

**WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**WARMINSTER TOWN CENTRE  
CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

**Informative Document**

**Consultation Draft/Cabinet Draft  
December 2006**

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## 1.0 BACKGROUND

### 1.1 OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this assessment is to identify and record the special features and characteristics of the town centre that make up its architectural and historic interest. This is important for providing a sound basis for policy formulation and development control decisions, as well as for the preparation of a management strategy to preserve and enhance the conservation area.

### 1.2 INTRODUCTION

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities (LPA) to determine which parts of their district are "Areas of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" and to designate them as conservation areas. The Act is supported by Planning Policy Guidance 15 that states that the LPA have a duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of all conservation areas in the form of a character assessment and management proposals.

Warminster town centre was originally designated as a conservation area by Wiltshire County Council in 1973. A comprehensive review of the whole conservation area has now been undertaken in line with the latest advice from Government

and English Heritage. As part of this assessment a review of the conservation area boundaries was undertaken. A number of boundary changes were adopted on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2006. The current conservation area boundary is shown in **Map 1**. For more information see **Appendix 1**

### 1.3 LOCAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Specific policies for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas are included in the West Wiltshire District Plan 1<sup>st</sup> Alteration (WWDPA) adopted in June 2004. Copies of this document are available from West Wiltshire District Council or on the Council's web site [www.westwiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.westwiltshire.gov.uk). Other guidance documents that have been produced by the District Council and may be relevant to assessing development in the conservation area are:

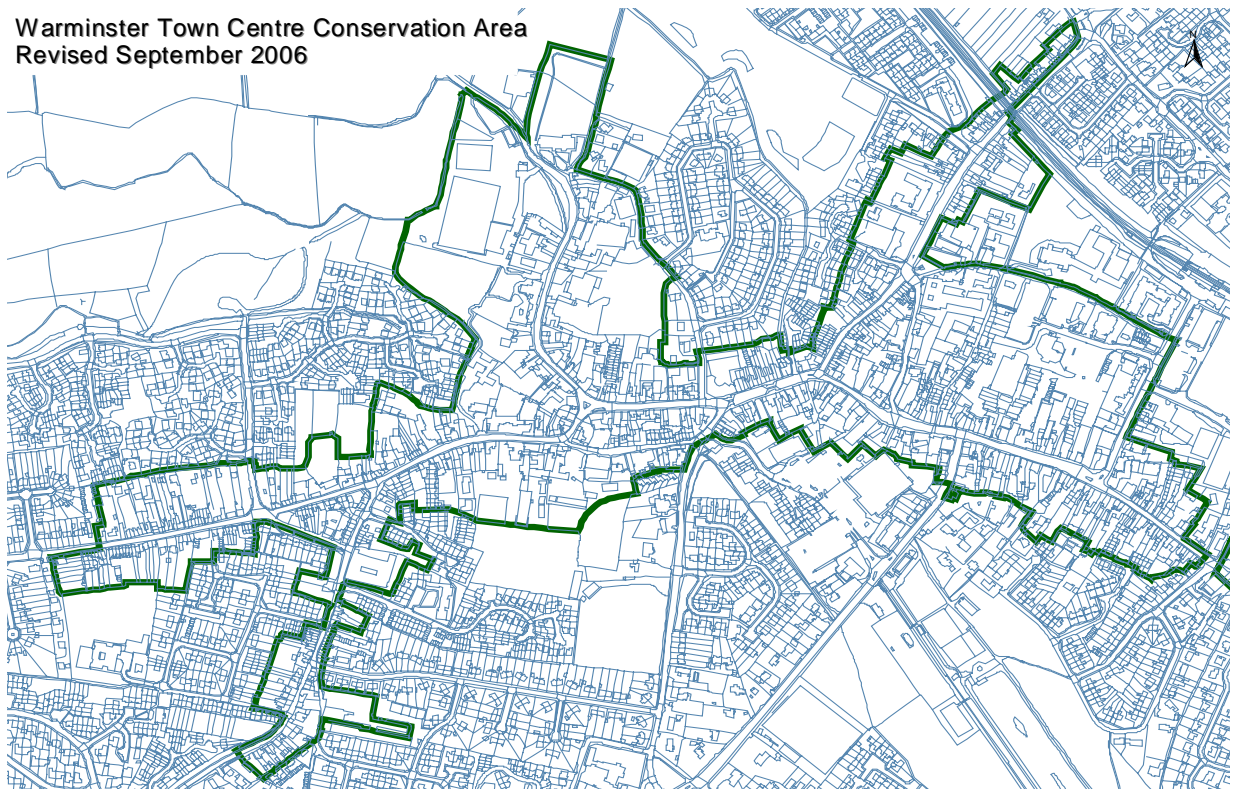
- Design Guidance Principles SPG, and
- The Residential Design Guide SPD

These policies and guidance now form part of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF). A review of the Council's conservation area policies will be undertaken during the production of the Core Strategy.

In accordance with the latest advice from English Heritage and the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), this assessment will be a background document to support the policies in the LDF. This document will go through a thorough

Map 1

Warminster Town Centre Conservation Area  
Revised September 2006



public consultation process and will be a material consideration when planning applications and other related applications are determined.

Coming out of this assessment will be a management strategy for Warminster Town Centre that will highlight the areas where improvements to the environment and regeneration proposals should be focused.

#### 1.4 USING THE ASSESSMENT

This statement contains an assessment of the Warminster Town Centre Conservation Area and is intended for use by all those with an interest in the town, in particular: those considering redevelopment, or undertaking work on its buildings, landscape, streets or public spaces.

It is important that the distinctive features that contribute towards the town's character are recognised so that they can be protected and enhanced for the benefit of everyone, today and in the future.

This assessment and the accompanying maps are intended to highlight significant features but they should not be regarded as an exhaustive account, the omission of any reference to a particular building or feature should not be taken to imply that it is of no significance. This may only be fully identified if a feature or building is subject to rigorous assessment as part of a subsequent planning application necessitates.

The controls that apply in a conservation area vary and in some instances the features or buildings that have been identified as significant features cannot be fully protected by planning legislation. Phoning the Planning Office or looking at the web site [www.westwiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.westwiltshire.gov.uk) can provide further guidance on the controls that apply in conservation areas. Advice on individual sites can be obtained from the Development Control section or from Planning Policy and Conservation.

In most instances, dates attributed to particular buildings will be derived from one of the sources set out in Section 6. In the remaining cases, dates will generally be based on the external features of a building. The authors acknowledge that in some circumstances, additional information such as internal features may suggest a different age so that dates in this document cannot be considered to be definitive.

#### Definition of Special Character of Warminster Town Centre

The town is contained within open countryside and wooded downs on the western edge of Salisbury Plain, which provides a beautiful setting and also plays an important role in the history and function of the town. Warminster is believed to have derived its name from the River Were and the Minster Church that was erected by the Normans.

Warminster has functioned as a market town for most of its existence. The corn market which existed in medieval times continued to be successful for over 600 years, forming an important commercial centre for the region's farmers. The corn market boomed until the mid 19th century, largely due to the fact that the town was by then on important trading routes between London, Bristol and the South. Other industries that flourished in the 18th and 19th centuries were malting and inns, which were related to the local farming industry, and iron, cloth and leather manufacturing, all of which have both left their mark on the town centre.

Market Place formed part of a 14th century extension and has become the focal point of the town that continued to develop in a linear fashion. Land ownership was generally divided into burgage plots. This has resulted in building layouts that are tightly packed along the main street frontages and a number of narrow streets and alleyways running back from the main streets. The increasing importance of the roads as primary trading routes also created a number of inns, resulting in the creation of service yards surrounded by ancillary buildings and stables, a number of which are still in evidence.

As with many towns a number of the earliest remaining buildings erected in the town were ecclesiastical. However, Warminster has managed to retain a number of historic houses as well as commercial and industrial buildings all of which enrich the built environment. During the prosperous 18th and 19th centuries many fine buildings were erected along the main street frontages whilst some older buildings were re-fronted. Consequently, the fabric of the main streets consists mainly of 3 storey stone fronted terraces with varying heights and Georgian or Victorian architectural features.

Away from the market centre the predominant building form is small terraced housing, although the more distinctive buildings are those that now house Warminster's numerous schools and the remaining industrial buildings.

## 2.0 CONTEXT

### 2.1 LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY

Warminster is one of the five market towns within the district. Located in the south west of the district on the western edge of Salisbury Plain, Warminster is within the upper reaches of the River Wylde where the River Were joins it. It is well contained within a rural location, which is attractive and gives the town a sense of isolation, particularly since the construction of the by-pass (the A36). The A350 (M4 to Poole) and the A36 Bristol to Southampton roads meet just to the west of Warminster. Map 2 illustrates the town's context.

The steeply rising landscape to the north-east and east of the town of Salisbury Plain gives the perception of it being in a valley, though, the surrounding landscape levels out to the south and west. The topography within the town centre is relatively flat, affording a number of attractive views of the surrounding landscape.

Directly to the north and west of the town are wooded scarps of the Plain, which present a backdrop to the town, known as Arn Hill and Cop Heap. This attractive setting for the town has a strong presence within the centre with views northbound along routes such as Portway and Station Road showing open fields and green woodland. This gives the town a rural feel.

The River Were runs to the north west of the town centre, creating a number of water meadows adjacent to Warminster School's playing fields, and the Minster Church before entering the town from the north. It passes underneath the town centre and emerges south of the town centre, in the Lake Pleasure Park, between the town centre and Warminster Common. Further south the River Were joins the River Wylde.

In terms of geology the main part of the historic town centre lies on greensand although there are some pockets of chalk underneath the town. The scarp slopes of the Plain are also formed on large expanses of chalkland.

### 2.2 GENERAL CHARACTER AND PLAN FORM

The Warminster Town Centre Conservation Area is centred on the linear element of the town, which runs west to east from West Street to East Street with four roads leading off in a northerly or southerly direction.

Warminster has historically functioned as a market centre. Nevertheless, even in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Warminster was very rural in character. The later growth of the town has resulted in a much larger, more urban, settlement, but within the conservation area Warminster has retained reference to its rural surroundings as well as its retail focus.

The most actively commercial streets have not changed since the 18<sup>th</sup> century namely:

- Market Place
- High Street
- East Street (previously called East End)
- George Street (previously Chain Street)
- Silver Street

Salisbury Plain has historically provided sheep pasture, consequently other historic routes into the town, such as Newport and Imber Road, may have originally been drovers routes, used to herd flocks to market or to lower pastures for the winter. The town's well established roads also put Warminster on the map as a coaching stop on a number of important trading routes. Whilst potentially influencing the linear plan form of the town this also opened the way for other industries to develop. In particular there was the malting industry that benefited from both the corn market and the successful agriculture industry.

These uses and historic routes, as well as the topography of the surrounding lands, have shaped the development, layout and building forms within the Conservation Area.

A number of commercial industries and activities have left their mark on the appearance and character of the town. Historically the most important industry within Warminster was the corn market, which flourished for over 600 years, however, for the vast majority of time it was an open market, and there is no obvious physical evidence of it remaining within the current conservation area.

Other uses and influences on the development and character of the town include:

- **Malting** – at its peak there were 36 maltings within the town and a number of these buildings have been retained. The town was probably one of the most important centres for this industry in the South West. One traditional malting, in Pound Street, is still in operation today



and is internationally acclaimed for its product.

- **Inns and Taverns** – Passing traders and the coaching resulted in a high demand for refreshment and accommodation within the town. This has both influenced the architecture and building arrangements within the town and is responsible for a number of the courtyard layouts. A number of these 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings remain in use as public houses and hotels.
- **Cloth/wool trade** – As well as bringing wealth to the town the cloth trade has left a number of weavers' cottages and distinctive buildings. Later the town became well known for leather glove manufacturing.
- **Building Materials** – Warminster is characterised by rubble stone cladding and bricks that were quarried and manufactured locally. This industry no longer functions making it harder to source matching materials for new development.
- **Ecclesiastical Influences** - Amongst the normal array of Church of England, conformist and non-conformist churches there was a burgeoning centre for religious training in the town. A men's missionary and an equivalent convent for women were established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They were inward looking institutions but outwardly they had an impact on the architectural character of the town and later an influence on some of the educational institutions.
- **Longleat Estate** – Not far from Warminster is Longleat the seat of the Marquess of Bath. There is evidence that over the centuries the Longleat Estate has played an influential role, directly and indirectly in the growth and character of the town. One example of this is in the founding of Lord Weymouth's Grammar School. Today it is responsible for attracting visitors to the area.
- **The Railway** - Until the establishment of the railway in the mid to late 19th century it was difficult for some forms of manufacturing to function efficiently due to the cost of obtaining coal. The coming of the railway line is also seen as damaging to the corn trade and other local industries

that relied on road traffic and transportation.

