NORTHAMPTON’S BOOT AND SHOE QUARTER

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL & MANAGEMENT PLAN

Planning Policy & Conservation Section
Northampton Borough Council
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Consultation
This document takes into account the comments and representations made over an eight week public consultation period during January – March 2011.
The Council’s Cabinet approved the Re-appraisal and Management Plan on June 16th 2011.
Boot & Shoe Quarter
Appraisal and Management Plan

Contents

Appraisal
Introduction...................................................................................................5
   The importance of conservation areas
   Planning policy context
   Summary of significance and special interest
Location & context......................................................................................6
Historic Development ..................................................................................6
   The map evidence
   The building evidence
   The documentary evidence
Plan form......................................................................................................10
Character....................................................................................................10
Character areas..........................................................................................11
   The western area – Bailiff Street to Overstone Road / Hunter Street
   St Michael’s Road / Dunster Street
   Central area – Colwyn Road to Alcombe Rd, and eastwards to
   Kettering Rd
   Area south of St Edmund’s Road
   Henry Street area
   Abington Square & the Wellingborough Rd & Kettering Rd shops
Building Materials........................................................................................15
Trees and Green Spaces...........................................................................15
Buildings making a positive contribution ................................................15
Neutral & negative areas..........................................................................15
Summary of issues.......................................................................................15
Parking..........................................................................................................17
Changes of Use ..........................................................................................17
Advertising...................................................................................................17
Future Management..................................................................................17

Management Plan ..........................................................................................19

Appendices
  1 Maps
  2 Charles Bradlaugh & Edgar Mobbs
  3 Schedule of listed buildings
  4 Local list candidates
  5 Building Types
  6 List of Shoe Factories (EH Rapid Survey)
  7 Bibliography
Introduction

The Importance of Conservation Areas

“Historic Areas are now extensively recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural inheritance, economic well being and quality of life. Public support for the conservation and enhancement of areas of architectural and historic interest is well established. By suggesting continuity and stability, such areas provide points of reference in a rapidly changing world; they represent the familiar and cherished local scene.”


The Northampton Boot and Shoe Conservation Area is a proposed new designation which follows from the Northamptonshire Boot and Shoe Industry Rapid Survey Record undertaken in 1999-2000 by English Heritage with support from Northamptonshire County Council. The subsequent publication of “Built to Last” by English Heritage highlighted the national importance of the urban landscape and the contribution made by the history of the footwear industry in Northampton to the understanding of the process of industrialisation in Britain in the 19th century. It also drew attention to the need for conservation protection for this special area of industrial heritage.

From the 1850s onwards terraced housing for the workers, intermingled with buildings for footwear production and supporting trades were developed in a tightly-grained urban pattern of straight streets as the economically buoyant town expanded rapidly north and eastwards. The area contains closely contemporary factories, workshops, shops, public houses, clubs, schools and places of worship, all centred around Abington Square with its locally important memorials. Together they eloquently illustrate the town’s and the nation’s important industrial development in the late 19th century and early 20th century.

Planning context

Conservation areas are protected by a number of Acts and statutory guidance. The Civil Amenities Act in 1967 first introduced the concept of conservation areas. This was succeeded by Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 which places a duty on local authorities to designate as conservation areas “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Local authorities must also formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas, normally in the form of generic guidance and a management plan specific to each conservation area.

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPS 5) sets out Government policy. The English Heritage publication “PPS5 Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide” amplifies the PPS and gives detail on how it should be applied. Conservation areas are defined as ‘designated heritage assets’ and there is an emphasis on enhancing or better revealing the significance of conservation areas.

The objectives of conservation area designation are:

- To give effect to conservation policies for a particular neighbourhood or area
- To introduce a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and structures within the area
- To introduce a general control over the removal of important trees
- To provide the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance all aspects of the character or appearance that define an area’s special interest. This will necessarily include the identification of buildings and structures, open spaces, views, trees and areas of the public realm which make positive contributions to the area.
**Summary of significance and special interest**

This urban, formerly industrial, area has a fascinating history of footwear production which has left a legacy of a rare, possibly unique, built environment, remarkable for its dense concentration of factories and specialist buildings.

The area contains the town’s highest density of occurrence and integrity of Boot and Shoe related buildings as defined by the Rapid Survey. The evaluation area includes 70% of the Survey’s documented footwear-related buildings in Northampton.

More Boot and Shoe buildings survive in recognisable form here than in other parts of the town. There is also the best range in terms of type and date of buildings. This makes it possible to trace the story of footwear production processes and their changes over time through examples of surviving buildings.

There is excellent survival of other key related and/or contemporary buildings of interest such as shops, public houses, schools and places of worship and memorials which illustrate the life of the area from the mid 19th and early 20th centuries.

The area contains a very high integrity of contemporary surviving housing and overall contemporary townscape, illustrating subtle social strata in their design and level of architectural embellishment.

The Boot and Shoe Quarter Conservation Area includes architecturally and historically important buildings with a diverse range of uses set within a coherent framework of residential streets, developed over a short period of time and retaining a largely unaltered street pattern. Built with great homogeneity of materials, mainly locally-made brick, the area has a strong and unusual visual coherence and sense of place.

Many aspects of the area are very typical of their time. The area illustrates well the history of ordinary life in good, plain, but representative built landscapes. It can tell us about the work and home lives of the past.

The dominant architectural style is the pared down classical language of the terraced house. This style is shared by the earlier industrial buildings. Interspersed, and often dominantly placed, are larger buildings, mainly places of worship in an eye-catching gothic revival style.

The area is characteristically low-rise with the buildings of the area being predominantly two-storey with factories seldom more than three storeys.

This is an intensely urban area with very little green space, few trees and almost exclusively without front gardens or other green areas.

**Location and context**

The area is an intensely-developed urban area of 63.73 ha. It lies to the north-east of the historic core of Northampton with the contrasting open green space of the Racecourse forming the northernmost limit and Abington Square at its heart. The area, which is contained within the Parishes of Holy Sepulchre and St. Giles, slopes gently southwards towards the valley of the River Nene in the distance and is traversed by two diverging principal shop-lined routes linking Northampton with two other prominent footwear production centres; Kettering and Wellingborough.

**Historic development**

One of the remarkable aspects of the area is its very rapid and comprehensive development and equally rapid final decline. In perhaps as little as 30 years, from 1850 to 1880 it was transformed from open fields into a thriving urban environment of people living and working in a densely developed network of homes, workshops and buildings for industrial production. For a little over 100 years footwear production occupied most of the inhabitants of the area, utilizing the homes and workplaces bequeathed by the era of Victorian expansion.

The fortunes of the Boot and Shoe industry, locally, nationally and internationally, have had a profound impact upon the development and subsequent history of the area. It dictated what was built and has left a unique streetscape legacy. This area of Northampton grew naturally out of an existing strong industrial predominance in footwear production which helped to secure it for many years as a nationally important area for the making of men’s boots and shoes.
The Map Evidence

Speed’s map of Northampton dated 1610, (Appendix 1, p.25), provides evidence that the whole of the area of the proposed conservation area was outside the medieval town walls and confirms that the part around Abington Square is of the greatest antiquity – partly built-up by 1610 – and was the location for one of the gates to the town.

The Priory of St Andrew, endowed by Simon de Senlis, played an important role in the making of Northampton as it owned much property inside and outside the town walls. The Priory lands or town fields outside the walls were enclosed in 1799 and these enclosure field boundaries determined the street pattern of the expanding town, the beginnings of which can be seen in the Wood and Law map of 1847 (Appendix 1, p.26). This map shows that, with the notable exception of Great Russell Street (now the site of the Chronicle and Echo offices) almost the whole area was then agricultural land.

Detailed investigation of the 1847 map and site surveys indicate there are very few buildings within the proposed conservation area which predate 1847. Stylistically the terrace of shops to the south of Abington Square at the beginning of the Wellingborough Road may be early 19th century: this seems to correspond to buildings marked as St Edmund’s Terrace on the 1847 map. Similarly a small stone building off the north side of Abington Square indicates early origins and may be the last remaining part of a small area called Chapel Place and Kettering Gardens in 1847. Some stone buildings on the north side of Abington Square also bear stylistic hallmarks of the late 18th century or early 19th century. The curved row of buildings, now shops, lining the north side of Kettering Road opposite the (former) Unitarian Church could be the oldest in the area, possibly originating in the 17th century but with significant fabric unlikely to be older than late 18th century.

By the 1880s (map, Appendix 1, p.27), the regular pattern of streets was fully laid out and almost fully developed, recognisably like the area we see today.

Close examination of the differences between the maps of 1883-7 and that of 1900 (Appendix 1, p.28) captures a moment in time when all the roads are laid out and plots set out but not all are built. This gives clues about how the area may have developed. Options were probably taken out on plots or multiple adjacent plots to develop as business expanded. For example the south side of Dunster Street is not yet developed. Cowper Street is a good example of factory-sized plots not yet developed and subsequently becoming houses but with detached buildings, perhaps workshops, in the rear gardens. Meanwhile in adjacent Hood Street undeveloped plots of land subsequently became sites 79 and 80 (site numbers refer to the English Heritage Boot & Shoe Rapid Survey – see Appendix 6). Speculative development of factories, as seen at 46 St Michaels Road (site 46,) must have been relatively common, and for houses this was probably the norm.

