



STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN DESIGN STATEMENT



Stratford-upon-Avon
Town Council



Prepared by the Community Management Group of the Residents of Stratford-upon-Avon with support from
The Countryside Agency, Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council



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	<small>by kind permission of The Royal Shakespeare Company</small>	

This Town Design Statement was adopted by
Stratford-on-Avon District Council
as Supplementary Planning Guidance
on 30th September 2002.

2. Acknowledgements

**The Community Management Group
acknowledge the help and assistance from:**

The residents of Stratford

The Countryside Agency

The Stratford-on-Avon District Council

The Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council

The Warwickshire County Council

The District Council Planning Department

The Royal Shakespeare Company

The Consultants – Sustainable Futures

The Stratford Society

Other local groups

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3. Introduction

Pilot Study

Following the success of the Village Design Statement initiative, the Countryside Agency in 1999 proposed “to promote improvements in design by experimenting with adapting the Village Design approach for larger settlements, such as market towns”. Anticipating the greater complexity of the procedures that would be required, they set up three Pilot Studies which they hoped would provide them with information on how such projects could be set up in future. After consultation between the Agency and Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Stratford-upon-Avon was selected to be the largest of the three towns for the study.

Aims

Essentially, the aim was to analyse the character of Stratford and create a Design Statement that could have a positive influence on the inevitable future changes in the town by encouraging sympathetic development. The content and form of this was to be determined by participants from the town with guidance from the Countryside Agency and their appointed consultants, and in consultation with the staff of the District Council’s Planning Department. From the beginning, the participants intended that the Statement should be suitable for use as supplementary planning guidance. Because the Stratford-upon-Avon Local Plan Review was also under way, it was also seen as desirable that there would be a link between the new Plan Draft, the Design Statement and the Warwickshire County Council’s Town Fringe Landscape Study.

Initiation

A series of meetings were held in 2000 between the Countryside Agency and its consultants, the County, District and Town Councils and the Stratford Society to consider procedures so as to involve as wide a selection of the community as possible. A public meeting was convened by the above and some 50 societies, groups and people who live and work in the town with an interest in planning and the built environment. It was decided that the requirements of the Agency would be satisfied if the execution of a Design Statement was the responsibility of a committee of townspeople and a Community Management Group (CMG) was set up.

Procedure

There followed a series of meetings in which the procedures, financing, co-ordination and publicity were discussed. Two information gathering processes were carried out. In the first the CMG divided the town into 12 distinct areas and a survey was made of each of the present character of buildings and landscape with photographs. The other began the process of looking at townspeople’s expectations for the future through three workshops held by the Consultants, focused on residents, on business people and on people connected with the theatre and associated activities. These were supplemented by a questionnaire in local newspapers, a website and a week long public exhibition of the survey photographs and draft material at the theatre.

4. History, Culture & Commerce



Stratford-upon-Avon is a town with a population of about 25,000 situated in South Warwickshire, its centre on the west bank of the Avon which runs roughly from North to South. Its present form dates from the twelfth century, although archaeological remains in the town reveal sites of Roman and Saxon settlements.

In 1196, a royal charter conferred upon the village of some 100/200 souls the status of a market town. Plots were marked out to show property boundaries and a pattern of streets which remain as today's town centre. The town prospered and its progress may be traced in some of its notable stone buildings – namely the Guild Chapel dating from 1269, extensions to Holy Trinity Church in 1331 and Clopton Bridge replacing the timber bridge in the 1490s.



In 1553 a charter of Edward VI unified the town's governance in forming a Corporation to which properties of the Guild and College were conveyed. Care for the poor, the Grammar School and upkeep of the Guild Chapel and probably, Clopton Bridge and the churchyard became civic responsibilities. The Guild and College Estates Trust oversees and retains some of these properties to this day.

For 200 years following these events not even the birth of William Shakespeare differentiated the town's development from that of many other market towns across England. Four great fires in the first hundred years destroyed most of the vulnerable timber frame and thatch buildings of the town centre. Only from the mid 17th century was the use of stone, brick and tiled roofs to become available and affordable in the district. Elegant Georgian

facades were favoured and many remaining timber structures were rendered. By now there were few buildings earlier than the 16th century remaining.

Shakespeare's life spanned 1564 - 1616 and it is likely that he lived in the town until at least 1585 before finding his working life in London. But his family responsibilities were here, and London never became his home. During his working life he invested much of the money he made in purchasing property in and around Stratford. So, in retirement he ended his days here as a wealthy and respected citizen and it was as such that he was interred in the chancel of Holy Trinity Church – not as a poet and playwright.

The Shakespearean connection was stamped indelibly on the town with the 1769 Jubilee

organised by the actor David Garrick. As the town grew under the influence of the quickening industrial revolution linking it by road, canal, horse-drawn tramway and several railway routes to other parts of the country, its future as a tourist destination was assured.

Thus to Stratford's ordinary commercial and minor industrial activities was added a cultural dimension bringing educational and theatrical institutions which would achieve world wide recognition. These are served by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust set up in 1847, which nurtures the Shakespeare family home and four other historic properties, and which together with Birmingham University's Shakespeare Institute and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre Company constitutes an international centre for scholarship and dramatic arts.

In 1801 the first national census counted the population as 2,900. In 1901 it was 8,600, while today it has reached some 25,000. And visitors are counted as between 2 - 3 million annually.

Much of the growth in the 19th century was contained in the centre of the town, but in the 20th century the boundaries moved outwards. Victorian terraces were built north and south of the centre defining Old Town and Newtown. The early part of the 20th century saw pre- and post-war building north of the canal towards the Welcombe Hills and Clopton, to the south and west of the town centre on the Evesham and Alcester Roads, and on the east side of the river along the Tiddington, Banbury and Shipston Roads. Recently housing has been built in the Bridgetown area (where another large development is about to begin) and to the west and north-west. Modern industrial developments have been confined mainly to the north-westerly corridor along the railway, the canal and the Birmingham Road/Masons Road.

Stratford is inseparable from Shakespeare, as his influence affects every aspect of the town. It is both the source of much of the town's prosperity and the cause of many of the planning difficulties which it must confront. Garrick's Shakespearean commemoration in 1769 was a turning point in Stratford's development. Shakespeare was no longer the preserve of the scholar, but the central figure in a burgeoning tourist industry which turned the provincial market town into an international cultural magnet.

The first permanent theatre opened in 1879 – built by Charles Edward Flower, then head of the family whose brewing business was Stratford's main industry and employer from the 1830s. A fire in 1926 largely destroyed the building, a remnant of which today contains the Swan Theatre. The much larger new theatre, a controversial modern building, home to the Royal Shakespeare Company, was opened in 1932. Then the riverside area was already losing its commercial activities. It was extensively altered and took on much of its present character as an open space, a focus for visitors and a recreational haven for residents. But for the birth of Shakespeare in the town, Stratford's cultural activities would be much as in any other town of its size.



5. Character By Areas

Good design evolves from the planning of buildings fit for their function, the layout of their interiors and the disposition of their elevational features to make a well proportioned elegant solution. It also involves the relationship of each and every building, one to another, to its neighbours and to the arrangement of the landscape around them.

Reference should be made to the District Design Guide, the Conservation Area Statement, the Countryside Design Summary and the Town Fringe Landscape Study.

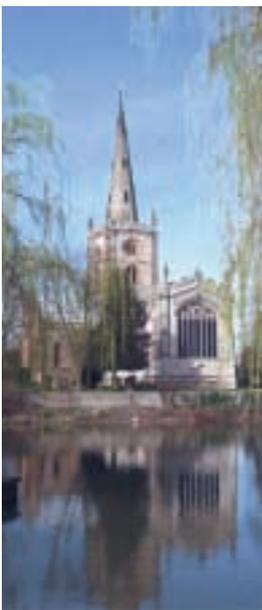
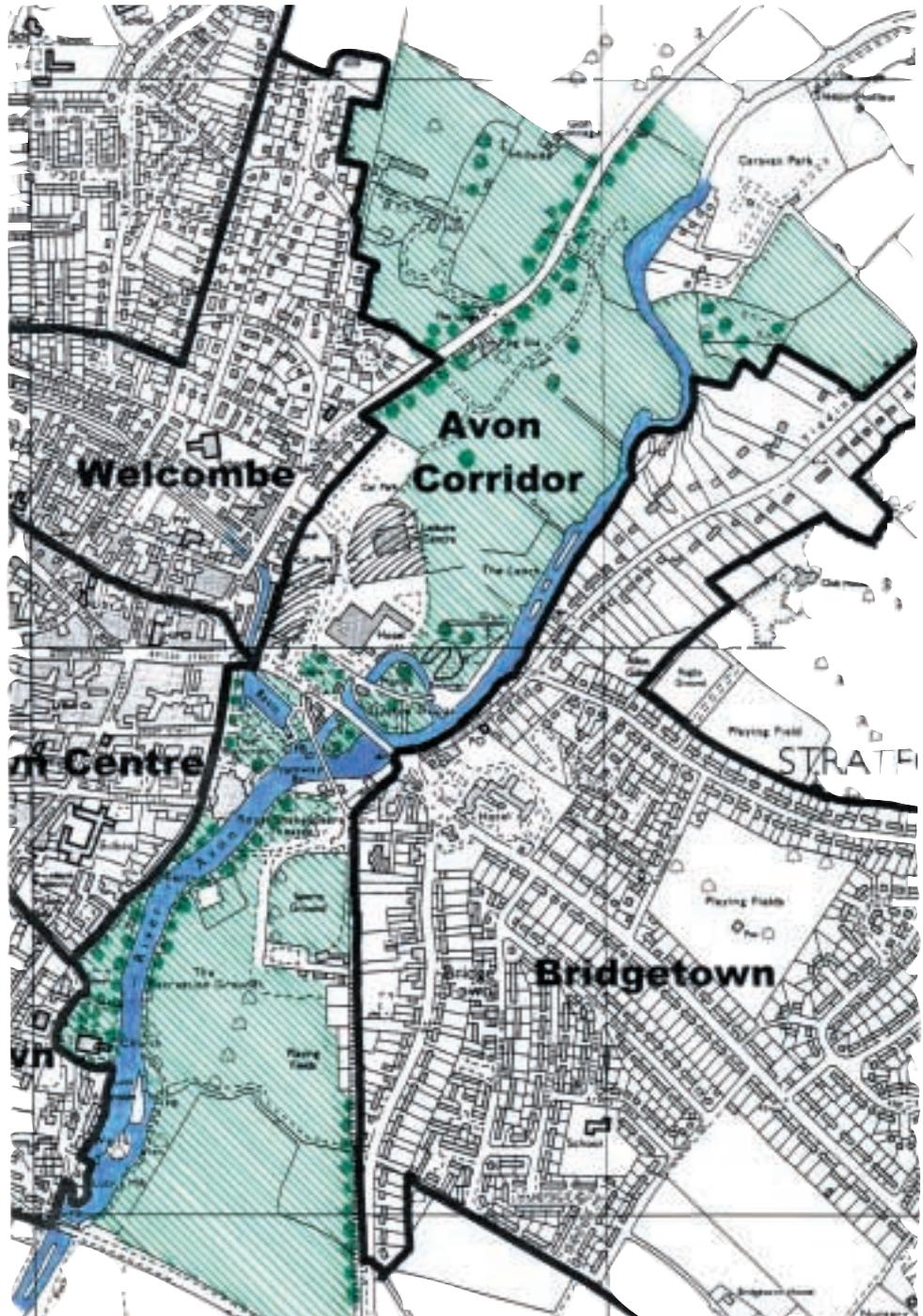
5.1 The Avon Corridor

Character of the Area

The Avon Corridor runs between Bridgetown and the main built up area of Stratford-upon-Avon creating a beautiful green corridor on either side of the river Avon, which curves through the town, crossed by two road bridges, three foot bridges and the historic chain ferry. The green space includes both remnants of natural habitat, extensive parkland and gardens (both formal and informal), farmland and a number of buildings, large and small. Most of the area is formally designated as

a Conservation Area and an Area of Restraint along the gardens of Tiddington Road.

