



Solihull Conservation Area

Appraisal and Management Plan

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Last update: 19 December 2023

Front cover: View of St. Alphege's Church from High Street. (Image courtesy of Mark Hau.)



Clock Tower, Brueton Gardens. Erected in 1964 to commemorate Solihull's elevation to a County Borough.

01 Introduction



Solihull Conservation Area was designated in March 1968 under the provisions of the Civic Amenities Act 1967. The Act introduced a requirement that local planning authorities identify places of special architectural or historic interest and designate them as conservation areas. The boundary was subsequently amended in November 1977 to include several listed buildings on the north side of Warwick Road. The amendments also included the removal of Malvern House in Park Road, which at the time was in a poor state of repair.

A review of the conservation area was undertaken in 2022, following which the public invited to comment on the proposed boundary changes and the contents of the draft conservation area appraisal and management plan. The conservation area boundary revisions were approved and the appraisal and management plan was formally adopted by the Council on 18 October 2023. The boundary was revised to include Malvern House, the former lodge to Malvern Hall on Park Road and a section of Church Hill Road alongside St. Alphege's church. The land previously occupied by the rear curtilages of properties along the south-west side of High Street, which were developed as part of the Touchwood shopping centre, were removed from the conservation area. The conservation area includes St. Alphege's church and churchyard, The Square, Church Hill Road, High Street, Park Road, New Road, Poplar Road, Station Road, Warwick Road and Brueton Gardens.

The Solihull Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan records the area's special architectural and historic interest by describing and evaluating its significance. It identifies negative features that harm its significance and puts forward proposals to preserve and enhance its character and appearance. The appraisal and management plan provides a firm basis on which planning matters affecting the conservation area will be considered.

This document should be read alongside the accompanying *Solihull MBC Conservation Areas General Information* which covers matters relevant to all conservation areas, including legislation, development plan policies and planning controls.

02 Location



View of St. Alphege's church from High Street.

Solihull town centre is located on the southern edge of the West Midlands conurbation, approximately seven miles south-east of Birmingham city centre and fourteen miles west of Coventry. Solihull is the commercial and administrative centre of Solihull Metropolitan Borough.

The town is located on the Arden Plateau, much of which is covered by clay or Keuper Marl that prior to the 17th century supported areas of dense oak, ash and elm woodland within the ancient Forest of Arden.

British Geological Survey mapping indicates that Solihull stands on glacial drift of sand and gravel. The lighter sandy soils were favoured by the early settlers of the area who chose to avoid the heavy soils and dense tree growth.

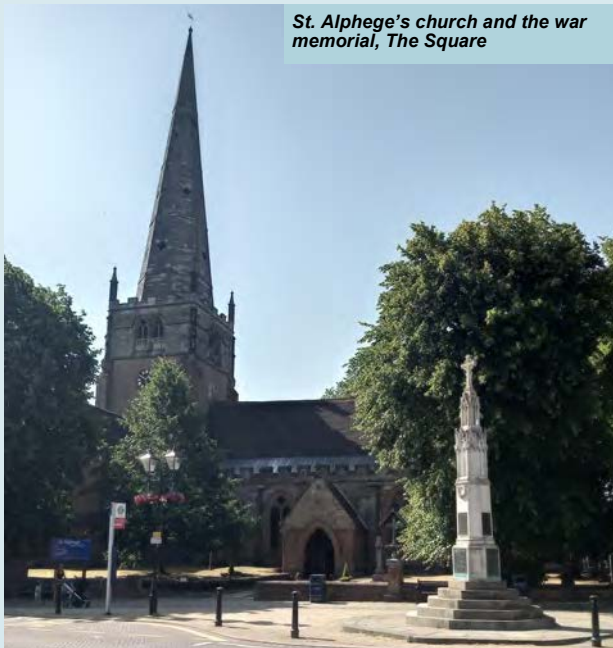
The bedrock of the Arden Plateau is Mercia Mudstone, which is unsuitable as a building material. Timber frame was the principal method of construction in the area, due in no small part to the abundance of locally available timber within the Forest of Arden. The deposits of clay found locally also provided the raw material for the manufacture of bricks and roof tiles.

The historic core of Solihull centred on the church of St. Alphege stands in an elevated position on a ridge of high ground above the Alder Brook, a tributary of the River Blythe.

The primary land use within the conservation area is commercial.

03 Historical development

The origins of present-day Solihull can be traced back to the medieval settlements of Langedone and Ulverlei, which were probably established by settlers of Anglo-Saxon extraction during the Early Middle Ages. Both villages were recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, the evidence from which indicates that Ulverlei was the larger and more prosperous of the two settlements. The precise location of Ulverlei is not known, however Langedone's medieval open field system survived into the early years of the 19th century, allowing a greater degree of certainty in predicting the likely location of the settlement as being in the vicinity of present day Marsh Lane.¹



St. Alphege's church and the war memorial, The Square



Solihull was established as a planted borough in the late 12th century by the feudal lord of the manor of Ulverlei. The site selected for the planned settlement was on high ground above the Alder Brook, a tributary of the River Blythe at the easternmost boundary of the manor of Ulverlei, less than one mile to the south-west of Langedone. The capacity to draw on the resources of its immediate neighbour may have been a factor in the choice of location.¹ The site also had the distinct advantage of being at the crossing of the road between Birmingham and Warwick and the ancient trading route between Worcester, Droitwich and Coventry, known as Salter Street,² which is considered to be of Roman or possibly Iron Age origin.

The lord of the manor offered burgage tenure of land within the new settlement in return for payment of rent, a practice that released the tenant from feudal obligations. This was at a time when many within the population paid their rents in labour and servitude to the lord of the manor.

Tenants were known as burgesses who, relieved of their servile responsibilities, were able to pursue commercial enterprises. The benefit to the lord of the manor came from levying taxes and tolls on trade.

The settlement was formally laid out in a rectangular street pattern with burgage plots, which were narrow plots that lined the street. The plots were measured out in standard units of measurement known as rods or poles. Typically a house would be built on the street frontage with land to the rear used for rearing livestock, growing crops and for small scale commercial activities. Over time the land at the rear of the plot was developed with ancillary buildings.

The original laying out of the town in the late 12th century established an urban form, which still survives within The Square and along High Street.

The first record of Solihull as a place name appears in the *Liber Rubens de Scaccario* or *Red Book of the Exchequer*, although the reference is undated, it is believed to date from the early 13th century.

The 14th century Gough Map held by the Bodleian Library in Oxford is the earliest known map evidence of Solihull. The Gough Map shows Solihull as a minor settlement on the ancient trading route between Worcester, Droitwich and Coventry.

The Gough Map of Great Britain may be viewed online at: <http://www.goughmap.org/map/>

1. Skipp, V., *The Origins of Solihull*, 1964.

2. Solihull Historic Environment Record ref: MSI 1376.

03 Historical development

By 1242 Solihull had been granted a Royal Charter by Henry III, which gave the burgesses of Solihull the right to hold a weekly market and an annual three-day fair. The Royal Charter was renewed in 1285 and again in 1320.

The religious and commercial focus of the medieval town was St. Alphege's church and the market square (now The Square), which housed the market cross and the town hall.

The main occupations within the early settlement were farming and the manufacture of agricultural implements and hunting weapons. High Street was known in the 14th century as La Smythestret, a likely indication of the presence of a number of blacksmiths within the town. The proximity of the surrounding Arden Forest provided a readily available source of fuel for iron smelting.

Later records indicate that the town's inhabitants were involved in the textile and leather industries. Other trades included carpenters, coopers, wheelwrights, masons, millers and butchers.³

Solihull prospered during the 13th and 14th centuries as a profitable market town, but thereafter its fortunes began to wane. By the 17th century the market was no longer held and the town's role as a trading centre began to decline.

The arrival of the London, Oxford and Birmingham Railway in the mid-19th century brought about the opening of Solihull Station in 1852. The impact of the railway on the town's growth was slow at first, but by the end of the 19th century the numbers of industrialists and business owners commuting between Birmingham and Solihull increased substantially. New residential roads were laid out around the town centre to accommodate the growth in the town's population.