The question arises of which came first, workshops, factories/warehouses or houses or all together? The answer is that it varies enormously and the situation was very fluid. For example at the Colwyn Road / Hood Street corner houses were built and workshops do not show up until the 1900 map. P.R. Mountfield puts it well in saying that “the local industry had been bricked and mortared into the domestic architecture” (References are listed in Appendix 7).

By 1900 the area was fully developed with the spaces which were reserved for schools such as Kettering Road, Clare Street and Military Road now filled in, and places of worship including St Michael and All Saints, St Edmund’s and St Lawrence all in existence.

Although overall there was little large scale development after 1900 there is the interesting exception of the Cannon Cinema, erected in 1936 on the site of a former school.

The Second World War had little, if any, effect on the building fabric of the area, but post-war redevelopment, demolitions and re-aligned traffic routes destroyed links with streets and factories west of The Mounts and indeed the streets and factories themselves. The area under consideration today gives the impression of being a little detached from the town centre but until recent changes such as the construction of the Grosvenor Centre and Bus Station, the pedestrianisation of Abington Street, and alterations to traffic circulation this was not
the case. It was much more of an organic whole, with the former tramline running through Abington Street and Abington Square before branching out and traversing along both Wellingborough and Kettering Roads. The change is the result of the late 1960s-early 1970s redevelopment of the town centre occasioned by the designation in 1968 of Northampton as an expanded town. This re-development included the loss of Great Russell Street and the building of the Chronicle and Echo building and printworks in the 1970s, significant areas to the west and east of Bailiff Street replaced with modern flats and industrial units, and the replacement of a factory site by the Jaguar showroom on Abington Square. Most recently the former Military Road School has been supplanted with residential units.

Abington Square is at the heart of the area and has a more complex history of its own. Situated at the divergence of the major routes to Kettering and Wellingborough this established junction point probably has the longest and busiest history of any part of the conservation area and looks from the earliest maps to have a small community already in place. The map of 1847 shows rows of tiny houses with outbuildings, probably workshops, some of which were cleared to build the Unitarian Chapel of 1896.

In 1883 a tramway passed through up the Kettering Road with a convenient “Peoples’ Café” established at the road junction. By 1900 the tram track is also going up the Wellingborough Road. The café survives until the 1930s when there is a partial clearance of the area for a Garden of Remembrance.

There had been a statue of Charles Bradlaugh (by Tinworth) on Abington Square since 25th June 1894, and a War Memorial was built in 1930s. A memorial to Lieut-Col Edgar R. Mobbs D.S.O. was moved from the north side of the Market Square to join it. Brief histories of these remarkable men are in Appendix 2. The Square was subsequently cleared of all the remaining small houses, leaving only a shop and the lone Unitarian Chapel, with its grassy surround, on what has become little more than a large traffic island.

Abington Square, looking west

The Building Evidence

The surviving industrial buildings of the conservation area illustrate most vividly the middle years of the footwear industry in Northampton.

The earliest buildings associated with the industry do not survive and would probably all have been in the town centre. Later, an American factory design was adopted which favoured a single-level production floor. Additional land was required for this type of building and the industry developed where there was enough space, further out of the town on the Wellingborough Road – for example at the Manfield Factory – and in the Kingsthorpe area, and also on re-developed earlier sites in the Spencer Street and St James area.

Very broadly the sequence of development of the area is that the western part and the area south of St Edmund’s Road were developed first. The earliest surviving buildings include no. 68 Denmark Road of around 1870 (site 148), nos 42-44 Victoria Road of 1873 (site 143), no. 56 Lome Road of 1873 (site 1), and from 1875, no. 59 Louise Road (site 2), Works, Oak Street (site 27), and nos 1-5 Robert Street (site 30). The central part of the area contains a gradual south to north development, starting with a few dating from 1875 in the south, many from the 1880s and a few from the 1890s, generally getting later in the more northerly roads. The Henry Street area is the last part of the conservation area to be developed: the industrial buildings here mainly date from the 1890s.

The Documentary Evidence

The history of the footwear industry in Northampton is available from other sources and will not be dealt with in detail here but it
should be mentioned that, as with the building evidence, the history of the craft and then industry in the town both substantially pre-dates and partly post-dates the history of the area under evaluation.

The early history of footwear making in the town is similar in many ways to other areas of production where mainly local needs are being met, but by the early 18th century shoes were already being produced for a mass market.

In 1712 the writer Morton remarks of Northampton that “the principal manufacturie is that of shoes whereof mighty numbers are, and have been, sent to foreign plantations and to the army in Flanders”

At the time of the earliest development of the area Northamptonshire was already the leading provincial centre of footwear production in the country. This was facilitated by the significant expansion in railway transport, particularly for this area, in the opening of Castle Station in 1838, which provided a large storage area and handling facilities for leather and finished footwear in transit.

By the 1880s the area had just two major markets, providing the footwear for the hugely increasing London population and the demands of the army and navy which were supplied through their London based Boards. The period of 1890-1912 was one of great prosperity for the area with a booming export trade. This could probably be called the “heyday” of the area as a footwear producer.

The period from 1900 to 1950s was a period of relative stability and good trade. Northampton firms, a high proportion of which were based in the conservation area, maintained their national standing and provided as much as 34% of the country’s footwear output in 1935. Decline came in the late 20th century: in 1956 there were 48 footwear manufacturers in the area, but this had dwindled to six by 2001. Currently (2010) there are just four in the town, two of which are in the proposed conservation area.

From the 1970s the decline in the industry brought with it a change in the character of the area. The old medium-sized multi-storied factories which were so typical of the area were increasingly left vacant. They were found to be unsuitable for new working practices, having small work areas interrupted by iron columns, insufficiently strong floors, difficult-to-access top floors, limited vehicular access and poor staff welfare facilities. These multi-storey 19th century factories were seen as far less suitable for rapid modern production than large single storey factories. Even so, in 1980, 90% of the factories still in use were in older buildings. Those firms producing traditionally made shoes certainly retained a loyalty to their historic locations and their often locally-housed skilled workforce. Even in 1975 the industry was still significant, with Northampton workers producing 5.8 million pairs of men’s footwear. The Northamptonshire footwear industry survived longer than in most other UK areas, and in 1992 was still providing over 14,000 jobs.

Within the conservation area Crockett and Jones and R.E. Tricker retained a niche at the top of the ready-made market using traditional materials and construction methods in their early 20th century buildings. Meanwhile the innovation of R. Griggs in the 1960s with Doc Martens PVC injected soles began 30 years of prosperity for the family firm which contracted work to several 19th century factories in Northampton, including most prominently Hawkins in St Michaels Road (Site 48). This only ended in 2003 with the transfer of production overseas.

The last 30 years have seen the collapse of the industry and the de-industrialization of the area. The reputation for footwear production built up since the 17th century and which flowered in the late 19th century and first half of the 20th century is now only just in evidence through the remaining buildings. The industry has left a fascinating townscap[e heritage together with a few world-renowned manufacturers of high-quality traditional gentleman’s shoes. In conclusion, the proposed conservation area developed its present day fabric and character in the 80 years from the 1850s to the 1930s. There have been social changes with the decline in the boot and shoe industry from the 1950s onwards with the loss of production and the subsequently redundant buildings being abandoned, re-used, redeveloped and sometimes demolished. The impact of the increasing use of the car has been dramatic, both for major route traffic management and for the residential roads and their parking provision.
However, in spite of the de-industrialisation of the area, it has not seen a period of marked gentrification and continues to exhibit much of its original working-class character, ethos and vitality.

**Plan form**

The plan form of the area is dominated by five major influences.

- The pre-existing major road layouts set a framework for development.
- Old field boundaries determined the street patterns.
- The strictures and regulations of national and local building bylaws determined the general size and shape of the buildings and roads.
- The needs of the footwear industry shaped the demand for suitable production spaces for industrial expansion and adjacent homes for the workers.
- The lack of marked local landforms or watercourses in the area ensured that the general layout could be rectilinear in character.

The footwear industry had a marked influence on the building pattern which was established. The plan form of this area illustrates a remarkable kind of mid- to late-19th century development of the industrial revolution.

The need for rapid expansion and the development of the area came at a time when following national guidelines, local building byelaws were firmly established. The byelaws controlled road widths, sewage disposal, building heights and spaces to the rear of buildings, amongst other things, which ensured public safety, health and hygiene. Buildings of this time are often referred to as bylaw houses and bylaw streets and they have left a legacy of rational, orderly development of a very distinctive kind. In the proposed conservation area the special local needs of the handcrafted footwear production meant that the houses were inter-mixed with small, medium and large factories, workshops, warehouses and other specialist buildings, most with requirements for access or extra land to cope with goods in and out. Important plan-form characteristics include yards accessed through archways, such as Dickens Bros on Kettering Road (Site 40), and workshops accessed through alleys and tunnel backs. Back land development for workshops on long plots and the treatment of corners are also particular to the area.

