tree specimens
- 2 storey coach houses at the rear of some properties
- some decorative barge boards
- bay windows, some 2 storey

This would strengthen the historic character and quality of the wider townscape for the benefit of this and future generations. **In addition, opportunities to enhance the historic significance of the Horsefair frontage with sympathetic repair of the older buildings and sympathetic redevelopment of some of the modern ones, especially those noted as having a negative impact, together with appropriate tree planting, will be encouraged.**

The Council will discourage use where possible of artificial materials and non traditional designs which are bland and lacking in the rich textures and colours of natural materials, **the painting and rendering of brick buildings, the obtrusive siting of unsympathetic modern additions, the opening up of front gardens and the wider use of dormer windows and roof lights in roof slopes.** It is acknowledged that owners wish to adapt their historic properties to meet modern need and expectations, but with care this can be done with respect for heritage.

For example, UPVC windows can be designed to reflect the design of traditional timber windows and set back within the reveal in a traditional way; front and rear boundary walls can usually be at least partly retained and repaired to reflect the traditional position and sense of containment whilst still accommodating some parking.

Safeguarding characteristic features will require an acceptance by property owners of their intrinsic value and a commitment to invest in their property to maintain its historic value. Historic features can be slowly lost through decay and under investment as well as more rapidly through modernisation and unsympathetic over-investment.

For example, care and maintenance of brick garden walls using mortar to match (usually lime based) with careful pointing and reinstatement of capping materials where missing can extend the life of the wall many years into the future, enhancing the setting of the building and the entire street scene.

The Council will consider the preparation of design guidance on specific issues and offer other advice on request or via its website which can be sought prior to carrying out work.

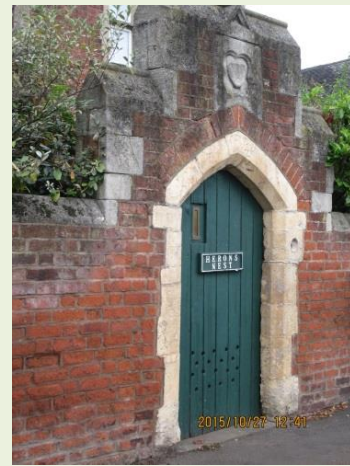
For example, regular painting of traditional timber windows in an appropriate colour helps protect from the weather and provides a far superior result to UPVC replacement in maintaining the historic value of the property and streetscene.

The Council will give consideration to including design guidance for the whole Horsefair corridor in an update to its Design SPD 2016 to encourage more comprehensive enhancement of this significant streetscene including the edge and setting of two Conservation Areas.

The Council will conduct a site survey of characteristic features with a view to progressing an Article 4 Direction to manage future damaging changes to unlisted dwellings which would result in certain minor works requiring planning permission. Although a significant number of windows and some doors in Talbot Street have already been replaced with plastic alternatives and some chimney stacks have been lost there are many remaining details still to be protected. The survey will be used to monitor change over time.

The Council will review the Conservation Area boundary from time to time to ensure it is still workable and that it encompasses as definable cohesive area with a particular character.

The Council will pursue enforcement action where unsympathetic alterations which threaten the character or appearance of the Conservation Area are carried out without the necessary planning permission to achieve a more sympathetic result.



2. The treatment of new development

The Council will require proposals for new infill development and redevelopment to adhere to well established good urban design principles for scale, form, materials, layout, density, landscaping and boundary treatment, with the use of contemporary design and materials or more traditional options as appropriate, to reinforce the existing strong frontage of buildings onto Talbot Street and surrounding streets, and the layout of the back lanes, in a well landscaped setting, reflect existing variety and detailing including colour, texture and range of materials and maintain and enhance views through the Conservation Area.

In view of the high potential for below ground archaeological deposits in the area as highlighted by the Extensive Urban Survey, archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to record and advance understanding of their significance in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The existing mix of uses in the Conservation Area will be maintained with any compatible additional uses considered.

The Council will apply the same principles to any opportunity sites occupied by buildings or neutral interest within or sites affecting the setting of the Conservation Area which come forward for redevelopment.

The Council will seek developer contributions in conjunction with planning permissions in accordance with the Council's SPD 'Developer Contributions and Houses Choices SPD 2015; or via the Community Infrastructure Levy charging regime to fund public realm enhancement as appropriate in order to improve historic character and sense of place with the nearby public realm.



3. Potential for future enhancements

New tree planting in appropriate locations, particularly if former community buildings are converted to residential/other uses, as they tend to be on larger plots with space to accommodate trees and this follows the character of Victorian specimen tree planting.

Consideration of new street signing in the Conservation Area with the County Highway Authority to strengthen sense of identity.

Consideration of traffic calming/parking restrictions with the County Highway Authority to explore the least obtrusive and most effective ways to regulate on street parking.