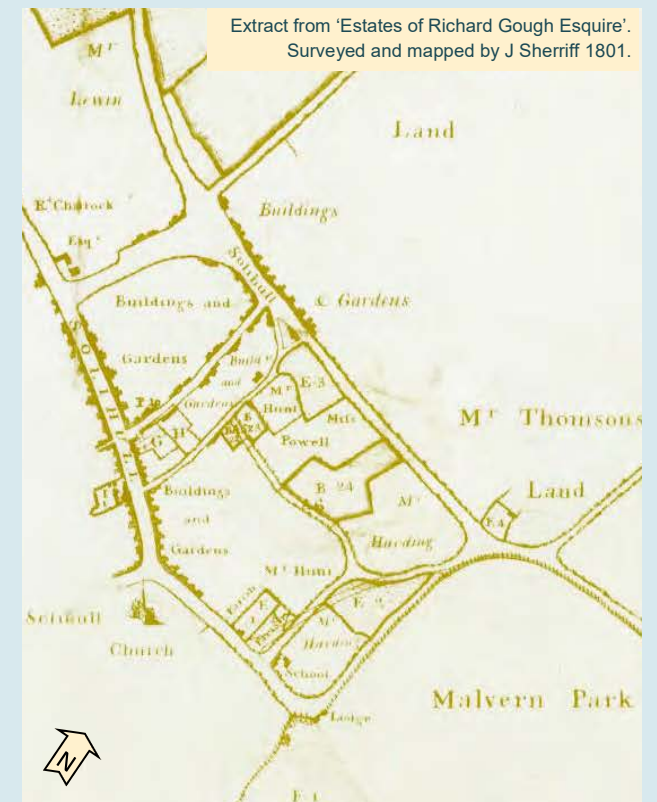
Commerce within the town responded accordingly and businesses expanded to cater for the growing market and in 1894 Solihull was created a Rural District Council. This continued until 1932, when it was succeeded by Solihull Urban District Council, which operated from the newly converted Council House in Poplar Road.

The town continued to expand and in 1954 Solihull was granted a Charter by Queen Elizabeth II and it became a Municipal Borough. Ten years later Solihull was granted County Borough status, which remained until local government reorganisation in 1974, when Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council was established within the newly created West Midlands county.

The growth of Solihull in the first half of the 20th century had only a limited impact on the town centre, and is most evident in the buildings on Poplar Road and Station Road. The town centre remained relatively unchanged until the 1960s when plans to redevelop Mill Lane and Drury Lane were approved to expand the town centre's shopping facilities.

Work on the Mell Square shopping precinct commenced in 1964 with the demolition of a number of historic buildings, including Touchwood Hall.

Touchwood shopping centre, which opened in 2001, was built on the site of the Civic Centre car park and the rear curtilages of properties along the south side of High Street, which included several historic burgage plots.



3. Woodall, J and Varley, M. Looking Back at Solihull, 1987.

04 Summary of special interest

The special interest of the conservation area is notable for the following:

- Solihull was established as a planned borough with the laying out of burgage plots in the late 12th century. The survival of the rectangular plots and boundaries and their arrangement in relation to the High Street and the Square are tangible evidence of Solihull's establishment as a planned town during the medieval period. The burgage plots determined the built form and layout of the town.
- A rich mixture of buildings and structures of architectural and historic interest including twenty four statutory list entries; three local list heritage assets and several buildings that have been identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- A well-defined historic core with a concentration of statutory listed buildings, including St. Alphege's church, the war memorial and the buildings within The Square and at the south-east end of High Street.
- A range of architectural styles documenting the growth of Solihull from its medieval origins to the present day.
- The strong linear character of High Street, which runs in a north-westerly direction from The Square for approximately 300 metres to the junction with Poplar Road. The buildings along both sides of High Street and on the north-west and north-east sides of The Square are positioned on the back edge of the pavement to create almost continuous building frontages that enclose the public realm.
- The surviving evidence of historic plot boundaries associated with the medieval burgage plots within The Square and High Street.
- High Street displays a degree of order and regularity within the plots, which is consistent with its medieval planned layout.
- The grade II* listed 126 High Street with its 15th century close set timber frame and 18th century red brick under-build. The property retains much of its rear curtilage, which has been sensitively developed to preserve much of its historic character as a medieval burgage plot.
- The two and three storey domestic scale of the buildings along High Street and within The Square.
- The irregular ridge heights, chimney stacks and roof pitches of buildings in The Square, High Street, Poplar Road and Warwick Road, which provide an interesting and varied roofscape.
- The use of locally distinctive traditional building materials, including timber frame; red brick and plain clay tiles.



04 Summary of special interest

The special interest of the conservation area is notable for the following:

- St Alphege's church, a grade I listed building of exceptional significance and of great historic and social importance to the town. A fine example of the evolution of English church architecture, the building includes fabric from the Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular Gothic periods. St. Alphege's church is a major landmark, visible in views from within and beyond the conservation area boundary. The church is featured in *England's Thousand Best Churches* by Simon Jenkins.
- The neo-classical former rectory to St. Alphege's church by J.P. Osborne & Son of Birmingham, built 1932-33. The former rectory has been identified as a building that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The former rectory has group value with the buildings and spaces associated with St. Alphege's church.
- The former rectory gardens and surviving remnants of the former glebe contribute to the setting and significance of the church and the buildings associated with the ecclesiastical use of the land.
- The potential archaeological interest of land to the south of St. Alphege's church, which includes the grade II listed Ruin, the formal gardens associated with the former rectory and former glebe.
- The grade II listed war memorial within The Square, which has been the focal point of remembrance in Solihull since its unveiling in 1921. The memorial was built to the designs of W.H. Bidlake, an architect of regional significance.
- Mature trees within the churchyard and along Church Hill Road and Park Road reinforce Solihull's mantra "*Urbs in Rure.*"
- The location of the historic core on the high ground above the Alder Brook. The response to the landform which influenced the establishment of the church and town.
- Church Hill Road on the approximate alignment of the historic salt road that connected Worcester, Droitwich and Coventry.¹ The presence of this major medieval trading route is considered by historians to have influenced the choice of location for the planned settlement in the 12th century.

¹ Solihull Historic Environment Record ref: MSI 1376.



04 Summary of special interest



The special interest of the conservation area is notable for the following:

- The 19th and early 20th century buildings in High Street provide evidence of its development as a traditional retail centre, with 19th century houses adapted to commercial premises at ground floor and later early 20th century purpose-built shops with accommodation on upper floors.
- The architectural and historic interest of the Old Council House (Assembly Rooms) and Lloyds Bank on Poplar Road, which illustrate the development of the town in the late 19th century as a commercial and administrative centre. The buildings are also of interest as the work of J. A. Chatwin, an architect of regional and national significance.
- The architectural interest and group value of buildings constructed during the inter-war period, including the three-storey, purpose-built parades of shops in Station Road and Poplar Road. The buildings provide evidence of the development of the town centre during a period of significant growth and a rise in Solihull's population.
- Brueton Gardens, an area of public open space within the town centre, presented to the inhabitants of Solihull by H. J. Brueton in 1938. The clock was added in 1964 to commemorate the town's elevation to a County Borough. The gardens have group value with the buildings in Poplar Road and Station Road and are an illustration of the redevelopment and expansion of the town during the inter-war period.
- The architectural interest of the surviving group of statutory listed 18th century two-storey houses now in commercial use along the north side of Warwick Road
- The 17th century George Inn bowling green. The green survives in or very close to its original position. Described by Historic England as possibly the region's oldest functioning sporting ground.