The Racecourse at the northern boundary is the defining public open space; there is no other provision within the area. By 1880s the only open spaces were located on the larger plots of the Militia Stores and school sites in the area.

**Character**

The conservation area is the most extensive of all those so far designated by the Borough Council. It is also the one with the most easily recognisable character. There are some interesting distinctions to be made between some parts, but the area is generally remarkably consistent and can be characterised as follows:

- Houses and industrial buildings in close and harmonious proximity in tightly-knit urban streets together illustrating the nature and history of development of the industry and its modest functionality.
- Factories, specialist industrial buildings, workshops and terraced houses of the workers share common building dates, palate of building materials, and the closest possible proximity to one another.
- Regimented streets and roofscapes – yet the houses illustrate a finely nuanced hierarchy by their subtle use of architectural embellishment.
- Factories illustrate their use, age and status by their design and embellishment – mainly modest in style. The area contains good examples of factories of different decades, illustrating change over time, as well as specialist buildings and workshops.
- Universal adoption of the back of the footway as the building line giving a high degree of uniformity to the streetscape and a high degree of sense of enclosure.
- Rational straight street plan form with few curves but a few interesting angular intersections.
- Importance of the corners – factory entrances and windows on two streets.
comer shops and comer pubs are all significant.

- Predominantly low rise – the majority of houses are 2 storey, a few 3 storeys. Factories are 2 to 4 storey, very occasionally 5.
- Industrial buildings rarely dominate the streetscape but there are good examples of the “canyon effect” especially in St Michaels Road.
- Places of worship dominate views and provide points of closure.
- Only rare trees or green spaces.

Character Areas

For ease of description the conservation area has been divided into character areas. These have some elements of distinctiveness which are described below but the boundaries between the areas are not hard and fast.

The Western Area – Bailiff Street to Overstone Road / Hunter Street

Lorne Road

This is at the same time one of the earliest areas of 19th century development and the most fractured by later development. It includes a modern industrial area of low townscape value. Because of this it has fewer residential streets than some other areas. The 1880s map shows a pattern of small scale streets and cross-streets with the smallest of plot sizes. Little of this now remains. Some of the houses which do survive (particularly in Lome and Louise Roads), though small, have a surprising level of ornamentation, reflecting their high status when built, particularly in comparison with the old restricted quarters in the town centre which they superseded.

There are only a small number of larger scale buildings in the area, including the church of St Stanislaus and St Lawrence and the TA Centre, but both of these buildings have limited impact on the streetscape beyond the immediate environs. These buildings contrast with their surroundings through being in a Gothic revival style.

One of the least altered industrial building is 124 Bailiff Street, dating from the 1880s (site 74). Of special note are the well-preserved Queen Victoria Inn and The Garibaldi both, in their ways, typical 19th century public houses. Well-preserved shops include the comer of Duke Street/Earl Street and Austin Street/Military Road.

There are interesting views out of the area from the tightly house-lined streets towards the trees and green space of the Racecourse and across to the churchyard of Holy Sepulchre, the spire of which acts as a visual link to and reminder of the ancient origins of the town. There is a glimpse from Duke Street south towards the Tower of Express Lifts, a later great industrial employer in the town.

St Michael’s Road/Dunster Street

This area is at the heart of the boot and shoe industry in Northampton, with the highest proportion of industrial buildings to domestic property in the area. The density of industrial buildings and the canyon-like effect of St Michael’s Road seem to provide a glimpse of what the area must have been like in its heyday and provide the single most important view into the proposed conservation area.
Tricker’s Factory, St Michael’s Road

Dominated by the former G.T. Hawkins boot works (site 48) at the prominent St Michael’s Road/Overstone Road junction, this area still contains the greatest density of large works in the area, as well as the still-working factory of R.E. Tricker (site 44). Together with the former curriers at 1 Dunster Street (site 51) these buildings are recognised for their national significance by being listed. Also on Dunster Street are good examples of curriers in the Globe Leather Works (site 52) dating from the late 1880s and the slightly later single storey leather warehouses of the turn of the century. Dickens Bros Leather works (site 40), fronting both Kettering Road and St Michael’s Road, is another building with great prominence in the streetscene with its impressive façade and rear courtyard.

There are a number of instances where industrial and domestic quarters are close at hand. At the rear of the house at 84 Dunster Street (site 59), for example, can be seen a range noted as a leather merchants as late as 1940, while at 97 St Michael’s Road (site 41) the rear range is identified in 1896 as a machine closers. The small doorway leads to the rear yard and range, a feature shared with 9-11 Dunster Street and 4-6 Alcombe Road (site 62) where rear workshops were variously as machine closers, grindery and boot making during the 19th century.

Traffic following the busy one-way system creates a hectic atmosphere on St Michael’s Road; this, together with the width of the footway, make it difficult to appreciate the quality and diversity of the buildings which line its route.

Central Area – Colwyn Road south to Alcombe Road, and eastwards to Kettering Road

Carey Street

This is the heartland of the characteristic tightly-packed residential streets interspersed with small- to medium-sized factories and bisected by the busy Clare Street, linking Overstone Road with Kettering Road. The streets run predominantly east-west with the highest status houses at the north boundary backing on to the Racecourse and lowest status houses in the southernmost roads. This area is consistently low-rise, except for some of the factories – for example the former Grove Works (site 65, now flats) at the junction of Grove Road and Clare Street: over-dominant in height, scale and roof-line. Of the 23 sites noted in the rapid survey in this area 11 are factories which occupy prominent corner sites and help to give it its distinctive character, but no single historic building acts as a focal point within the network of streets. The places of worship, which so frequently provide focal points in a community, all front on to the Kettering Road and so do not feature in this area.

The converted factory at 3 Gray Street (site 83), in use from the early 1890s, is listed Grade II, as is the well preserved footwear-related site at 41-43 Colwyn Road (site 76) of c.1890 which was a boot manufacturer and later a machine closers. From this building there is a glimpse out to the Racecourse, and views down Shakespeare Road and along Colwyn road itself, which take in six former factories.

Of interest is the Cricketers Public House which is rare in being in-line with the houses of Hervey Street.
Public open space is missing from this area and greenery is almost entirely absent, but Clare Street has a row of 10 houses with small front gardens. A few street trees have been planted. Alcombe Road, Cloutsham Street, Somerset Street, Clare Street and Hervey Street have tiny rear yards or gardens, whilst along Hood Street and Cowper Street the rear gardens are of considerable length. This area was not fully developed in the 1880s. The reason for the more generous plot lengths is not known but may be partly reflected in the prestige or ornamentation of the terraced façades.

Area south of St Edmund’s Road

Palmerston Road

This area was developed from the 1870s onwards and includes some of the earliest surviving factories and two of the most ornate.

Here the planform gives a series of mainly tightly packed roads and narrow plots sloping gently south with short cross linking roads. This orientation lends a certain air of brightness which complements the calmer atmosphere after the hectic traffic of the Wellingborough Road. The northern and southern boundaries are very different from one another. The north side of St Edmund’s Road in particular has a bleak, unfocused aspect where the tight rows of 19th century terraced houses have been almost totally demolished. The building at the rear of 90 Wellingborough Road (a bakers shop in 1890-6) shows just how humble and unassuming a boot manufacturer’s factory can be in the 1890s. The planting of small trees has only slightly mitigated the northward view. In contrast with this are perhaps the two most decorative factories of all, 10-12 Victoria Road of 1878 (site 140) and 9-12 Palmerston Road (site 135) of a similar age.

Noteworthy is the Victoria Road Congregational Church of 1888 which forms an endstop to the views along Thenford Street and Woodford Street and also looks out of the conservation area itself to a view of the tower of the Norman church of St Giles. As with this view, glimpses out of the area tend to include mature trees and one of the best is down Denmark Road, to the pedimented façade of the Hospital framed by greenery.

The site of the former church of St Edmund, built in 1850 and demolished circa 1973, is a rare area of open space within the urban area. It includes the former churchyard, and is still consecrated ground. It is bounded by coursed local ironstone walls and contains many grave markers set amongst lime and holly trees. The stout ironstone walls, although common enough elsewhere in the town, are unique in this conservation area and are a welcome contrast in texture and a reminder of the local vernacular traditions of the area.

For the variety and quality of the buildings and views in this area, Victoria Road ranks most highly. Starting at the top with the Crown and Anchor, it includes four factories, houses with well preserved façades and, further down the hill, higher-status three-storey houses with bay windows, front areas and basements.