- **Military** – There is also a large military presence within the town. Despite the close physical proximity of the army barracks and School of Infantry, the army's infrastructure is hidden by the landscape and does not have a visual impact within the town.
- **Modern Housing Development** - The form of Warminster as a whole is now dominated by large residential suburbs, reflecting the popular environment, which attracts people to the town as a place to live, rather than the success of the commercial centre, it once was.

### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments currently in Warminster Town Centre. However, immediately to the east of the town are the massive earthworks of Battlesbury Camp, an Iron Age hill fort that provides tangible evidence of prehistoric settlement patterns in the area.

The Extensive Urban Survey undertaken in 2001 by Wiltshire County Council compiled from desktop studies of the sites and monuments record that numerous excavations within the Warminster area have revealed prehistoric and later artefacts including:

- Neolithic worked flints that have been recovered from a number of sites throughout the town.
- Bronze Age artefacts that were found to the rear of George Street prior to the undertaking of modern development in the mid 1990s.
- On Weymouth Street, just outside of the conservation area, Roman materials were found during the redevelopment at the Regal Cinema.

Records of the Saxon period suggest that a Saxon church was located on the opposite side of Church Street to St Denys' Church on ground now belonging to Warminster School adjacent to the swimming pool. Ariel photographs showing crop marks appear to support the documentary evidence of the site of the possible Saxon church. The County Council has not recorded further physical investigation in this location. Archaeological evidence, including a series of drainage ditches and pottery finds, identifies further Saxon activity around the Emwell and Silver Street area.

During the medieval period there was a large expansion of the town to the east of the original Saxon settlement. The most notable feature that demonstrates clear evidence of this planned medieval growth of the town, are the number of burgage plots that still exist as narrow strips of private land often contained within brick or stone walls, at the rear of property fronting onto East Street, Market Place and High Street. The most notable section is to the rear of buildings on the south side of East Street into Market Place. Any proposals for development in these areas should ensure that these plots are maintained in an identifiable form. This issue will be taken up more fully in the

section devoted to the town centre and the Warminster Conservation Area Management Plan. Many finds and artefacts are now housed in the town museum that is housed within the Library and bear witness, to the thriving community during the past. Whilst the historic buildings within the town represent an important element of Warminster's environmental richness, it should be recognised that many of the buildings that display 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century frontages are, in reality, earlier medieval and later medieval structures that were simply refronted during the more affluent part of the market town's evolution.

The industrial heritage of the town is mainly represented by the malting and brewery buildings that are located in and around the principle streets. Many of them have survived although converted, to other uses including; residential accommodation. The most important group still operating are in Pound Street, whilst examples of converted maltings or breweries can be found to the north of Silver Street and south of Vicarage Street.

### 3.2 THE ORIGINS AND HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The earliest reference to a settlement in this locality dates from the 10<sup>th</sup> century and makes reference to an Anglo Saxon settlement, focused on the River Were, on the edge of a great forest. The forest was believed to be located to the south west of Church Street, and it is possible that a Saxon church and burial ground was located to the south west of the Norman Church.

The first record of a place name identifies the earliest settlement as "Worgemynster". This has been identified as signifying the River Were and a Minster church.

The Domesday Book identifies Warminster as a royal manor, sited to the east of the parish church, with agricultural holdings of some standing with several mills. The main settlement was located to the west of the current town centre in the region of Church Street, extending from St Denys' Church to Emwell Street. The market centre is said to have been at the junction of Church Street and Silver Street, where the obelisk now stands.

Over the following centuries Warminster was extended and a total of eight manors emerged. In the late 12th century the royal manor was granted to Robert Mauduit and it became Warminster Manor. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century part of the estate belonging to Warminster Manor was granted to a younger son and the manor of Newport was created. This was later to become Portway Manor and is now the only manor remaining which was situated within the boundaries of the Town Centre Conservation Area. The manor of Kingston's, also established in the 12<sup>th</sup> century was located on what is now called The Close, but it is no longer any physical evidence of it.

Boreham Manor which stood to the East of the town is also believed to have previously formed part of the estate belonging to Warminster Manor and was created in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 12<sup>th</sup>- 14th Centuries

By the early 12th century the town had spread as far as Silver Street and George Street areas. High Street and Market Place, formed planned extensions to the settlement in the 13th century. Burgage plots\* are an important feature of the town that are

indicative of a planned medieval development. The fact that they are still evident in some areas has a significant impact on the character and appearance of the town and should be preserved.

The first record relating to the market status of the town is in the form of a market grant, which dates between 1204 – 1244, and was given to Mr Thomas Mauduit. It is therefore likely that either King John or King Henry III awarded market status.

#### 15th -17th Centuries

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century the corn market was well established and was of some considerable regional importance. A Town Hall was erected in the middle of Cornhill, which has since become High Street and Market Place.

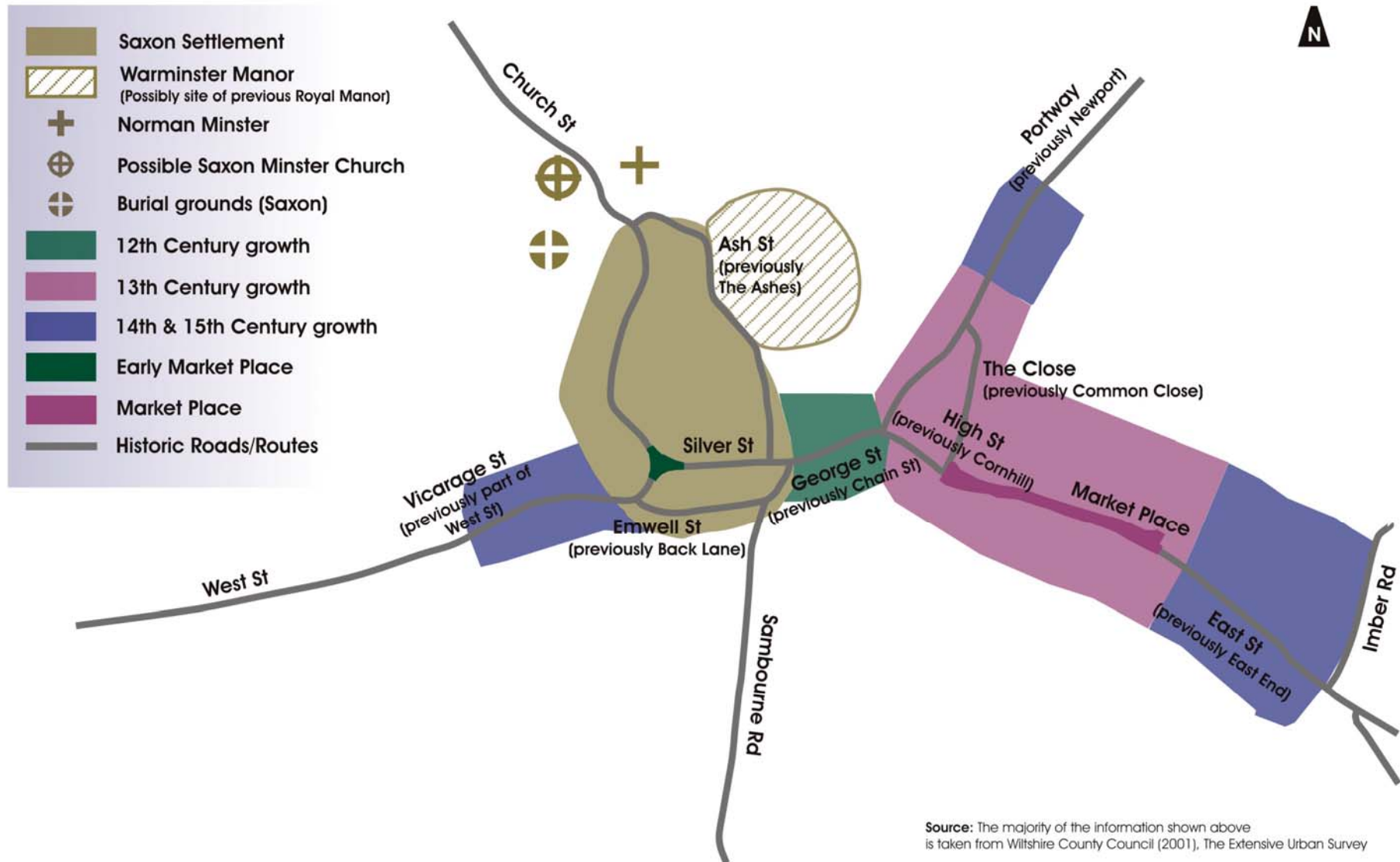
At this time other manufacturing and trade industries, were emerging, in particular the woollen and malting industries. The woollen industry did not result in the building of factories or wool mills in Warminster and was probably based on the earlier cottage style weaving. Nevertheless, the clothing trade was prosperous and well known in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Wealthy clothiers built some of the more prestigious houses within the town, such as Byne House and Portway House. The only factory-based cloth manufacturing emerged in 1874, which was the silkworks factory on Factory Lane.

During the 17th century brick making and the leather manufacturing industries emerged. Brick making resulted in an increase in the use of brick in local construction. Warminster also became well known for leather glove manufacturing Dents still have a factory located just outside the conservation area.

The increasing use of the corn market and rising levels of traffic, meant an increase in the significance of Warminster's roads, although many of the streets we see today may, at this point, have still been drovers routes, as the market was not solely reliant on the corn trade.



## Historic Development of Warminster Town Centre (Saxon to Medieval Period)



## 18th-19th Centuries

The visual characteristics of the town are mainly attributable to this period. Whilst a number of buildings date back to the 16th and 17th centuries, many of these were re-fronted in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In 1727 the Warminster Turnpike Trust\* was established. This body was one of the earliest of its kind in the country, and is an indication of the importance of the town and its function within the south region. The Trust generated employment and ensured the continuing success of Warminster's corn market and coaching industry. Seven toll houses were built to finance road improvements.

The work undertaken, through or with the assistance of the trust, helped to shape the current form of the town centre including:

- 1759 Portway was widened for increased traffic.
- 1763 Footbridge known as Almshouse Bridge was replaced by a road bridge. Almshouse Bridge was located at the end of George Street where it meets Portway and High Street.
- 1783 major works to Market Place.
- 1808 joining of two narrow streets, one of which was called Chain Street, to form a broader thoroughfare renamed George Street.
- 1831 the opening of Weymouth St to link the newly built Christ Church with the current Town Hall, built by Lord Bath.
- 1838 The need to widen the pavements in East Street resulted in the loss of front gardens and garden walls.

Trading routes connected Warminster to some of the most important towns on the south such as; London, Barnstable, Bath, Bristol and Salisbury and southern ports including Southampton and Portsmouth. Consequently, there was a buoyant coaching industry in Warminster in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries that relied on the good position of Warminster on the main coaching routes.

In 1815 powers of the Turnpike Trust were extended on the grounds of public safety to the extent that they forbid the use of thatch within the Town Centre. Consequently, thatch, though once a common roofing material in Warminster, can no longer be seen within the town centre.

as it diverted traffic from the road and resulted in trade passing by the town.

The success of the corn market and the strength of the local farming industry resulted in a strong malting industry, aided by the trade routes, local alehouses and breweries, by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Warminster was the malting capital of the south west. The one remaining malting that is in full operation is in Pound St.

