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Borough Council

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## **DESFORD CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

**March 2010**

# **Desford Conservation Area**

## **Appraisal Consultation**

Like many villages in Leicestershire, little is known of Desford until after the 11<sup>th</sup> century when the village was first mentioned in the Domesday Book. Reference is made to Hugo de Grantmesnil, a Norman Baron who was the Lord of the Manor over a settlement known as 'Diresford'. It is possible however that a small settlement did exist about the time that the Saxons and Angles arrived in 410AD which would have been sited on a small clearing in the Charnwood Forest.

The oldest surviving building of note is the Old Hall situated in the High Street. This impressive dwelling with gables and a grand entrance porch faced with stone was built in 1640 for Thomas Muxloe, a member of a well known Leicestershire family. Adjacent stands a two storey dovecote circa 1700 constructed of red brick with burned headers and a slate roof.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 1657 there was a terrible fire in the village which destroyed dwellings, barns, stables and goods of great value and villagers petitioned Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector to seek charitable assistance from Christians across England. The Great Fire of Desford

The earliest reference to nonconformity is in 1672 when permission was given for the Miller's house to be used as a Meeting Place for Presbyterians. Towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century other houses in the village were being used as meeting places for Protestant Dissenters for the Church of England. At about this time the Chapel of the Strict or Particular Baptists was built in the High Street of which only the graveyard and a few grave markers remain. In 1866 following visits from preachers from Barton in the Beans, a Chapel was built in Chapel Lane. Renovated in 1890, it is now known as the Desford Free Church.

Until the Industrial Revolution, the village was an agricultural community. Prior to enclosure the village had farmhouses in the village itself and not in the fields. The Desford Open Fields consisted of five fields divided into strips the signs of which can be seen today in the ridge and furrow. In 1760 by private Act of Parliament, these open fields totalling around 1000 acres were enclosed and village began to expand along the High Street, Main Street and the Newbold Road area.

In 1832 the third oldest railway line in the world, the Leicester to Swannington Railway Line was constructed by Robert Stephenson to link Leicester to the north-west Leicestershire coalfield. Desford had its own station at the bottom of Station Road although it is now a private house. By 1846 there were 988 persons living in the village. Employment opportunities began to diversify from agriculture into hosiery and several framework knitters' workshops were built. By 1851 there were 115 framework knitters in the village together with other allied trades such as needle

makers. However by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the domestic hosiery had declined. An attempt to sink a mine shaft was made at Lindridge in 1875 but abandoned 2 years later due to constant flooding. In 1902 the first coal shaft was sunk at Desford Colliery, 2 miles north of the village. Following its closure in 1984 the local history group erected a half colliery winding wheel on Lindridge Lane to serve as a reminder of the village's involvement in the industry.

During recent years the village has undergone substantial change. The population is now around 3450 persons and a considerable amount of new housing has extended the village boundary. It is now a commuter village and the majority of its working population travel out of the settlement to work.

## **Setting**

The village lies at the intersection of routes linking Kirby Muxloe, Newbold Verdon, Thornton and Thurlaston. Less than a mile north of the village lies the moated site of Lindridge Hall.

Until the turn of the 20th century, properties in the village were contained in short lengths of ribbon development along Newbold Road, Main Street, High Street and Church Lane. This situation continued until the 1930's when Manor road was constructed along the line of an ancient footpath. Recent development has steadily infilled the land between this new road and Cottage Lane, the footpath that runs along the rear of properties fronting Main Street and Newbold Road and which was, until then, open countryside.

Although Desford Conservation Area stands on the eastern slope of a steep hill, views in and out of the area are largely restricted by modern development, except for occasional views of the countryside between buildings.

The Church of St Martin marks the centre of the village around which are dispersed the most important buildings in the settlement. These include Manor Farm also known as Chamberlains, the Rectory and The Grange.