Henry Street Area

Henry Street

This was the last part of the conservation area to be developed. The 1880s map (Appendix 1) shows that the Church of St
Michael, 1881-2 (listed grade II) was the first building to be constructed in the area. Late 19th century large former factories dominate the street scene of Henry Street and Artizan Road, and the Church of St Michael and the Kettering Road Baptist Chapel form end stops to the street views from the corner site of The Artizan public house. From the elevated location of the church of St Michael there are the longest views out of the conservation area to the far side of the valley of the River Nene. The church and its bulky ancillary buildings, together with the extensive Crockett and Jones factory form very significant townscape features. Both are listed for their historic and architectural interest. The green space and trees within the church grounds lend a genteel character to the surroundings. Of note is the impressive Working Men’s Conservative Club on Adnitt Road, by Charles Dorman (1892). This, and the area generally, represents the pinnacle of the footwear industry at the end of the 19th century, a confident, prosperous development of big factories and houses, many with bay windows. It makes an interesting comparison with the Louise/Lorne Road area developed only about 20 years earlier.

Abington Square and the Wellingborough and Kettering Road shops

This area is the spine of the retail network which supported the central boot and shoe industry in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Lined with shops, it also has a former school, churches and chapels, and developed a commanding civic presence in Abington Square itself. The Square has a long history, a distinctive character and a powerful resonance of its own; both as the commemorative heart of the area and as a busy retail and commercial presence, characterised and constrained by the traffic system and all its attendant signage. It is a place of opposites, a very busy place but with a still heart of commemoration and remembrance.

Designed by Sir John Brown and Henson, the War Memorial of 1937-8 is in the form of a loggia constructed in light brick and supported by piers of golden mosaic. Inscriptions on panels contain 2904 names of those who gave their lives in the 1914-18 War and a further 750 who fell in the 1939-45 War. Despite the evident care and upkeep of the small Memorial Gardens there is limited appeal for the pedestrian.

The Cannon Cinema of 1936 and the Unitarian Chapel of 1896 on Abington Square are both listed Grade II and there are a number of other buildings of note. These include two runs of small shops of some age and historic interest; the short stone-built terrace from 19 to 21 Kettering Road and the possibly slightly later terrace from 2 to 30 Abington Square. Two terraces of late 19th century shops with architectural merit are seen opposite the cinema and on the left hand side of the Kettering Road up to the Racecourse. The Art Nouveau façade of 16-28 Wellingborough Road is of rare elaboration and on what must have originally been a shop of some distinction.

The former school, now the Northamptonshire Performing Arts and Music Service, is a substantial presence on Kettering Road. It is in a heavy mock Tudor style and, along with the various Italianate gothic revival style churches and chapels which also front on to the road, provides an interesting counterpoint to the uniformity of the streets behind.

Colour is a noticeable addition to this part of the conservation area, with the multitude of advertisements and shop signs making a lively and vibrant scene, although this is sometimes at the expense of the buildings themselves.

As with other areas, green space is rare and here it is confined to the land around the Unitarian chapel and a long strip of land, within the setting of the conservation area running north opposite the end of St Michael’s Road. The long view north up Kettering Road includes an enticing glimpse of the mature trees of the Racecourse.
**Building Materials**

Walling is universally of brick, mainly made locally with some use of different colours for decorative effect. Most houses have a decorative brick eaves course under the guttering, either done as dentils, diagonally placed or as special shaped bricks, sometimes using more than one colour brick. The pattern of laying or “bond” varies but a favourite and characteristic pattern, especially for the earlier buildings, is Flemish Bond.

The Upper Lias clay of the area is suitable for brickmaking and there was good availability of local stone. Several brickmakers doubled as stonemasons, as is apparent from late 19th century census returns. The use of stone for door and window cases is also universal, although the quality and elaboration of the design varies.

A major brickworks lay just north of the Racecourse, with access from Kingsthorpe Road. There were brickworks there from at least 1755, with production continuing until around 1925. The Bryant Map of 1827 in the Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO) shows it as by far the largest workings in the Northampton area. By the late 19th century more than half of the town’s brickmakers were working on the site.

Cheaper glass for windows was introduced in 1838 and from 1858 onwards all domestic windows were required to be fully openable in their upper half.

Welsh slate for roofing was available from 1800 and was transported mainly via the Northampton Arm of the Grand Junction Canal, which had opened in 1815, in time for the building boom in the area. Originally all roofs in the area would have been slate, but most have now been replaced with concrete tiles.

**Trees and Green Spaces**

A defining feature of the conservation area is the almost total absence of trees and green spaces.

With the exception of a few recently planted street trees placed as part of traffic management or improvement schemes in Hunter and Hervey Streets, and in places along the north side of St Edmund’s Road, the only appreciable green in the street scene is around places of worship (such as St Stanislaus), or in the case of St Edmund’s, a former church, now demolished. The best use needs to be made of the rare green spaces that are available and any trees which are making a positive contribution should be protected. New introductions of trees will need careful consideration and placement in order not to compromise the intensely hard urban character of most streets.

**Buildings making a positive contribution**

These are mainly noted in the descriptions of the character areas and are also where appropriate, included in the list of Local List new proposals in Appendix 4.

**Neutral and Negative Areas**

These are discussed in the section on character areas and marked on Map 1. Considering the extent of the area there are remarkably few areas of negative townscape value. The only one of great significance is the site of the former Great Russell Street, used as a rough car park since the houses were demolished in the early 1970s.

**Summary of Issues**

This is a unique conservation area. Its extent, the inclusion of large numbers of terraced houses, shops and former factories and the range of specific conservation challenges these raise pose some particular issues about the type of conservation needed and the
best approach to the future management of the area.

During the appraisal process the following issues have been identified:

- Past damage to the integrity of the historic building fabric
- Future conservation of the character of the area including the preservation of the historic building fabric
- Traffic management
- Parking
- Impact of changes of use
- Impact of advertising
- The importance of conservation-led regeneration to improve the future vitality of the area.

Conservation of the fabric and character of the area

The focus of historic building conservation is on the preservation of the special interest of buildings and areas. The issue is that many of the buildings of the area have been much altered in recent years and some of their fabric lost. The conservation task is to identify the special elements of interest in the area which remain and are worthy of protection.

Concern was expressed during the Boot and Shoe Survey of 2000 at the continuing level of loss of industrial buildings and the unsympathetic conversion of others. Since that time eight shoe-related industrial buildings in the conservation area have been protected by being listed Grade II but many others have been demolished, altered or are at risk. Few important industrial buildings now remain in an externally unaltered state. Those that are now in the best preserved state should be given the additional protection of inclusion on the Local List, but threats remain to features such as hoists and taking-in doors, metal and hopper windows.

Houses have been altered with extensive losses of historic fabric in the form of original doors, windows and roof coverings and in the painting, rendering and cladding of the brickwork. Additions of aerials and satellite dishes on buildings and overhead wires also make noticeable changes to the streetscape, although these can be seen as incidental and short-term introductions.

Changes which would adversely affect the character of the area:

- Breaching the low height line by high new development.
- Breaching the building line or setting new buildings back from it.
- The loss of the characteristic roofscapes by the introduction of dormer windows and skylights on front elevations, and the loss of parapets, chimney stacks and pots.
- The loss of any rear workshops in the curtilage of houses would undermine the historic integrity of the area.
- The loss of former boot and shoe buildings or redevelopment which did not respect their essential character.
- The loss of buildings housing places of worship.
- The loss or erosion of detail on corner buildings.
- The introduction of incompatible building materials.
Traffic Management

The single greatest negative impact on the proposed conservation area is the management of traffic around the Abington Square area and the effect it has on isolating the Square itself and dividing the conservation area. Traffic management causes a perceived lack of topographical continuity for the area, slicing through St Michael’s Road, one of the best and most interesting industrial roads in the area, cutting off the St Edmund’s Road area from the rest of the conservation area and isolating Abington Square as an island. The heavy traffic and unappealing land to the south of the Mounts provides a physical barrier between this area and the town centre. Therefore the need to reinforce the particular identity, character and facilities of the conservation area is paramount.

Traffic calming measures, more appealing provision for pedestrians and a reduction in road signs could help to mitigate the impact of the road layout in this area, but only radical solutions can deliver far-reaching conservation-led regeneration benefits. These would require significant levels of long-term planning and financial commitment.

Parking

Alexandra Road

The impact of parking on the historic character of the area is marked. The high level of car ownership and the resultant demand for on-street residential parking, one-way schemes and greater capacity of the layout of smaller roads all have an impact on the street scene, the setting of the buildings and views within the conservation area. There is little scope for radical improvement, but a sympathetic approach to signage and traffic management can be adopted as a priority where change is required. Simple rectilinear designs reflect the character of the area with all its right-angles and are usually preferable to curves and the introduction of individual street trees, both of which are alien to the character of the area.

Changes of use

Change of use can have a major impact on the character of the area. Most importantly, its historic character was based on the intermix of industrial and residential buildings due to a requirement of homes to be in close proximity to workplaces. With the changes of use from factories and commercial buildings to residential use this has been undermined. Industrial and commercial buildings were often on corner sites, and formed an important and characteristic part of the streetscape. With changes of use these buildings are often vulnerable to unsympathetic change, weakening the defining architectural features of the area. Reducing diversity in the area, both economically and visually, can also have a major impact on the overall vibrancy of the area. It also places an additional pressure on car parking requirements with more people requiring car transport to get to work.