Despite the early origins of the corn market a corn market building was not constructed until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. As an attempt to sustain the corn market it failed and the building, which was on the south of Market Place, has now been demolished.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a shift in focus from industrial development to civic investments such as the construction of the Town Hall, and the Athenaeum. The Warminster athenaeum as an institution was set up in 1851 and initially leased premises within the Literary and Scientific institute, which was located opposite the Town Hall on the Corner of Weymouth Street and Market Place.

In 1856 The Marquess of Bath agreed to sell the premises known as The London Inn to the Athenaeum Trust, The London Inn was built on the site of the former Search Hoop Inn that was built in the late 17th century and destroyed by fire in the early 19th century. The London Inn had been an important coaching stop and one of the busiest inns in Warminster.

The location of both the Town Hall and the Athenaeum served to maintain this area of the town as the focus community activity. The 19<sup>th</sup> century also saw an expansion in the quantity and size of educational facilities within the town, many of which occupied prominent locations within the town centre.

The arrival of the railway is blamed for the decline of the coaching industry and loss of the corn market in the 20<sup>th</sup> century,

## 20th Century

Following the loss of the corn market in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the decline in other industries, which had been buoyant in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century farming, horticulture and service trades were the dominant employers.

The town, like many others, became service orientated and seemed to lack a particular commercial focus, or many opportunities for further employment.

Warminster's landscape setting as well as the reason for the containment of the town now proved to be a source of employment and wealth within the local economy. The large expanses of uninterrupted terrain upon Salisbury Plain attracted the military as a good environment for military training.

The influx of military workers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the establishment of War Department Barracks in 1938 brought with it employment opportunities and fuelled the service sector by considerably increasing the population of Warminster and providing a source of custom.

The arrival of the army was followed by the building of fighting vehicle workshops and finally the establishment of the School of Infantry, located on the northern edge of the settlement.

The attractiveness of the towns setting, the needs of the military and changes in lifestyles in the mid 20th century led to the considerable expansion of the town, with the development of residential suburbs really taking off in the 1960s. In addition to military personnel, Warminster has also become an attractive place for retirement.

Another important industry in the 20th and 21st centuries is tourism. Since 1966 Longleat House and gardens (roughly 5km west of Warminster) has also become an important tourism venue, which has boosted tourism within the wider area, when it became a safari park. The other largest tourist attraction in close proximity to Warminster is Centre Parks, which was first opened in 1996 and provides employment as well as bringing tourists to the locality

#### **Summary table of important historic events that have impacted upon the towns' evolution.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
1086	Domesday Book identifies the Royal Manor of Warminster.
Early 13 <sup>th</sup> Century	Warminster identified as having Market Status.
1575	People of Warminster bought The Chapel of St Lawrence.
1707	Founding of Lord Weymouth Grammar School on Church Street. Financed by the Longleat Estate. This became Warminster School in 1973.
1711	Completion of Warminster Town Hall in the middle of High St. Demolished in 1832, as it obstructed the free flow of traffic.
1727	Warminster Turnpike Trust established by an Act of Parliament on 24 <sup>th</sup> June.
1720-1750	Peak of the malting industry with approximately 36 malthouses across Warminster.
1784	Parliament agreed to have the Royal Mail sent by coach from Bristol to London via Warminster due to improved road conditions speed of travel. The principle Post House was The Angel Inn.
1820	Lord Bath bought Portway Manor and Estate.
1831	Opening of Weymouth Street to form link to Christ Church.
1830	Construction began on the New Town Hall that was commissioned by Lord Bath.
1838	Opening of the Literary and Scientific Institute.
1851	Arrival of the railway.
1851	Creation of the Warminster Athenaeum Trust.
1855	Construction of the Corn Exchange building commissioned by Lord Bath. Previously trade had taken place on the streets.
1856	Extension of the Westbury to Warminster railway to link with Salisbury.
1857	Opening of the Athenaeum, following the completion of the first stage. Comprising a lecture theatre and waiting room to the rear of the site.
1859	Athenaeum building work completed (designed by William Stent).

Date	Event
1870	The Warminster Turnpike Trust ceased to operate.
1890	Closure of three malthouses leaving one in Pound Street and a small overflow facility.
1894	Creation of the Warminster Urban and Rural District Councils.
1912	Palace Cinema opened at the Athenaeum.
1919-1920	Closure of the corn market. The building was then demolished in 1923.
1924	Opening of the Lake Pleasure Park.
1938	Construction of first permanent army barracks
1955	Warminster Urban District Council brought Portway House as its offices and turned the ground floor into a new library.
1960s	Residential development led to a considerable expansion of the town.
1964	Gates to Portway House restored after an appeal raised £950
1966	Longleat Estate became the Longleat Safari park
1974	Creation of West Wiltshire District Council as an amalgamation of the 7 existing Urban and Rural District Councils.
1981	Dewey House converted from a school to the Town Council Offices.
1982	Opening of new library and museum to the rear of Market Place
1988	Construction of the A36 Warminster by-pass
1901-1991	The population of the town soared in the 20th century from 5,547 to 16,276
1994	Centre Parks was opened adjacent to Longleat
2005	Wiltshire County Council estimate the population of Warminster to be 23,790

## 4.0 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

### 4.1 ENTRANCES INTO THE TOWN CENTRE

The edges of the historic town were governed, particularly to the north and the east, by the steeply rising slopes of Salisbury Plain, the route of the River Were to the north west and the low-lying flood plains of the River Wylfe to the south. However, in the 20th century the shape of the town as a whole has been changed significantly due to considerable suburban residential development. Whilst most of the historic centre has been retained within the Conservation Area with limited pockets of redevelopment, the boundaries of the Conservation Area are as clearly defined on the ground as the historic town limits were.

There are a number of visual and physical gateways into the historic centre including:

**Portway** – the terraces and semi-detached Victorian and Georgian buildings mark the entrance into the town. This gateway is formed by the sudden rise in the density and urban nature of the buildings.

**Church Street** – St Denys' Church marks the edge of the current and historic settlement. Along with the buildings owned by Warminster School, Church Street visually presents a transition from open countryside into the built up settlement.

**East Street** – part of East Street is essentially commercial and is contained within the Town Centre Conservation Area. Before becoming Boreham Road, as you enter the Boreham Road Conservation Area the overriding character of the street changes, becoming less dense and domestic in character. This shift in character marks the gateway between the historic town centre and the residential suburbs.

**West Street** – The extent of the Georgian and Victorian settlement is very apparent travelling into Warminster from the east, due to the sudden change in architecture. The style of development is nevertheless urban rather than suburban in character and clearly marks the entrance into the town centre.

### 4.2 FOOTPATHS AND PUBLIC SPACES

There are a number of pedestrian routes around the town that have existed for many

years. Often to the rear of the main streets these serve to link different parts of the town and historically may have been used to get to market or as alternative routes to the main streets that were often overrun on market days.

There are few public open green spaces within the Conservation Area although there are a number of walled gardens, cemeteries and private green spaces that are of some significance within the Conservation Area. Close to the edge of the conservation area lies The Lake Pleasure Park, the most important recreational facility within the town, formed in a natural valley around a man-made lake served by the River Were.

### 4.3 KEY VIEWS AND VISTAS.

Views in and out of the conservation area are governed by the surrounding topography and the street patterns.

Warminster adjoins Arn Hill and Cop Heap to the north and Cley Hill to the south west. At 400ft high, these hills are the most prominent features in the wider landscape that surrounds the town. Located within a valley these adjoining hills are the only locations to offer extensive views across the town although glimpses of prominent buildings can be obtained from lower vantage points.

One of the most prominent landmarks within the town is Christ Church, which is located to the south of the main centre and outside of the conservation area. It's location, high above the town on Sambourne Hill, and its pinnacle tower make it a visible feature from a number of vantage points both within and outside the settlement boundaries.



## 5.0 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Focused on the main trade routes and market centre of the town, the Warminster Town Centre Conservation Area, has developed a varied character, generally focused around the uses, which have been dominant during different periods, and the uses that are dominant today.

In order to identify the key features that characterise the conservation area and its townscape, the conservation area has been separated into five character areas. These are loosely based on the predominant uses and identities associated with these parts of the town:

1. **Market Centre** – this area includes the main retail centre and covers the majority of the medieval market.
2. **Secondary Retail Area** – centred on George Street and Silver Street, this area portrays the characteristics of a secondary retail area, with a considerable number of residential buildings and less commercial emphasis than in the Market Centre.
3. **The Original Settlement** – Centred on Church Street and stretching down from the Minster, this area is thought to be the original location of the town in the 9th century. It now includes land and buildings relating to Warminster School and has St Deny's Church at its head in the vicinity of possibly an earlier Saxon church.
4. **Residential Area 1** – Portway is characterised by residential properties and although originally identified in the 13th century. Today it forms the edge of the Georgian and Victorian settlement.
5. **Residential Area 2** – West Street and Vicarage Street form part of one of the earliest routes through the town.

As part of the character analysis of the conservation area, the urban design of the town and the historic buildings within it will be considered in greater detail. This is not designed to be a comprehensive account of all the town's notable buildings, but does include a selection of the salient architectural features, including significant non-listed buildings.

Whilst the majority of buildings within the conservation area make a positive contribution to its character and appearance, it is possible to identify certain buildings that

play a particularly important role in contributing towards that character. Their importance may be derived from their historic associations, architectural interest, technological innovations or a combination of these factors.

There are over 351 separate entries for the town centre in the Warminster Town Statutory List for Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Portway House is a Grade I, 8 are Grade II\* and the rest are Grade II. There is also a map of the conservation area that indicates where all the listed buildings are located.

Buildings of Local Interest have also been identified during the course of the survey work. These, together with the listed buildings referred to above, are all indicated on a map **within the appendices**. The criteria for assessing local interest buildings are also provided as an appendix to this report.

### MATERIALS

Locally quarried rubblestone roughly squared was a popular building material in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The more affluent buildings used dressed stone, fenestration details such as door and window openings and quoins. Bath Stone was imported for use on some of the most prestigious buildings within the town such as Portway House, The Athenaeum and the Town Hall

Brick as a building material began to be used in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. One of the earliest examples of brickwork is in the Weymouth Arms, Emwell Street. From this period onwards bricks were also used around doorways and windows.