05 Spatial analysis

5.1 Layout and street pattern

- The Church of St. Alphege, the churchyard, the former rectory and its gardens and the buildings within The Square and at the south-east end of High Street form Solihull's historic core, arguably the area of greatest heritage interest within the conservation area.
- The churchyard and the wider landscape historically associated with the ecclesiastical use provides the setting for St. Alphege's church. The area of land to the south of the church includes The Ruin, a grade II listed structure, which is possibly the remains of an earlier rectory dating from the 14th century. The area also includes the neo-classical rectory built in 1933, the former rectory gardens and the remnants of the former glebe. The extent of the former rectory gardens and the glebe has been reduced by development, however the remaining open space makes an important contribution to the setting and significance of the group of buildings associated with the ecclesiastical use of the land.
- Church Hill Road runs alongside the western boundary of the land associated with the church and is on the approximate alignment of the historic salt road, which connected Worcester, Droitwich, and Coventry. The position of the settlement alongside this historic trading route and on the high ground above the Alder Brook were likely contributing factors to the establishment of the early settlement.
- The rise in the landform on the southern approach to The Square along Church Hill Road and the open space within the former rectory gardens and glebe provide evidence of the role that topography played in the choice of location for the planted borough. The landform contributes to the setting and significance of the church and the historic core.
- The land to the south of the church and churchyard may be of potential archaeological interest and may contain details of earlier structures associated with site's ecclesiastical use.

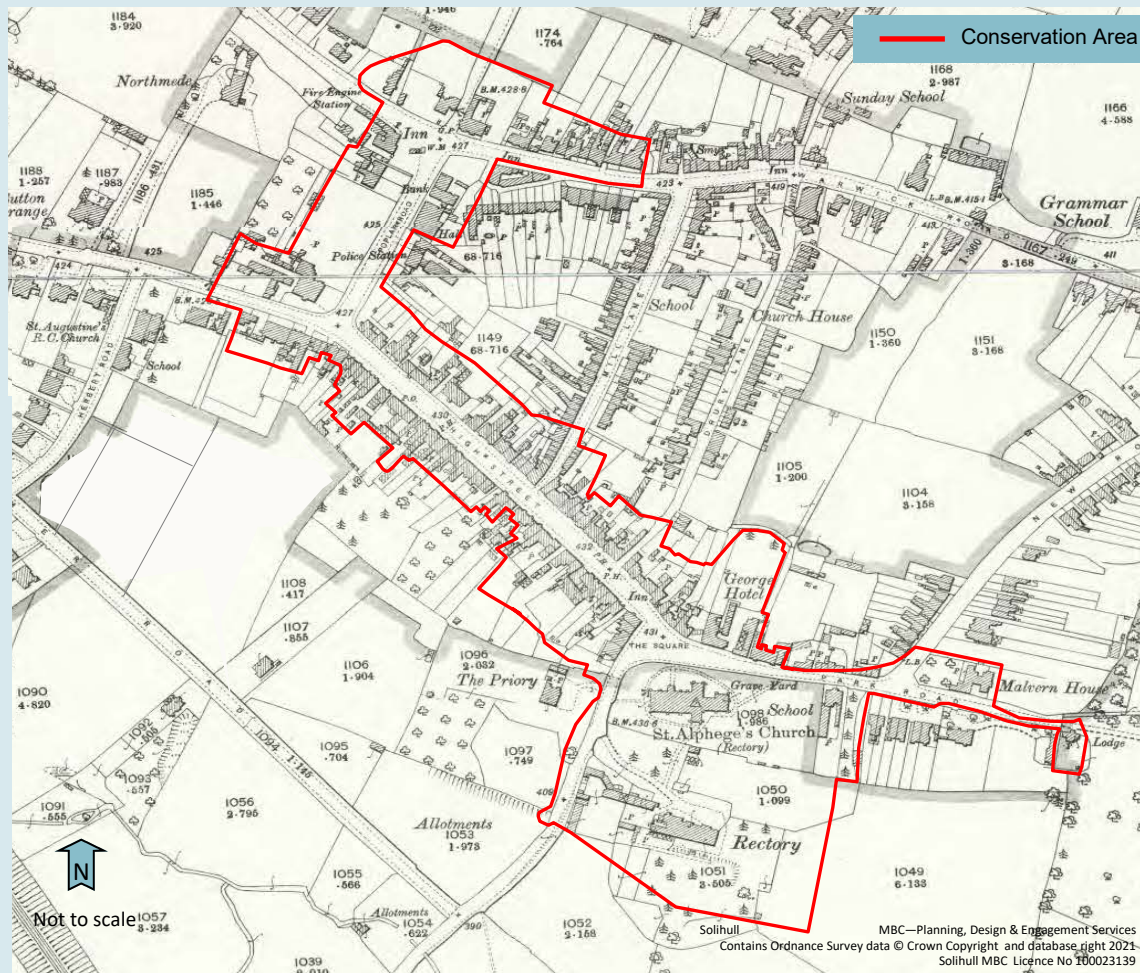


Church Hill Road approaching The Square.

05 Spatial analysis

5.1 Layout and street pattern

The Square situated immediately to the north of St. Alphege's church is enclosed to the south by the churchyard boundary wall and by two-storey buildings to the north and west. The buildings surrounding The Square date from the 16th century onwards and form almost continuous frontages on the back edge of the highway. As the commercial and administrative centre of the medieval town, The Square included the market cross and the town hall. The original 14th century town hall was replaced in 1779 by a building which stood on the south side of the Square until its demolition in 1880, when it too was replaced by the Public Hall in Poplar Road. The focal point of The Square is the war memorial, which has been a place of remembrance within the town since its unveiling in 1921. By the late 20th century the war memorial was at the centre of a traffic island surrounded by the highway. In 1994 the highway was realigned and the war memorial moved to its current location in a paved pedestrian area in front of St. Alphege's church.



Extract from the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey 25 inch Map. Revised 1902. Published 1904.

The main vehicular route through the town is along Church Hill Road to New Road. The volume of traffic using the route has a negative impact on what is arguably the most significant group of historic buildings and spaces within the conservation area.

The conservation area extends eastward along Park Road to include a section of the former carriage drive to Malvern Hall, which is lined by a row of mature cedars. Alongside the former carriage drive is the grade II* listed Malvern House and the grade II listed former lodge (22 Park Road) at the entrance to Malvern Park.

High Street leads off The Square and runs in a north-westerly direction for approximately 300 metres to the junction with Poplar Road. The buildings along High Street are domestic in scale with two and three-storey buildings, which creates variation within the roofscape.

The Square and High Street have a fine urban grain with individual buildings forming almost continuous frontages along the back edge of the highway. This is in stark contrast to the more recent developments that now surround the historic town centre, where the grain is much coarser.

05 Spatial analysis

5.1 Layout and street pattern

The planned settlement was formally laid out with burgage plots. Burgage plots were a key feature of the town and were a deliberate attempt to encourage commercial activity. Plots were allocated a section of street frontage to a standard measurement with a strip of land at the rear. Houses were built on the street frontage to maximise the land to the rear. The rear curtilage often contained ancillary buildings for small scale manufacturing and open land for rearing livestock, growing crops and other purposes including cess pits. The buildings formed continuous frontages along the street, which allowed easier marshalling of livestock. The continuous frontages within The Square and along High Street can be traced back to the laying out of the burgage plots in the late 12th century. Where plots survive, particularly along the east and north sides of the Square and the south side of High Street there is the potential to reveal finds of archaeological interest.

With the passage of time the original burgage plot boundaries have been amalgamated to create larger parcels of land, subdivided or subsumed beneath later development. The burgage plots shaped Solihull's urban form, which still survives along sections of High Street and within The Square. Much of the evidence has been lost, however a few remnants of the original historic subdivisions have survived, the most notable of which is the area of land to the rear of 126 High Street. Where plot boundaries survive they provide tangible evidence of Solihull's medieval origins and are of historic and archaeological interest. The narrow plot frontages with land extending rearwards make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area.

When the opportunity presents itself, redevelopment proposals should reflect the town's historic layout and form. Development proposals that cut across surviving historic plot boundaries may harm the special interest of the conservation area and should be avoided. Development proposals should reflect the town's historic form, scale and fine grain and should preserve the historic property boundaries.

The image on the right taken in 1910 from the tower of St. Alphege's church illustrates the small scale development within the rear of the plots, which were subservient to the principal buildings along the street frontage.

The extension at the rear of 126 High Street that runs alongside Manor Walk, is a successful response to the town's historic character. The changes in the ridge height create a hierarchy within the built form, the scale of which diminishes as the building extends towards the rear of the plot.