## **Gateways**

The Malt House is a highly significant building with large timber framed gables facing onto the street and this defines the entrance into the conservation area from the north west. Lindridge Lane rises steeply to the Red Lion public house which distinguishes the northern entrance to the village although this has been compromised to a degree by the modern bungalows and shop on the opposite side of the road. Built in late 18<sup>th</sup> century Manor Farmhouse on High Street identifies the eastern entrance to the designated area. This grand three storey property stands close to the edge of the road and includes its former stables and a high boundary wall which is now in separate ownership. The western entrance at Peckleton Lane is less significant but in keeping with the character of upper High Street. Here Victorian properties mark the entrance to the street. On the south side is a low key two storey

bay fronted building with a steeply pitched gable onto the street. Opposite is the Co-operative store whose original form has been lost in an unsympathetic conversion. This building also marks the entrance into the most important pedestrian route in the village extending as far as Newbold Road.

### **Character Statement**

The boundaries of the Conservation Area are concentrated along the High Street, Main Street and Newbold Road. shown to have been established by 1720 on the Enclosure Map although many properties appear to post date the turn of the nineteenth century.

The character of designated area is derived from four key factors.

*The agricultural origins of the settlement:* This can be identified by the occasional open view of the countryside between buildings, the preponderance of woodland trees within and adjacent to the settlement, and a number of former farm buildings such as Priory Farm and Manor Farm.

*Land ownership:* Following its enclosure in 1760 the church, with the exception of a few small properties, held all the land on the eastern side of Main Street from Little Lane to Station Road. It is within this section that the majority of the imposing buildings were subsequently constructed often within large green spaces and mature planting. These included the Old Rectory, the Old National School, the Church Hall, the Grange and Manor Farmhouse.

*The topography:* Main Street and Newbold Road are partially cut into the side of a hill and this has created significant issues for the access arrangements into the adjacent properties. On the east and north sides, buildings are level with the road but on the south and west sides there are significant differences which are particularly evident at Main Street Corner. The way these level differences have been overcome has had a significant impact on the character of the conservation area. These include steps directly from the street, sections of raised pavement, and massive brick retaining walls.

*The medieval street pattern:* with its subtle twists and turns has added a further layer of local distinctiveness to the area. This is reinforced by an extensive network of jitties which historically gave access to the countryside but which have now been partially absorbed into the village built fabric.

**Character Areas** The conservation area can be divided into five distinct areas of different character

#### **Area A - The High Street**

Up to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the High Street formed a hard edge to the settlement with properties mainly on its southern side ranged on each side of The

Old Manor Farm. This building had been the most important none secular building in the village for several centuries. Along the Street's northern edge, the buildings, although linked as terraces in places, were more dispersed with quite large gaps in the frontage.

*Upper High Street:* The most important characteristic of this part of the High Street is that of enclosure. Here the building line on each side is practically continuous with terraced properties set at the back edge of the pavement throughout its length. Only the gardens adjacent to 13 High Street break the slight curve in the frontage. The street, although much used by pedestrians and vehicles alike, does not form an easy thoroughfare for vehicles.

The average height of buildings on each side is relatively low. The street shows the greatest concentration of brick buildings in the area amounting to approximately 60% of the properties. The remainder show render, timber framing or a painted face. Roofing shapes and materials play an important role in the character of this street. Ridges are parallel to the street interrupted in many cases by slight differences in height and tall brick chimney stacks. Pitches are steep, and probably a remnant of previous thatching. There is a wide mix of materials including red and blue clay tiles, Swithland and Welsh Slates and thatch. On its northern side a number of properties have been adapted to shop use but these, with the exception of the Co-operative Store have managed to retain the small proportioned windows and avoided the presence of large signs.

*Lower High Street:* Along this section, although it follows the same general themes as before, the building blocks are more dispersed and varied, occasionally set back behind front gardens which together form interesting corners of space. Brick garden walls, sometimes high, sometimes low, and capped with stone or saddleback copings, close off these breaks in the building frontage to maintain the sense of enclosure. The road itself becomes a sweeping counter curve which closes off views of exits from parts of the street. Jagged gables and chimneys have greater emphasis and the occasional porch, projecting street gable, hipped roof and privet hedge occur.