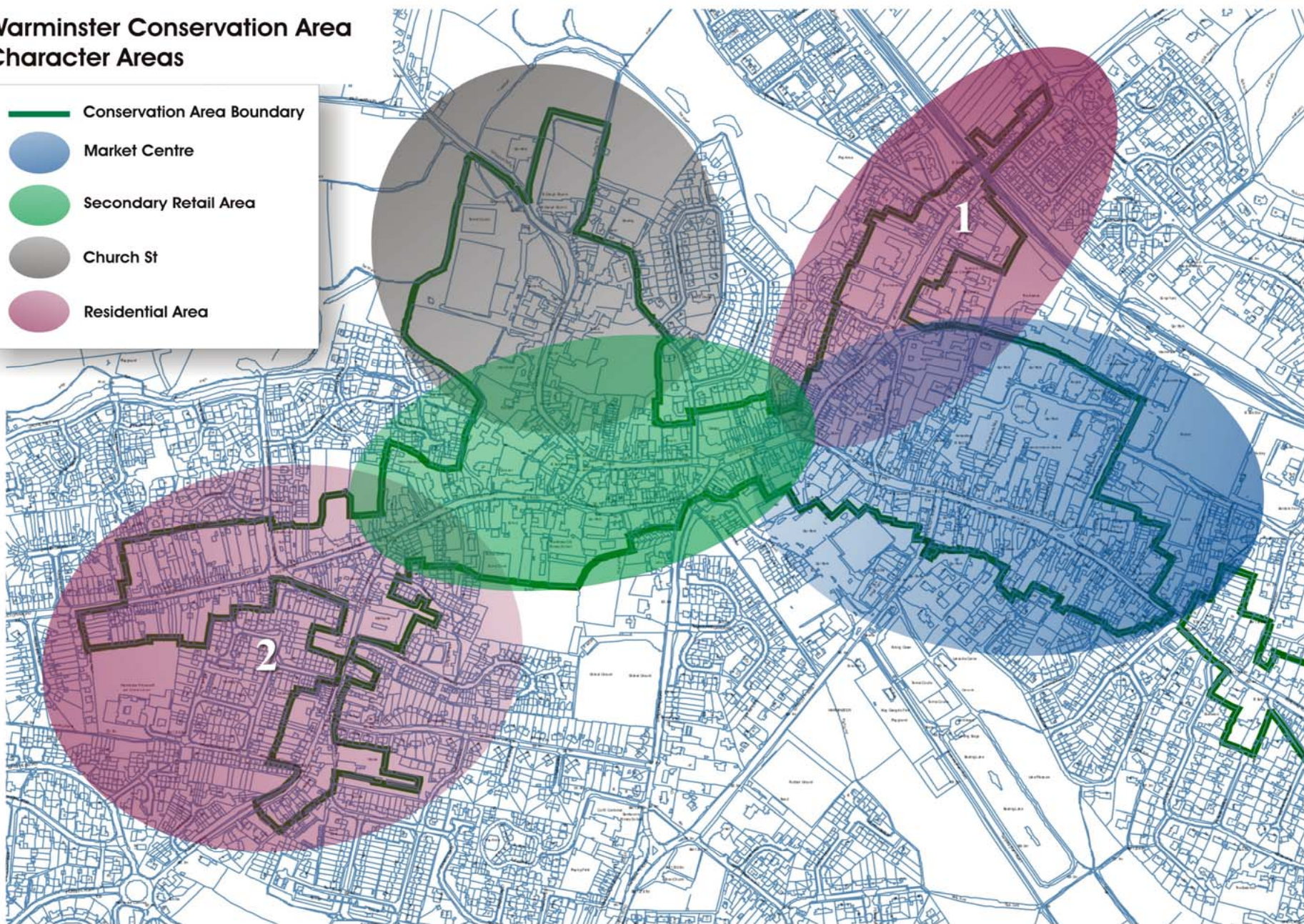
In the 19<sup>th</sup> century many of the existing buildings were refronted or rendered in stucco, although buildings continued to be constructed with local rubble and brick dressings. Cambered arches were commonly used and details such as this should be accommodated in new buildings and extensions. Houses entirely of brick were uncommon during the early nineteenth century, but became more common towards the end of the century.

Originally famous for its thatched roofs, Warminster gradually adopted plain clay tiles, made from local clay, as a safer roof cladding due to concerns over fire. The roofscape today is recognised as being in the main an attractive assembly of traditional roof shapes and coverings, that can be fully appreciated from the top of St Lawrence's tower.

Traditional cast iron street nameplates are still common in the town. It is important that these street features are retained. Other features common to property are foot scrapers that still appear on the exterior of many period houses.



## Warminster Conservation Area Character Areas







## MARKET CENTRE

This area includes Market Place, High Street, North Row and East Street and part of Weymouth Street.

Since the 13<sup>th</sup> century High Street and Market Place have been the focus for trade within the town. This area has been relatively unaltered and retained the majority of the building frontages that existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, there are a number of considerably older buildings behind the Georgian and Victorian frontages.

The majority of the 20<sup>th</sup> century development spills back off of Market Place. To the north it is in the form of small shopping centres, which open into the modern car parks. To the south more of the earlier town's plan form is retained with the vestiges of burgage plots still in evidence.

Warminster town centre today is dominated by traffic, although this is not new as Warminster's traffic problems date back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. There are ongoing studies and discussions taking place between the Highways Authority and other interested stakeholders on how this issue may be resolved. This document is not the appropriate format to address this issue other than to note it as a potential enhancement opportunity.

## USES

This area has historically been characterised by shops and inns and taverns, many of which are still in evidence. Many of these shops are in buildings that have residential accommodation above, some that are empty and some that have offices. Where these are empty it, there is clearly a need to re-establish uses.

The area has remained the primary retail area, but has been dramatically changed by the need for parking. The civic and entertainment uses in the form of the town council and the Athenaeum have been retained, although the Town Hall is no longer used as a civic building and is currently on the District Council's buildings at risk register. The modern library and museum building, located in the car park to the north of Market Place, is also an important focus for community activity.

The Chapel of St Lawrence was originally built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century as a chapel of ease to the Norman Minster Church. It was

## SUMMARY OF KEY FEATURES

### Street and Building Layout

Generally narrow building frontages along linear roads, historically with long burgage plots to the rear. Alleys and small courtyards are common features in this area.

### Building Types

Individually designed buildings of varying heights and qualities arranged in long terraces.

There are a large number of traditional shop fronts in this area that are important to the character of the conservation area.

### Materials

Ashlar stone and render are used most frequently in this area, but locally manufactured red brick, tiles and rubble stone can also be found.

### Landscape Features

Hard, urban landscaping dominates this part of the town centre relying on the green backdrop of Salisbury Plain's escarpment to give reference to its rural setting.

### Parking

- On street,
- Rear courtyards, and
- Designated car parks to the north of Market Place

### Streetscape

In a number of the courtyards and alleyways as well as a covered area to the front of The Bell Inn, have retained pitched paving stones, which are important to the conservation area, as the only remaining historic ground surface treatment.

Traditional street nameplates are also an important feature.

### Skyline

The building heights are varied tending to be of 2-4 storeys in maximum height thereby allowing long distance views of the steeply rising landscape setting.

subsequently rebuilt in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and then sold by Edward VI in 1575 to the people of Warminster. Owned by the town and administered by local people, this chapel is most unusual in this respect and is one of only a handful like this in the country. This also emphasises the social importance of this part of the town, with community activities as well as religious worship still taking place in the chapel.

The Market Place itself is now, as always, a busy vehicular thoroughfare, which due to changes in the nature of traffic is no longer a suitable environment for an open market. Consequently the market is now held in the car parks to the north of Market Place, on a weekly basis. Detached from the historic

Market Place and main shopping roads the current market has a sense of being detached from the historic town itself. This shift in the retail focus for the town, and car dependency, that draws people to the rear of Market Place. Nevertheless, Market Place itself retains its vibrancy and continues to be the main focal point for the town.

## **LAYOUT**

### **High Street & Market Place**

High Street and Market Place are wide, busy commercial streets with buildings directly fronting the footpaths and a strong building line that bends to accommodate curves in the road. Despite the width of these streets little space is given to pedestrians in comparison to that allocated to vehicles.

Buildings typically have narrow frontages and extend back in a burgage plot plan form with courtyards and alleyways. The buildings, which front High Street, are often larger in scale with wider frontages.

There are a number of rear courtyards and alleyways that were used to access other commercial buildings or associated stabling and outbuildings. The best remaining examples are:

- Chinns Yard - an alleyway with a number of retail uses fronting onto it and a converted malthouse at the southern end.
- 14-28, East Street – a number of commercial buildings surrounding a courtyard.
- Carsons Yard – a courtyard that provides access to a number of industrial units.

High Street starting at the top of a hill, drops dramatically to the west so that views from the Athenaeum, in a northerly direction, are of the varied skyline and upper storeys of the buildings that lead down to the junction with George Street.

Market Place and East Street are relatively flat accommodating a long vista of attractive buildings, interrupted by parked cars and delivery vans and the occasional traffic sign.

### **East Street**

East Street is a high-density narrow street located on the periphery of the primary retail area. East Street is busy in terms of traffic

movement and is lined by terraces that directly abut the highway.

It contains a number of small-scale retail uses but is generally of a more domestic nature that is reflected in the scale and character of the buildings. It also channels views of the attractive avenue and front gardens of Boreham Road.

### **North Row**

North Row is a very narrow predominantly residential street that is remarkably tranquil and rural in character. This may be partly due to its "secret" entrance off the High Street, as it has a modest pedestrian entranceway between buildings. It also has a less ridged character as some buildings extend forward of the building line where others are set back behind walled gardens.

### **North of Market Place**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the need for additional retail space and the need to accommodate motor vehicles have resulted in the creation of small shopping centres (Three Horseshoes Walk and The Cornmarket), which lead back off of Market Place and adjoin large open car parks. The manner in which the shopping centres have developed in terms of their linear nature and small unit size has retained some reference to the earlier burgage layout and the names of these centres obviously have reference to the historic functions of the Market Place. The car parks have effectively destroyed any standing evidence of the medieval pattern of burgage plots in this area.

Generally, the buildings to the north of Market Place are 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings with later 20<sup>th</sup> century additions built off of them. From within the car parks, it is possible to view the rear of a number of significant historic buildings, behind the more recent extensions.

This area is contained by a significant stone boundary wall, which runs along The Avenue, interspersed by trees. Previously a wide road The Avenue is now a pedestrian only route, which connects Portway with the railway station. Direct pedestrian links with the railway station, Market Place, North Row and Portway, make this an important node for the town.

### **Weymouth Street**

This road was created quite late on to act as a link between the town centre and



Sambourne Road. This acts as a main junction operated by traffic lights for traffic turning into High Street and Market Place. It is quite narrow at this point although it widens out as it goes south down hill, past car parks and main entrances to The Lake Pleasure Park and Morrisons.

### **ARCHITECTURAL FORM**

The characteristics of the frontage buildings in this part of the conservation area have generally been retained.

Market Place and High Street have a high proportion of ashlar Bath Stone fronted buildings, but rubble stone of local origin is more common throughout the historic town centre for both residential and commercial buildings.

In general terms building scales vary throughout this area, but by dividing the area into streets it is possible to make a more accurate definition:

- Market Place is dominated by three storey buildings of varying heights. Building frontages tend to be relatively narrow, although there are a number of exceptions.
- On Market Place and High Street parapets are common in this area, but dormers have very rarely been added or incorporated into the original design.
- High Street has buildings with much wider frontages and larger footprints but also does not extend beyond three stories, despite the variation in finish heights.
- There are a number of important shop frontages as well as a number of bland 20<sup>th</sup> century shop frontages, however some of the most ornate architectural features are to be found at first and second floor levels, a good example of this is 36 High Street.
- Banks commonly occupy some of the most ornate ashlar Bath stone fronted buildings with strong classically proportioned facades.
- East Street begins with large three storey buildings but quickly drops to a more domestic scale and style, and is predominantly two storeys.
- North Row has a handful of three storey buildings but is predominantly 2 storey cottage style terraces. There are however some semi-detached or detached properties. Interspersed with some larger buildings of a very different

character i.e. The Baptist Chapel and Dewey House.

- Being of a more domestic nature dormers are more common on East Street and North Row where the architectural form is also generally simpler and less ornate.

There are many fine buildings in this area most displaying similar architectural characteristics, however, others are unique and would be difficult to find similar examples anywhere else. The Town Hall, The Old Bell and the Athenaeum are some of the most unique in the zone.

### **SHOP FRONTS**

This area has retained a number of period shop fronts which are very important to the character and attractiveness of the town and should be preserved. Those that stand out within the streetscene are:

- 6, East Street
- 7 and 9, East Street.
- 10, East Street
- 4, High Street
- 6-8, High Street (Gibsons)
- 10, High Street
- 30, High Street
- 20, Market Place
- 36, Market Place (Coates and Parker)
- 38/40, Market Place
- 45, Market Place
- 51/53, Market Place (Dorothy Perkins)
- 84, Market Place

There is a wealth of old photographs and records for the town, providing an opportunity to reinstate lost features or even entire shop fronts if they have been replaced with less sensitive modern examples.

### **LANDMARK BUILDINGS AND FEATURES**

The majority of the buildings in this area are listed and are worth noting for their appearance and historic significance. The following is a list of those, which are most dominant, due to their positioning and/or architecture:

- 2&6 Portway and 52&54 High Street (corner group) known as Carters Corner.
- 36 High Street.
- 24 North Row.
- Dewey House, North Row.
- The Baptist Chapel and Hall, North Row
- The Athenaeum.
- St Lawrence Church.
- The Town Hall.

- 34 Market Place
- 37 Market Place
- The Bell Inn, 42 Market Place
- 69 Market Place
- 71 Market Place
- The Police Station, Station Road
- 6 East Street

## BUILDING MATERIALS

**Walls:** render, rubble stone and ashlar Bath stone are the most common forms of cladding, but there are some red brick buildings within this area.