View along High Street from the tower of St. Alphege's Church. Each plot was allocated a length of street frontage and an area of land to the rear. The main building fronted the carriageway and the rear was often developed with ancillary buildings. Image courtesy of the Joiner Collection, Solihull Library. Taken by H. Trinder 1910.

05 Spatial analysis

5.1 Layout and street pattern

Poplar Road and Station Road are characterised by the commercial developments of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The buildings and the spaces created are indicative of the town's expansion during this period. The late 19th century Lloyds Bank and the Old Council House situated on the east side of Poplar Road were built to the designs of J.A. Chatwin, an architect of regional and national importance. Both buildings are included in the Solihull Local List of Heritage Assets. The conservation area at this point is also notable for the purpose-built, three-storey parades of shops constructed during the inter-war period. The original shopfronts have been replaced, however much of the original detailing survives at first and second floor levels. The buildings make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Norwich House, a five-storey commercial office building constructed on the site of the old police station circa. 1978, has an imposing presence on Poplar Road. Norwich House is not included within the designated conservation area boundary.

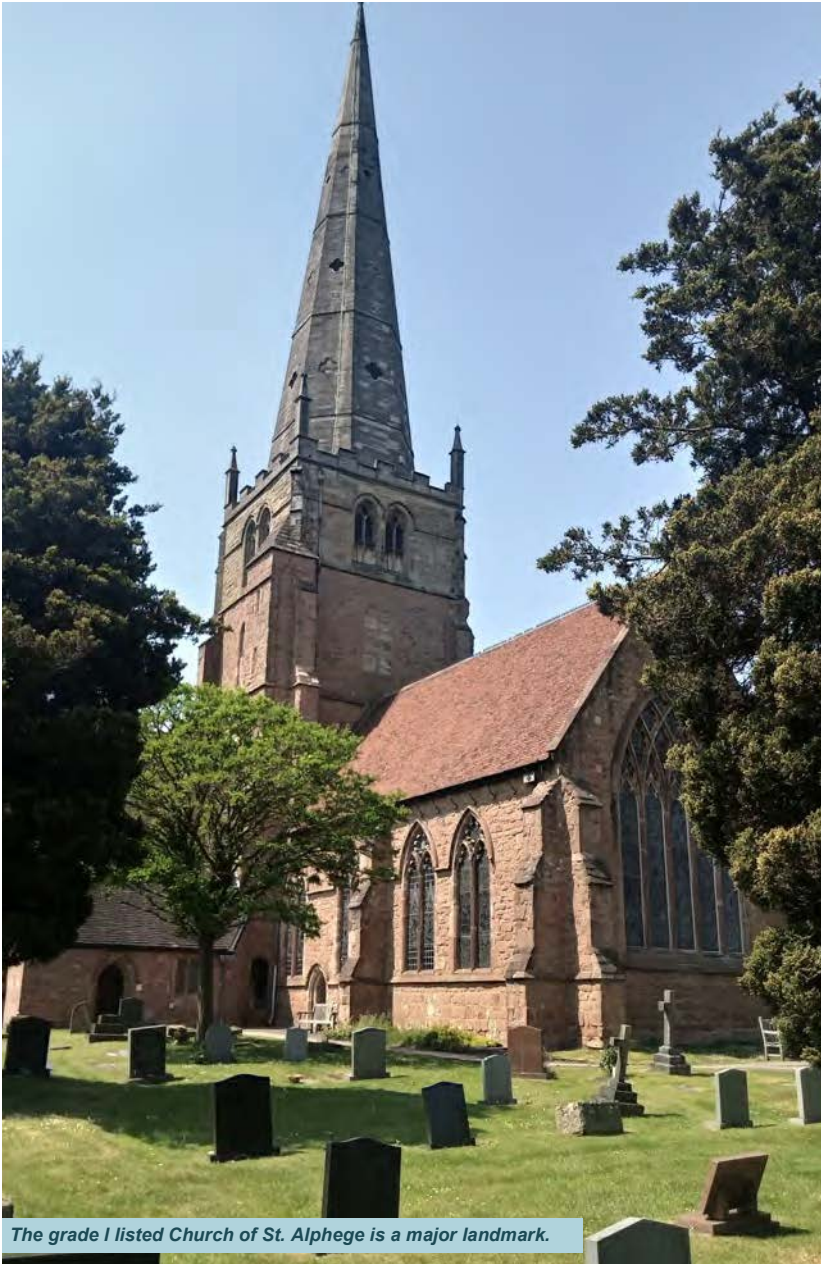
On the north side of Warwick Road at the junction with Poplar Road is Brueton Gardens, an area of public open space presented to the people of Solihull by H.J. Brueton in 1938. The clock tower is a later addition, erected in 1964 to commemorate Solihull's elevation from a Municipal Borough to a County Borough.

The conservation area extends eastwards along the north side of Warwick Road to include several grade II listed buildings, which date from the 18th century. Originally houses the buildings are all now in commercial use. This historic route between Birmingham and Warwick existed prior to the foundation of Solihull in the late 12th century.



05 Spatial analysis

5.2 Landmarks, focal points and views



The grade I listed Church of St. Alphege is a major landmark.

- St. Alphege's church is a major Solihull landmark visible from vantage points within and beyond the conservation area.
- Views of the church tower and spire are visible above the rooftops of buildings in High Street and The Square, much as it has been for centuries.
- Views of the church change with the seasons, which is partially obscured during the summer months when the trees are in full leaf.
- The war memorial is the focal point of The Square and has been at the centre of remembrance within the town since its unveiling in 1921.
- Views along Church Hill Road and New Road towards the town's historic core at the centre of which is the church, the war memorial and the buildings that enclose The Square and the south-east end of High Street.
- The three-storey buildings in Station Road and Poplar Road, constructed during the inter-war years, represent a significant period in the development of Solihull. The buildings are prominent in views from the western end of High Street.
- The view from the junction of Warwick Road and Poplar Road focuses on the group of 18th century houses now in commercial use along the north side of Warwick Road. The group of buildings provide evidence of the development of the town during the 18th century.

06 Buildings

6.1 Building materials and architectural features

Solihull has developed piecemeal over a long period of time, the consequence of which is that its character is one of diversity rather than uniformity, with a range of architectural styles and periods present. The richness of the features and detail of the buildings and the range of textures and colour of the materials collectively create the architectural character of Solihull Conservation Area.

Features, details and materials within the conservation area, which contribute to its special historic and architectural interest:

Scale: Two and three storey domestic scale buildings.
Diminishing scale of rear projections.

Roofs: Pitched roofs.
Old clay and machine-made plain clay tiles. Occasional Welsh slate.
Clay ridge, hip and valley tiles.
Dormer windows.
Brick chimney stacks with clay pots.
Cast iron and lead rainwater goods.

Walls: Timber frame.
Red brick.
Sandstone.
Render.
Decorative applied timber frame.
Stone architectural dressings.

Windows: Vertical sliding, timber sash windows.
Timber casement windows.
Steel and iron frame casement windows.
Leaded lights.
Bay windows.



06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list



165 HIGH STREET ▲

Grade II

List entry no. **1203280**

A two-storey, 18th century house now in commercial use. Red brick with plain clay tile roof. Elevations front High Street and Drury Lane. The architectural interest of the building is its form and appearance.



THE MASONS ARMS, 173 HIGH STREET ▶

Grade II

List entry no. **1076721**

181 HIGH STREET ▶

Grade II

List entry no. **1281758**

173 High Street is a two-storey, early 19th century public house. Whitewashed brick with a Welsh slate roof and central brick stack. Ground floor canted bay with timber sash windows at first floor.

181 High Street is a two-storey, 18th century building with earlier timber frame rear wing. Whitewashed brick with Welsh slate roof and end gable brick stack.

The two buildings have been a public house since the 19th century and its continued use as such is a tangible connection to Solihull's 19th century High Street. The architectural interest of the buildings is their form and appearance.

183 to 189 HIGH STREET ▶

Grade II

List entry no. **1342887**

A two-storey, early 19th century building. Red brick with parapet and stone cornice with central brick stack. Timber sash windows. The architectural interest of the building is its form and appearance.