Of particular note is the elegant frontage of Manor Farmhouse on the northern side of the street. The additional height of this three storey building is intended to set itself apart from other properties in the street. This is emphasised by refined detailing and the use of iron railings rather than low brickwork to separate it from passersby.

Old Manor Farm, the other significant building on this part of the street, stands almost opposite. The form of this group of buildings reflects its original agricultural use. The complex includes a medieval house showing a fine gabled facade onto the street, its timber framed outbuildings attached through a roofed, gated cart entrance and within the courtyard, the unique four gable dovecot.

## **Area B - The Jitties**

*Footpath S6* is an interesting remnant of the former green way linking the High Street to Newbold Road which has retained a rather more rural character than the other jitties within Desford. This footpath consists of part of Stewards Court and part of Cottage Lane.

*Stewards Court* The edges of this jitty are formed by the rear gardens of properties on Manor Road and the open frontages of the modern Stewards Court estate. The jitty itself continues beyond this footpath by following a 90 degree bend along the rear of single storey out buildings to the Bulls Head public house to intersect with Main Street. Although the sense of enclosure has been retained to a degree, it has been compromised by the open frontages of the modern properties

*Cottage Lane* is the continuation of this pedestrian route as far as its junction with Chapel lane where it also turns through 90 degrees to enter Newbold Road opposite the Malt House. The route links in with Stewards Court at the Pickard Recreation Ground, a pocket park edged with many mature trees. It continues along the rear boundaries of properties on Main Street, squeezed on the other side by long lengths of close boarded fencing broken occasionally by thin privet hedging. Although this is not unpleasant, the route improves dramatically on turning towards Newbold Road where it follows a gentle curve lined by a continuous high dense privet hedge. The opposite side of the jitty has been developed in a rather piecemeal nature This part of the Lane encompasses various 'back street' developments around the 19<sup>th</sup> century core of the village. These are all characterised by asymmetrical uncoordinated development reinforced by open frontages, parking areas and none traditional forms of building which has created a more suburban character. It is unfortunate that a tighter building line along the jitty was not respected. As the route approaches Newbold Road, however, it steps up visually to a higher level with fine white painted vernacular cottages set around linked narrow spaces, a truly civilised corner of Desford.

*Chapel Lane* is characterised by its narrowness and continuous boundaries formed by buildings, walls, hedges or fences along its edges which provide a strong sense of enclosure. There are a number of buildings along this jitty which give it a distinct character, although not of the same importance as that of the other streets in the village. With the exception of the rear of the Free Church at the junction of the two lanes, the buildings are all very low two or single storeys. Rendered brickwork is the predominant form of construction with grey slate or modern concrete tiled roofing. Unfortunately gaps created by recessing the occasional modern building and open frontages have created similar uncomfortable breaks in the frontage which seem to have been as a result of the requirement to provide vision splays. This jitty also turns through a bend to descend between characterless lengths of close boarded fencing to intersect with Newbold Road down a series of steps and a ramp

The surfacing throughout these jitties is in well maintained tarmac which contributes nothing to the character.

### **Area C - Newbold Road and North Main Street.**

North of the Church, Main Street continues as a gently curving route between terraces of housing on its western side and a series of educational buildings on its east flank. These include the old School, the Headmasters house and the church hall, each set back from the pavement behind iron railings or low brick walls. The former school, now a doctor's surgery is a particularly fine building with its high brick gables dominating this part of Main Street. Beyond this is the three storey rendered structure of Priory Farmhouse. This is an unusual structure with very limited openings onto the street but a grand full height bay on the rear. It is believed to have been three cottages. Priory farmhouse is the centre of a group of buildings which line this part of the street and include a cart entrance, a barn, a farm workers' cottage and a former shop. The adjacent private passageway provides pedestrian access to a pair of cottages at the rear. The differing roof heights of this complex of buildings provide a dramatic change in the street scene in contrast to the terrace of cottages opposite which are all of similar two storey height.