**Roofs:** clay pantiles are the most common roof finishes but stone tiles and slate can also be found

**Fenestration:** timber Georgian and Victorian style sash, often with multiple glazing bars.

## STREETSCAPE

Small areas of traditional paving materials have been retained. The majority are on the entrances to alleyways such as the cobbles along Chinns Walk. An area of pitched paving had also been retained to the front of The Old Bell underneath the colonnaded arcade that provides a unique frontage to this building.

Street nameplates are predominantly traditional in size and materials and should be retained.

The streetlights are often attached to buildings including a number of listed properties.

The pavements are often narrow and somewhat cluttered by street furnishings.

## LANDSCAPE

Urban high-density environment, with the only areas of greenery and significant trees being to the rear of the main streets and surrounding St Lawrence Church.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Promote the use of appropriate shop front designs and materials within the historic market streets.
- Empty shop units and premises above shop level should be monitored and where possible new uses actively encouraged whilst allowing the buildings character to remain intact.
- Removal of on street parking to enhance the pedestrian environment

and allow trade onto the streets. The study currently being promoted by the Highways Authority should take into consideration this character assessment with regard to the proposals being put forward.

- Investigate the ownership and nature of the Buildings at Risk within this part of the town and pursue their repair and reuse as part of the regeneration for Warminster.

## SECONDARY RETAIL AREA

This area is formed from a series of roads including George Street, Silver Street and Emwell Street, the southern end of Ash Walk and the northern end of Ambourne Road.

Archaeological evidence appears to suggest that Saxon habitation may have been situated within the area now formed by Emwell Street – an area slightly raised above the river Were's floodplain. An early medieval market is also said to have flourished at the meeting of the roads in Silver Street and Church Street, where the obelisk is currently located.

The early origins of this part of the town are therefore an important contributory factor to the way this area has gradually evolved to become the complicated urban fabric that characterises this area today.

## USES

This part of the town has always acted as a physical link between the earliest part of the settlement and the later medieval part in the High Street area. Despite this it has grown to have its own special features especially reflected in terms of the quality of the built environment. It is characterised by a mixture of uses including residential, retail, small business, including several inns and semi-industrial uses. The balance between these elements fluctuates but is generally stable apart from the shop units in George Terrace that do not all appear to be flourishing, leading to some units being converted back to residential use.

The uses genuinely reflect the fact that this area is not the main commercial centre of the town although there are some well established shops that have been operating for many years. Many shops are classed as specialist and provide a slightly unusual range of goods from antiques to electrical items. Some of the dwelling houses in the area have been converted to small business such as dentists or architects practices, whilst others seem to be successful in providing family accommodation. The close proximity of a number of schools in Church Street and Vicarage Street makes this area attractive for residential use.

## LAYOUT

Silver Street and George Street are orientated in roughly the same alignment east-west and appear to be separated at present by a small mini roundabout that allows for Sambourne Road to merge with

## SUMMARY OF KEY FEATURES

### Street and Building Layout

High density, narrow building plots fronting onto pavements.

Wide streets with parking in bays along each side. George Street, in particular, has raised crossings.

Emwell Street in contrast is narrow and has become one way to alleviate problems with school and residential traffic.

### Building Types

Uniform terraces of brick up to 3 storeys in height interspersed with individual buildings of varying heights, styles and architectural qualities arranged in long terraces or groups.

There are a number of traditional shop fronts in this area that are important to the character of the conservation area.

### Materials

Ashlar stone and render are used most frequently in this area, with some locally manufactured brick and rubble stone can also be found. Many of the rendered buildings are painted in attractive shades that help to distinguish each one.

Casement and sash windows reflecting Georgian, Victorian or earlier origins.

### Landscape Features

Hard landscape associated with an urban centre.

### Parking

- On street, subdivided into parcels of parking areas in George Street.
- Rear courtyards and some coach houses converted to garages.

### Streetscape

Presence of traditional street nameplates.

### Skyline

The lowest part of the town so that buildings in the immediate vicinity tend to block any views out of the town. Buildings are of varying heights whilst others have uniform heights forming visual blocks.

them. Highway features mark each end of these roads; Silver Street starts at the junction where the Obelisk stands, whilst George Street ends at the mini roundabout at the Portway and High Street junction. Both have attractive visual ends and are lined almost continuously with high density historic development fronting directly onto the pavements.

There are few gaps between development, although the most notable is that large area presently boarded by McCarthy Stone

hoarding that used to be the Octagon Motors Garage, occupying an important corner site on George Street and Ash Walk. There is a higher predominance of properties with private gardens in Silver Street, especially towards the western end. Craven House in particular boasts gardens to its front and rear.

Emwell Street runs parallel to Silver Street, with the effect of both creating a large roundabout containing property on the south side of Silver Street and the north side of Emwell Street by linking into Sambourne Road and Vicarage Street. This results in some of the property being accessed from both roads, effectively having two public frontages. Emwell Street is distinctly different in character from the other roads being one-way, traffic calmed and narrower than them, it has a more suburban feel to it. The areas of open space Created by school playing fields and off-street car parking that break up the southern side of this street also contribute to this character.

### **ARCHITECTURAL FORM**

The strongest group of buildings in terms of visual impact is George Terrace. These 3 storey Victorian terraced houses dominate the north side of George Street emphasised by the sheer wall of brickwork.

Public Houses are numerous in this part of the town, possibly reflecting the historic association this area had with the brewing industry. Many inns still survive as pubs the most notable being The Weymouth Arms Inn and The Farmers Hotel. Both prominent buildings in both scale and position. The former is an 18<sup>th</sup> century re-working of an earlier structure- possibly 16<sup>th</sup> century in date- and is regarded as one of the first buildings in the town where the wings have been faced in brick, it is also likely to have been a house before it became an inn. The Venetian window and gothic tracery at the rear together with a pedimented doorway on the front give this building an attractive quirky appearance that tends to allow it to dominate the road.

The Farmers Hotel is in contrast a later building, deliberately built as a hotel although attached to earlier buildings at the rear that may have been workshops. Interestingly this started out life as a grocery, licensed to sell tea, coffee, pepper, tobacco and snuff! before changing to a temperance hotel in 1879 selling cocoa. The most

salient feature of this building is its angled front onto the corner of Silver Street and Sambourne Road.

Now redundant but recognisable externally, is the 19<sup>th</sup> century 2 storey building on the corner of Church Street and Silver Street facing the obelisk. Once known as the “Ship and Punchbowl”, this was the site for one of the earliest inns in Warminster pre-dating 1710. The original thatched building burnt down in 1880 and was replaced with the current brick and tiled building with distinctive dog-tooth cornice details at the eaves. The alley by the side of this inn was the entrance to Warminster Brewery, now apparently converted to a row of houses known as Obelisk Terrace.

Houses in this area seem to either be flats above shops especially in the 3 storey properties within the George Street area or 2 storey cottages in terraced groups. The row of cottages numbered 44-49, Silver Street are a particularly attractive group with colourful rendered fronts, adding a visual break from the somewhat monotonous brick and stone of surrounding buildings. Craven House on the opposite side of Silver Street is a high status building from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, set back from the street behind ornate gates and walls.

### **SHOP FRONTS**

This area has retained a number of period shop fronts which are very important to the character and attractiveness of the town and should be preserved. Those that stand out within the streetscene are:

- 2, Silver Street (Obelisk Antiques)
- 5, Silver Street ( Double M Electrics)
- 16, Silver Street (Manfield House)
- 34, Silver Street ( Collectables)
- 1 and 2, George Street
- 42, George Street.

There is a wealth of old photographs and records for the town, providing an opportunity to reinstate lost features or even entire shop fronts if they have been replaced with less sensitive modern examples

### **LANDMARK BUILDINGS AND FEATURES**

- George Street Terrace.
- The Weymouth Arms Inn
- The White Hart
- The Farmers Hotel
- The former Police Station now Warminster Christian Science Society HQ.

- Obelisk
- Craven House and railings, Silver Street
- Methodist Chapel, George Street

## **BUILDING MATERIALS**

**Walls:** Stone, brick and render are the most common forms of walling materials, although there appears to be little example of mixing them in individual developments. 19<sup>th</sup> century brickwork has some ornate details such as dog-toothing at eaves.

**Roofs:** Plain clay and pantiles predominate with slate primarily on later Victorian buildings. Most buildings have stone and brick end chimneys.

**Fenestration:** Timber Georgian and Victorian sashes. Earlier timber casements, some within stone mullions frames.

## **STREETSCAPE**

There are a number of areas along the main roads- George and Silver Street where on-street parking is accepted. George Street and Emwell Street have been traffic calmed with raised tables in the road that helps to reduce traffic speeds.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Encourage retention of existing shop units for retail uses and to also work at finding over the shop uses compatible with this part of the town and the building form.



## THE ORIGINAL SETTLEMENT

This area comprises primarily of Church Street incorporating The Minster, the Parish Church of St Denys and Warminster School; two major establishments in the town and Vicarage Street. Historically, it is thought that Church Street was once the focus of a Saxon settlement complete with a church, before the establishment of the Norman Minster church. Vicarage Street is not as old but has links with Warminster School, and with the character influenced by the position of other schools to the south is incorporated into this section as a logical extension of the functions in Church Street.

## USES

There are a variety of functions associated with the different buildings in this part of the town, primarily religious and educational, uses that are often compatible. Foremost of these is the main town church that commands the northern end of this part of the town. Other ecclesiastical establishments were also founded in Church Street including a community for women, St Denys and a mission college for men known as St Boniface's. These are all attributed to the 19<sup>th</sup> century vicar of Warminster, the Rev. James Erasmus Philipps. St Denys, currently housed in Ivy House, continues to operate as a religious conference and retreat centre. St Boniface, however, opened in 1860 and closed in 1943, has, since 1969, formed part of Lord Weymouth School, later to become Warminster School.

The most dominant use in Church Street is Warminster School, formed from Lord Weymouth and St Monica schools in 1973 when the two establishments were merged. This would explain the multiple numbers of different buildings that make up the buildings of the school, manifesting itself along each side of Church Street. The open spaces and land associated with the school, again on both sides of the street, provide playing fields and on the western side are bounded by the River Were. Thomas Tynne, first Viscount Weymouth, who was responsible for the fine Queen Anne style building, stables and outbuildings, originally established the Lord Weymouth Grammar School in 1707. It was referred to as a grammar school as it taught Greek and Latin but this term was dropped in 1955. Since the late 1960's the school has developed and expanded taking over other religious and educational establishments, and supplementing these with new buildings.

Currently the school attracts pupils on an international basis.

The junior or Preparatory School to the Senior School, together with the Minster Church of England Junior School are both located on the southern side of Vicarage Street, adding further to the educational institutions in this part of the town

## SUMMARY OF KEY FEATURES

### Street and Building Layout

Many buildings are set back from the street edges with small walled gardens. Other buildings are constructed directly on the road side.

Roads are generally long and wide apart from at certain pinch points such as in front of St Boniface's Buildings. The street has to also bend around the churchyard around the Minster.

### Building Types

Individually designed buildings of varying heights, many detached and within their own grounds. 2-3 storey in height in general although some buildings like the Church and St Bonifaces are much taller adding variety to this part of the conservation area and the skyline.

### Materials

Ashlar stone and render are used most frequently in this area, but locally manufactured brick and rubble stone can also be found. The more notable buildings have more polite architectural detailing with symmetrical frontages and high quality stone.

### Landscape Features

Very urban and hard landscape in character, this part of the town centre relies on its green backdrop to give reference to its rural setting.

### Parking

- On street.
- Rear courtyards and old coach house buildings.
- Some car parking within the school site.

### Streetscape

A number of the courtyards and stable yards, have retained pitched paving stones that are important to the conservation area, as the only remaining historic ground surface treatment.

### Skyline

The detached buildings allow long distance views of the steeply rising landscape setting. This is especially the case for the Warminster School playing fields where gaps formed by driveways and paths between buildings allow long distance views into rural landscape. The heights of buildings in this area are high and stop views, apart from through these gaps.

so that children's voices can often be heard during play and recreation time.