165, 173 and 181 to 189 High Street are of group value with other historic buildings at the south-east end of High Street, The Square and St. Alphege's church, which form the historic core of Solihull.



06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list



THE GEORGE HOTEL 3 THE SQUARE

Grade II

List entry no. **1076692**

A two-storey 17th century (or possibly earlier) building. The George Hotel is of historic, architectural and archaeological interest. The pebbledash front elevation was replaced with timber framing in 1991. Plain clay tile roof, red brick stacks and timber casement windows with leaded lights. Original timber framing survives at the rear.

The George Hotel is a well-known landmark within the centre of Solihull. Early in its history it was a coaching inn and was a popular location for the gentry, particularly those taking horse drawn breaks from Birmingham.

It remained an inn throughout the 17th century and into the 18th when it was known as The Nags Head (1693-1715) and The Bell (1715-38).

The George Hotel is of group value with other historic buildings at the south-east end of High Street, and The Square which together with the church form the historic core of Solihull.



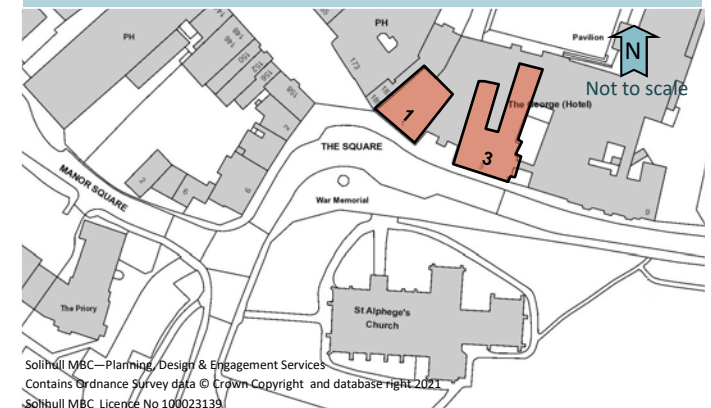
1 THE SQUARE

Grade II

List entry no. **1342874**

A two-storey 18th century house with three hipped roof domers. Bracketed cornice door surround and timber sash windows. Red brick with old plain clay tile roof. The architectural interest of the building is its early 18th century form and appearance.

1 The Square is of group value with other historic buildings at the south-east end of High Street, The Square and St. Alphege's church, which collectively form the historic core of Solihull.



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06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list

158 HIGH STREET, 2 and 4 THE SQUARE ▶

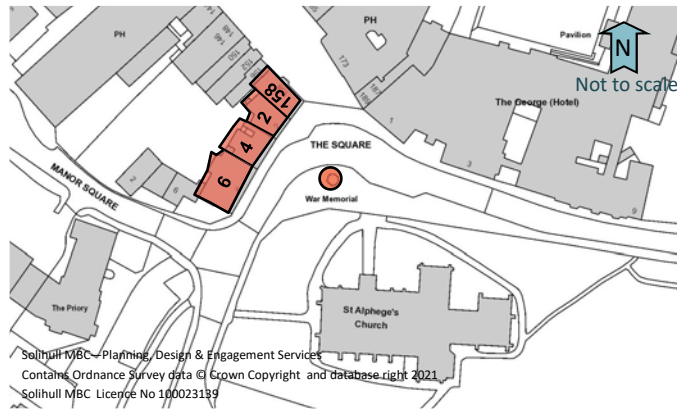
Grade II
List entry no. 1076694

6 THE SQUARE ▶

Grade II
List entry no. 1076695

WAR MEMORIAL THE SQUARE ▼

Grade II
List entry no. 1396589



The war memorial was unveiled on 19 June 1921 to commemorate the fallen of the Great War. The names of the fallen from the Second World War and the Korean War were subsequently added.

The monument, designed by W. H. Bidlake, is an adaption of an Eleanor Cross of Portland stone with bronze tablets. The memorial is of architectural interest as a strong composition, well-suited to its prominent position in The Square. It has historic and communal interest as a permanent testament to the sacrifices made by the town's inhabitants during the two world wars and subsequent conflicts.

158 High Street and 2, 4 and 6 The Square form an important group of listed buildings with significant architectural features representative of the 16th century.

The buildings may have been one house, which is considered to have been owned by the Baynton family, who played a prominent role in both the church and local government during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Historians consider the group to have been an annexe to the ancient Powell's School, that stood on the adjacent land on Church Hill Road, that is now occupied by the Priory

The significance of the group is its late medieval form and appearance as a 16th century timber frame structure, with later alterations comprising probable 18th century refacing and infill in red brick.

The buildings have been extended to the rear with 20th century additions, which are not of special interest.

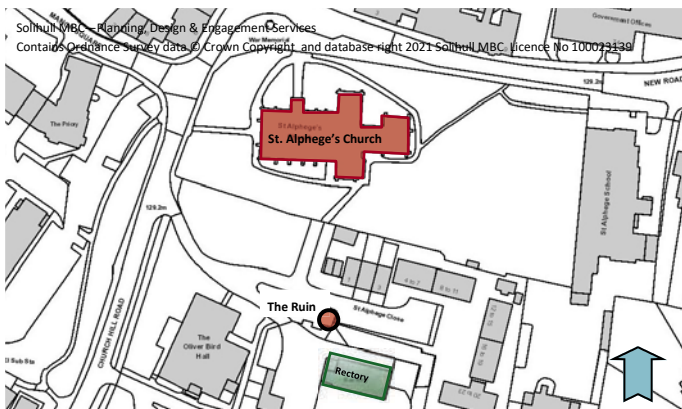
The buildings are of architectural and archaeological interest because of their surviving historic fabric and of historic interest because of the connection to the Baynton family.

158 High Street, 2 to 6 The Square and the war memorial are of group value with other historic buildings at the south-east end of High Street, The Square and St. Alphege's church, which collectively form the historic core of Solihull.



06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list



◀ THE RUIN

Grade II
List entry no. [1444735](#)

The Ruin is believed to date from the 14th century and may have been an early rectory to St. Alphege's Church. The Ruin has architectural, historic and archaeological interest as surviving medieval fabric. It has group value with the buildings and spaces associated with the ecclesiastical use of the land.

▶ CHURCH OF ST. ALPHEGE

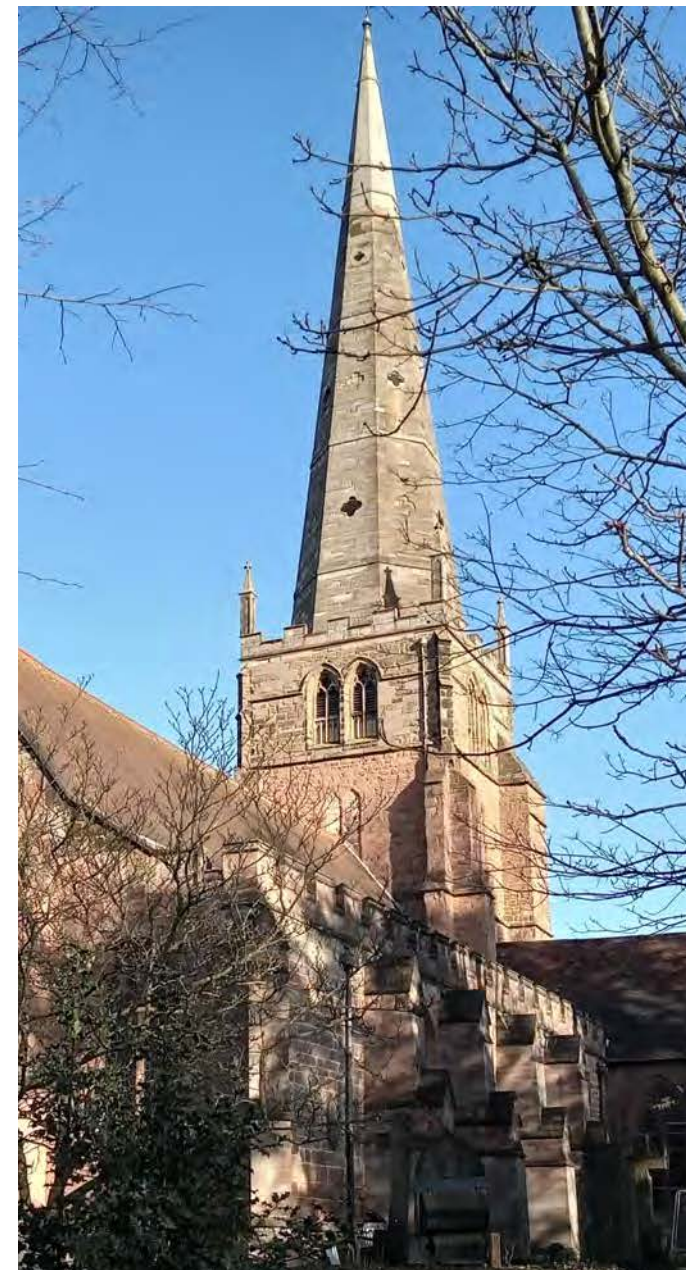
Grade I
List entry no. [1076693](#)