Advertising

This mostly affects the shopping areas of Abington Square and the Wellingborough and Kettering Roads. A diverse and vibrant character is desirable in these areas, but the upper floors of good quality historic buildings are in many cases unduly visually dominated by permanent and semi-permanent signs.

Future Management

Although there is a general understanding of the importance of this area to the industrial heritage of the town and county there has been no coherent vision for the conservation, enhancement and economic regeneration of the area. Much can be achieved in conservation terms by the
designation of this conservation area and by targeting existing resources.

However, more could be achieved with the adoption of an aspiration for a new vision for the area rebranded as the “Boot and Shoe Quarter”. Reduce traffic, place Abington Square at its centre and encourage the shops of this part of town to become once again the “village” shops serving the myriad adjacent streets.
Management Plan

Introduction

The designation of conservation areas is an important aspect of the role of local authorities in recognising and managing the historic assets under their jurisdiction in a sustainable manner for the benefit of this and future generations.

Northampton Borough Council has currently designated 20 conservation areas, of which 10 lie within the urban areas of Northampton and 10 are villages or historic village centres.

Every area has a distinctive character derived from its topography or landscape, dominant building materials, historic development, current uses, features such as the street pattern, trees and green spaces, buildings and structures, open areas, and views. Understanding and appreciating these elements together with the shaping effect of the social and economic background is the starting point for making decisions about the management of a conservation area.

Until now there has been no conservation area purposely centred on the defined identity of the distinctive urban landscape created by the boot and shoe industry in the 19th century. Although there has been much redevelopment and some loss of the industrial buildings since the initial survey in 2000, it is still necessary and desirable both to celebrate the importance of the industrial legacy of the town and to define and then protect the essence of what makes this area special so that it may be appreciated in the future.

The foregoing character appraisal has provided the basis for developing management proposals for the Boot and Shoe conservation area. These fulfill the general duty placed upon local authorities to draw up and publish such proposals.

Proposals for the enhancement of the character and appearance of the conservation area are aimed at reinforcing those qualities and characteristics which provide the special interest that has warranted designation.

Management proposals

These management proposals take the form of a strategy, setting objectives, addressing issues and making recommendations for action arising from the appraisal process.

The availability of resources will have an impact upon delivery of the plan. Northampton Borough Council recognises both the needs of the area and its own aspirations to meet those needs wherever and whenever they are able to do so within the constraints which will apply.

The principal ways in which the conservation area will be managed fall into two broad categories of protecting the existing fabric, and works of enhancement.

These will be achieved by -

- The application of generic and specific policy guidance.
- The provision of published and on-line policy guidance, augmented from time to time.
- The protection of locally important buildings, structures and trees and the review of protection measures on a regular basis.
- An enforcement strategy.
- Ensuring that new development complements the existing scene.
- Ensuring that works within the public realm reinforce the character of the area.
- Seeking pro-active opportunities for the restoration of lost elements and repair of important historic elements which are damaged or in danger.
- Monitoring change and modifying priorities and policies accordingly.

Protection

Listed Buildings

Eight of the listed buildings within the conservation area are related to the Boot and Shoe industry - see Appendix 3. In addition, there are five other listed buildings. All material change to listed buildings (inside and out) is controlled through the Listed Building Consent regime. Certain works will, in addition, require planning permission and/or Conservation Area Consent.
Consideration will be given to putting certain additional buildings and structures within the conservation area forward for inclusion on the national register of buildings of special architectural or historic interest (i.e. listing) if information becomes available which may make them potentially of national historic significance.

Important buildings not put forward for listing, or not adopted for inclusion on the national list, will be placed on the draft Local List for consideration.

**The Local List**

A draft Local List of buildings considered to be of outstanding local significance for their architectural or historic interest is currently being prepared by Northampton Borough Council. These buildings will not benefit from the same level of protection as those on the national statutory list, but will nevertheless require careful appraisal and justification when applications for change are under consideration.

The general presumption will be in favour of retaining buildings and structures which have been included on the Local List. Those which have been identified through the appraisal process as making a positive contribution to the character of the area will receive special scrutiny where major changes are proposed.

A review of buildings and structures within the conservation area will be undertaken to assess their suitability for inclusion on a Local List (see Appendix 4). A review of all the sites identified as part of 2000 Survey will also be undertaken and those which represent good levels of survival will be added to the local list. Some which are currently most rare and/or vulnerable to change have already been proposed for inclusion on the Local List.

**Additional Protection**

The focus for action and the range of measures required have been identified through the appraisal process. The resultant issues have subsequently been outlined.

Conservation areas are all about the quality and sense of place of a location and less about all the individual buildings. An area is much more than the sum of its parts. This is especially true in the boot and shoe conservation area, where the detailed preservation of the architecture of the individual terraced house – while of some significance – is not the main focus of conservation interest. The terraces’ main contribution is to the close formation of the straight urban grain which forms the web within which key buildings are supported. As such they are not especially vulnerable to change, short of wholesale demolition. However, the introduction of front facing dormers and rooflights, the demolition of chimney stacks or roof division parapets and the loss of chimney pots would all damage important elements of the integrity of the street scene. The loss of any rear boot and shoe workshops would also undermine the historic integrity of the area. Cladding or rendering of houses also disrupts the designed unity of the rows of houses.

Change is inevitable, often positive and necessary to ensure the relevance of the housing stock and also the vibrant character of the area which must have been so much a part of its inception and early history. But this change should not be at the expense of the special character of the area which has been defined in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

In order to offer protection to that part of the character which can be vulnerable to certain kinds of change consideration will be given to the potential benefits of the following policies and measures:

- **Article 4.1 and 4.2 Directions**: these may be used to protect, in particular, surviving original and interesting features such as taking-in doors and hoists, plaques and datestones, historic roof coverings, windows and doors in unlisted buildings, particularly industrial buildings.

- **Changes of use**: because of the importance of corner buildings and commercial buildings, such as shops and public houses, to the character of the area the council will strongly discourage the change of use of these buildings to residential use, especially where this involves significant external alterations and the loss of comer architectural details.

Buildings which are former or current places of worship play a very important role in the articulation of the area, visually, architecturally and socially. Every effort will be made to retain these buildings in active
use and wholesale demolition strongly resisted.

In order to retain the facility of as many properties as possible to be live/work sites and to reduce on-street parking pressure the Borough Council will also discourage the conversion of workshops, former factories, garages and off-road yard areas to residential use. To inform this process a review of the uses of the 120 identified sites will be undertaken.

Infill development will be carefully designed to complement the character of the area in design and scale. Critically, new buildings should not be too high in relation to the overall area. Two storeys should be the norm, with the occasional three storey building where this can be justified by the immediate context or precedent. New building above four storeys is unlikely to be acceptable as it would potentially dominate the skyline, the streetscape and the surrounding historic residential buildings, and in general be out of scale with the area. It is important that no new building in the area should be more dominant in height and general scale than the largest former factory. This will ensure that the overall balance of scale is maintained and that the historic factories remain the focal points of any views.

The area has great homogeneity in the use of local brick and new building should demonstrably respect or complement this characteristic material.

Advertising controls and guidance may be required for the shopping areas, especially around Abington Square, to ensure that good historic upper floors are not unduly visually dominated or obscured.

Conservation, restoration and repair of historic buildings

The main historic quality of the area comes from the former industrial buildings and their surrounding terraced houses which form the body of the area. It is embellished by buildings which are places of worship and supported by a backbone of largely contemporary 19th century shops. Buildings are almost exclusively constructed in brick with stone details. Factories and workshops traditionally have metal and timber windows of various but redolent designs, houses have timber doors and sash windows and all had slate roofs. These elements have been extensively replaced in recent years using modern, sometimes inappropriate materials and designs. The typical house now has a ridged concrete tile roof and double-glazed windows with white plastic frames and a door constructed of plastic. These changes are regrettable, though perhaps inevitable as older fabric came up for repair after 100 years of service. Some of these works will be reversible, but care will be needed to ensure that, over time, ill-advised changes do not further undermine the appearance of the area and potentially reduce the special character. Owners are encouraged to seek specialist advice before considering external work and to employ specialist craftspeople.

It is important to retain and repair, or replace on a like-for-like basis, original or early historic elements such as windows, doors and roof coverings, and look after smaller features such as original guttering, hoppers and downpipes, porch tiles and boot scrapers wherever possible. Painting or cladding the brickwork is usually both harmful to the building in preventing it breathing and detrimental to streetscapes which rely on a good degree of uniformity in the façades. Painting over stonework features is not recommended.

Illustrated is a selection of good examples of terraced houses with good levels of survival of original features.