The schools and church, when in use, are a hub of activity with pupils and worshippers going to and fro between buildings and car parks, or using the many sports pitches behind the school buildings. Warminster School does provide some living accommodation for students, but many day pupils arrive by bus and car to this and the other schools, so that at times this area can be very busy. At other times, however, especially at weekends, it has an air of tranquillity in contrast to the main commercial parts of the town.

In between the school and ecclesiastical buildings are a small number of terraced cottages and larger houses. Providing housing for staff or privately owned, they add a different layer of visual interest to the area. Outbuildings, such as stables and malthouses are also present. Once serving the principle buildings, these buildings mainly survive in converted forms and are used for storage and workshops for the schools and larger houses.

## **LAYOUT**

### **Church Street**

The main focus of this part of the conservation area is on Church Street, a long sinuous road running north-south, meeting the junction of Silver Street and Vicarage Street where the obelisk is located. Along the length of the street is an almost continuous frontage of development, although there are some gaps, especially at the northern end around the Minster. Most of the buildings front directly onto the street pavements, whilst a few are set back with small gardens bounded by formal wall and railings. In between the buildings are views and glimpses of trees and land mainly belonging to Warminster School that serves to provide a perception of spacious open land form and allows this area to naturally flow into the rural land beyond the conservation area's boundaries.

Views towards the west from Church Street take in the mature trees and meadowland of the River Were, with Norridge Wood forming a backdrop and in the distance Cley Hill being visible. To the north are the occasional views of Arn Hill with its electronic mast standing proud. There are few open views to the east and south, apart from of other parts of the town.

Church Street, at its northern end, curves around the churchyard to The Minster with

strong stonewalls lining its eastern side and trees and hedgerow to the west, providing a semi-rural feel. Further south, however, the characteristics of the street alter to a more sub-urban feel by the houses and larger buildings fronting onto it. Cars parked on the road and a pelican crossing further down the road add to this character. The road appears to narrow nearer its junction with Silver Street and this is exaggerated by the higher density and heights of the buildings at this point and the lack of outward views.

### **Ash Walk and Dorothy Walk.**

To the east of the main street area, are two smaller lanes that are narrow and partly free from vehicular access, thereby allowing the free flow of pedestrians. Historically, Ash Walk would have served as the main access to the Manor House, that no longer exists but that would have been closely associated to the Minster Church. The large house known as Warminster Court, now surrounded by a late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing estate, is also accessed from the lane. Whilst it also allows limited traffic into the rear of Warminster School the Lane is a no through road and is therefore a peaceful footpath for users between the Church and School and the junction of Silver Street and George Street. Hedgerow and some stonewalling mark much of its route along the school's curtilage. Dorothy Walk runs along the eastern side of the churchyard to the Minster, taking pedestrians further a field and eventually linking up to the top end of Portway Lane via another footpath. It is an attractive tree lined track at this end, dominated by the stone walling of the churchyard with glimpses between the trees on its eastern side towards open fields and water meadows associated with the Were's water course.

### **Vicarage Street**

Vicarage Street is an extension of West Street that runs into the town from the west and is historically associated with the later growth of the town. Although this road is visually separated from Church Street by the meeting of a series of other roads, terraced houses and buildings of a slightly different characteristic to those in Church Street, the unifying characteristic between the two areas is the presence of the school that owns most of the larger individual buildings that front onto the both sides of Vicarage Street. The purchase of the convent building from the Community of St Denys was carried out in 1994, thus allowing a visual link between

this part of the senior school and the Preparatory School that is separately based on the south side of Vicarage Street. Immediately to the east of this is the Minster CE primary school that also fronts onto part of Emwell Street.

### **ARCHITECTURAL FORM**

At the north end of Church Street stands the grand 11<sup>th</sup> century parish church that has already featured in this section. It has a dramatic presence in the street due to its scale and orientation, although this is softened by the location of a large yew tree that conceals much of the churches southern elevation. This extensive stone church and tower, although covering a large area, does not visually intrude due to the building being set back from the road and in a slightly raised position together with the characteristic crenelated parapets that allow the roofs to be screened from public views. The central square tower is also quite squat and relatively free from decorative embellishment. The major restoration of the 1880's may have altered much of the original Norman and medieval fabric.

Around the church is a traditional churchyard with older monuments and tombs in the immediate vicinity and criss-crossed with a number of footpaths many of which are still lined with the pitched stone cobble surfaces. Surrounding the churchyard is a traditional rubble stonewall with stone copings, and, along the roadside, a line of coppiced trees reinforces this.

Interspersing the larger, "institutional" buildings are a series of discreet groups of small-scale cottages and terraces, displaying the vernacular stonewalls, plain clay tiled and pantiled gable roofs with a mixture of timber casement and sash windows. Some of the casements still indicate earlier stone mullion frames. It is known that the group immediately adjacent to the Church have earlier medieval origins than their 18<sup>th</sup> century exteriors indicate. Others may also be later frontages to earlier structures.

Lord Weymouth's School, built in 1707, is a fine example of the Queen Anne architectural fashion, with a symmetrical frontage of 2 ½ storeys. Although set back from the road, it still has a striking presence, with other outbuildings and later structures forming a courtyard plan around the front garden. The school doorway was,

apparently, designed by Sir Christopher Wren for Longleat House. Built in the local stone, the main feature of this building is the wealth of sash windows subdivided with slim glazing bars evenly spaced on the façade with little masonry in-between and the horizontal stringcourse between the floors.

Within the grounds to the main school building are a number of interesting original features and later additions. A stable block and walled garden, mainly intact, feature to the rear. The walled garden with a surviving garden house built into one side of it, now acts as one of the entrances into the recently constructed refectory that is attached to another part of the wall. There are also a number of fine tree specimens within its walls and beyond in the grounds to the school. Many of these have individual Tree Preservation Orders on them. On the opposite (southern) side of the walled garden, are a group of relatively modern school buildings of varying sizes and quality. The best of these is the library and science block completed in 2004 that is built off the south eastern corner of the wall and creates a visually strong block to the rear of the school site backing onto Ash Walk. Another interesting feature in this part of the school is the Fives Court; a tall section of wall that towers above the ground attached to the end on one of the cottages immediately behind the group that front onto Church Street.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century school building sets the tone for other development in the street, other later 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings of similar architectural quality with symmetrical faces and large sash windows. Byne House and Teddington House are a few of the best examples in Church Street in this style. Many the gentile houses from this period are complimented with stonewalls and metal railings to their curtilages and modest stable blocks. Examples of stable courtyards with the original cobbles of pitched paving till survive.

Wren House in Vicarage Street is a very good example of a Georgian house with strong classical features dominating road with an ancillary coach house now converted to a separate dwelling.

The nineteenth century brought further development to this part of the town. There was a growth in the malting industry at this time and many malthouses, with the characteristic long 2-storey form and

associated buildings, were constructed. There are two examples off Church Street, the one immediately opposite the Lord Weymouth Grammar School building being the most recognisable. Built in stone rubble, this structure appears to be quite an early example, with the gable end onto the street still with an intact 19<sup>th</sup> century shop front, once the HQ of Culverhouse Bros Ltd. In Vicarage Street there is a similar group of dwellings, to the Warminster Brewery row, in a malting building behind the buildings on the south side of the road.

There was also an expansion in the religious organisations that were established in this area. St Boniface Missionary College is part neo-Jacobean style, part gothic, built in a series of phases from the late 18<sup>th</sup> through to the 1920's. The latter section is a stark white painted and rendered building that towers over the road on the west side of Church Street. The only clue to its original use is the gothic style windows that occasionally interrupt the walls. The whole structure appears on the street at an intimidating height compared with all the buildings around it.

Public Houses, numerous in other parts of the town, are not very common possibly due to the other activities in this area. The only one, now redundant but recognisable externally, is the 19<sup>th</sup> century 2 storey building on the corner of Church Street and Silver Street facing the obelisk. Once known as the "Ship and Punchbowl", this was the site for one of the earliest inns in Warminster pre-dating 1710. The original thatched building burnt down in 1880 and was replaced with the current brick and tiled building with distinctive dog-tooth cornice details at the eaves. The alley by the side of this inn was the entrance to Warminster Brewery, now apparently converted to a row of houses known as Obelisk Terrace.

Three quirky structures are also worth mentioning in this section. All are situated in the vicinity of the junction between Church Street and Vicarage Street. One is the stone built circular town Lockup now concealed behind later buildings and the second a 1913 memorial clock to John W Hall, a major influence in the formation of the Tariff Reform Movement. The third is one of Warminster's main landmarks the stone obelisk set upon its own island at the conflagration of the three streets; Church, Silver and Vicarage. Dated to 1783, it commemorates the inclosure of the parish.

It is a most distinctive feature of fine proportions and an important landmark in the town.

## LANDMARK BUILDINGS AND FEATURES

- The Minster- the Parish Church of St Denys and churchyard walls.
- Lord Weymouth Grammar School Building, walled garden and associated outbuildings.
- Byne House and front railings.
- Malthouse building on west side of Church Street, now belonging to Warminster School, which was once the base for the building contractors Culverhouse Brothers.
- New Library, Maths and Science Block to Warminster School, off Ash Walk.
- St Boniface Buildings.
- Memorial Clock on No 1, Church Street.
- Obelisk at the junction of Church Street, Vicarage Street and Silver Street.
- St Denys Convent- now part of Warminster School- and walls Vicarage Street.
- The main school building to the Junior School, Vicarage Street.
- The Minster CE, Primary School Building, Vicarage Street.
- Wren House, Vicarage Street.

## BUILDING MATERIALS

**Walls:** Stone, brick and render are the most common forms of walling materials, although there appears to be little example of mixing them in individual developments. 19<sup>th</sup> century brickwork has some ornate details such as dog-toothing at eaves.

**Roofs:** Plain clay and pantiles predominate with slate primarily on later Victorian buildings. Most buildings have stone and brick end chimneys.

**Fenestration:** Timber Georgian and Victorian sashes. Earlier timber casements, some within stone mullions frames.

## STREETSCAPE

Many properties in this area have still got intact garden walls and railings. The best examples, from two different periods, are the ornate railings and low stonewall to Byne House and the later decorative brick wall to St Denys Convent, now part of Warminster School. Other plainer stonewalls, especially to the Churchyard perimeter and along Ash

Walk, form strong boundary treatments in the public domain.  
Small stable courtyards to larger houses and the footpaths within the churchyard still have the original stone pitched paving surviving.

and management of existing land and buildings.

## **LANDSCAPE**

There are some fine examples of individual trees in this part of the conservation area. There have been mainly identified on the accompanying map. They are most prolific around the Churchyard to The Minster and dotted around Warminster School grounds. The main species are beech and oak but there are also special individual trees such as the large Yew in front of the Minster and two large Wellingtonia to the south of Furneaux House.

The presence of the River Were dictates the form of landscape to the north and west of this part of the town. Water meadows and clumps of trees offering good pasture for farming provide the backdrop to the conservation area. In parts the school's playing fields have encroached upon this landscape but do not appear to have harmed the overall character of the river course. The sports pitches appear to merge into this landscape without imposing many man-made structures onto it other than the inevitable goal posts or white lines. Closer to the school buildings, on the west side of Church Street, are some low walls that break up the expanses on land providing a transition between the rural hinterland and the immediate setting to the school buildings. Car parking in this area is reasonably discreet being closely related to the buildings and an access road that divides the school from the rest of the site including the pitches.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Removal of vegetation and repairs to the churchyard wall are identified and initial discussions have been on-going with the town council and Church parishioners to compile a management plan for the site. This would also assist with any works needed to trees and footpaths.
- Discussions with Warminster School need to identify scope for new development and removal of harmful existing buildings. The formulation of a management plan for a future strategy to both schools is encouraged, encompassing development aspirations



## RESIDENTIAL AREA 1

This part of the conservation area includes Portway and The Close. Portway runs southwards and is one of the main entrance routes into the town. The Close also runs north to south, but is a smaller, one-way back road.