Should appropriate funding become available the option of offering a financial contribution to the repair of historic frontage walls to enhance the Conservation Area could be beneficial, based on historic evidence for these features.

Monitoring

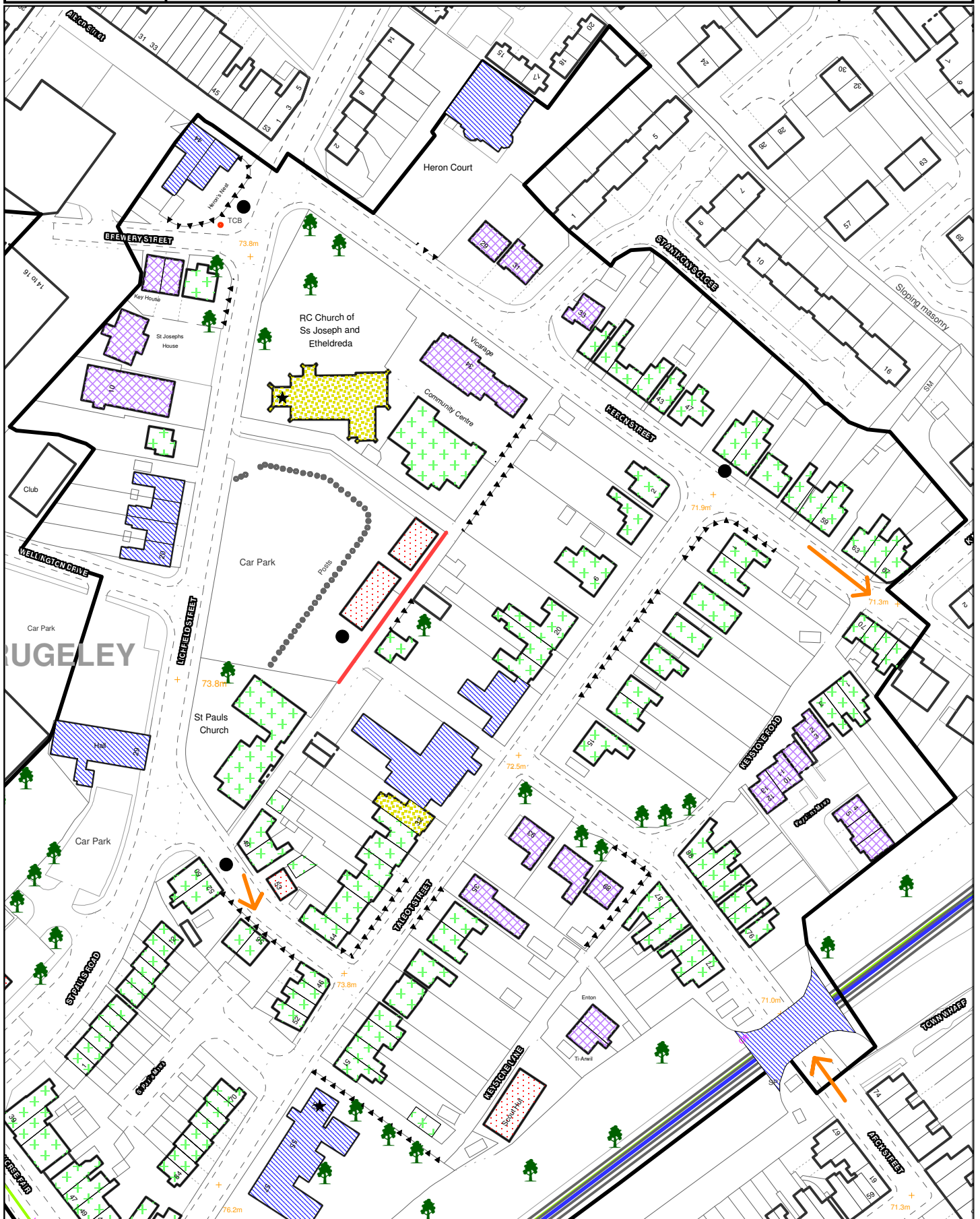
The Council will monitor progress towards the delivery of the above actions and the resultant impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area on a five year cycle. Some of the actions will be on-going, some will relate to specific actions which can be completed. The monitoring process together with developing Planning Policy will inform updating of the Appraisal and Management Plan over time.

Monitoring will involve further consultation with the community and may identify new issues and ideas for raising standards. Monitoring could also be carried out within the community, under the guidance of the Council.



Key	
	Buildings making a Positive Contribution
	Buildings making a Negative Contribution
	Buildings having a Neutral Impact
	Listed Buildings
	Unlisted Buildings of Particular Interest
	Conservation Area

	Boundaries making a Positive Contribution
	Boundaries making a Negative Contribution
	Significant Trees & Tree Groups
	View
	Visual Stop
	Sky Line Feature



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