Good survival of original features (Thenford Street)
Good windows (Denmark Road)

Original doorcase and boot scraper (Denmark Road)

The general condition of buildings and structures within an area contributes to the overall character. Creating or sustaining an ambience of vibrancy and well-being is desirable. It is normally in the interests of owners to keep their historic and listed buildings in a good state of repair. The Borough Council has powers to take action and will consider using these where an historic building has deteriorated to the extent that its preservation may be at risk.

Buildings at Risk

A Buildings at Risk survey of listed buildings was carried out by the Council in August 1990 and updated in July 2010.

There are listed buildings within the proposed conservation area the structural condition of which may give cause for concern. These are:

- Hawkins-Homby and West, St Michael’s Road/Overstone Road (site 48)
- 20-26 St Michael’s Road (site 46)
- 4-6, Dunster Street (site 52)
- 76, Colwyn Road (site 76) part vacant and boarded up.
- The walls of St Michael’s Churchyard

Management and protection of important trees

The Boot and Shoe Quarter conservation area contains few trees. Currently a sycamore tree within the grounds of St Stanislaus’ Church is the only tree in the area protected by Tree Preservation Order (see Map 1).

Consideration will be given to a review of those trees which fall within the boundary of the proposed new conservation area boundary or its setting.

Enforcement strategy

Where there is clear evidence of a breach of planning law, national and local policy will be enforced. In cases where it is necessary, it will be carried out in a fair, clear and consistent manner. Information and advice will be available before any formal action is taken and an opportunity provided to discuss the circumstances of the case and an opportunity will be given to resolve problems.

In instances where there has been a clear breach of planning control, and especially in cases where unauthorised alterations have been made to Listed Buildings, Northampton Borough Council will use the full weight of planning legislation to request regularisation or take further legal action. When considering works to any listed or historic building in the conservation area we urge you to contact the conservation team first so that unnecessary enforcement control can be avoided.
**Enhancement**

**Summary of management and enhancement potential**

The conservation area appraisal highlighted some issues which have arisen, the principal one being that the area has immense enhancement potential and is capable of being the beneficiary of long term and far-reaching conservation-led regeneration. If this were to become an aspiration it would be underpinned by the preparation of an Area Action Plan.

Other localised measures will also improve the townscape quality.

**Improving the public realm** - The quality of the public realm in the boot and shoe area is generally fair but there are opportunities for enhancement which will strengthen the character (see table overleaf).

There is a need for a strategy to encourage the maintenance and use of the key green spaces around places of worship and Abington Square.

**Opportunities for redevelopment:**

There are a number of locations where enhancement works would strengthen the character of the area and opportunities to introduce more sympathetic designs and materials into the streetscape or where the impact of former works and signage could be reduced, simplified or removed.

Poor and varied footway surfacing, visually intrusive and unnecessary signage and street clutter together with overhead wires all detract from the visual harmony of the area and the setting of the historic buildings.

**Conservation Strategy for Green Spaces**

Although the Racecourse to the north is a great resource, within the conservation area itself there are no public open green spaces. Trees, except in back gardens, are also few and far between and rarely of any great age or size. The opportunities for the conservation of green spaces will be to make the best and most appropriate use of land around existing and former churches and chapels, and at Abington Square.

The churchyard of the former Church of St Edmund is an important and rare green area which lies on the edge of the conservation area. There may be opportunities for developing a maintenance plan which would have beneficial outcomes for nature conservation, bio-diversity and possible public access. The boundary ironstone walls are important and are in good condition. They will require sympathetic maintenance from time to time as will the commemorative monuments, some of which may be in a poor state of repair. There are opportunities for interpretation of this site of a lost church, perhaps including information about the former Workhouse opposite (St Edmund’s Hospital).

The Churchyard of the Church of St Michael is bounded by walls in a poor state of repair and the probable loss of former railings which weaken the streetscape value of the church by poor quality boundary definition. There may be opportunities here for enhancing the space as above.

The land around the Unitarian Chapel on Abington Square has potential for enhancement to help counter the effects of the noise and pollution of traffic and be linked to the memorial gardens which are well maintained, but restricted in extent and hard to access. An overall green space could be linked with other environmental improvements to the area and beneficially be part of a wider scheme to create a better, useable public space at Abington Square.

**Opportunities for redevelopment**

New development in the conservation area should aspire to a quality of design, scale and use of materials which is clearly related to its context. This normally involves demonstrating that the values which have been established through the conservation area assessment have been respected. To an extent the character of the area derives from its natural evolution over time. New development which complements this pattern and the established grain and settlement pattern will therefore be encouraged.

New development within the grounds or curtilage of listed buildings and local list buildings will be discouraged, especially where it is considered that the setting of those buildings or the character would be compromised.
**List of priorities for public realm improvements to the conservation area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traffic management around Abington Square</td>
<td>Traffic has a stranglehold on the square making it pedestrian-unfriendly for shopping and contrary to the character of remembrance and commemoration.</td>
<td>Comprehensive re-assessment of traffic and signage. Resurfacing and consider widening footways, re-route / reduce traffic, better / more crossing points. Aim to establish the Square as living heart of the area</td>
<td>Long</td>
<td>NCC/NBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter Street / Hervey Street / Gray Street / Bums Street</td>
<td>Un satisfactory street works related to traffic management with loss of individual street trees</td>
<td>Re-design and simplify, improved hard landscaping, not replacing lost trees</td>
<td>Medium / Long</td>
<td>NBC / NCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Street / Earl Street</td>
<td>Unsympathetic design and materials, unsightly and possibly unnecessary street works</td>
<td>Assess and redesign to strengthen local area character</td>
<td>Short / Mediu m</td>
<td>NBC / NCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranstoun Street</td>
<td>Poor and broken footway paving</td>
<td>Resurfacing</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>NCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junction of Bailiff Street / Military Road &amp; entrance to the Racecourse</td>
<td>Poor surfacing and rundown look in the setting of important buildings and at a principal viewpoint in the area out into open space</td>
<td>Assessment and redesign and renew to strengthen local character</td>
<td>Mediu m</td>
<td>NCC/NBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Street</td>
<td>Visually intrusive overhead wires in a road with the highest streetscape value</td>
<td>Street audit to review the street scene and recommend improvements. Liaise with utilities to explore provision of underground services.</td>
<td>Mediu m / Long</td>
<td>NCC/PC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For development within or adjacent to the Conservation Area the Council may seek financial contributions through Section 106 planning obligations to assist in delivering the improvements to the conservation area as set out in the Management Plan.
There are a number of sites which are of neutral or negative townscape value and are capable of sustaining sympathetic redevelopment and which have the potential to enhance the character of the conservation area. These include:

- Land off Earl Street / Clare Street (formerly Great Russell Street)
- Land off William Street / Duke Street
- Land north of the Abington Square 1960s low rise shops
- Spencer Road / Kettering Road corner
- North comer Clare Street / Kettering Road
- Clare Street to Somerset Street – site of former school
- St Michael's Road east end

**Conservation Strategy for Green Spaces**

Although the Racecourse to the north is a great resource, within the conservation area itself there are no public open green spaces. Trees, except in back gardens, are also few and far between and rarely of any great age or size. The opportunities for the conservation of green spaces will be to make the best and most appropriate use of land around existing and former churches and chapels, and at Abington Square.

The churchyard of the former Church of St Edmund is an important and rare green area which lies on the edge of the conservation area. There may be opportunities for developing a maintenance plan which would have beneficial outcomes for nature conservation, bio-diversity and possible public access. The boundary ironstone walls are important and are in good condition. They will require sympathetic maintenance from time to time as will the commemorative monuments, some of which may be in a poor state of repair. There are opportunities for interpretation of this site of a lost church, perhaps including information about the former Workhouse opposite (St Edmund’s Hospital).

The Churchyard of the Church of St Michael is bounded by walls in a poor state of repair and the probable loss of former railings which weaken the streetscape value of the church by poor quality boundary definition. There may be opportunities here for enhancing the space as above.

The land around the Unitarian Chapel on Abington Square has potential for enhancement to help counter the effects of the noise and pollution of traffic and be linked to the memorial gardens which are well maintained, but restricted in extent and hard to access. An overall green space could be linked with other environmental improvements to the area and beneficially be part of a wider scheme to create a better, useable public space at Abington Square.

**Opportunities for redevelopment**

New development in the conservation area should aspire to a quality of design, scale and use of materials which is clearly related to its context. This normally involves demonstrating that the values which have been established through the conservation area assessment have been respected. To an extent the character of the area derives from its natural evolution over time. New development which complements this pattern and the established grain and settlement pattern will therefore be encouraged.

New development within the grounds or curtilage of listed buildings and local list buildings will be discouraged, especially where it is considered that the setting of those buildings or the character would be compromised.

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- St Michael’s Road east end
Monitoring Change

The appearance of conservation areas is subject to change over time and results from the implementation of permitted alterations and approved schemes and sometimes unauthorised alterations. The physical fabric of the area and the public realm may also change for the better or worse. This will be monitored and the effects reviewed and policies modified accordingly with the aim of maintaining a sustainable equilibrium.