The parish church dating from the late 12th century with later rebuilding and enlargement during the period between the late 13th and 16th centuries.

The Church of St. Alphege is of outstanding national significance. It has architectural interest with surviving evidence from multiple periods, reflecting changing practices in English architecture. It has architectural and historic interest as it retains a high proportion of medieval fabric. It has notable historic fittings of high quality which represent many different periods.

The Church has communal interest as a place of worship.

It has group value for its contribution to the townscape of Solihull and its relationship with other historic buildings and spaces associated with the ecclesiastical land and with buildings in The Square and at the south-east end of High Street.



06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list



130 & 134 HIGH STREET ▲

Grade II
List entry no. 1076719

A two-storey building with whitewashed roughcast render and plain clay tile roof. The building is of architectural and historic interest as an earlier building re-fronted in the late 18th century and as a surviving part of the historic High Street. The form and appearance of both the earlier and later parts are of architectural interest including the pointed arch sash windows and tall central ridge roof.

The building is also of archaeological interest as it is probable that elements of the original building structure remain, which aids the understanding of how the building was constructed and how it has evolved over time. The 18th century front elevation of the building is of historic interest, and illustrates the changes made to the building to adapt it to commercial use.



▲ 144 HIGH STREET

Grade II
List entry no. 1076720

A 19th century re-fronting of an earlier building.

The building has had many alterations, including the loss of its stacks. It has illustrative value as a building converted to commercial use in the 19th century. The front elevation is of architectural interest, as evidence of the changing face of the High Street in the 19th century.

◀ THE MALT SHOVEL INN, 142 HIGH STREET

Grade II
List entry no. 1025881

A two-storey building with a 17th century timber frame. Whitewashed roughcast render with clay tile roof. The stacks have been removed. The front elevation includes three early 19th century ground floor canted bay windows with first floor casements.

The significance of the building is its surviving timber frame and its 19th century remodelled front elevation.

At the rear is a large nightclub extension constructed in the mid 1960's. The rear extension has no special interest.



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06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list

**THE MANOR HOUSE,
126 HIGH STREET**
Grade II*
List entry no. 1025870



126 High Street is of historic, architectural and archaeological interest. The alterations made to the building over five hundred years are of archaeological interest and hold evidential value. The construction, design and development of the house is of historical and architectural interest. The building has associative value, due to its association with the Greswolde family and illustrative value as a large late medieval house that was later converted for commercial use.

The building has been subject to change throughout its history and is considered to have been two separate houses that were later connected. Of particular note is the first floor which still retains its close timber frame with overhanging gables and clay old tile roof.

126 High Street is of architectural interest as an impressive 15th century house that was converted to commercial use in the 18th century. It not only allows the observer to gain insight into the design of a high status regional house of the period, but also illustrates how such buildings were subsequently adapted for commercial purposes with the introduction of brickwork at ground floor level.

The front (north-east) elevation has sash windows at ground floor and casement windows with leaded lights at first floor. The change in window styles in the front elevation illustrates the development of window technology, which took place between the 16th and 18th centuries. The 15th century timber frame and 18th century brick under-build is clearly visible from the public realm.

The rear curtilage of the property is of particular historic interest as a good example of a burgage plot.

The Greswoldes, a wealthy Solihull family who owned large swathes of land and property in the area, owned the building in the 16th century (and possibly earlier). The family's importance within the local area is evidenced by the number of buildings and streets named after them in and around Solihull.

The house has had several uses throughout its long history, including a doctor's surgery.

The building has been a local landmark throughout the centuries. It is recorded in 1720 as Lime Tree House on account of several lime trees that were planted outside. The original lime trees have long since been replaced, however the later replacements still continue to contribute to the significance of the property as part of its historic context.



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06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list



124 HIGH STREET

Grade II
List entry no. 1076718

A two-storey, early 19th century building of painted brick with a plain clay tile roof. The building is of architectural interest due to its early 19th century form and appearance, including its brick frontage, first floor sash windows and bracketed cornice.

124 High Street has group value with the historic buildings within High Street.



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122 HIGH STREET

Listed as 116-120 (even) High Street
Grade II
List entry no. 1354757

122 High Street is a 16th century house (and later shop). It is of architectural interest due to its late medieval form and appearance including a close set timber frame and casement windows. The building has had some reduction of significance, as a result of alterations to the ground floor shopfront and the limited survival of historic fabric beyond the front elevation. The front elevation is of historic interest as an example of a late 16th century timber frame house and for its later alteration and development for commercial use.

122 High Street has group value with the historic buildings within High Street.

06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list

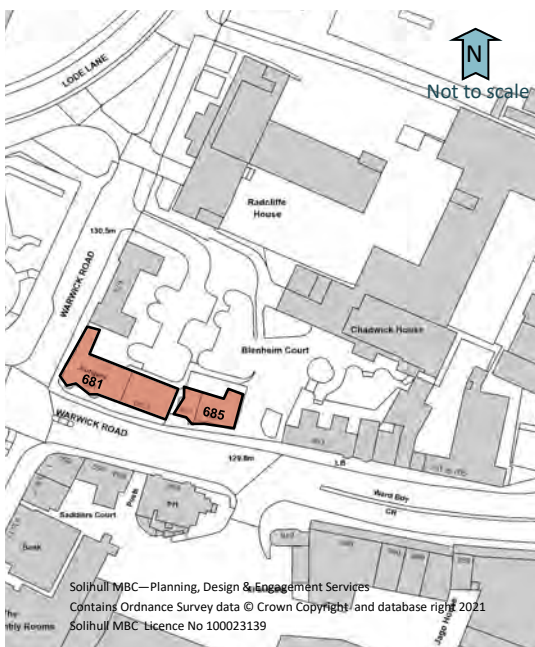


◀ 681 to 681A WARWICK ROAD Listed as 681 and 683 WARWICK ROAD

Grade II
List entry no. **1076696**

The building is of architectural interest as a late 18th century, two-storey town house now in commercial use. It is distinguished by its steep, plain clay tile roof, chimneys, box cornice, hipped domers and sash windows. It has a well-preserved exterior that is still recognisable as a residential property.

681-681A Warwick Road has group value with the 18th century town houses along the north side of Warwick Road.



▶ 683 to 685 WARWICK ROAD Listed as 685 and 685A WARWICK ROAD

Grade II
List entry no. **1076697**

The building is of architectural interest as an 18th century two-storey town house, with surviving earlier timber frame in the rear wing. It is distinguished by its steep plain clay tile roof, central stack and hipped domers. Now in commercial use.

683-685 Warwick Road has group value with the 18th century townhouses along the north side of Warwick Road.



06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list



695 to 697 WARWICK ROAD
Grade II
List entry no. **1076698**



699 WARWICK ROAD
Grade II
List entry no. **1203444**



701 to 705 WARWICK ROAD
Listed as **701 to 707 WARWICK ROAD**
Grade II
List entry no. **1342875**

695, 697 and 699 Warwick Road are of architectural interest as a terrace of late 18th century houses, now in retail and commercial use.