The green areas include large areas of flood plain, some of which may be under water several times a year. There are islands in the area of the Clopton and Tramway bridges and also further downstream where there is a lock and a dramatic weir. Below Clopton Bridge is another lock and a canal basin where the Stratford canal joins the Avon navigation.



Holy Trinity; peaceful and serene.



The Avon from The Tramway Bridge.

To some people the idyllic setting suggests a long period of little change. In fact the setting is closely bound up with the history of Stratford and has been subject to continual change since the first days of human activity on the site, but particularly during the last two centuries.

The peace of the Avon Corridor belies the wealth of activities which take place throughout the year, providing interest and exercise, mental, physical, recreational and spiritual for residents, workers and visitors.

The river itself is a great source of human activity; pleasure craft, narrow boats, rowing boats, canoes and punts all ply up and down. The Avon contains fish and supports huge flocks of swans, geese, ducks and gulls with herons and kingfishers among the other inhabitants.



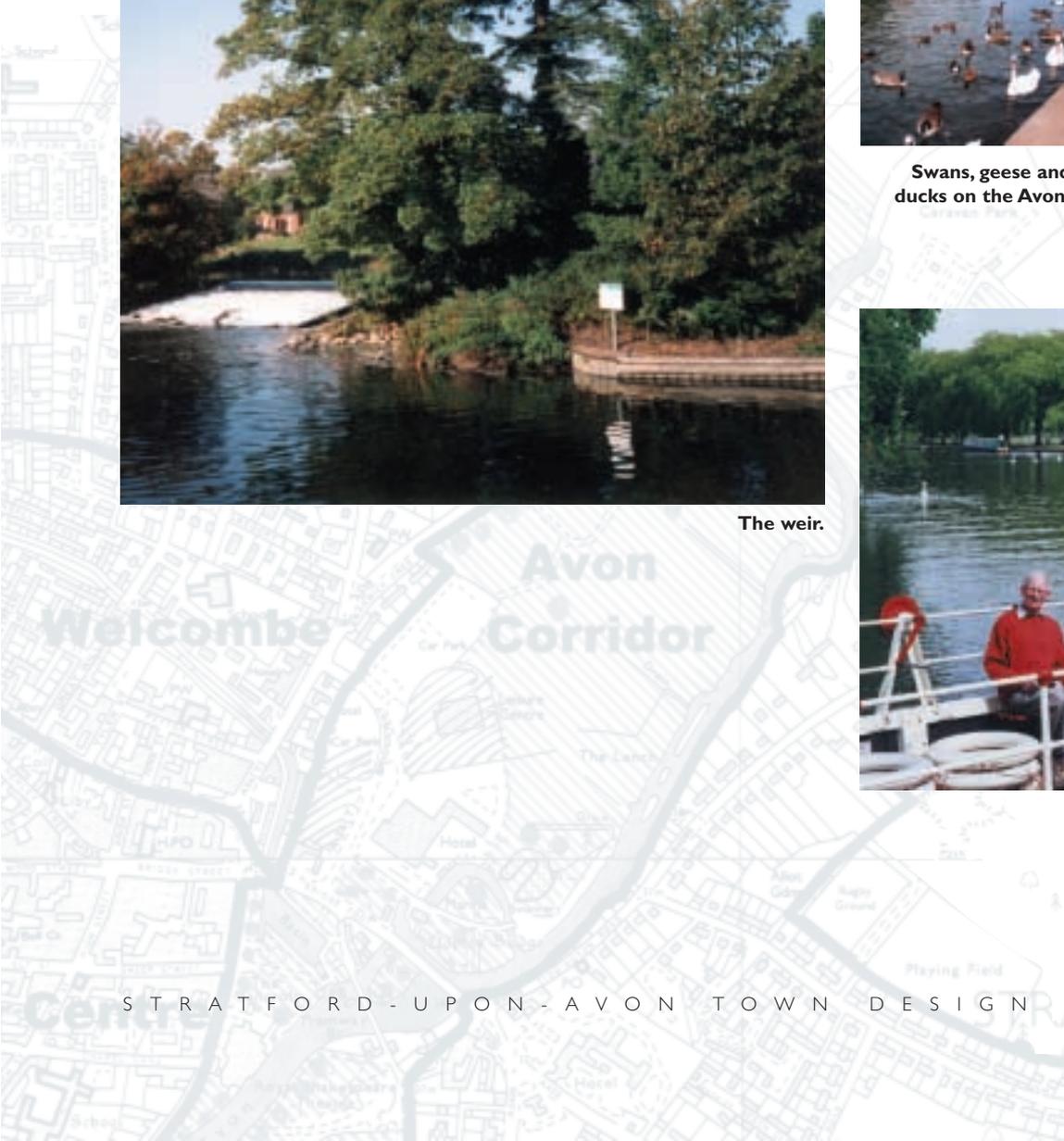
The weir.



Swans, geese and ducks on the Avon.



The historic Chain Ferry.



The Avon Corridor North of Clopton Bridge

This area includes a large area of trees, scrub, herbaceous and aquatic plants which is a haven for wildlife and is valued as such by local people. There are a number of very large modern buildings including the Leisure Centre and the Moathouse Hotel which perform valuable functions but are widely regarded as of barren and soulless appearance. The Bridgefoot car park, softened by planting and creepers, is more attractive!



The Moathouse Hotel.



Bridgefoot Car Park; softened by planting.



The Avon north of Clopton Bridge – a haven for wildlife.

The Recreation Ground

The 'Rec', on the east bank, south of Clopton Bridge, provides not only space to stroll or sit and watch the river but facilities for cricket, football, hockey, tennis, bowls, squash and miniature golf. There is an excellent children's playground and ample space to run, play and picnic. Recently the bandstand has been rebuilt and concerts are given on most Sundays in the summer. The Butterfly Farm is nearby and adjacent to the Tramway. The boat club has its headquarters by the Tramway Bridge, and there are buildings for the tennis club, football and bowls together with a well-screened car park for, surprisingly, 943 cars, with free passes for local senior citizens. All these facilities support the enjoyment of the area by residents and visitors. The Recreation Ground is home to many special events including occasional fairs, the Stratford Marathon, firework displays and charity

fundraisers. It is also prey to creeping commercialisation which must be resisted. South of the Recreation Ground is farm land which, although not open to the public, is an important reminder that the town is part of a wider agricultural area. This whole area is bounded by the Tramway track which itself is another green corridor serving both wildlife and human joggers, shoppers and people walking their dogs.



The 'Rec'; space to play.



The recently rebuilt bandstand.



The Recreation Ground cricket pitch.



Children's playground.



The Tramway – a green corridor.

The West Bank, South of Clopton Bridge

On the west bank, south of Clopton Bridge is the Bancroft Gardens. Now a formal area of gardens and park hugely popular with visitors and crammed to capacity on summer weekends. This was once an industrial area, occupied by a second canal basin and surrounded by wharves and industrial warehouses of which only Cox's Timber Yard, now a pub and exhibition centre, remains. Further downstream the less formal theatre gardens lead to the beautiful churchyard of Holy Trinity, peaceful and serene despite being reputedly the most visited parish church in England. The buildings in this area are also very large compared with most of the town. They include the oldest building in the town, Holy Trinity Church, visited by the thousands of tourists from all over the world who come to pay their respects at Shakespeare's burial place. Just upstream the works of Shakespeare are recreated for successive generations by the world-famous Royal Shakespeare Company. The Art Deco brickwork of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and the fantastical Victorian shell of the old Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, now housing the Swan Theatre below a graceful twentieth century roof, are each an extraordinary contrast to the character and style of most of Stratford. However the activities within are crucial to Stratford's character and importance and are a key part of what makes Stratford a very special place to live, work or visit.



Space to play.



The Swan Theatre.



Shakespeare's grave at Holy Trinity with flowers laid during the Birthday Procession.



River traffic by Clopton Bridge.



Recommended Design Guidelines

The key features of the Avon Corridor are:

The existence of large green areas within the centre of the town and the co-existence of these green areas with some very large buildings and others much smaller to support the great variety of human and wildlife activity which takes place. The area is a great asset to Stratford and the distinct characters of its constituent parts must be maintained and enhanced.

The following measures are suggested:

North of Clopton Bridge

- Manage the green part of this area principally for wildlife, with reasonable access for people.
- Support parking around the Leisure Centre but substantially improve pedestrian routes from there to the rest of the Avon Corridor.

The Recreation Ground

- Continue to manage this area for a mix of sports and other recreational uses.
- Allow sensitive low-key development of facilities to support recreation but resist intrusive commercial use of this area.

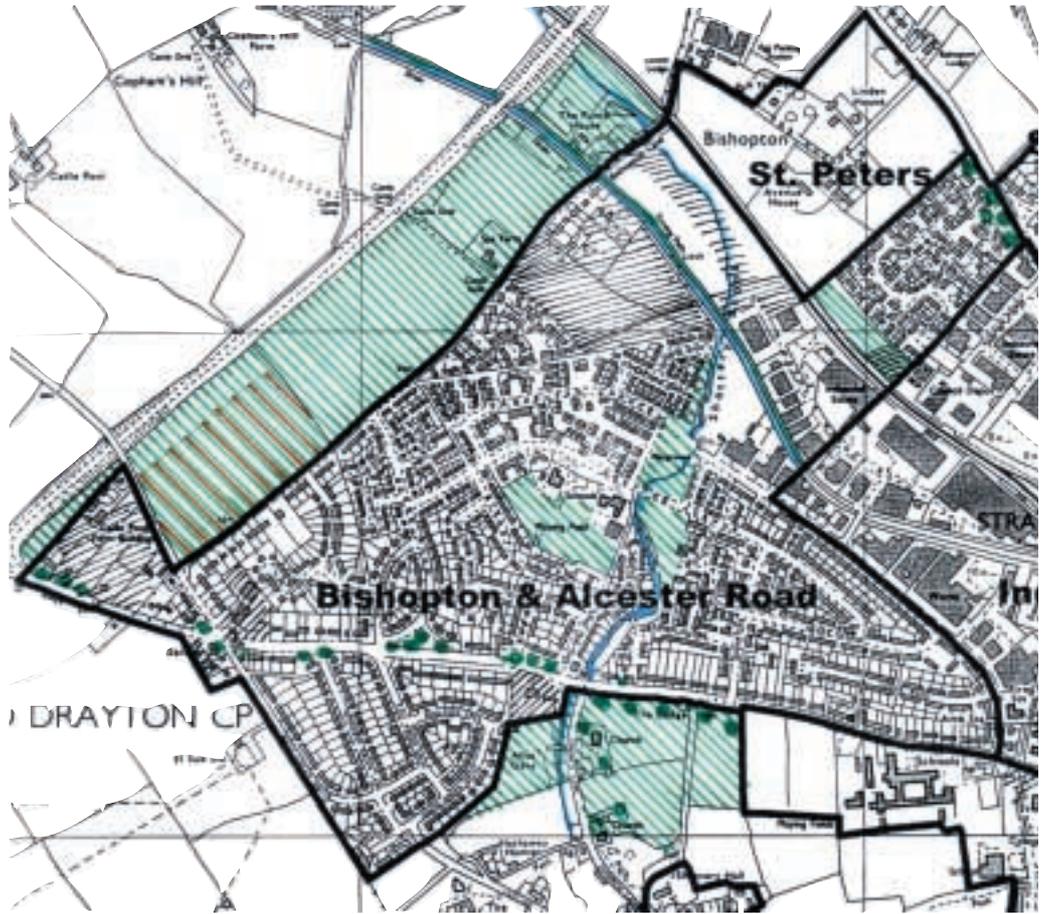
The west bank south of the Clopton Bridge

- Retain Bancroft Gardens as a 'honeypot' for visitors but tidy up and renew elements of the landscaping which have become tired and outdated.
- Improve pedestrian routes south to encourage visitors to explore further downstream and across the river.
- Create better connections for local people to walk and cycle within and across the Avon Corridor.
- Use the opportunity of the RSC development to enhance the unique riverside location for the living tradition of performing the work of Shakespeare in his home town.