Mechanisms for monitoring change

Changes will be managed through the planning, listed building and conservation area consent regime and a logbook recording the formal planning history of the conservation area will provide an overview of accepted changes within the area.

A dated photographic record of the conservation area will be created during the appraisal process and kept up to date to maintain its usefulness.

An annual visual inspection by a suitably qualified person will take place to monitor change within the conservation area.
Appendix 1 - Maps

MAP 1 - Showing the Conservation Area boundary, listed buildings, locally listed buildings and candidates, boot and shoe related buildings, buildings making a positive contribution to the area, negative areas, important green spaces and trees, views and viewpoints.
MAP 2 – Speed’s Map of Northampton, 1610

Published by Northamptonshire Libraries
MAP 3 - Map of 1847

Extract from map of Wood & Law, published by Northamptonshire Libraries
MAP 4 - Map of 1883-87

Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (surveyed in 1883)
MAP 5 - Map of 1900

Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey
Appendix 2

Charles Bradlaugh 1833-1891

Bradlaugh was MP for Northampton from 1880 to 1891. He was the first atheist to become an MP and between 1880 and 1886 had to fight for the right to sit in the House of Commons, repeatedly being returned to Parliament by the voters of Northampton. He was only permitted to take his seat from January 1886 when he established the legal right to affirm the Parliamentary oath rather than swearing the oath on the bible. His Act of 1888 followed and was his lasting legacy. He was one of the most controversial and politically active public figures of the late 19th century, particularly championing unpopular causes. In 1866 he founded and became first president of the National Secular Society, going on to establish the Freethought Publishing Company in 1876.

The statue in Abington Square was unveiled by Sir Philip Manfield MP on 25th June 1894. Bradlaugh is remembered each year on the anniversary of his birthday, 26th September.

Lieut.-Col Edgar R. Mobbs D.S.O.

The dedication on the monument in Abington Square reads:

“A great and gallant sportsman who raised a company of the Northampton Regiment in 1914. Killed in action 13 July 1917”.

The monument was originally placed at the north side of the Market Square and was unveiled by Lord Lilford on 17th July 1921. It was subsequently moved to its present location when the Garden of Remembrance was built in the 1930s.

Mobbs was born in Northampton and played for and captained Northampton RFC (the Saints) from 1907, scoring 177 tries for the club. He played for England in 1910 and continued to play rugby for Northampton, East Midlands and Barbarians as well as cricket for Buckinghamshire until he retired from sport in 1913 at the age of 31.

At the outbreak of war he tried to enlist but was refused a commission as at 33 he was over the mandated age limit. Undeterred, he joined the army as a private soldier and then raised his own unit of 264 men as “D” Company, 7th Battalion Northampton Regiment. Having seen much action at the front in France, he was promoted to Major in 1916, taking over command of 7th Battalion. He was killed in action 19th July 1917.

The memorial in Abington Square is a testament to the extraordinary achievements, personality and charisma of Mobbs and his inspiration of local men who followed him in his sport and then in his call to alms and the ultimate sacrifice for his country.
## Appendix 3: Schedule of Listed Buildings

The brief description is from that given at time of listing.

All buildings are Grade II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of St Stanislaus and St Lawrence, Duke Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.A. Centre and Drill Hall, Clare Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Cannon Cinema, Abington Square</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitarian Chapel, Kettering Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Bradlaugh Statue, Abington Square</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-43 Colwyn Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church of St Michael, St Michael's Mount</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hawkins factory, St Michael's Road</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globe Works, Dunster Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 Overstone Rd / 1, Dunster Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-26 St Michael's Road</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Trickers, St Michael's Road</td>
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<td>3 Gray Street</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crockett and Jones, Perry Street</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Local List Buildings

Buildings on the Local List in the proposed conservation area

16-28 Wellingborough Road

Abington Square War Memorial

Local List – new proposals for review

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 1 – Arnold House, 56 Lome Road

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 2 – 59 Louise Road

Former Church Rooms of St Lawrence, now Dom Polski, Craven Street

The Garibaldi, Public House, Bailiff Street

Bat and Wicket Public House, Bailiff Street

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 74 – 124 Bailiff Street

The Victoria Inn Public House, 2 Poole Street

Shop, 2 Austin Street

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 24 – 19 Thomas Street

St Lawrence House, Duke Street

Shop, 48 Duke Street

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 75 – 1 Colwyn Road

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 84 – Shakespear House, 20 Shakespeare Road, 74-76 Cowper Street

The Cricketers Arms Public House, Hervey Street

Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, Kettening Road

Former School now Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Service, Kettening Road

Queensgrove Methodist Church, Grove Road

Jen Yen Temple, St Michael’s Road

The Bantam Public House, Abington Square

Edgar R. Mobbs Memorial, Abington Square

Stone Building, Chapel Place

St Michael’s Church Rooms, Peny, Magee, Tumer Street

Working Men’s Conservative Club, Adnitt Road, Whitworth Road

Princess Alexandra Public House Alexandra Road

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 148 – 68 Denmark Road

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 131 – 15 Ecton Street

Crown and Anchor, Public House, Victoria Road

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 140 – 10-12 Victoria Road

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 142 – 29-33 Victoria Road

Congregational Church, Victoria Road

E.H. Rapid Survey Site 135 – 9-12 Palmerston Road

Churchyard walls to former St Edmund’s Church, Palmerston Rd/St Edmund’s St
Appendix 5: Building Types

Industrial Buildings

The interwoven industrial buildings are what give this area its very particular character and so markedly distinguishes it from other such areas of 19th century development. The buildings, factories, workshops and others, are very varied in size, plan form, historic and present uses, and contrast interestingly with the regularity of the plots of the houses. One might expect, looking at Birdsal\\u2019s map of 1878, that the industrial buildings would, as the roads and houses do, form rational relationships within the development. But in fact this could hardly be further from how the demands of the rapidly expanding industry, fluid entrepreneurial activity and traditional ways of working shaped the urban landscape. We see examples of factories of all sorts of shapes and sizes; on awkward angled corner sites, gable end-on to the street, behind houses in rear yards, in courtyards of their own, attached to houses, and freestanding.

Where the industrial buildings do conform however is when they front the street they all respect the building line, forming a seamless line with the adjacent houses. Also many occupy the corner sites of residential streets which gives them commercial prominence and the opportunity to gain maximum working daylight from two frontages, for example as at no. 1 Colwyn Road (site 75). There are examples of industrial buildings, particularly rear workshops, which have a common eaves level with the adjacent or attached houses, e.g. nos 32-34 Victoria Road (site 141) on the front and nos 15-17 Woodford Street (site 132) a rear range on a street frontage. Corner sites are usually L-shaped in plan and can have decorative corner bays or ornamental main doorways on the corner, e.g. the Martonia Building of 1890 – nos 62-68 Artizan Road (site 93) – alas now rather disfigured. A small number of large factories extend to four storeys with basements and attics, e.g. the former Church\\u2019s factory in Duke Street (site 8).

Buildings for the preparation of leather include curriers and leatherdressers such as the rare survival of the little-altered no. 1 Dunster Street (site 51) and the impressive nos 4-6 Dunster Street (site 52).

There are no surviving tanneries, heel factories or last works in the conservation area. Buildings used at one time or another for ancillary trades such as making and grinding knives and shaped stamps for cutting leather, box makers and makers and suppliers of “findings” such as eyelets and laces can only be identified from trade directories as they are architecturally indistinguishable and frequently changed premises.

There are now just two purpose-built factories in the conservation area still in production, but the adaptability and
modest functionality of the 19th century industrial buildings with their flexibility of workspaces and desirable locations have to some extent ensured their continuing usefulness and hence active re-use.

Of the 120 buildings identified in the Rapid Survey of 2000, 31 had at that time been converted to residential use (22 of which were former factories and 9 of the house/workshop type). There were 2 shoe shops, 3 engaged in leather trades and 3 footwear producers. The rest (81 sites) were in various commercial new uses. In 2010 many of those 81 former industrial buildings have now been converted to residential use, some altered almost beyond recognition, and at least 4 have been demolished and the site completely redeveloped. The rate of change over the last 10 years has been rapid and not always wholly beneficial to the character and appearance of the area.

**The style of the industrial buildings**

The industrial buildings are all constructed in brick in a range of pink, red and orange. Blue and buff coloured bricks are reserved for details and plinths. The more prestigious the factory the greater the level of ornamentation, but all are relatively restrained in this and smaller buildings and workshops are relentlessly plain and utilitarian in style. A cream limestone is widely used for dressings but has often weathered badly. The buildings are frequently of pier and panel construction, e.g. Oak Street (site 27) and universally with Welsh slate roofs (originally). Before 1890s factories as small as four to six bays in length are common and relatively few exceed twelve bays (endnote to Rapid Survey).

Elevations usually have large regular segmental headed windows with blue brick or stone cills. Frames were most often cast iron with an opening section, but timber casement frames were not uncommon. Larger works had an office or showroom which where often distinguished externally by having sash windows e.g. no. 105 St Michael’s Road (site 39) and the bay incorporating the main entrance was frequently embellished whilst another works entrance for employees would be plain. There is normally a vehicular entrance to

"Use of polychromatic brick, Palmerston Road"

give access to a yard; where this is not possible there are one or more taking-in doors and hosts on the front elevation.