701 to 705 Warwick Road are of architectural interest as a two-storey 18th century house, now in commercial use. The building is distinguished by its plain clay tiled roof, box cornice; round headed dormers, multi-paned sash windows and quoins.

695 to 705 Warwick Road have group value with the 18th century buildings along the north side of Warwick Road.



06 Buildings

6.2 Statutory list



◀ MALVERN HOUSE 29 PARK ROAD

Grade II*
List entry no. **1076728**

The Grammar School from 1615 until 1882, now in office use following restoration work in late 20th century. Two-storey with dormers. Early 17th century timber frame building encased in red brick circa.1774 (*Loynton p.9*), with plain clay tiled roof. Late 19th century extensions. Timber frame survives in the central range and west wing. Four panel door to south elevation of central range with vertical sliding timber sash and casement windows. Malvern House is of architectural and historic interest as an early 17th century building and the former home of Solihull School, which was founded in 1560.



View looking west from Malvern Park along the route of the former carriage drive.



◀ 22 PARK ROAD

Grade II
List entry no. **1281721**

The former lodge to Malvern Hall, which dates from the early to mid 19th century. The building is located alongside the former carriage drive at the entrance to Malvern Park

A single-storey stucco building with eaves cornice and frieze beneath hipped Welsh slate roof with central stack. Timber sash windows with hoodmoulds and sills. Pilasters to external angles and central canted bay on front (north) elevation with a four panel door flanked by sash windows. 20th century single-storey, flat-roof extension to rear (south) elevation. The former lodge has group value with the buildings and structures associated with Malvern Hall.

06 Buildings

6.3 Solihull local list of heritage assets

THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS 21 POPLAR ROAD ▶▶

Solihull Local List

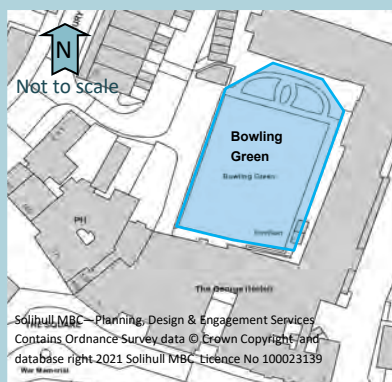
Built as the Public Hall in 1876 and designed by J.A. Chatwin in the Venetian Gothic style. A seven-bay, two-storey with attic accommodation, symmetrical civic building. Red brick with fine mortar joints and machine made plain clay tiles. Windows and front doors in painted timber. Stone band courses, stone stringcourse with intersecting pierced stone central ceremonial balcony on stone console brackets, reached by French doors. Stone label course, window surrounds, first floor tracery and hood moulds. It retains its original T-plan. An imposing building of significant local importance and interest. The building is of architectural interest for its design and of historic interest as the work of a prolific local architect of regional and national importance. 21 Poplar Road has group value with Lloyds Bank as the work of J.A. Chatwin.



LLOYDS BANK 9 to 11 POPLAR ROAD ▶

Solihull Local List

Built in 1877 and designed by J.A. Chatwin, the Lloyds Bank architect for over thirty years from 1864. The building is two-storey with attic rooms in a cross gable fronting Poplar Road. Red brick and machine made plain clay tiles with stone architectural dressings. The building was extended and altered both externally and internally during the 20th century. It is an imposing building of significant local importance and interest. The building is of architectural interest for its design and is of historic interest as the work of a prolific local architect of regional and national importance. Lloyds Bank has group value with 21 Poplar Road as the work of J.A. Chatwin.



THE GEORGE INN BOWLING GREEN, THE SQUARE

Solihull Local List

Situated to the rear of the George Hotel, the bowling green was reputedly formed when Dog Lane Croft was incorporated into the site in 1693, but may be earlier. A rectangular green and perimeter path, with a clubhouse to the east and a yew arbour to the west. The mature trees and the yew arbour suggest it has maintained a broadly consistent position. It is the earliest known surviving bowling green in the Borough, distinctive due to its antiquity and long-standing general location. The survival of the bowling green in its original or very close to original position is significant. The bowling green has group value with the George Hotel, Masons Arms, 183 to 189 High Street and St. Alphege's Church.

06 Buildings

6.4 Positive buildings and structures

Several historic buildings and structures have been identified as making a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area on the grounds that they are of architectural or historic interest. There will be a presumption in favour of conserving positive buildings.



◀ THE RECTORY ST. ALPHEGE CLOSE

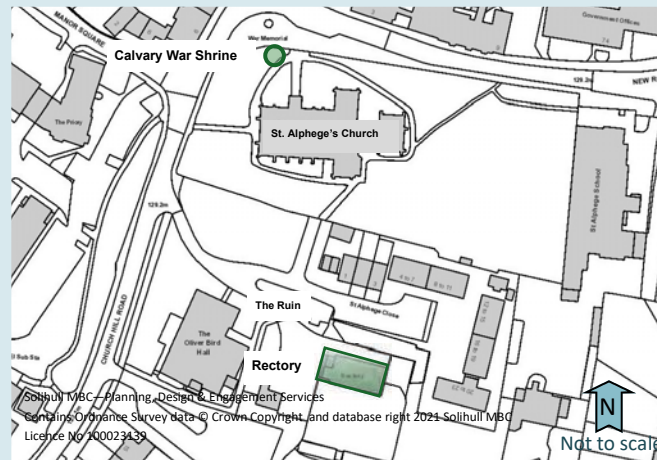
The rectory to St. Alphege's Church by J.P. Osborne & Son of Birmingham, built 1932-33. Neo-classical. Brick with a plain clay tile hipped roof with end stacks. Oversailing eaves with dentil cornice and brick quoins. Symmetrical elevations. Timber sash windows to ground and upper floors of north and south elevations and stone aedicule to main entrance (north elevation). The east elevation has two pairs of sash windows centrally positioned within the composition. The west elevation has a row of three sash windows at first floor above later flat-roofed, single-storey brick extension at ground floor.

▶ THE CALVARY WAR SHRINE

The Calvary war shrine, designed by local artist Elphege Pipet, was unveiled at a dedication service on the 9th April 1917 in memory of Solihull's Fallen of the Great War. The war memorial is of historic and communal interest as a permanent testament to the sacrifices of the town's inhabitants during the Great War.

The former rectory is of group value with the buildings and open spaces associated with the Church of St. Alphege, including the grade II listed Ruin and the surviving elements of the rectory gardens.

The Calvary war shrine is of group value with the Church of St. Alphege and the war memorial.



08 Buildings

8.4 Positive buildings and structures



△ 146 to 152 (EVENS) HIGH STREET

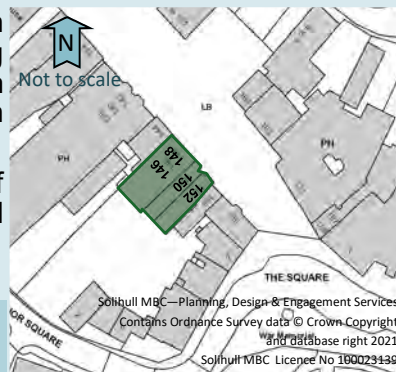
A pair of 19th century, two-storey buildings of white painted brick with plain clay tile roofs. 146 to 148 has 19th century paired arched-head with sash windows at first floor beneath moulded brick corbel eaves.

150 to 152 has three-light casement windows with transom lights beneath gabled roof projections at first floor. The shopfronts of both buildings have been replaced with modern interventions and the chimney stacks have been removed.

The buildings are of architectural interest for their surviving 19th century detailing and materials. The continuous built frontage along the south-west side of High Street is and provided which has been evidence of the town's origins as a planted borough laid out with burgage plots.

The built frontages extending north-westwards along both sides of High Street make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

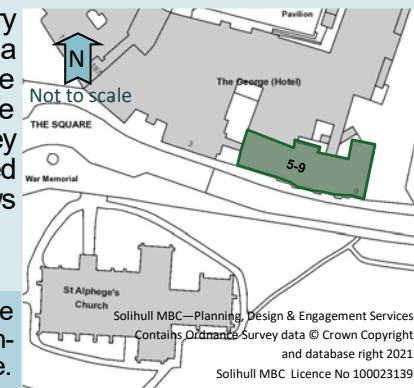
146 to 148 and 150 to 152 High Street have group value with the historic buildings at the south-east end of High Street and The Square.