Generally

- Insist on a high quality of design, materials and workmanship.
- Avoid pastiche.
- Use planting to integrate buildings with their green surroundings.

5.2 Bishopton & Alcester Road



Character of the Area

The Alcester Road, which forms the southerly boundary of most of the area is a main arterial road running east towards the Town Centre, commencing at the island at the junction with the A46 and it becomes the A422 into Stratford. Immediately from the island on its northern edge a housing development has been started between the A422 and The Ridgeway, a local road leading to the village of Wilmcote.

There are three distinct sections: Bishopton with Joseph Way; the area between Masons Road and the Alcester Road with a small area south of Alcester Road and finally land at either side of Drayton Avenue, around the Marie Corelli School.

The bulk of the area is housing mostly mid to late 20th century on the north side of Alcester Road with a mixture of two storey private and social housing in brick of various colours, some white rendered walls, tiled roofs and modern casement windows.



Note the small green and the maturity of the trees.



Note how once again the green and mature trees give a sense of peace.



An example of typical houses in Joseph Way.

Bishopton

Bishopton, an area with historical associations, was originally owned by the Bishop of Worcester from which it derives its name. In Victorian times, it boasted a new church, now demolished. During this period Bishopton was developed as a small Spa and some of the 1841 buildings still exist, including four Grade II Listed Buildings.

Between the Stratford to Birmingham railway line and the canal is the proposed Shottery Business Park which has the Shottery Brook running through it. This is a manorial boundary and part of the Welcombe Inclosures Act of 1754. Hedges on the land are also boundaries under the Act and should be dealt with under the Hedgerow Regulations.

The Shottery Brook plays an essential part in the maintenance of wildlife in the area. However, further development, whose storm water runoff is permitted to run into the brook, will lead to flooding as in 1998 with financial implications to the residents and District Council alike. There is an abundance of wildlife such as hedgehogs, rabbits and birds, including those on the Red List, the endangered species. Bats are also known to frequent the area.

The north west side of Bishopton forms a boundary with the A422, the A46 and the A3400, Birmingham Road. The land on the west of Birmingham Road near to the Avenue from the railway line up to the Birmingham Road contains a housing development of two storey houses of brown brick with tiled roofs at Joseph Way. This development includes a large number of starter homes, which were quite unusual and forward-looking at the time. The gardens are quite small but large trees have been retained with greens around, which give a mature and settled feel to the area.

Bishopton Lane has residential property on the east side and fields, three listed Grade II buildings, the Spa complex, on the west. There are large prestigious houses with some modern detached and a few semi-detached houses. The three Listed Buildings on the west side of Bishopton Lane formed part of the Bishopton Spa. One of them, a guest house,



Canal Bridge viewed from Bishopton Lane.



Modern development leading off Bishopton Lane.



The start of the Joseph Way area. Note how the mature trees and small green break the area.

was once visited by a young Queen Victoria. The other two buildings are Bruce Lodge and the Pump House, which was, as its name implies, the Pump House for the Bishopton Spa. The other Grade II Listed Building is Lower Lodge which is located on the opposite side of the Bishopton Lane at Bruces' Egg Farm.

Entomological surveys have shown that Bishopton fields are home to a wide range of insects, some of which are unique to this area together with a plethora of flora and fauna. The bird life includes, amongst other species, lapwings, skylarks, thrushes, sparrows, starlings and blackbirds.

A large proportion of the bird life is recognised as being endangered and on the 'Red List'.

The trees are mostly oaks, ash and silver birch. The fields are arable and there is a footpath to the village of Wilmcote. The canal cuts across the fields and is well used as a leisure facility. The western end of Bishopton Lane adjoins The Ridgeway from which there is an uninterrupted view across miles of Warwickshire countryside.

Modern housing developments lead off Bishopton Lane to the south east. Most of the properties are large and medium sized detached houses. Towards the Alcester Road there is a mix of private and social houses including semi-detached, modern terraced, bungalows, sheltered housing and one block of four storey flats. This block looks out of place amongst single and two storey homes.

Alcester Road

On the southern side of the Alcester Road, opposite The Ridgeway is a small well-designed development completed in 2002. Beyond this is mid-20th century two storey housing with a single shop. All are constructed in the same manner as on the opposite side of Alcester Road. This housing culminates in a recent intrusive three storey development with poor elevational treatment which dominates the scale of the Alcester Road area. The remainder of the south side is open fields which also back on to Shottery village to the south.

On land between Alcester Road and The Ridgeway, in the parish of Stratford and Old Drayton, on the Town boundary, a new housing development is under construction. Planning permission has been given for more houses than was agreed in the local plan and included four storey flats in the centre of the development on the highest part of the site. This will be the over-riding focal point of the development.



Looking south along A422 into Stratford.



Hathaway Green Lane and local store.



Undeveloped fields on the corner of Alcester Road and Church Lane.

Drayton Avenue, Trevelyan Crescent, Drayton Avenue/Bomford Way

This area provides the only open space in the Bishopton area. These open areas are an essential requirement for all residents of the Bishopton area now that so many green areas have been developed. Children have a safe area in which to play whilst being close to home.

Lower down Drayton Avenue there is a large area of open space and a children's play area close to the Marie Corelli School. This school also has its own playing fields which add to the feeling of open space in the area. The Shottery Brook also runs at the edge of the open space.



Path between houses and school.



Small shopping complex, Drayton Avenue.



Block of flats forming part of social housing development in Trevelyan Crescent.



Marie Corelli School and playing fields.



Recommended Design Guidelines

The key features of this area are:

- Modern family homes in pleasant surroundings.
- Canal, fields and open spaces.
- Attractive panoramic views to the north west of the town visible on entry and exit of the town.
- Four Grade II Listed Buildings linked to the Bishopton Spa.
- Good bio-diversity with some protected species.

The following measures are suggested:

- Retain what remains of the fields and other green open spaces with some judicious tree planting schemes implemented.
- The allotments adjacent to Church Lane should be retained.
- Any development close to Shottery Brook should not be allowed to discharge surface water runoff into the brook as this will cause flooding, which will not only affect Bishopton but Alcester Road and Shottery as well.
- All future development should be of good design and materials should respect the character of the area.
- Good landscaping schemes should be provided in any new development.
- Numbers of dwellings determined by the Local Plan should be adhered to.
- More cognisance of topography of land to be undertaken in any development.
- Any high rise high density developments must be avoided at all costs.
- The canal bridge in Bishopton Lane must be retained with additional traffic calming measures to ensure that Bishopton Lane does not become a 'rat run'.

5.3 Bridgetown



The Gazebo. The southbound road across Clopton Bridge has been cut through part of the Manor grounds. The Gazebo was saved and incorporated into the roundabout.

Character of the Area

Bridgetown is situated on the east bank of the River Avon at the site of the very ancient river crossing. From the Clopton Bridge (late fifteenth century) other tracks and toll roads diverged. These include the routes by which Shakespeare would have travelled to London. All these roads, modified, are in use today, defining and delineating the character of Bridgetown.

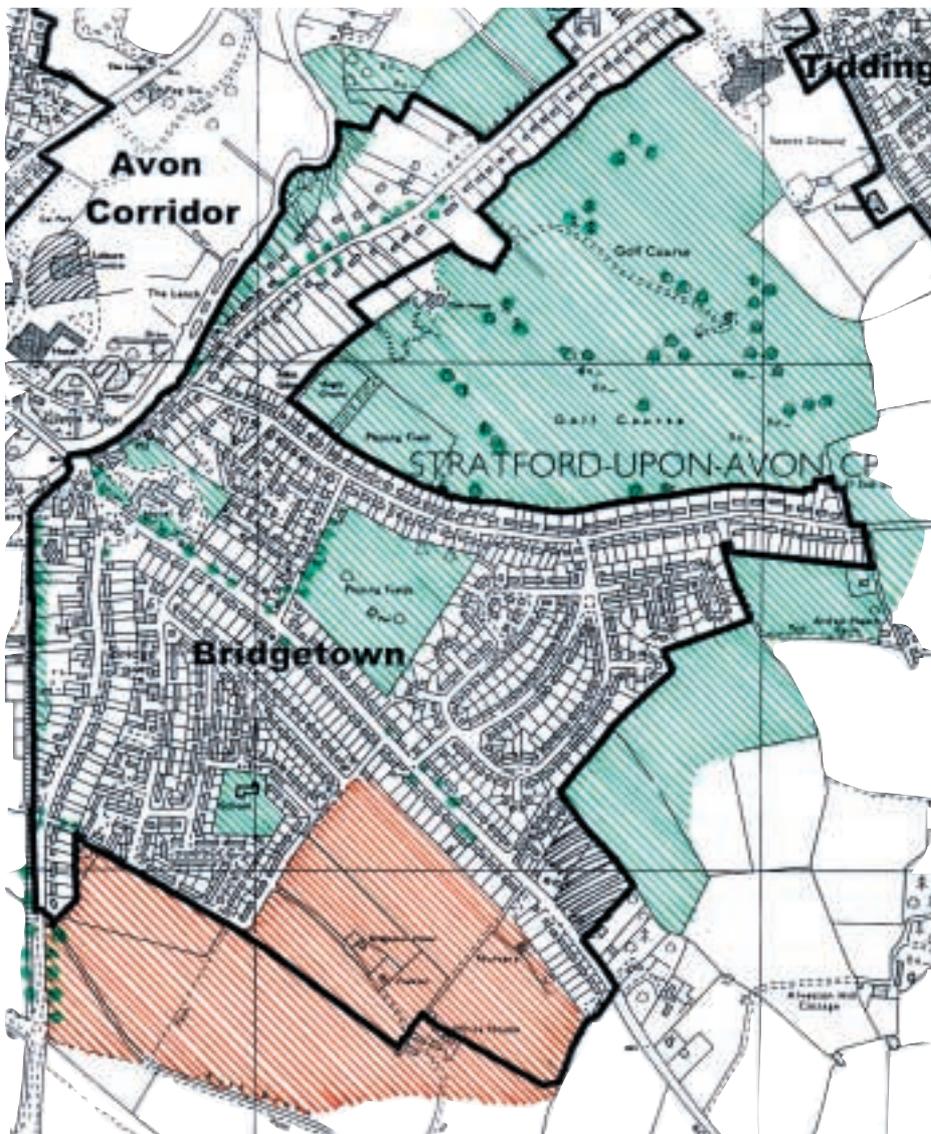
Until the nineteenth century the only buildings of importance were Alveston Manor and a public house which is now the Swan's Nest. Both are handsome buildings, now hotels. All the rest of the area was agricultural land.