The topography of the street has given this area a character which is unique in the conservation area. The junction between the two streets at Main Street Corner stands at the steepest point in the village. As a consequence, the land enclosed by the two roads is much higher than the opposite sides and the two storey properties on the south and western sides have been constructed above massive brick retaining walls. This has given the street an overbearing, uncomfortable feel which is compounded by the untidy appearance of the corner plot. Buildings on the opposite side of the street however are mainly linked together despite being of different periods. Their heights and appearance present an almost continuous edge to the street which reinforces the sense of enclosure.

Further west, the junction with Lindridge Lane has created a wider space within the street which despite being set back from the building line, is dominated by the Red Lion Inn. Buildings around this intersection are a mixture of periods, heights and materials, however, recent changes to the profile of the land to create open frontages and garages below bungalows and changes to the appearance of the Co-operative store have had a detrimental impact on the street scene.

Approaching the western entrance to the designated area, buildings on the north side continue as long blocks behind deep gardens and low brick walls terminating in the timber framed triple gabled Malt House. Opposite the properties are sited along the back edge of pavement which retains the sense of enclosure up to the entrance to Cottage Lane

### **Area D - The Church and its environs**

St Martin's Church and its church yard defined by a low brick and stone wall, is the focal point of this area. The Church stands at the junction of Church Lane and Main Street where the street widens out to emphasise its dominance of the space. The

approach from the High Street is edged by some fine vernacular cottages which although they have been rendered, for the most part have retained many original features. There is a particularly fine mixed terrace of cottages at the beginning of Main Street which includes a row from the Victorian period with original timber sash windows and a successive series of tiled canopies. These canopies are maintained on the lower row of cruck framed cottages which continue the terrace as far as the church yard. In contrast, on its western side, buildings are fragmented in age and appearance and include several gaps in the street scene. Beyond the library the first property is set at right angles to the street but has recently been rendered and its roof covered with concrete tiles. Next is a pair of Victorian semi-detached dwellings, with a feature bay window and then follows a double pile cottage, both with short front gardens set behind low brick walls. The Bulls Head Inn and its outbuildings to the rear is the next major vernacular building. It is unfortunately separated from the rest by Stewards Court, a modern development of open fronted estate houses whose features and design detract from the traditional character of this area. The groupings of buildings around the church, along Main Street and Church Lane, with few exceptions, reflect the continuity of building lines and sense of enclosure experienced elsewhere. In most cases the steep roof pitches also corresponds to other streets such as the High Street.

### **Area E - Church Lane**

Around the corner on Church Lane again there is a fine terrace of properties which are two storeys in height with early window frames of mostly 19<sup>th</sup> century origin. The pavement in front of these cottages is raised up with iron railings between concrete posts which add to the sense of enclosure. The projecting gable at the end of this group is an unusual feature which adds to its character. Feature buildings distinguish this street from others in the conservation area. These include Desford Grange, a three storey brick building with an impressive stone portico and the old Rectory set behind a high brick wall in fine mature gardens which includes a large pond. Although the former grounds of the Grange have recently been developed into a housing estate, the gardens still retain some fine mature trees and other planting which provide an attractive setting for the buildings along the eastern side of Main Street. Along the rear of the church yard, the Lane turns through 90 degrees to meet the High Street. The eastern side of the road has a different character with large properties set back off the road behind high walls in large gardens. These contrast with the western side which has a mixture of modern properties which do not reflect traditional features or design, set behind short front gardens, and a terrace of two storey vernacular cottages which include the splayed corner entrance of a former shop at its junction with High Street.

### **Building Style, Scale and Detail**

Buildings in the conservation area fall into three distinct categories.