The manor of Newport was created in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, however, the road previously known as Newport (now Portway) formed part of a planned extension to the town in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

Strong reference to the rural setting of the town and the historically rural nature of the town. Whilst it emerged in the 13<sup>th</sup> century as a route into the market place and has older origins than High Street or Market Place it is likely to have developed from a relatively low key drovers or access route; has not been consumed by the commercial centre/ uses of the town.

As an important entranceway into the town centre, Portway has quite a suburban feel to it although it becomes more urban to the south as you get nearer to the town's retail centre.

The northern end of Portway has a steeply rising wooded backdrop which, along with the low density green (well planted/mature) residential environment which surrounds the conservation area at this point, makes this one of the parts of the town which has retained its rural character.

## USES

A large part of the Portway area was once part of the Portway Estate (previously the Newport Estate). Portway House is still the most dominant landmark feature within this area.

In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century the railway line was constructed and crosses Portway, interrupting the avenue.

This area has always been on the periphery of the commercial centre. Residential is currently the predominant use in this area that is also true of its historic function.

At the entrance to The Close is the Warminster Hospital complex. Positioned to the rear of Portway, these buildings do not have a strong presence on this main route but are a prominent feature on The Close and The Avenue.

## SUMMARY OF KEY FEATURES

### Street and Building Layout

Varying street widths

Majority of building directly front the highway

### Building Types

- Predominantly residential terraces
- Some semi- detached or detached properties
- Portway House and No 35, large buildings set in large grounds, multiple occupancy not apparent from the street.

### Materials

- Mixture of rubble stone and brick, some feature buildings in particular Portway House clad in ashlar stone
- Clay tiles including pantiles, some slate and stone
- Timber sash windows with glazing bars and timber casement windows.
- Railings are the most frequent front boundary treatment.

### Landscape Features

A large number of mature trees are important to the visual attractiveness of this locality. These are either to the rear of buildings or focused on Portway Lane, 33 and 35 Portway or around the war memorial.

### Parking

- On street or Courtyard and walled car parks.
- Some later creation of frontage parking.
- Some rear parking courtyards
- Garages are not a common characteristic of the locality.

### Streetscape

No historic street finishes or furnishings have been retained in this locality.

### Skyline

Viewed against Salisbury Plain the varied nature of the skyline and roof detailing is considered an important feature in this locality.

This area has also been the location of the fire station for over 100 years although originally located at the southern end of The Close. In the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century it was found that the original building did not have sufficient capacity to meet demand and a new fire station was built on Portway. The current fire station is outside of the conservation area boundary and does not visually contribute to the character of the conservation area. However, it represents an important function within the town and the original first station building remains architecturally intact.

Between Portway and The Close there are remnants of the town's industrial heritage and sandwiched between these two

residential streets are Victorian malthouse and brewery buildings.

### LAYOUT

The majority of the buildings in this area are terraced properties which front directly onto the highway/footpath, although a number are set back behind small enclosed front gardens.

Portway in the most part is an unusually wide road, which allows for long views and adds to its low-density edge of settlement feel. Large gardens and a number of breaks in the building frontage allowing glimpses of green space or trees is an important feature. The relatively low density of development north of Portway House, gives the impression that the northern part of the area backs onto open countryside.

The southern end of Portway is narrower in width and is characterised by high-density development with narrow fronted terraces and a greater number of three storey buildings. Layers of development become visible and a sense of the busy town centre spills across into Portway.

The Close is a narrow one-way street, consequently cars do not dominate it. Buildings directly about the road although many are orientated north and south rather than fronting The Close. Buildings are often very spaced out with side gardens bound by high walls. The overall effect is a high sense of enclosure and an intimate feel.

The Close, previously known as Common Close has a narrow entrance off of High Street, which historically was only a pedestrian alleyway with a building terminating the street. With the demolition of that building in the 20<sup>th</sup> century The Close became a one-way street from Portway to High Street.

### ARCHITECTURAL FORM

The scale and form of buildings varies within this area from modest two-storey cottage style terraced properties to three storey wide fronted Georgian style town houses.

The Almshouses are the only single storey terrace. The tall steeply sloping hipped roof ensures that the neighbouring houses do not overshadow the building, and its detailed architectural features give it a strong presence within the streetscene.

Portway House, a grade I listed building, fronted by large wrought iron gates with pillars capped by eagle statues. This is one of the largest and most architecturally interesting buildings within the town. Portway House consists of three wings with the central part being three storeys, dropping down to two storey of either side. Clad in ashlar Bath stone, it stands out as one of the most distinguished buildings in the town.

The walls which front Portway House are also listed in their own right with the front wall and gateway being a grade II\*.

Side gables are common, but a number of the feature buildings have steeply pitched Victorian front gables. Parapets are not common in this locality despite being a regular feature on the towns' commercial streets.

The heights of buildings and roof pitches create a varied skyline that is enriched by the multitude of chimneys.

### LANDMARK BUILDINGS AND FEATURES

Whilst a number of buildings or structures stand out within this area due to their size, positioning or architectural detailing, there are 2 key focal points:

- The railway bridge, due to its simplicity, rather than being a barrier, acts as a physical gateway into the town.
- Portway House.

Other landmark or feature buildings include:

- The Almshouses, Nos. 92 -98 (even) Portway.
- The War Memorial, set in its small courtyard.
- Nos. 83-91 (odd) Portway, Victorian front gable, ornate timber detailing.
- Nos. 37 – 43 (odds) Portway, a row of three storey weavers' houses.
- The pub, 49 Portway.
- The Hospital (main building), The Avenue
- The Old Fire Station, The Close
- Nos. 2-6 Portway group with 52 and 54 High Street, corner building.

### BUILDING MATERIALS

**Walls:** As is common throughout Warminster a large number of the buildings are clad in rubble stone with brick dressings.

Red brick frontages with stone or timber dressings, are found particularly along the east of Portway and in the southern part of this area. The side and rear elevations are often still finished with the local rubble stone. Some buildings have been painted or rendered.

**Roofs:** Clay pantiles are the most common roof materials, with occasional use of slate or stone.

**Fenestration:** Where the original timber windows have been retained, they tend to be either glazing bar sash windows or narrow glazing bar casements. A number of buildings also have blind windows.

## **STREETSCAPE**

Portway is an unusual wide street, which although not formally planted has the feel of an avenue and a street of some status.

## **LANDSCAPE**

Surrounded by prominent green landscaping with views of mature trees and long green gardens to the rear of the buildings which front the street, Portway has retained a semi-rural feel.

There are a number of mature trees in front courtyards which are important to the character of the streetscape and complement the long views of the attractive landscape setting of the town.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- In order to retain and enhance the character of Portway the retention of front gardens and boundary walls is considered important.
- The reinstatement of these enclosed spaces by introducing gateways where new drives have been created would be beneficial.
- The street can accommodate the inclusion of street trees due to its width.

There are a few neutral buildings that do not contribute to the character of the conservation area:

- 35 Portway, is architecturally bland, but is nevertheless, of an appropriate size and positioned well in terms of its relationship with Portway House. Consequently, if redeveloped the building form should be retained.
- 88 Portway, late 20<sup>th</sup> century detached house. neither the materials, the positioning nor the architectural style of this building is suitable for this locality.

- Kyneston Court, architecturally does not positively contribute to the character of the conservation area.

## RESIDENTIAL AREA 2

This part of the Conservation Area is made up of Pound Street, Pound Row, West Street and the western end of Vicarage Street.

West Street was established by 1325 and by the 16<sup>th</sup> century the town extended as far as what is now No. 34 Vicarage Street, (Vicarage Street formerly being part of West Street). By 1783 houses stretched along West Street on both sides for 0.8km beyond the High Cross (now The Obelisk in Silver Street), and along Pound Street further than the end of Princecroft Lane.

The entranceway from the town centre into this area is the junction of Vicarage Street, Pound Street and West Street. Both Pound Street and West Street, but particularly Pound Street, are narrower roads than Vicarage Street.

The western end of the Conservation Area in West Street terminates with Bleeck's Buildings and the southern end of the Conservation Area along Pound Street is marked by the change from higher density urban form to a more rural feeling in the streetscape.

## USES

Pound Street and West Street are predominantly residential in use and is somewhat removed from the town centre. These were principle routes into the town and linear development out of the town was a natural evolution.

There are commercial properties within this area however and Pound Street contains the principle remaining commercial elements of this area, namely The Maltings on Pound Street and The Old Silkworks off Factory Lane.

The Maltings, Pound Street, is Grade II listed malthouse built in 1879 and is still in operation in its original use and as such retains much of its original character. The characteristic kiln roof structures are still visible even though some have been lost.

The Old Silkworks was built in 1874 as an extension to the silkworks in Mere and Crockerton. Silk manufacturing ceased in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century at which point the factory was then used for making shirts. It was used as a wool store by the War Department but remained empty then until

## SUMMARY OF KEY FEATURES

### Street and Building Layout

- Narrow street widths
- Majority of building directly front the highway

### Building Types

- Predominantly residential terraces
- Some semi-detached or detached properties
- Some larger plots
- Some large commercial buildings

### Materials

- Mixture of rubble stone and brick, some finished in render and/or paint
- Clay tiles including pantiles, some slate
- Timber sash windows with glazing bars and timber casement windows
- Occasional boundary walls, some with railings

### Landscape Features

- Minimal, some trees
- Children's play park on Pound Street

### Parking

- Predominantly on street

### Streetscape

- Narrow and enclosed
- Intimate

### Skyline

Quite an enclosed feeling created by the narrow streets. The skyline is varies by gentle undulations in roofscapes, but there are no views of the wider landscape.

1925. It returned to textile production at this point and was used for parachute manufacture during the Second World War. Following the war the building has operated almost continuously in various forms of commercial enterprise.

West Street does have elements of commercial uses with The Cock Inn at No. 55 (Grade II listed), and a modern garage use on the corner of West Street and Pound Row.

## LAYOUT

The majority of the buildings in this area are terraced properties which front directly onto the highway, although a number are set back behind small enclosed front gardens or rose behind retaining walls.

The towards southern end of Pound Street the road becomes very narrow, occasionally with footpaths only on one side of the

carriageway or even no footpath at all. This results in a strong sense of enclosure within the street.

Within the conservation area densities are reasonably consistent, and there are few detached and semi-detached dwellings. Beyond the conservation area the building layouts and character is much more suburban. On Pound Street buildings become detached and there are entrances into modern cul-de-sacs.

West Street is also narrow but has footpaths on both sides of the carriageway along its length. Consequently, there is a more open feeling to West Street rather than the intimate nature of Pound Street. Once again the densities and mix of property types are consistent, however the plots are much deeper than those of Pound Street retaining the sense of the medieval burgh plots.

### **Vicarage St??**

West Street and Pound Street are connected by Pound Row, creating a triangular block between Pound Row and the junction of Vicarage Street, Pound Street and West Street.

### **ARCHITECTURAL FORM**

The scale and form of the terraces throughout this area are reasonably constant in that they are mostly modest two storey cottage terraces. These are interspersed with larger two storey detached properties and even a large three storey residential building.

The terraces are quite simple architecturally often with only minimal detailing. The emphasis of the detailing is predominantly on the door and window surrounds and on the roof details such as decorative ridge tiles and chimneys.

The scale of the terraces is reasonably consistent but there are small variations in heights and indeed some ranges are set on banks behind retaining walls. The effect of these minor variations in the terraces has led to an attractive undulating skyline that complements the intimate nature of these streets.

Some of the detached houses are grand and situated on larger plots. These are generally of a higher quality of architecture and boast

features such as bay windows, stone string courses and a larger use of quality stone.

14 West Street is a Grade II listed building and was built in the 1680s. It has been altered substantially over the years but still retains an important presence in the street. Its striking façade and elevated roofline give it grandeur over the surrounding area.

The three storey Bleek's Buildings on West Street – now 101-119 West Street – is an imposing and dominant building within the area. This building was in existence in 1886 and at that time was the westernmost extent of the continuous development of the town. The building is now a collection of separate dwelling units. Despite this it has retained most of its original character and plays an important visual and historic role in the Conservation Area.