Modern Bridgetown is an attractive residential neighbourhood with a good mixture of mainly detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows, in a variety of English suburban

styles with brick, painted render or pebble dash walls and tiled, or sometimes slate, pitched roofs. All the dwellings have well tended gardens, and in the case of the older properties many have large gardens, creating a pleasant, green environment.

There is good access to the recreation ground, with its many sports facilities, and room for picnics and family games. There is one Public House, The Tramway (formerly The Railway Inn), and a small church, St Peter's (part of the parish of Alveston). There is an excellent Primary School, an off-licence, a beauty parlour, a post office-cum-shop and a garage which sells a variety of goods and runs a snack bar.

For all other services and entertainment, the river must be crossed. So that Bridgetown, despite physical proximity to the town centre, is a dormitory suburb curiously isolated in character from the rest of Stratford.





Harvard Hotel in Shipston Road. Built as a private house, now enlarged to provide more accommodation. Behind is a row of workmen's cottages c.1870.



Alveston Manor Hotel.



The river Avon flooded up the Shipston Road in 1998.

Bridgetown Along the Main Roads

Shipston Road (A3400)

In 1825 a horse-drawn tramway was established from the canal basin with a new bridge over the Avon, and an embankment raised above the watermeadows parallel to the Shipston toll road. This served Moreton-in-Marsh and, later, Shipston. Within a few years steam trains had taken over from stations east of the river. The trams became obsolete. The strip of land along Shipston Road, cut off from the watermeadows by the embankment quickly became used as orchards and allotments. Several rows of workmen's

cottages (two-up, two down) were built, as well as a few houses for affluent families. These are now largely guest houses and small hotels.

This situation with no houses on the east side of Shipston Road remained until after the 1914-1918 war, when houses were built individually, and at intervals in ribbon development. However, from the town the countryside is quickly reached and, turning down Seven Meadows Road, there is a delightful view.



Archway under the Tramway, Shipston Road.



Looking across Rushbrook Road on the edge of the Bridgetown Estate. Application has been granted to build five hundred houses on this site.

Banbury Road (A422)

Ribbon development spreads along Banbury Road for about a mile. Further on, the buildings of the new Stratford Business Park straddle the horizon. These are built on the site of the old ammunition dump, previously hidden by green banks. Returning, the buildings dominate the approach to the town. From the brow of the hill, descending to the Avon, there is a lovely view of the town, in the foreground of which, on green fields, five hundred houses are being built.



Riverside Gardens. New houses on the Tiddington Road.



Tiddington Road. Recently constructed house (built on the site of a demolished dwelling).



Tiddington Road.

Tiddington Road (B4086)

This road too is characterised by ribbon development of large detached houses occupied as single units with single or double garages to the front or side. It carries a substantial amount of private and commercial traffic, including HGVs most of which results from the development of Wellesbourne's housing estates and the industrial park. On the approach to town in the Alveston Manor roundabout and Clopton Bridge area there are serious traffic capacity problems during the many peak periods, resulting in long tailbacks.

The houses have wide frontages but narrow depth that gives a sense of built form that runs with or parallel to the road. On the north side some dwellings near to the town have river

frontages. Further along there are open spaces which along with Riverside Caravan Parks are 'Areas of Restraint' some of which are in the flood plain. To the south side, near town is part of the Conservation Area. Further along to the rear of the dwellings are allotments, the Rugby Club sports field and Stratford Golf Club. Development stops just short of coalescing with Tiddington village.

The area of Stratford town is particularly green and pleasant with its own character which should be retained by avoiding any infilling, demolition or redevelopment. It is important to maintain an open space area between the built area of the town and Tiddington village. All Areas of Restraint within the river corridor should be maintained.



Tour buses and heavy lorries use the fifteenth century Clopton Bridge.

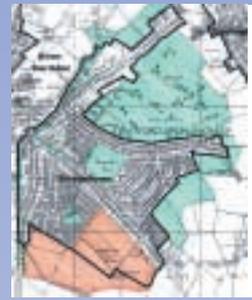
Backland Development Between the Main Roads

Before and since the Second World War the rate of development on land between the main roads has grown apace. Broadly speaking the land between the B4086 and the A422 was developed earlier and at a lower density, further relieved by the areas of playing fields.

The area between the A422 and the A3400 has been developed more recently and at a higher density so that the softening effect of gardens is less, particularly unfortunate given the harsh colours of some of the brick used. Building has already begun on five hundred houses beyond Rushbrook Road. These are to be at still greater density. Roads will not be built to service them until the first hundred and fifty are sold. Distance from the town centre makes it most likely that their inhabitants will wish to do their shopping by car. Already other building sites are being sought in this area. It would seem that a very large expansion is envisaged which would be detrimental to Stratford.



Bridgetown School.



Recommended Design Guidelines

The key features of Bridgetown are:

- Riverside area isolated in character from Stratford town.
- Historic tramway embankment.
- Historic Alveston Manor.
- Good access to Recreation Ground.
- Golf Club.
- Sports facilities.
- Good range of house types in pleasant, green environment
- Excellent primary school.
- Local centre shops and service facilities.

The following measures are suggested:

- Retain as much green space as possible, leaving room for planting and shrubs.
- Any further planning proposals should include shops and services.
- Design of new roads should be integral with the development.
- Houses should be built to a high standard of design, keeping to two storeys in height, in order to keep a really good view of the town from the A422 Banbury Road.
- Use bricks, tiles and slates which tone with the older buildings. Local bricks have a warm orange/pink glow unlike the strident red brick so often used today. (The walls of Alveston Manor and along Southern Lane are excellent examples).
- Impressions of a town on arriving and leaving are as important to the inhabitant as to the visitor, and views from approach and exit roads should be planned sensitively.

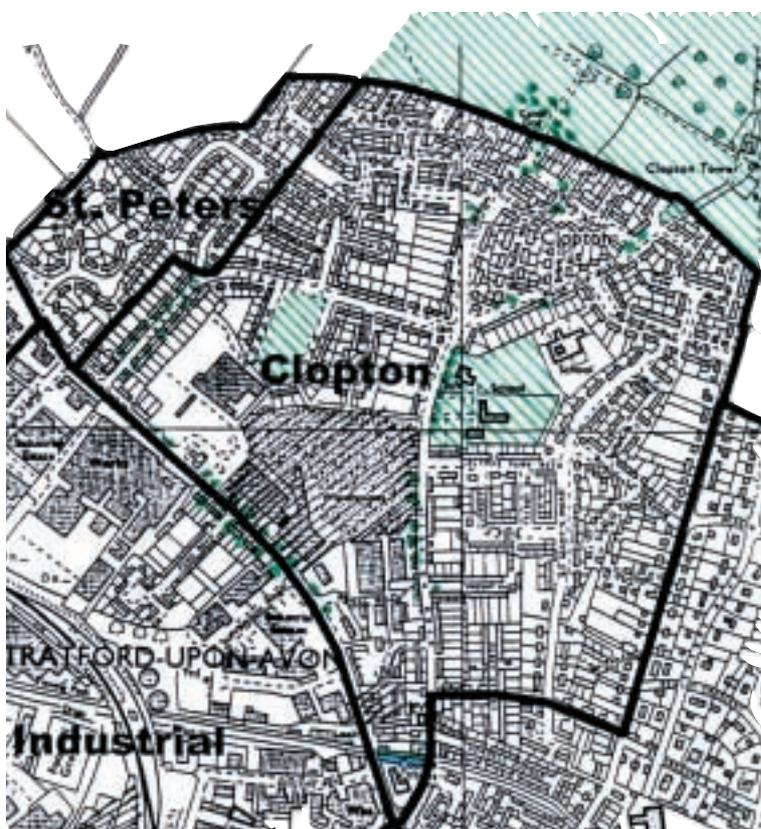
5.4 Clopton

Character of the Area

The area is split into two sections east and west of the spine road Clopton Road which runs in a northerly direction from the road junction with Guild Street, Birmingham Road and Arden Street ending at Clopton House with large forest trees and a green. The area is mostly housing with early 20th century red brick terraces nearest the town and late 20th century estates of two storey Council and private houses. Landscape is patchy but there are some areas of mature trees and associated greens which relieve the urban character. Clopton Road is very narrow and cars are parked along large stretches, making further development difficult.



A view looking south down Clopton Road from inside the old Clopton Estate. An entrance pillar can just be seen in the left mid picture. Note how the developers have left the very mature trees and a small green in the picture background.



East Clopton Road

This section was initially developed around Edwardian times with a three storey brewery now converted into apartments in red brick and slate roof progressing up the road with two storey terraced housing as far as a mid 20th century small row of shops. Leading from the Clopton Road are Arthur Street, Percy Street and Vincent Avenue with small but substantial semi-detached and terraced houses. Occasionally at the end of a street as a focal point is an individual detached house with a character of its own. The construction is of red brick with tiled and slate roofs, white casement windows and bays. Recent building in Vincent Avenue with a block on either side of the individual house on the south side echoing the design of this end house and on the north a block with similar detail to the semi-detached houses along the Avenue but on a vast scale which is an intrusion in the area. As the front gardens are small the landscape is very limited but there are a few larger trees placed haphazardly.



Percy Street, east side, looking south.



Vincent Avenue, north side, looking west.



Clopton Road. One of the bay fronted houses on the right housed a cobbler up to the late 1960s.

Beyond the shops the playing fields to the Thomas Jolyffe School provide a very large green space with trees bordering the road. North and east of the school is almost entirely developed, during the last half of the 20th century, in estates of two storeyed detached, semi-detached and terraced housing of varying designs in brick of several colours, some with clap boarding and a variety of medium pitch tiled roofs and casement windows. Most have garages and porch features. There are small areas of forest trees and greens which add punctuation to the road scene and the gardens are well planted with ornamental trees and shrubs which will mature and present a more landscaped aspect.



The flats on the right were converted from the building where the Flowers brewers dried hops.



Recommended Design Guidelines

- The scale of future development must be no more than two storeys except where compatible with existing development.
- Landscape, particularly greens and forest trees, must be included to enhance the area to integrate with and provide a contrast to the buildings.
- Land to the south of Clopton House should become permanent public open space and link with the Welcombe Hills and Clopton Park local nature reserve.

West Clopton Road/ Birmingham Road

On this side to the north is more private housing similar to the east side and further to the west mid 20th century Council housing with a mixture of red and brown brick with some half timbered gabled projections as features, particularly at the turn of the road to give a focal point. The Birmingham Road contained early 20th century terraced housing in red brick and tiled or slate roofs some of which still survives in pockets. A large area now contains a retail centre with superstores which while landscaped with small trees and shrubs to hide the car parking presents an industrial atmosphere in amongst the housing. At the junction with Clopton Road, offices have been built but some of the land previously used for industry has been reused for two and three storey housing alongside the listed monopitch terrace by F.R.S. Yorke which is set at right angles to the road.