*Simple vernacular buildings* often incorporating medieval timber framing and brick extensions. These are low buildings and are comparatively shallow, often being only one room deep. They have steeply pitched gabled roofs of natural slate or very occasionally, plain clay tiles punctured by brick chimneys. Windows at first floor are tucked under the eaves and are smaller than those at ground floor which normally have canted brick sills. Their external appearance is varied and reflects the changes which have occurred over their lifetime. These can include a mixture of brick or stone plinths of differing heights, irregular pattern of openings, different sized openings and large areas of blank brickwork or rough cast rendered walls. It is anticipated that unfortunately the modern restoration techniques of smooth render, plastic windows, large rear extensions and front porches will change this appearance.

*Victorian feature buildings* are of regular design and use high quality materials. Generally red and mottled pink bricks and plain clay tiles give these buildings continuity throughout the conservation area. There are only a few examples of alternative external finishes including painted brick and render (62/64 High Street and 10-18 Main Street). These buildings are normally two rooms deep with steeply pitched gabled roofs parallel to the street broken with occasional projecting gables onto the street. Decorative features include dentil eaves courses, polychromatic brickwork, applied gable framing and patches of render. Openings are vertical with segmental arched or flat stone lintels with keystones and projecting brick sills

*Post Second World War properties* These are principally bungalows set in larger plots of ground. They have shallow pitched hipped roofs with concrete roof tiles, large picture windows and integral double garages set well back from the edge of the road often with open frontages. These properties have had a major detrimental impact on the appearance of the conservation area.

## **Important Listed and Unlisted Buildings.**

### ***Listed Buildings***

**Manor Farmhouse, 53 High Street:** Grade II listed. A three storey brick house built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century with 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations. It is red brick in Flemish bond with rubbed brick dressings and a slate roof. The 3 bay front has a central arched recess through 3 stories.

**Old Manor Farm, 32 High Street:** Grade II\*. This brick building was constructed between 1600 and 1640. It is 2 storeys, a basement and 4 gables on the street frontage one of which is a 2 storey porch with stone quoins, two storey projecting porch and an original 17<sup>th</sup> century staircase. The building has a swithland slate roof covering. The house has a projecting wing on the west side and is separated by a roofed cart entry to an L shaped range of single storey former farm buildings. It was a working farm until the 1990's.

**Dovecote: at Old Manor Farm** Grade II. Constructed about 1700 with 19<sup>th</sup> century alterations. The structure is two storeys with 4 gables. Built of red brick with burnt headers. The interior has retained its nesting holes. The roof is covered with swithland slate.

**Ivy House, 26 High Street:** Grade II. This building is thought to be late 18<sup>th</sup> with some 19<sup>th</sup> century alterations. It has a red brick frontage in Flemish bond, street door within pilasters, fluted capitols and a rectangular ornamental fanlight above. This facade conceals is a timber box frame with a cruck frame above. The roof has a Welsh slate covering but was previously thatched. It was built as a farmstead over 400 years ago.

**19 High Street:** Grade II Late 18<sup>th</sup>. This is a red brick cottage with Welsh slate roof and a single gable stack. It has a segmental headed doorway and adjacent a 2 light sliding sash window. Above this is a 2 light window.

**21 High Street:** Grade II. This cottage is probably early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Its street elevation consists of red brick 3 bay wall on a random rubble Swithland stone plinth. The brickwork is Flemish bond with burnt headers. It is one and a half storeys with a thatched roof and 2 eyebrow dormers.

**The Post Office, 23 High Street:** Grade II Mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. This shop occupies a key location in the conservation area. It is also in red brick in Flemish bond but with pale headers. The building was radically changed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The entrance has been relocated from the High Street onto the gable wall and a new shop front added. The original shop front has been replaced by a window and the roof is partly covered with concrete tiles.

**St Martin's Parish Church:** Grade II\*. This mediaeval church has a nave with south aisle Chancel and west tower and spire. It is constructed from randomly coursed Mount Sorrel rubble with ashlar dressings and slate roof with decorative ridge tiles. The structure is largely 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was heavily restored on 1883/84 by Stockdale Harrison.