By and large the preferred style for factories was a simple polychromy, of which no. 56, Lome Road (site 1) is a good example. This decorative use of different coloured bricks is associated with the Gothic revival, but with the splendid exceptions of no. 9 Palmerston Road (site 135) and no. 10 Victoria Road (site 140) none of the buildings could be said to be said to have actual Gothic motifs. Later buildings are decorated by bands of coloured brickwork and/or limestone with a classical revivalist flavour to the minimal decoration, often only a stone doorcase, as on the south side of Dunster Street.

**The Terraced House**

This area, in terms of sheer numbers, is defined by the terraced house with about 95% of the buildings being of this kind. But the British terrace is not just a row of houses. It is, according to Stefan Muthesius in The English Terraced House “an architectural unity which provides a heightened social image which speaks of a special achievement on the part of those who planned it and built it and those who bought or rented it”. This would certainly ring true in the Northampton of the second half of 19th century. The architectural intention of a terrace, even when developed by different builders, is to bind dwellings together as tightly as possible to give an illusion of unity. This can be stressed by central features like a small pediment, a plaque or date stones. The unity is further enhanced by the
architectural treatment of corner buildings which seldom end in a blank end wall, but have dual aspects.

The architectural language of the terraced houses of the area is classical in origin, but very pared down. There is, though, all the more careful, correct and consistent attention to the overall proportions, particularly of the façades. We see modest architectural embellishment in the form of consoles supporting shallow door architraves and window cills, string courses defining floor levels and ornamented eaves.

The proportions of the doors and windows and openings to wall space owe everything to the well established ratios inherited from the Georgian interpretation of the buildings of antiquity. In adopting this style so consistently there is in a sense a larger reference to a rational life, an idea of order and with it a social utopian dream. Ironically, perhaps, the reality of the life of the workers in the industry as reported - hectic, sometimes chaotic, hand-to-mouth and independently-minded - was not quite in line with the social order that the streets of regular buildings seem to be dictating.

There was both the necessity and desirability to provide a certain density of housing for workers in the industry and for the houses to be promoting good public health and supporting one family per house in respectable comfort. One of the chief inducements to build these houses of no more than 2 storeys high was the use of the standard 9 inch or one brick thick wall which could be used throughout. This lightness of construction combined with standardisation of plans and the building process was ideally suited to speculative building and the calculated 99 year lifespan of leasehold property.

The importance of the building line is everywhere apparent, not even the boot scrapers are allowed to protrude, and front doorways are recessed with a lipped stone step or steps up. Those houses with basements have a shallow air vent or window at street level.

The regular march of the roofscapes of the area is immensely important to views along streets, especially where there is a slight gradient. The rows of chimney stacks announce the number of internal fireplaces and hence the level of domestic comfort and the roof parapets designed to reduce the impact of calamitous fire spreading from house to house.

**Style in domestic buildings**

A cursory visit to the area might leave an impression that the terraced houses of 1850s to 1890s exhibit little variety. This would not be the view of the early inhabitants nor probably the current ones. Subtle nuances of social status and aspirations as well as accommodation needs are played out in the location, size, layout and level of original embellishment and later additions. This is all the more remarkable since almost every house in the conservation area is terraced and none has the ready-made distinction of being in any way detached, with the exception of the very large St Lawrence House in Duke Street (originally the Vicarage to St Lawrence’s Church).

One very noticeable feature of the area is the total absence of the influence of any local vernacular style in the houses, their decoration or materials.

With the charming exceptions of houses in Palmerston Road, especially nos 15 and 16 in...
the Gothic style to match the adjacent factory, the terraced houses are in a very abbreviated classical style. This can best be seen in Lome Road, where houses have an eaves parapet (illustration p. 9), and the decorated fronts of 23 and 48 Lome Road. Both Louise and Lome Roads have surprisingly ornate façades for their small size, prompting the idea that when they were built they were a prestigious address. Every house is adorned with at least a stone doorcase, either square or segmental, and some form of decoration for the ground floor window (for an example of a good door see 67 Denmark Road). This may be a simple keystone with or without rubbed brick voussoirs, or may be more omate with paired windows and consoles supporting the cills.

The smallest houses have a narrow front door leading straight into the front room which is lit by a narrow window and a similar single window in line above (52 Earl Street). Rows of these houses seldom have passage doors for access to rear yards. Front doors can be paired or alternating with the windows. Slightly larger houses may have a wider ground floor window and the addition of a narrow window over the front door. This can indicate that there is a hall entry. The main window may be more omate – a tripartite design is common – or a paired style such as in Artizan Road, or be a canted (three-sided) bay.

Having a bay window is a “cut above” and several streets have their entire length embellished with single bays. These include: Perry Street, Tumer Street, Bums Street, Talbot Street, that part of Artizan Road opposite St Michael's Church and down to Henry Street, and much of the east side of Connaught Street. All these houses are two-storey but a few roads are distinguished by houses of three storeys in height, but often of no greater width. Plain versions are to be seen on the south side of Hood Street and in Victoria Road, and more elaborate versions where roads run down to meet the Billing Road. The fall in the land here reduces their impact but it may be assumed that they were developed to be of some status and reflect their proximity to the middle class Billing Road area.

The best (but entirely atypical) example of three-storey houses, many with canted bay windows or even double bays (on two floors) is Colwyn Road. This was the last road to be fully developed in the area, particularly on the north side; one building on the south side has a datestone of 1875 and “Cobden Cottages” are dated 1877. Its proximity to the Racecourse must have prompted the layout of superior plot widths and generous lengths, reflected no doubt in the purchase price. The result is a riot of eclectic building designs and styles which has no parallel in the area and yet remains rooted in the same overall pattern and proportion and the same pallet of materials and embellishments as the surrounding lower status housing.

Detailed scrutiny of the 1881, 1891 and 1901 census returns would undoubtedly shed interesting light on how the different house types reflected the occupations of the earliest inhabitants and to what extent the status proclaimed by the architectural ornamentation and size of the houses had a direct relationship with the status of different skills within footwear manufacturing.

Very few houses now retain their original or early windows or doors. Not entirely unaltered but a good set of houses are nos 18-20 Victoria Road. No. 13 Thenford Street, with its margin glazing, is also a nice example. Many front doors are still made in timber, some reflecting the design of the original doors and others popular designs of when they were replaced in the 1930s and 40s. Perhaps as few as 20% of slate roofs now remain and the new dominant covering is a shallow concrete pantile, usually in a rusty grey.

Modern additions which speak of the continuity of the everyday working class life of the area include satellite dishes and roof aerials.

Places of Worship

Places of Worship play an important social, architectural and visual role in the makeup of the appearance and character of the conservation area. In 1851 when the area was being laid out and developed 50% of the population of the town were church goers. The Church of England accounted for 31% of these, the Baptists 25%, Wesleyans 20% and Independents 12%. This is reflected
in the 8 large church and chapel buildings in the proposed conservation area.

All the places of worship are relatively plain, constructed in brick, some with modest stone architectural embellishments. With the exception of the chapel on St Michaels Road which is classical in style, all are in a simple gothic style, with Queensgrove Methodist Church showing hints of Italianate gothic.
## Appendix 6

Schedule of Boot & Shoe Factories included on the English Heritage Rapid Survey 2000

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Site No.</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Alcombe Road</td>
<td>4 &amp; 6 Alcombe Road; 9 &amp; 11 Dunster Street</td>
<td>Site No: 62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alfred Street</td>
<td>41 Alfred Street, 22 Stockley Street</td>
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<td>Artizan Road</td>
<td>59 Artizan Road</td>
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<td>76 &amp; 78 Artizan Road</td>
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<td></td>
<td>104-108 (even) Artizan Road (Bona Fide Boot Warehouse)</td>
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<td>Martonia Building, 62-68 Artizan Road</td>
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<td>Meadows House, Artizan Road</td>
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<td>124 Bailiff Street</td>
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<td>7 &amp; 9 Burns Street</td>
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<td>97 Charles Street</td>
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<td>Clare Street</td>
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<td></td>
<td>24 Clare Street &amp; 2 Overstone Road</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Clare Street/ Overstone Road (Dawson &amp; Sons)</td>
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<td>94a Clare Street</td>
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<td>Clare Street / Grove Road (Grove Works)</td>
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<td>Eaton House, 141-147 (odd) Clare Street</td>
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<td>34 &amp; 36 Connaught Street, 31 Robert Street</td>
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<td>77 Ethel Street / 28 St Edmund's Road</td>
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<td>Spencer Warehouse, 26 Spencer Road</td>
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<td>Woodford Street (off)</td>
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</table>
Appendix 7

References and further reading


Bridges J. – History and antiquities of the County of Northampton. 1791 (Ed.P.Walley)


Communities and Local Government Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPS 5). 2010

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