Justins Avenue looking east. The pub on the right was built on the site of demolished Police houses. Note how the maturity of the trees enhances this road.



St. Mary's.

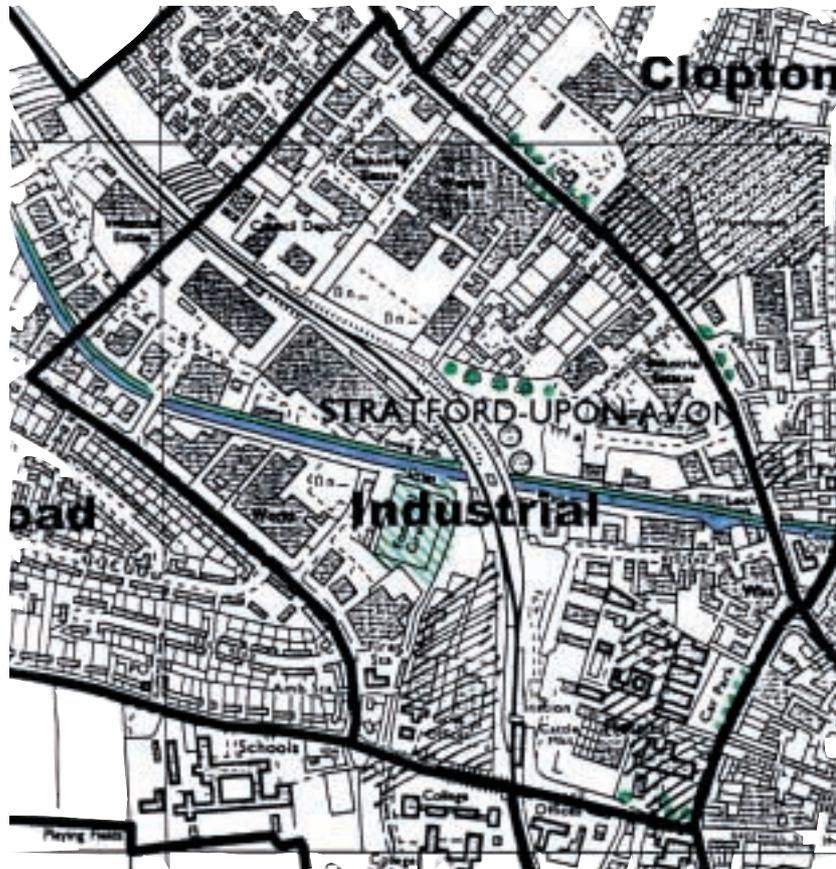


The green on Hodgson Road.



End of Vincent Avenue.

5.5 Industrial



Note how the Industrial Area looms up.



The new hospital with its Emergency Department in the foreground.



The unsightly island leading to the supermarkets.

Character of the Area

One of the approaches to the Industrial Area from the north, where the road is bounded by large trees, green spaces and verges, is along the south west side of the Birmingham Road. This road is intersected by a roundabout, without doubt the most unsightly in Stratford, which forms the north eastern boundary. The remaining boundaries are Arden Street, Masons Road and Timothy's Bridge Road. The railway and canal crisscross the whole area.

The overall impression, on the Birmingham Road, is of large warehouse type buildings with brick and profiled sheet cladding. The only landscape comprises some mature trees which, to some extent, relieve the buildings. One of the large factories fronting the Birmingham Road is to be developed with housing and a budget hotel which with good design and landscape could greatly enhance the approach to the town centre. Arden Street has been largely redeveloped with an office block, a new building for hospital services, all in a light brown brick and a new hotel which follows the Victorian design, complete with cupola, of the

original hospital on the site. Between the hotel, offices and in front of the hospital services is an existing car park screened by a hedge and shrubs.

The adjacent cattle market is to close and the area also contains the railway terminus building. A new development is proposed, possibly with a combined rail and bus terminal is as yet undetermined. This gives another opportunity for good design with landscaping. The only green space in the whole area is the local football club field which should be retained. At the end of the area, next to the railway station is a large retail supermarket.

The other section of the Industrial Area runs along Masons Road, Timothy's Bridge Road and Timothy's Bridge Road extension. The factories on Masons Road are opposite to residential dwellings. Grass verges and trees do soften the impact of the factories and in some cases conceal their structures. There is no conformity in design but are generally two storey, the age of the buildings determining their design and construction. One outstanding building, in more ways than one, is the AMEC building which is totally out of proportion to the other buildings in the Industrial Area. It can be seen from most areas in the north of the town. No more buildings of these dimensions should be agreed to.

Timothy's Bridge Road extension has planning permission for a Business Park which covers a 12 hectare site at the junction with Bishopton Lane. The site has residential development to the south and planning permission has been granted for further residential development to the north side.



**Old Post Office vehicle park.
Ideal for redevelopment.**



Note how Regal House looms over the 1920s houses, typical along the Birmingham Road.



Plaque on the wall reads: "Housing for the Working Class". Dates from the 1920s.



Warehouse in Regal Road.

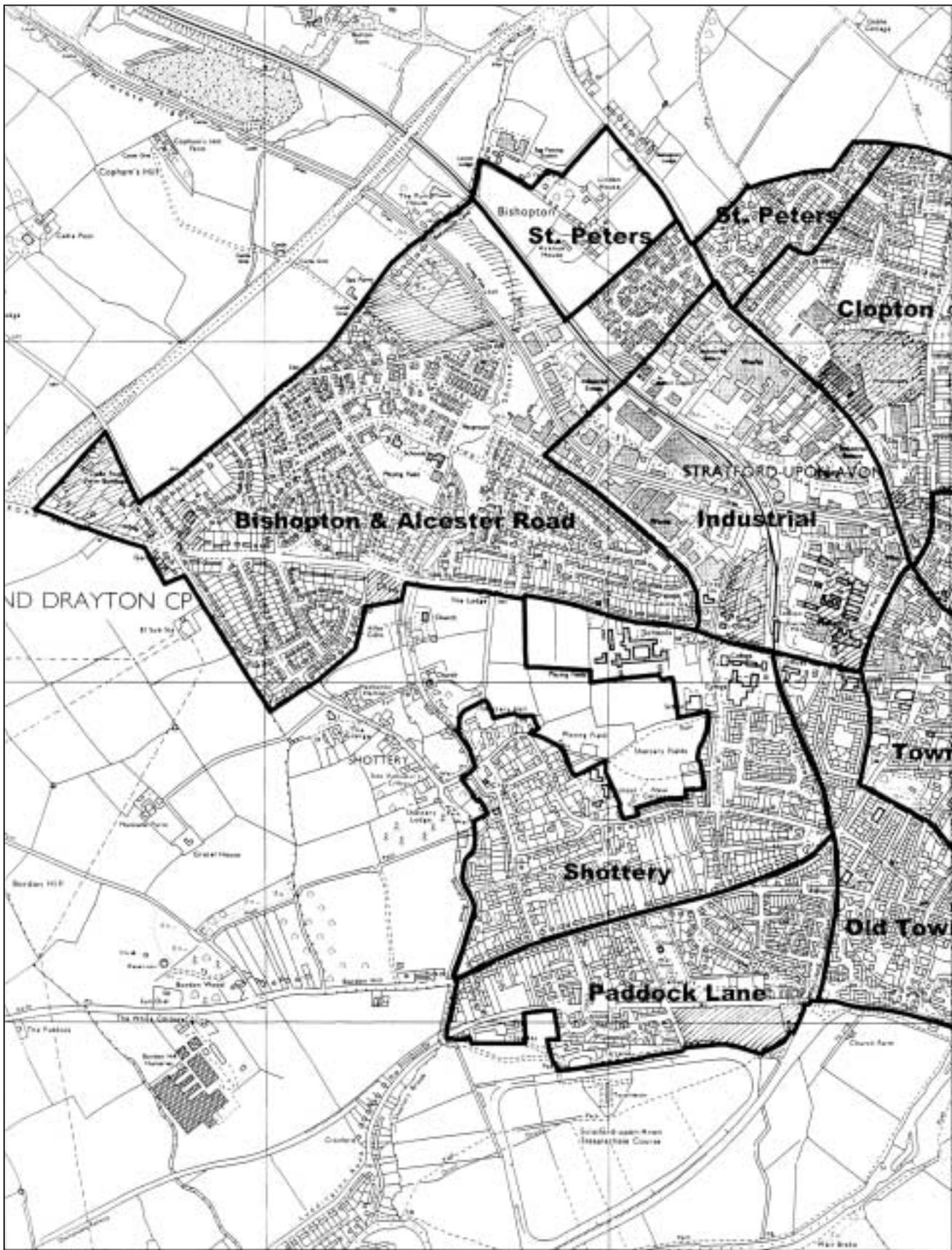


NC Joseph site.