**The Grange (formerly Castle Hill House) 17 Church Lane.** Grade II. This 3 storey building is late 18<sup>th</sup> century (1799) with some C19 and C20 alterations. It is constructed of red brickwork in Flemish bond with a slate roof. It has a symmetrical 3 bay facade with a central Doric columned door with a round headed fanlight. This is flanked by single canted full height bay windows. It has been converted into flats.

**Malt House Cottages, 40-42 Newbold Road:** Grade II. This building lies on the north side of Newbold Road overlooking open countryside. It was originally 3 cottages by was semi derelict and was restored and converted into a single dwelling in 1964. The structure is 2 storeys and was originally timber framed but now is largely red brick. The remains its box frame construction is still visible and its frontage has 3 brick gables, and massive brick chimneys which are now clad in

granite rubble at its east and west ends. It has a plain tiled roof. Probably 15<sup>th</sup> century but altered in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**The Old White Cottage, 2 Newbold Road:** Grade II 17<sup>th</sup> century. Timber framed structure of a single storey with attics which has been underbuilt in brick and rendered. It has a thatched roof with three eyebrow dormers and a single brick axial stack. It was altered in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Desford School, 54 Main Street:** Grade II Dated 1876. This is a 5 bay red brick building with blue brick and ashlar dressings. It has slate roofs with decorative terracotta ridge tiles and moulded brick stack. Important features of the elevations are the striking pointed arched windows. It has recently been converted into a doctor's surgery.

**Former School Masters House, 50 Main Street:** Grade II. Dated 1876 with 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations. Two storey red brick with blue brick and ashlar dressings. It has a slate roof with terracotta ridge tiles and two moulded brick stacks. It has an off centre two storey gabled porch.

**10 Newbold Road:** Grade II. This is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century cottage with some 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations. It is red brick in Flemish bond and a slate roof with 2 brick gable stacks. It is two storeys with a 3 bay front and central planked door.

**The Old Forge 16 High Street:** Grade II. The main part of the house is brick built probably 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries on a Swithland stone plinth. The western end is timber framed with square panels and curved braces and of 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century origin. It was originally thatched but now has a Swithland slate roof with an eyebrow window and a single brick gable stack. The end bay was demolished in the 1960's to allow rear vehicular access. The eastern section was a single storey working forge and in 1929 the bedrooms were added.

### **Unlisted Buildings of Local Importance**

**The Old Bluebell Inn:** This timber framed structure has retained its original window openings on the street frontage although a new third gable has been added replacing the earlier eyebrow dormer. The rubble stone building has also been recently rendered and a bay window added to the south-east elevation. The car park was the site of a row of thatched cottages which were demolished in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**The Old Manor House Main Street:** This was a fine Georgian building although demolished in 1959 when the remains of roman kilns were found on the site. The site has been redeveloped as a modern housing estate known as Stewards Court.

**Desford Free Church, Chapel Lane:** 1866 was originally tied to the Baptist chapel at Barton in the Beans. Renovated in 1890. The two storey brick structure, now part

rendered has a slate covered roof. The building also holds a church hall now in community use.

### **Traditional Building Materials**

The principle building material in the conservation area is brick. With the exception of St Martin's Church, stone is restricted to the plinths of buildings and some boundary walls. The brickwork has generally been laid in Flemish bond which was common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In a number of instances the brick walls have been finished in rendering which appears in recent times to have been used to cover disguise or protect poorer quality brickwork. This is not unpleasant but it is not a traditional material. The roofs of several older buildings are covered in swithland slate in diminishing courses which is important to retain. There is also widespread use of Welsh Slate particularly along Main Street and the High Street. Clay tiles and thatch are not characteristic roofing materials in the settlement although there are isolated examples. (The Old White Cottage (thatch), Priory farm (clay tiled) and The Old Bluebell Inn (clay tiled).

Natural materials, particularly Welsh slate, should be used on all new development. Imported or reconstituted slates or concrete roof tiles are not part of the historic palate and are inappropriate in the conservation area. Where the slate has been replaced with concrete tiles it has had a major detrimental impact and is not acceptable.