### **LANDMARK BUILDINGS AND FEATURES**

- The Maltings Pound Street
- The Old Silkworks Factory Lane
- 14 West Street
- Bleek's Buildings (now 101-119 West Street)

Other landmark or feature buildings include:

- 72-74 Pound Street
- 13-19 West Street
- Stables to 12 West Street

### **BUILDING MATERIALS**

**Walls:** The area is a mix of rubble stone buildings and red brick buildings. Some of the rubble stone buildings have brick dressings and some of the buildings have been rendered and/or painted.

**Roofs:** Clay pantiles are the most common roof materials, with occasional use of slate. There are a number of decorative ridge capping and chimney pots.

**Fenestration:** Where the original timber windows have been retained, they tend to be either glazing bar sash windows or narrow glazing bar casements.

**Boundary Walls:** Mostly brick built with brick caps, some with railings.

### **STREETSCAPE**

Due to the narrow nature of both West Street and Pound Street, the streetscape is of an intimate nature and gives a strong feeling of enclosure to the area. There are a number of front boundary walls where the properties are set back slightly, some of these have retained their railings, which add



a subtle but important visual element to the streetscape.

## **LANDSCAPE**

There is no real sense of the wider landscape in this area due to the close-knit nature of the buildings and the fact that most of the buildings front directly onto the highway. In addition surrounding landscape is flatter here which does not facilitate long views.

The front gardens that do exist are small in nature, not providing any real sense of green space, although there are a small number of trees at the junction of Vicarage Street, Pound Street and West Street.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- The retention of boundary walls is considered to be very important in order to retain the remaining historic form of these buildings.
- There are a very small number of historic street features such as iron gullies and boot scrapers. These should be retained as they constitute increasingly rare features.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Alwyn Hardy**

**Jack Field**

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## APPENDIX 1

### Warminster Town Centre Conservation Area Boundary

The boundaries of the Conservation Area were revised on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2006 in accordance with the following table.

The location of these changes is identified on the plan following this table.

AREA	DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CHANGE	JUSTIFICATION
1	Large extension to include property on both sides of the road in Portway up to the railway line and then property solely on the west side of Portway on the north side of the railway line.	A number of the buildings identified are listed and many are over 100 years old. There has been some modern infill but generally this part of Portway still retains important townscape characteristics, forming one of the main entrances into Warminster.
2	Small extension in Station Road to include remaining buildings that formed part of the 1900 extent of the old town. Also small modern factory building to be removed from the CA.	1 Station Rd is estimated to be an Edwardian property. The land around it formed part of the town centre in the 19th century. The proposed extension also includes a structure to the south that used to be the weighbridge for the coal yard and predates 1 Station Rd.  Factory building at rear is not worthy of retention.
3	Small extension to include group of listed buildings on Weymouth Street.	Makes sense to include these listed buildings as they were part of the town centre in the 19th century.
4	De-designation of land within Morrisons Car Park.	A TPO protects the tree that was planted as a replacement in this part of the car park therefore no reason to keep this area in the CA.
5	Removal of 21 Samborne Road and adjoining land on corner of the road leading to Morrisons Car Park and Coppice Close.	Nothing currently on this site that is considered special enough for retention.
6	Removal of large modern housing development around The Maltings east off Pound Street.	No architectural or historic merit in this development. The proposed amendment will ensure all historic walls are retained around this development.
7	Extension to include the Old Silk Factory off of Factory Lane and Beech Avenue.	The original factory building has architectural, historic and industrial interest. Local sources indicate that the factory continued making silk for parachutes until the end of WWII.  An internal inspection of the buildings on this site is proposed.
8	De-designation of buildings at the west end of Pound Street that have been subject to recent re-development.	Old buildings but badly altered and no trees of any significance.
9	Removal of part of estate to the west of Pound Street known as Westleigh and large road verge on the south side of Pound Row.	No architectural or historic merit in this development.
10	Removal of land and buildings at western end of current CA at top end of West Street, including No 5 Victoria Mews.	No architectural or historic merit in this development. No significance to the land adjacent to No 106.
11	Readjustment of the boundaries to relate more closely to the features on	More logical boundary around the perimeter of the school playing fields.

	the ground and allow better protection to the setting for Warminster School.	
<b>12</b>	Removal of modern development off George Street known as George Street Place.	No architectural or historic merit in this development. The proposed amendment will ensure all historic walls and trees are retained around this development.





## APPENDIX 2

### CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Not all buildings in the town centre are statutorily listed. Other buildings and structures may make positive contributions towards the character and appearance of the conservation area but cannot or have not been listed. The location of those buildings and structures that are considered to be of Local Interest in the town are indicated on the attached map. There may be some buildings or structures that haven't been identified that may come under the criteria below and should therefore be included.

Some of the buildings that have been identified under the criteria set out below, may be put forward for consideration for listing in due course. English Heritage is now the body responsible for listing and the listing criteria is presently being redefined. However, the set of criteria below are based on the latest English Heritage guidance for locally listed buildings.

#### Criteria for Assessing Local Interest Building

- The building is designed by an architect of local or regional note.
- It has qualities depicted by age, style, materials, or any other characteristics that reflect those that are typical of and makes a positive contribution towards the conservation area.
- It relates by age, materials or other historically significant way to any adjacent listed buildings or their settings.
- It may either individually or as a group serve as a reminder of the gradual development of the town or any historic activities associated with the town's past.
- It may have a significant association with established features such as road layout, burgage plots parks or landscape features.
- It is a landmark building that makes a qualitative contribution towards the area.
- It may have strong historic associations with local people or events.
- It may be a structure of significance within the street scene such as a wall or streetscape feature of some relevance either historically or architecturally to the area.

Any one of these criteria could provide the basis for considering that a building or structure makes a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area, provided that its historic form and values have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration.

## APPENDIX 3

### HISTORIC BUILDING OVERVIEW AND AUDIT.

There are a total of 351 listed building entries in the town centre conservation area. This gives the town a high proportion of historic buildings, contributing toward the architectural quality and historic interest of the town centre. The attached map indicates where the listed buildings are in the town centre. However, if there is any doubt about the statutory listing of a building, especially where there may be structures within the grounds of a listed building, guidance should be sought from the District Council's conservation advisors.

There is 1 Grade I Listed Building within the town centre.

There are 11 Grade II\* (or B) Listed Buildings within the town centre.

The remaining entries are Grade II Listed.

A Building at Risk survey was carried out over the summer of 2005. The preliminary results of this survey indicate that:

71% of buildings were in good condition.

25% of buildings were in fair condition.

4% of buildings were in poor condition.

0% of buildings were in very bad condition.

#### List of buildings most at risk in the Town Centre as of August 2005:

Stable Block to north of Byne House, Church Street	Grade II
The Round House, Church Street	Grade II
7, East Street	Grade II
10, East Street	Grade II
14-30, East Street	Grade II
32, (The Agra), East Street	Grade II
Entrance Screen to 45, (Yard House), East Street	Grade II
8, George Street.	Grade II
No 1, George Street	Grade II
1-3 (Ciro Citterio), High Street.	Grade II
41, High Street.	Grade II
Town Hall, Market Place	Grade II
15-17 (Reeve the Baker), Market Place	Grade II
56, Market Place	Grade II
30-33, North Row	Grade II
7 & 8, Silver Street	Grade II
Wall to Churchyard at Parish Church of St Denys, Church St	Grade B
Boundary wall to the south of The Avenue.	Not listed.

Three buildings/structures have recently been removed from the Register;

The Organ Inn, High Street

The screen wall to Portway House, Portway

Nos. 37 and 39, Portway.

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

As outlined in the WWDC Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), different LDF documents require different procedures for consultation and are likely to impact on different groups. Consequently, consultation on each document should seek to identify appropriate methods and target appropriate stakeholders as well as statutory consultees.

This draft has been produced in consultation with a Planning Policy Group that includes; District Councillors, Local Councillors, members of the Warminster Civic Trust, local historians and representatives of other relevant local bodies such as the Warminster Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

During consideration of the conservation area boundaries, a thorough public consultation exercise took place.

#### **METHOD**

##### **Targeted Consultation**

1. The PPG have met four times prior to the completion of the consultation draft.
2. A letter and questionnaire was sent to the individuals and organisations as well as relevant individuals within the District and County Councils identified (**see table 1**) outlining the conservation area boundary changes proposed and inviting comments to be made within a 4 week time period. The responses received are shown in **table 2**.
3. A consultation letter was also included within the members' information sheet that is sent to all District Council Members.
4. A display was put up outside the Planning Reception in the District Council Offices in June inviting comments and identifying that formal public consultation was scheduled for the boundary changes.
5. The proposals for the boundary changes formed part of the District Council's exhibition at the library in Warminster and interested individuals were asked to fill out a questionnaire.

**Public Consultation** - The public consultation period began on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and ran for the maximum statutory period of six weeks ending on the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2006.

It was advertised in the following ways:

1. A press release identifying that the change was put out to public consultation.
2. A public notice was published in the Wiltshire Times identifying where the proposals could be accessed and how to make representations.
3. Letters were sent to a number of statutory consultees who also received copies of the proposed alterations to the boundary.
4. Information was displayed within the District Council offices, at Warminster Library and within the Warminster Youth Centre.
5. The proposals were published on the WWDC web site.

## CONSULTEES AND RESPONSES

### CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES

**Table 1** includes a summary of all of the consultees that were specifically included in the targeted consultation process and the methods used for engaging them.

**Table 2** shows the results of the consultation.

**Table 1- Phase 1- Boundary Changes**

Consultees	Method adopted
Targeted individuals owning or leasing property or land within the areas affected (a copy of the list can be made available on request)	- Selected property searches. - Targeted letters and questionnaires sent out to all property and adjacent property
Local Councillors	- Consultation letter - PPG
<b>Wiltshire County Council</b>	
County Archaeologist	Consultation letter
County Building Records	Consultation letter
Corporate Estates	Consultation letter
Environmental Services	Consultation letter
Highway Department	Consultation letter
<b>Other Organisations</b>	
GOSW	Consultation letter
South West Regional Assembly	Consultation letter
SWRDA	Consultation letter
English Heritage	Consultation letter
West Wiltshire Economic Partnership	Consultation letter
English Nature	Consultation letter
Countryside Agency	Consultation letter
Utility providers – Wessex Water, BT, SWEB, Southern Electric, Transco, British Gas	Consultation letter
Network Rail/British Rail Board	Consultation letter
<b>Local Bodies</b>	
Warminster Town Council	Consultation letter
Warminster Civic Trust	Consultation letter
Warminster and Villages Community Partnership	Consultation letter - PPG
Warminster and District Chamber of Trade and Commerce	Consultation Letter - PPG
Warminster Independent Trade Association	Consultation Letter - PPG

**Table 2 -Results of Questionnaires and Written Representations Received**

Proposed Boundary Change	Support	Objections
Area 1 – extension	7	1
Area 2 – extension	3	0
Area 3 – extension	4	0
Area 4 – removal	3	0
Area 5 – removal	3	0
Area 6 – removal	8	0
Area 7 – extension	6	3 (4)

Area 8 – removal	5	2
Area 9- removal	4	0
Area10 – removal	3	0
Area 11- removal	5	2
Area 12- removal	5	3



## **USEFUL CONTACTS DETAILS**

### **English Heritage**

English Heritage (South West Office)  
29, Queens Square  
Bristol  
BS1 4ND

Tel: 0117 975 0700

### **Wiltshire County Council**

Wiltshire County Archaeologist  
Wiltshire County Council  
Council Offices  
Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge  
Wiltshire  
BA14 8JD

Tel: 01225 713000

### **West Wiltshire District Council**

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Caroline Power  
Conservation Officer [cpower@westwiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:cpower@westwiltshire.gov.uk)

Hilary Maclean  
Urban Designer and Conservation Assistant [hmaclean@westwiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:hmaclean@westwiltshire.gov.uk)

Russell Brown  
Heritage Development Officer [rbrown@westwiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:rbrown@westwiltshire.gov.uk)

Chris Kirk  
Tree and Landscape Officer [mgoodwin@westwiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:mgoodwin@westwiltshire.gov.uk)

Web site: [www.westwiltshire.uk](http://www.westwiltshire.uk)

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