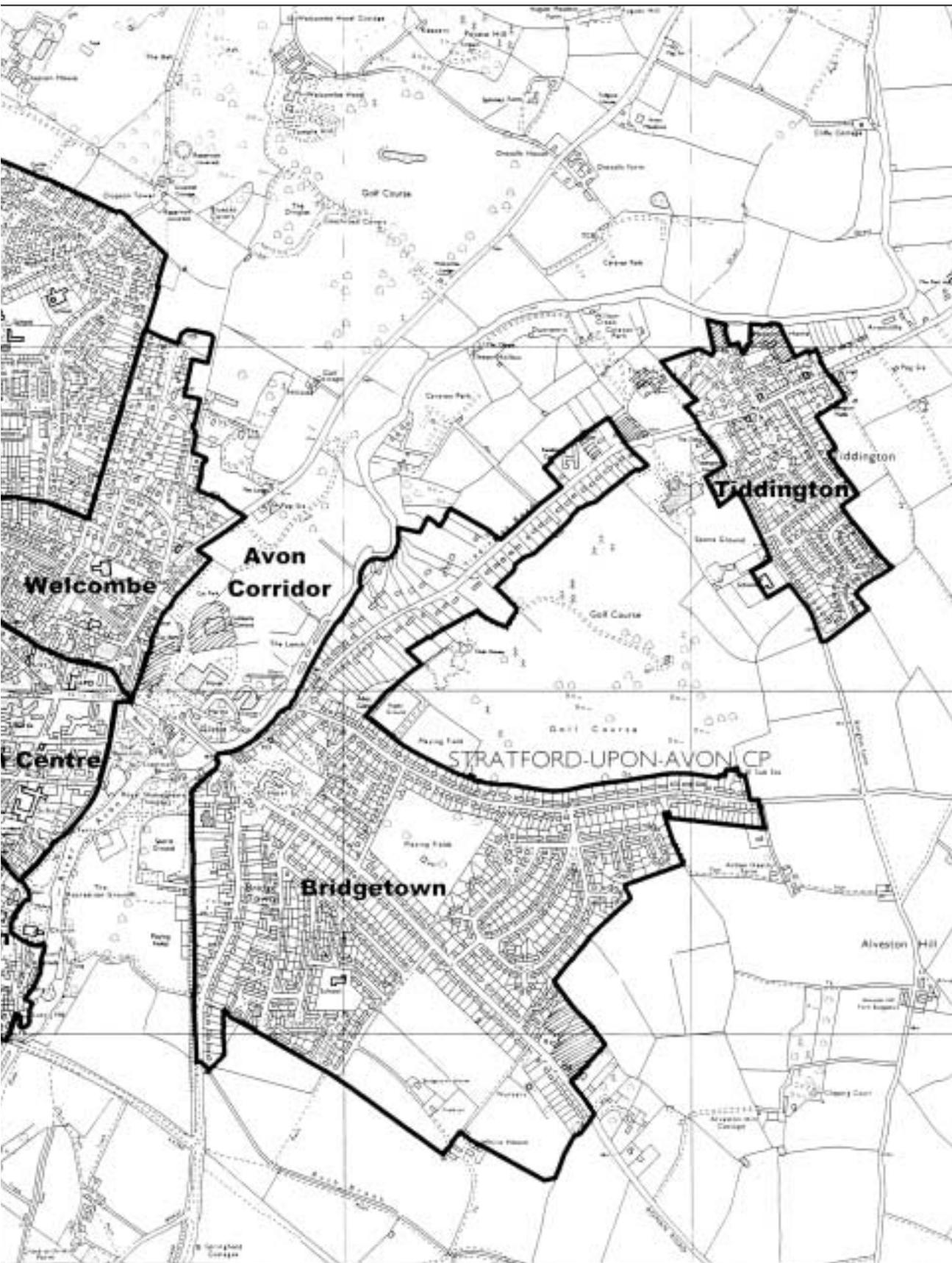
Recommended Design Guidelines

- New development bordering the main route from the north into the town should be of good design and incorporate green spaces and tree planting.
- Consider the use of red or brown pantiles or delta roofs at 17 or 22 pitch in lieu of profiled sheeting.
- All new industrial development restricted to a maximum of three storeys.
- Retain all existing landscape of mature trees and green verges from the A46 roundabout along the Birmingham Road and improve the roundabout to the retail centre.
- Provide landscaping along the canal to increase its amenity.
- Plant trees around the car park in Arden Street.
- On the proposed Shottery Business Park all designs should be compatible with the nearby residential development in height and materials with a wide belt of tree planting and landscape to soften the outlook from the housing and listed buildings on Bishopton Lane.



**Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council
Stratford-upon-Avon Town Design Statement**

Character Areas



Scale 1:15000



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5.6 Old Town



Character of the Area

The area is bounded on the east by the Town Centre and the Avon Corridor, by Seven Meadows Road on the south, the walkway on the old railway line on the west and the Alcester Road on the north. It consists of three areas, two in the conservation area and one new infill development; it does not contain any significant open spaces but does have important green landscaped spaces adjacent in the Town Centre Area and the Avon Corridor.



Typical street scene.



Building materials are primarily brick with slate roofs. Walls predominate over windows.

The area is intensively developed, predominantly residential including extensive Bed & Breakfast accommodation along Grove Road, Evesham Place, Broad Walk and Chestnut Walk. It has three shops, two schools and an Adult Training Centre. These are small scale in keeping with the village character of the area. Housing consists of two storey terraced Victorian houses in the vernacular style of red brick, low pitched slate roofs and sash windows. Some houses are set back from the back of pavement and originally had small wrought iron railings. Unfortunately some window and door replacements together with some painted brickwork are inappropriate and detract from the overall character. There are some occasional mid 20th century semi-detached houses with pebble dash finish and an unusual short terrace of 'timbered' houses.



'Rat running' in Old Town.



“Splendid” Chestnut Walk.



A brave attempt to shield parking. With a mature hedge, this would qualify as ‘good’ practice.

Old Town

Stretching south from Chestnut Walk and Old Town are classic Victorian houses on terraced streets which are on a grid plan with traffic moving two ways but hampered by continuous on-street parking. There is a feature of a footpath across to Shottery via Shottery Fields. There is virtually no planting except around larger end units where gardens show behind boundary walls. Where some small front garden spaces occur they are generally decorated with attractive hanging baskets in summer.



Height of buildings should be rigorously controlled.



Painting does not always enhance the streetscape.



Some newer developments have blended in well.

Albany Road, Westbourne Grove

Consists of slightly larger Victorian terraced housing with more window features including bays and slightly decreased front gardens. This section has one-way traffic which has to cross the busy Grove Road traffic. Along Grove Road and Evesham Place are larger Victorian buildings, some semi-detached, mostly used for Bed & Breakfast, three storeys high, some with converted attics. A number face onto Firs Gardens in the Town Centre Area, which gives a sense of space.



Typical street scene, Albany Road.



Recommended Design Guidelines

- The height of buildings must be rigorously controlled. Buildings should be two storeys high. Nothing higher should be permitted except along the northernmost areas nearest the existing taller buildings along Alcester Road.
- Building styles should respect the vernacular building forms, walls predominate over windows and materials of red brick with slate roofs. They should avoid large scale repetition of modern standard designs.
- Developments which add to the existing on-street residential parking should be actively discouraged e.g change of use from residential to Bed & Breakfast. Such development needs to show how additional demand for parking will be accommodated (preferably off-street with appropriate shielding).
- Development should recognise the importance of pedestrian movements and should provide public footpaths wherever possible.
- Any developments which lead to further through traffic should be actively discouraged.
- The introduction of unsympathetic replacement of doors, windows and other features should be restricted.

Old Town Mews, Saffron Meadow



Old Town Mews.

This is an entirely new development mainly bounded by Seven Meadows Road which provides access to the western part. The eastern part is reached from New Street in Old Town. There are linking footpaths between each part. The development is one and two storeys with one large block, Lucys Mill, alongside the river. The boundary with Seven Meadows Road is bordered by planting, walls and fencing.



Interesting 1930s houses with character.

5.7 Paddock Lane



Character of the Area

This area is bounded on the north by the Evesham Road, on the west by Luddington Road, on the south by the Racecourse and the Greenway and by Seven Meadows Road on the east. The bulk of the area is two storey housing with Council housing constructed early 20th century at the eastern end and a mixture of private and Housing Association homes mid to late 20th century. The latest housing development is three and four storeys high, adjacent to the Racecourse with a most unsatisfactory design and no planting!



Roundabout leading to Evesham Road.



Bordon Place Council houses off Evesham Road.



Recommended Design Guidelines

The Key features of this area are:

The view of the whole of Stratford from the top of Bordon Hill, Bordon Place Crescent and the cemetery.

The following measures are suggested:

- The fields on either side of Bordon Hill should be protected in perpetuity and the panoramic view preserved.
- The Kings Acre estate should be well planted throughout to offset its starkness.
- Any new development must have good design and landscaping and must respect the existing scale.

Evesham Road South Side

This commences with a planted roundabout which replaced a level crossing of the closed Stratford to Cheltenham railway line which also ran along the present Seven Meadows Road. The first section is dominated by the Salmon Tail pub rising high among the two storey red brick and slate terraces alongside and around it. Bordon Place is a shallow green crescent planted with large forest trees with two storey brick and render housing built by the Council forming an entrance to further similar housing beyond. Adjacent is a cemetery where the grave of Marie Corelli amongst others is situated and which also provides a green haven along the road and in the area. Detached



Town Council Cemetery, Evesham Road.

and semi-detached houses in brick, render and tile roofs continue to the foot of Bordon Hill; this rises steeply alongside green fields and a hedge to the top, where there is a magnificent panoramic view of the whole of Stratford.

Paddock Lane

This last infill site north of the Racecourse, the Kings Acre estate, has been developed with overpowering three storey blocks with restless gabled elevations punctuated by crass four storey towers with pyramidal slate roofs without a single piece of planting. This gives a harsh urban view of Stratford from the Racecourse and the countryside beyond. The site is also adjacent to the Greenway, a walk and cycle rideway along the water meadows into the Warwickshire countryside.



Houses on Paddock Lane site.



Entrance to 'The Greenway'.

Shottery Area

This Area is bounded on the north by the Alcester Road, on the east by the walkway on the old railway line, on the south by the Evesham Road and on the west by the Shottery Brook.

From the Alcester Road the village and the Area is approached via Church Lane with allotments on the west and two churches and a hospice on the east which have retained the established trees and hedgerows. Shottery Road, the boundary of the residential section, is lined for some distance with two storey brick, tile and slate roofed terraces as far as Shottery fields and the Grammar School for Girls. A mixture of old houses and 20th century houses, some set behind hedgerows and well planted gardens lead up to a 'square'. This is a one way traffic system, containing a pub, houses and a church. The remainder of the area between Shottery Road and the south and west boundaries contains two storey mid to late 20th century detached and semi-detached



Shottery Brook.



Allotments along Church Lane.



Hathaway Hamlets.

The roof tiles, brickwork old and new complement each other.



Hathaway Hamlets. Note how the tiled roof and thatched roofs work together to complement each other.

typically suburban houses in brick of various colours, rendered walls and tiled roofs. West of the village and the Shottery Brook boundary is a tree plantation, orchards and open farmland running up to the Evesham Road and north side of Bordon Hill. South of the Alcester Road and adjacent to the green fields alongside it are playing fields for the new High School whose buildings are now under construction. Alongside is The Willows School and Warwickshire College of Further Education and its grounds.



Tavern Lane. The green is an ideal place for a sign identifying Shottery.



Recommended Design Guidelines

The key features of the Shottery area are:

The green spaces on the north and the open countryside on the west of the village.

The following measures are suggested:

- The allotments and the green spaces around the village as shown on the area map must be protected.
- Any future redevelopment must be of good design incorporating good landscape and be in scale with the area.
- Traffic measures are vital.

5.9 St. Peters / Bishopton



Looking south from the Warwick side of the A46 bypass from the hill top.

Character of the Area

This area is split into two distinct areas on either side of the A3400, The Birmingham Road, running from north west to south east. One is mostly green and the other housing.



Approach along Birmingham Road.



View looking west down Oakleigh Road. Typical of house building in the late 1950s/early 1960s.

North west side

This side is, at present, mostly green with several forest trees. It encloses The Avenue which is entered from Bishopton Lane on the north west side which eventually turns at right angles and exits onto the Birmingham Road. The Avenue is lined on both sides with mature lime trees and gives access to two large houses and some adjacent smaller houses. The area is named after a church built in 1843 which was intended to serve a development around Spa Lodge in Bishopton but which never took place. The church has been demolished but the churchyard still remains with an abundance of wild flowers, mature yew trees and much wild life.

Planning permission has been granted for further residential development over most of this section.



Looking west and to the right of Linden House from The Avenue.

South east side

This section contains two storey housing, detached, semi-detached and terraced, constructed in the early to mid 20th century mostly in brick with tiled roofs and some mature planting which is typical of the adjacent west side of Clopton Road.



View of The Avenue looking south towards Stratford.



St. Peters Churchyard.



Recommended Design Guidelines

The key features of this area are:

- The green approach into Stratford.
- The Avenue with its mature lime trees.

The following measures are suggested:

- As the fields on each side of The Avenue are already scheduled for new housing, it should be treated with great care as it is on view from roads into Stratford from north, east and west.
- The churchyard should be protected in perpetuity.