The replacement of timber windows, doors and fascias with plastic has also had a harmful effect on the traditional character of the area and is undesirable.

### **Boundary Treatments**

The village has numerous brick boundary walls with blue saddleback copings which terminate at openings with brick piers and slate copings. They provide a strong sense of enclosure, channel views and provide a distinct local identity. It is important that they are retained and any new openings which are unavoidable should be as narrow as possible. The holly and privet hedges which run along the boundaries of most jitties add considerably to their rural character and should be retained. New hedges should be introduced on jitties to replace close boarded fencing where it currently exists.

### **Contribution of Spaces and Natural Elements**

The traditional terraces on the back edge of pavement or with short front gardens have restricted open space within the street scene. With the exceptions of the recreation ground, the church yard and the large gardens on Church Lane, open space is contained behind the rear of properties particularly the former gardens of Desford Grange and the Old Rectory which is where the majority of mature trees can be seen.

The extensive green space around the church is the principle open space within the Conservation Area. This provides a distinctive open break in the street scene and provides a pleasing contrast to the relative enclosure of Main Street and contributes significantly towards the area's character. The space also provides an attractive setting to the listed church providing distant views of this important building.

The graveyard of the Chapel of the Strict Baptists in the High Street is hidden from public view because of the boundary wall, high privet hedge and the iron gate. Within the graveyard, the headstones have been relocated to leave a pleasant grassed area.

The Pickard Recreation Ground off Cottage Lane is a fine green space edged with several mature trees which adds significantly to the character of the jitty and is a valuable local resource.

### **Buildings of Poor Visual Quality**

Within the conservation area there has been a degree of new development in the post war period and those buildings which have been erected, have not, for the most part, added to the architectural interest of the area. Single storey buildings, particularly, by reason of their design, modern materials, shallow pitched roofs and their position, set back from the road frontages appear, discordant with the street scene.

### **Enhancement**

The enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area can be defined as the reinforcement of the qualities which provide the special interest which warranted designation, It may be through the sympathetic development of sites identified in the detailed analysis of the area as opportunity or neutral sites; it may involve physical proposals or the application of sensitive detailed development control over extensions and alterations. Areas which warrant special attention for enhancement are marked on the Conservation Area Plan.

## **GENERAL CONSERVATION AREA GUIDANCE, PLANNING CONTROLS AND POLICIES**

To maintain the distinctive character and appearance of the Desford Conservation Area it will be necessary to:

- Retain listed buildings and buildings of local interest.
- Ensure new development contributes positively to the character or appearance of the conservation area regarding siting, scale, design and materials used.
- Ensure house extensions satisfy the Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- Resist development proposals in key areas, which have been identified.

- Ensure the consistent application of positive, sensitive and detailed development control over proposals to develop the haulage depot opposite the church, the small-holding at Main Street Corner and the site at the rear of the Red Lion Public House on Lindridge Lane. The Red Lion building should be retained but the rear flat roofed extension should be removed.
- Ensure important views of the church and other key visual buildings and spaces in the conservation area identified on the attached map, are protected.

Special attention is given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the appearance of the Conservation Area. Planning Applications in Conservation Areas are separately advertised. The principal effects of the designation of a Conservation Area are summarised as follows:

- Consent is required for the total or substantial demolition of any building exceeding 115 cu metres.
- Applications for Outline Planning permission are not normally acceptable. Full planning applications are likely to be required.

**Planning permission is required for:**

1. The external cladding of any building with stone, artificial stone timber, plastic or tiles.
2. Alteration of the roof which results in its enlargement.
3. A satellite dish on chimney, wall or roof fronting a highway.

The design of all new shop front, advertisements and security grilles should be in accordance with the Council's Shopping and Shop Front Design Guide.

Anyone proposing works to a tree in a Conservation Area must give six weeks written notice to the local planning authority.

These requirements do not cover all aspects of control in Conservation Areas and you are advised to contact the Local Planning Authority.