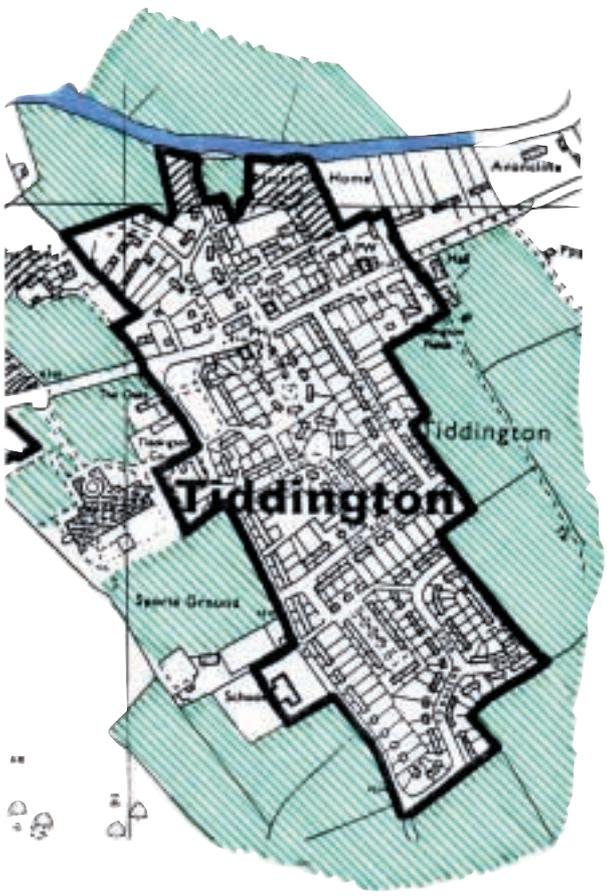
5.10 Tiddington

Character of the Area

Tiddington is a separate riverside village/ settlement from Stratford town. It is substantially surrounded by arable farm lands with some pasture lands and greenfield recreational facilities that attract and support a wide variety of bird life. The topography is mainly level.

There are three distinct areas; the Historic Core' centred on Main Street, the 'Riverside Area' extending from the Historic Core towards the river and the 'Knights Lane' Area extending from the Historic Core southwards towards Alveston Hill.

The Historic Core with its Main Street straddling the B4086 which links the village to Stratford town and Wellesbourne, includes part of New Street, School Lane and Carters Lane with housing and community buildings predominantly from the Georgian and Victorian era with some earlier, the oldest being the late 16th century (1580) Thatched House in School Lane.



Main Street Tiddington.

The Riverside Area has been re-developed during the later years of the 20th century which resulted in the demolition of several mansions with extensive parkland gardens being replaced by executive type dwellings with substantial gardens.

The Knights Lane Area has been developed over most of the 20th century beginning with a few dwellings built in the 1920s and 1930s. Most of the earlier dwellings were social housing built by the Council. Later developments in the Townsend Road area were market housing on the edge of the settlement.



Main Street looking towards Stratford.

Tiddington's Historic Core

The riverside village/settlement probably originated in the late Iron Age before the Roman Conquest. Evidence from excavations shows it developed into a Romano-British settlement and subsequently Anglo Saxon. By the time of the Domesday Book (1086) Tiddington was under the Manor of Alveston. It is within the Ecclesiastical Parish of Alveston which was included in the Municipal Borough of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1924 and since 1974 was included within Stratford-upon-Avon administrative boundary. The oldest building as mentioned earlier is a late 16th century (1580) Listed Thatched House which by its structure was probably an important manor house with access to the river.

Many of the dwellings have distinctive local brick patterns and slate roofs; there are 12 Listed Buildings and several others, such as the Old Schoolhouse, the Old Chapel and the Crown Inn public house which are worthy of preservation. This part also includes local centre shops serving local needs and restaurants serving a wider area.



The Old Schoolhouse.
Note the brickwork.



The Crown Inn
public house.



The oldest building in Tiddington – 1580.

Tiddington's Riverside Area

Most of the Riverside Area was re-developed during the latter half of the 20th century with low density individual design properties with substantial gardens. The Riverside Area of Carters Lane has been developed as an estate with ten similar dwellings on what was the site of the Endowed Monroe-Devis Stratford Maternity Home. The Avonhurst Apartment Block was built on the site of the Avonhurst Mansion.

Consequently as most re-development was on the sites of several mansions and their parkland gardens, there is a wealth of mature



Beeches Walk looking north.

and specimen trees, many of which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. The open land on the riverside of the School Lane Listed Building and Avonhurst is protected as an Area of Restraint and Legal Agreement. School Lane joining with Dark Lane slopes into the river bed, being the only remaining public access to the river available in the village. Most of these areas along the river bank are within the flood plain.



Carters Lane looking towards Main Street.



Recommended Design Guidelines

The key features of this area are:

- Riverside village surrounded by greenfield lands, a wealth of mature and specimen trees with panoramic views of the Welcombe and Alveston hills.
- Good bio-diversity with some protected species.
- Historic Core with twelve Listed Buildings, the oldest being late 16th century.
- Wide range of house types in pleasant surroundings and excellent local facilities.

The following measures are suggested:

- The open spaces surrounding the entrances to the village should be maintained to preserve Tiddington's village setting to prevent creeping urbanisation, coalescence with the town and Alveston village.
- Any re-development or infilling of the Historic Core should be in character and scale by retaining trees, hedges and boundary walls. The design should incorporate local features, materials and be compatible with brick colours and patterns. Roofs should be of similar height and pitch and be of slate or tile construction as appropriate.
- Apart from the twelve Listed Buildings in the Historic Core, the external appearance of several other important buildings; the School House, the Chapel and the Crown Inn public house should be preserved.
- Any re-development or addition to the Knights Lane area should be designed to improve the local village scape and character.
- Any redevelopment of the larger properties within the Riverside Area should respect the spatial layout, the Area of Restraint, Legal Agreements and protect the river margins and flood plain.
- The slipway to the river along School Lane/ Dark Lane should be improved, maintained and possibly provide a River Bus stage.
- The private open space and river bank adjacent to the Slipway, formerly grounds of the Monroe-Devis Maternity Home endowed to the people of Stratford-upon-Avon Borough, previously available to the community as a public open space should be made available to the community as a recreational access to the river.
- Main Street which has wide pavements but is devoid of foliage would benefit from tree planting to create an avenue through the village to improve the streetscape.

Tiddington's Knights Lane Area



Townsend Road looking north west.

Knights Lane which descends from Alveston Hill is the only other road into the village. It serves a substantial residential area, some of which was built on land that was previously a quarry and brickworks. It was developed during the 20th century over a period of some sixty years, beginning with a few dwellings built in the 1920s and 1930s.

The major development of Knights Lane, Oak Road and Lawsons Avenue with social housing was built in the 1940s. South Warwickshire Housing Association own a small number of these properties but most are now privately owned. The dwellings are semi-detached of brick construction with rendered finish and tiled roofs typical of the period but containing some features that improve the elevations.

Later development of Townsend Road and Hamilton Avenue occurred in the 1950s with some later infill in Charlecote Close, Whitfield Close, New Street and the Hamiltons in the 1970s and 1980s. The design of these developments are in the style of various developers' standard estate designs to be found adjacent to many towns and villages countrywide.



Knights Lane opposite NFU Sports Ground, looking west.

5.1.1 The Town Centre



Character of the Area

The Civic and commercial heart of Stratford is geographically off centre. It is situated on gently rising ground above the western bank of the river Avon with the rest of the town fanning out to the west, north-west and south-west. On the opposite bank of the Avon lie only the smaller mostly residential areas of Bridgetown and Tiddington so that the 'central' area is bounded on one side by the open, green corridor of the Avon and connects directly with the glorious Warwickshire countryside beyond.

The central area includes the Roman and medieval routes leading via Greenhill Street, Wood Street and Bridge Street to the Avon crossing at Clopton Bridge. The pattern of streets between Guild Street / Birmingham Road on the north, Old Town / Chestnut Walk on the south, Grove Road / Arden Street on the west and Waterside / Southern Lane on the east was laid out by the new town planners of the twelfth century. The medieval heart of this central area still substantially retains the original land tenure pattern of 'burgage' plots which help conserve the 'grain' and scale of development, and has many surviving historic buildings establishing a strong and distinctive visual character.



Chapel Street from Church Street – Burgage plots establishing a strong and distinctive visual character.



Almshouses in Church Street – historic buildings blend seamlessly into the residential area of Old Town.

Despite the ravages of traffic and a number of insensitive, crass, modern insertions the central area of Stratford is, in the main, a cohesive, pleasant and visually interesting built environment still retaining the qualities of a prosperous regional town. The livestock market has closed but there are still weekly general markets and a monthly Farmers Market in Rother Market.

The great majority of buildings are of two or three storeys. Very many are constructed in brick or are timber framed with brick or rendered infill, casement and dormer windows and pitched, tiled roofs and gables. Of these some are as old as they look and others more recent. Many others are of Regency appearance with stucco facades, sash windows and sometimes parapets to conceal the roofs, some include delicate balconies and others the arched openings of former coaching inns. Of these apparently eighteenth or early nineteenth century buildings some are internally much older and others more straightforwardly of their time.



The Minories.



Nineteenth century artisans' cottages, Ely Street.



Cooks Alley.

The Town

On the south the plot pattern of the medieval centre fades but this area also contains many historic buildings as well as open space from former agricultural land. It blends seamlessly into the residential area of Old Town, adjoining the probable site of the Saxon settlement around Holy Trinity church.

To the west and north the central area is bounded by the traffic arteries of Grove Road/ Arden Street and Guild Street. Along these streets commercial buildings, modern traffic engineering and signs, car parks and the traffic itself, though essential to the life and prosperity of the town, severely damage the character and amenity of the adjoining property and open spaces.



Birmingham Road from Arden Street junction.

However, between these roads and the medieval heart of the town there is much to enjoy, including Shakespeare's birthplace and a web of ancient alleys and courts, modern pedestrianised areas and back land developments to explore. This zone also blends into the town's main shopping area centred on Bridge Street, Wood Street and High Street, which includes many large national multiples, their size and number supported by Stratford's exceptional number of visitors. Moving away from Bridge Street, for example into Sheep Street and Ely Steet, there are smaller, more specialised and individual shops and businesses, together with a very large number of restaurants, cafes and pubs; their numbers again supported by Stratford's visitors. These secondary commercial areas blend into the predominantly residential and administrative areas of the outer parts of the town centre where large and small houses rub shoulders with the Civic Hall, Guild Chapel, District Council Offices, Shakespeare Institute, schools and hotels.

On closer inspection the range of building types sitting successfully within the apparently cohesive whole is surprisingly wide. Nineteenth century buildings range (for example in Ely Street) from simple artisans' cottages to the vigorous High Victorian Gothic of the bank on the corner with Chapel Steet; both are red brick, but there the similarity ends. Twentieth century buildings include art deco (not a style associated with the English market town!) at the former Burtons in Bridge Street and at the western end of Henley Street, the street which also contains Shakespeare's birthplace. It is significant that the art deco buildings adhere to the tight street pattern and overall height to which their extreme eccentricity is subordinate and that they are isolated examples. Stratford's overall coherence could not survive more than the occasional insertion of this kind.

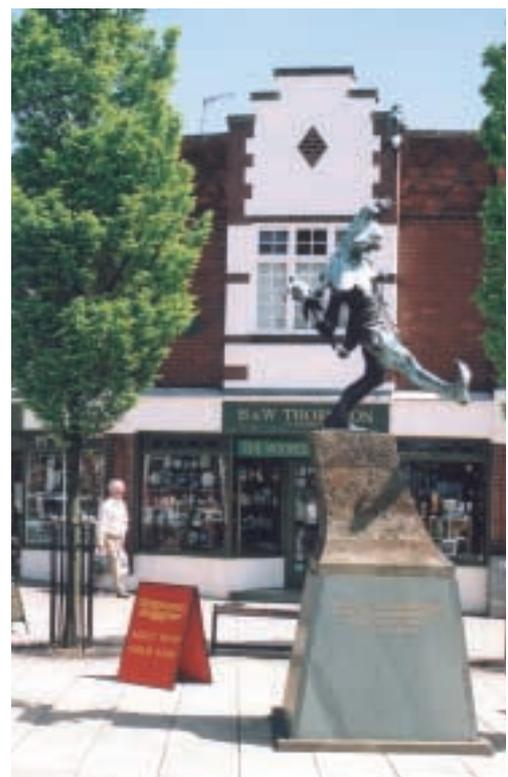
Really damaging buildings include the Mulberry Centre at the bottom of Bridge Street where the undisguised bulk of the store overwhelms



High Victorian Gothic: HSBC Bank, corner of Chapel Steet/Ely Street.



Overwhelmed – The mulberry tree with its modern neighbour.



Art deco in Henley Street.



Marks and Spencer, Bridge Street uses a variety of existing buildings.



Pleasingly modest – Meer Street.

the delicate iron work and modest scale of the former Mulberry Tree despite crudely aping some of its features and materials. Less damaging to the character of Stratford, which is the main draw for the visitors who support the High Stleet shops is Marks & Spencer's use of a variety of existing buildings, without insensitive plate glass display windows or the imposition of a house style on the exterior. If more retailers can be persuaded that installing standard shop fronts in Stratford will ultimately undermine trade, the town will benefit across the board.



Neo Heritage? Bards Walk.

Over-fussy 'neo heritage' features should be avoided; some aspects of Bard's Walk are perilously close. Conversely, attractive, genuinely local features such as the engineering brick pavements (complemented by granite kerbs and gutters) found in Southern Lane and parts of Ely Street are ignored and are currently being repaired with tarmac. A pleasingly modest but clearly modern twentieth century development in Meer Street is a good example of respect for the form and scale of the street combined with modern materials and a varied and interesting appearance.

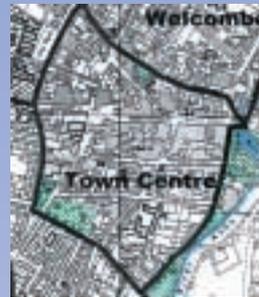


A surprising glimpse of the Avon corridor from the top of Bridge Street.

The central district of Stratford is characterised by a wide variety of greenery, reinforcing the sense of interdependence with and proximity to the countryside. Even from parts of the centre there are surprising glimpses of the Avon Corridor; for example from the top of Bridge Street. The area contains the Birthplace Garden and the tranquil oasis of the Great Gardens of New Place, neither historically correct in their planting but in their own right beautiful, atmospheric retreats for visitors and residents to enjoy. There are trees of many kinds (though there should be more still) from the mass of splendid horse chestnuts in Chestnut Walk to the street trees in the upper end of Henley Street to the individual, almost accidental trees brightening the corners of the Craft Yard. There are climbing plants such as wisteria on the cottage fronts in Waterside and, particularly away from the main shopping



The garden, Shakespeare's birthplace.



Recommended Design Guidelines

The key features of the Town Centre area are:

Its ancient street pattern and the inter-connecting alleys and courts, the small scale of many of the buildings and the predominance of historic timber framed construction with brick or rendered infill and pitched tiled roofs. However within this norm the buildings vary significantly in age and style, the character is cohesive but far from uniform. Soft landscape and planting is also key to the character of the area. Commercial and traffic pressures threaten the heart of Stratford and these must be restrained but not eliminated if the town is to thrive.

The following measures are suggested:

- Respect the street pattern, but look for means to restrain traffic.
- Continue to enhance and develop various forms of pedestrianisation, including back land alleys and courts.
- Retain the grain of the medieval plot pattern, including burgage plots where applicable.
- Development should be low rise and small scale.
- Insist on a high quality of design, materials and workmanship.
- Avoid pastiche and 'neo-heritage'.
- Avoid large shop windows and blanket application of brand styles.
- Create more opportunities for street trees and other forms of planting.



Almost accidental planting: the Craft Yard.

streets, where residential property intermingles with other uses, there are gardens opening onto the street or appearing above boundary walls. Throughout the central area there are hanging baskets, planting boxes and beds, creating, particularly in summer, a sense of welcome and celebration.

The character of the central area of the town is perhaps best seen when the traffic is briefly removed for the annual celebration of Shakespeare's birthday when the procession of townspeople and guests rule and can enjoy the varied streetscape and greenery in safety.



Hanging baskets in Ely Street.



Pedestrian power – Shakespeare's Birthday procession.

5.12 Welcombe



The mature landscape of the Welcombe area.

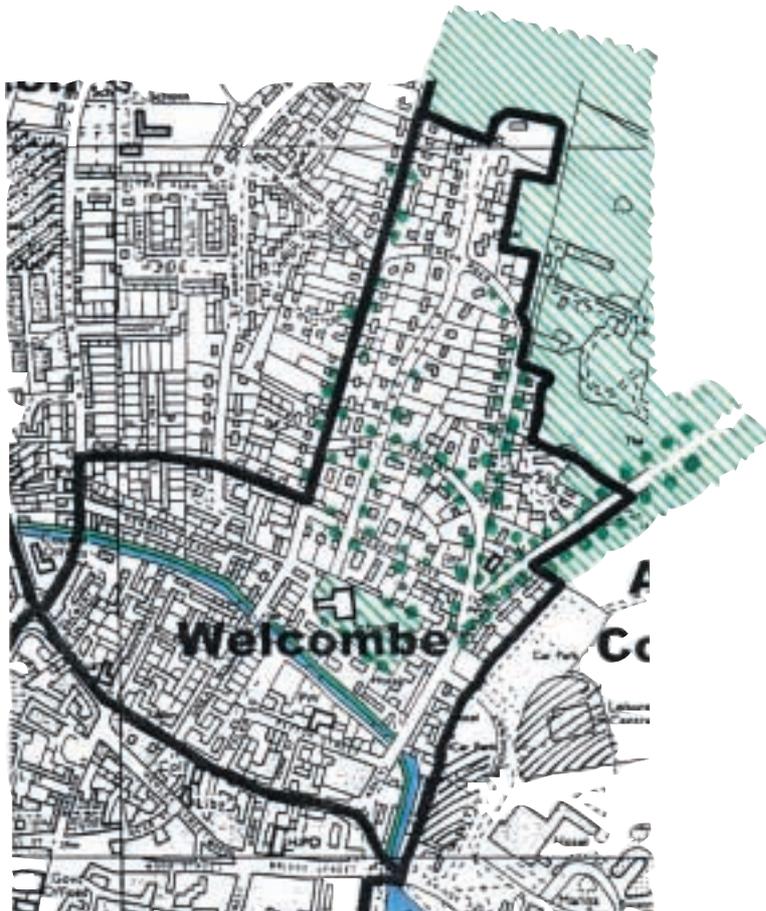
Character

The Welcombe Area is physically two areas divided by time and the Canal. It developed to the north of the Town Centre, bounded by Guild Street and on the north by the canal from late Georgian times. This section called Newtown is the most densely developed and includes some notable Georgian and Regency houses and several streets of Victorian small terraced houses.

Development continued in Victorian and Edwardian times northward from the canal along streets with large plots, houses and gardens planted with specimen forest trees together with hedges and boundary walls on the rising ground towards the hills.

Building carried on during the early and mid 20th century with large houses in large gardens which are now fully matured.

From the last half of the 20th century, building continued up to the boundary of the Welcombe Hills, now designated a Local Nature Reserve with further individual houses on smaller plots.



Trees and buildings characteristic of this area.



Welcombe Road looking north.

Newtown



Kendall Avenue.



The Canal looking west from Great William Street Bridge.

The canal was built in 1816 connecting Birmingham to the Severn and the sea. This section between Guild Street and the Canal is largely built in red brick sometimes with feature arches over openings, string courses and corbelled eaves. Some have rendered facades usually on corners of streets and all with low pitched slate roofs and white casement windows.

The Victorian terraced houses and the larger houses are all fronting onto the streets and the large gardens behind hide the landscape except in one or two locations. This section has a certain character reminiscent of Old Town which is of a similar era. Just north of the canal, 1930's development was carried out in Kendall Avenue in typical suburban style semi-detached with rendered walls and tiled roofs characteristic of many of this period all over the British Isles.



Georgian houses in Tyler Street.



Sentinel trees,
St. Gregorys Road.



Great William Street looking south.



Recommended Design Guidelines

The key features of this area are:

- The mature landscape
- The leafy setting
- The substantial buildings
- The pleasant prospect

The following measures are suggested:

It is essential to retain this quality by maintaining at all costs the trees, hedges and boundary walls and to insist on a high quality of design incorporating the local materials of red brick, tiles and slate with a lower density of housing to retain a spacious environment.

Welcombe

This section north of the canal is laid out with mainly tree lined streets, particularly Welcombe Road, with large Victorian and Edwardian houses on individual plots and large mature gardens. At the northern end of this area are early and mid 20th century large houses with mature gardens followed by large 20th century houses on smaller plots. There is a scattering of modern houses, bungalows and flats sited in the grounds of earlier houses in large gardens. The earlier houses are red brick with slate and tiled roofs of varying pitch, oriel and bay windows, dormers and gables, some with applied half timbering. These buildings together with mature landscaping provide a leafy setting and pleasant prospect which characterises the whole area.



Regency cottage in Maidenhead Road looking north.



Avenue Road/Benson Road.

6. Planning Guidelines



Warwick Road looking south towards town centre. Warwick Crescent is on the left.



Final approach into Stratford before seeing the Industrial Area. The Ark Veterinary service is on the left.

- Stratford-upon-Avon is a unique small market town with an immense world-wide reputation because it is the birthplace of William Shakespeare, his burial place in the parish church and the home of the Royal Shakespeare Company and its three theatres.
- It has a wealth of medieval and historic buildings in its centre. Within the town many trees and green open spaces in its residential areas have been preserved and prospects from the approaches to the town are dominated by trees and planting. There is a clear cut boundary with countryside all round which is still in agricultural use. The riverside with the large green recreational areas and the wetlands further to the north constitute an invaluable feature of the town.
- It is important not to lose the scale, character and form of the town, which are valued by the residents and which constitute the pleasant image of Stratford also held in the minds of people all over the world. This is an image which is the responsibility of all to preserve, not just by conserving its assets but enhancing with good building and landscape design in all parts of the town.



Island at the intersection (looking north) of the A3400 north and south bound and the A46 west and east bound.

Contd. on next page →

- Each area of the town has its own individual character and all new, future and brownfield site development in spatial layout, scale, materials, design and landscape should reflect and improve upon it. Reference should be made to the section 'The Character of the Area'.
- Protect the views into and out of the town to show the close relationship of the countryside such that any development on the approaches retains the existing landscape and green spaces and augments it.
- The formation of a Forum for Dialogue between Councils, developers, designers and residents representatives to produce the best quality of design for all projects.
- All planning applications for all sites must show by means of drawings or other graphics how new buildings will relate to surrounding, existing buildings and space. This will help the assessment of the character and form of all new development related to each area.
- To create harmony and 'good manners' between existing and new features.



Evesham Road, passing Hathaway Lane.



Looking downhill over land between the A46 on the left and Bishopton Lane on the right from the west on The Ridgeway arable land.

This Town Design Statement was adopted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance on 30th September 2002.