▽ 5 to 9 THE SQUARE

5 The Square is a late 19th century, two-storey building of stucco render with a plain clay tile roof. Exposed rafter feet at eaves and asymmetrical projecting gable with bargeboards. Three-light casement windows with transom lights at ground and first floor. Vertical planked timber entrance door with door surround.

9 The Square is a late 19th century two-storey, three bay building with a plain clay tile roof. Central gable with in-filled entrance aedicule flanked on each side by two-storey projecting bays beneath hipped roofs. Timber sash windows except ground floor western bay.



5 and 9 The Square have group value with the historic buildings at the south-east end of High Street and The Square.



06 Buildings

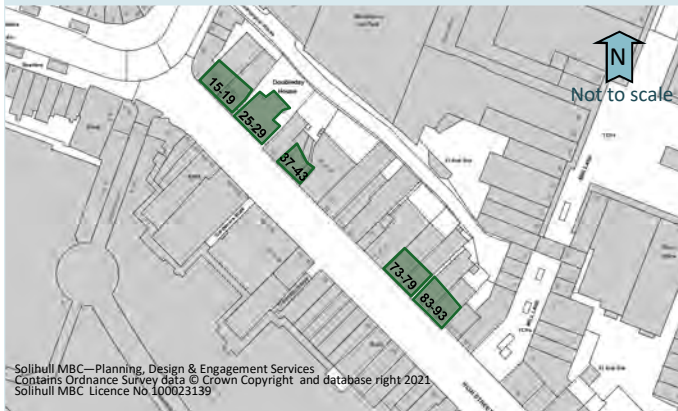
6.4 Positive buildings and structures

15 to 19 HIGH STREET ▷

A three-storey, four-bay parade of Arts and Crafts shops by architects Gateley & Parsons, built 1906. Brick and render with buttresses and ball finials. Plain clay tile roof with ornate brick central and gable end stacks and two 4-light hipped dormers flanked by gables. Later shopfronts at ground floor.

25 to 29 HIGH STREET ▷▷

A three-storey 19th century house with later shopfronts. Brick with plain clay tile roof. Central two-light hipped dormer, flanked by two forward projecting gables.



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◁ 37 to 43 HIGH STREET

A two-storey early 20th century parade of shops. Brick with plain clay tile roof. Gable end stacks. Four bay windows at first floor level, beneath plain clay tile clad gables with steel casement bay windows with leaded lights.



◁◁ 73 to 79 HIGH STREET

A three-storey pair of late 19th century houses. Brick with stone dressings. Two first floor bays with timber sash windows. Projecting gabled dormers above with timber sash windows. Original ground floor bays replaced with shopfronts. Stacks removed.

◁ 83 to 93 HIGH STREET

A three-storey, pair of red brick 19th century houses with later three-storey, single bay addition to the south-east. Two first floor bays with timber sash windows with gabled sash windows above. Original ground floor bay windows and entrance aedicule removed and replaced with shopfronts.

06

Buildings

6.4 Positive buildings and structures



△ 1 to 15 STATION ROAD

A three-storey, purpose-built parade of shops. Patterned brick with applied timber framing. Plain clay tile pitched roof with brick stacks and two projecting front gables.

1 to 15 Station Road are of architectural interest and have group value with other buildings built during the inter-war period in Station Road, Poplar Road and Warwick Road.



△ 2 to 16 STATION ROAD and ◁ 26 to 72 POPLAR ROAD

A three-storey, purpose-built parade of shops designed by W.T. Orton, built circa. 1931.

Brick and render with applied timber framing. A large, central front gable celebrates the corner position. Plain clay tile roof with gabled dormers and brick stacks.

2 to 16 Station Road and 26 to 72 Poplar Road are of architectural interest and have group value with other buildings built during the inter-war period in Station Road, Poplar Road and Warwick Road.



07 Negative issues

Summary of negative issues affecting the conservation area's special interest:

- Erosion of the town's historic layout and townscape from the 1960s onwards.
- Erosion of the setting of the conservation area from large scale development within the surrounding area.
- Loss of historic architectural details including traditional shopfronts, chimney stacks and windows.
- Use of non-traditional materials, including uPVC windows.
- Inappropriate signage on commercial premises with little regard to historic detail and architectural composition.
- Unoccupied buildings with vacant ground and upper floor space.
- Competition from on-line retailing and the impact of Covid on the viability of retail and commercial units.
- Inappropriate building alterations and repairs.
- Lack of routine maintenance. The lack of occupation particularly on upper floors does little to encourage regular maintenance, which over time has an adverse impact on a building's fabric.
- Adverse impact of inappropriate additions and rear extensions within the historic burgage plots, in particular the rear extensions at nos. 130 to 156 (evens) High Street and nos. 2 to 6 (evens) The Square.
- Rear additions and extensions to buildings do not reflect the scale and form of traditional buildings.
- Warwick Road, a historic route through Solihull, is dominated by a four lane carriageway, which generates high volume of road traffic, which has a negative impact on the setting of the group of historic buildings on the north side of the road.
- High levels of traffic passing through The Square and along New Road has an adverse impact on the setting of the surrounding historic buildings and the character and appearance of the town's historic core.
- Highway signage, surface road markings and the proliferation of street furniture have an adverse impact on the historic character and appearance of the conservation area.

08 Management proposals

8.1 Monitoring and additional measures

Monitoring:

- An audit of the conservation area should be undertaken from time to time to identify inappropriate changes or unauthorised alterations. The monitoring of change within the conservation area is necessary to enable the Council to review the effectiveness of planning controls over a period of time and to implement any necessary action. The audit should include a dated photographic record of the conservation area to identify change.
- A building condition and vacancy survey should be undertaken to identify maintenance issues and buildings potentially at a risk from neglect or damage. The Council should seek to secure appropriate repairs as necessary through liaison with property owners. In cases of serious neglect and decay the Council should consider the use of its statutory powers.
- The Solihull Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan should be reviewed from time to time and should include an evaluation of the implementation of the management recommendations contained within this document.
- The *SMBC Conservation Areas General Introduction* should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with amendments to legislation, government guidance and local planning policy.

Additional measures for consideration:

- Update shopfront design guidance to inform development proposals and encourage traditional shopfronts in buildings of historic interest.
- Introduce further controls on advertising.
- Removal of permitted development rights through use of article 4 directions.

Town Centre Public Realm Strategy:

- The Town Centre Public Realm Strategy sets out the Council's aspirations for public realm improvements within the conservation area. The benefits of enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area has been one of the drivers to improve the town centre experience. An initial phase of the Public Realm Strategy will focus on improving the link between Solihull Station and Malvern Park, which will include High Street, The Square and New Road/Park Road.

Solihull Local List of Heritage Assets:

- Potential additions to the Solihull Local List of Heritage Assets may be identified.

08 Management proposals

8.2 Development management



Rear extension to the grade II* listed Manor House 126 High Street along Manor Walk.

Development management:

Conservation area designation is not intended to restrict or prevent new development, its purpose is to manage change in a manner that ensures the character or appearance of the area is not harmed but is either preserved or enhanced. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that any development proposals within the conservation area satisfy this requirement when determining planning applications.

The Council in the implementation of its development management functions should ensure that all proposals that may affect the special interest of the conservation area are consistent with the relevant legislation; the National Planning Policy Framework, local development plan policies; supplementary planning documents and any other material considerations. The Solihull Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted by the Council for development management purposes on 18 October 2023 and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Applications for development proposals that affect the significance of the conservation area will require the submission of a heritage statement that demonstrates how the proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, in accordance with the advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

There will be a strong presumption in favour of retaining existing buildings and open spaces that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

For further information on producing a heritage statement refer to:

Historic England Advice Note 12 *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*.

The document may be accessed on line at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/heag279-statements-heritage-significance/>

08 Management proposals

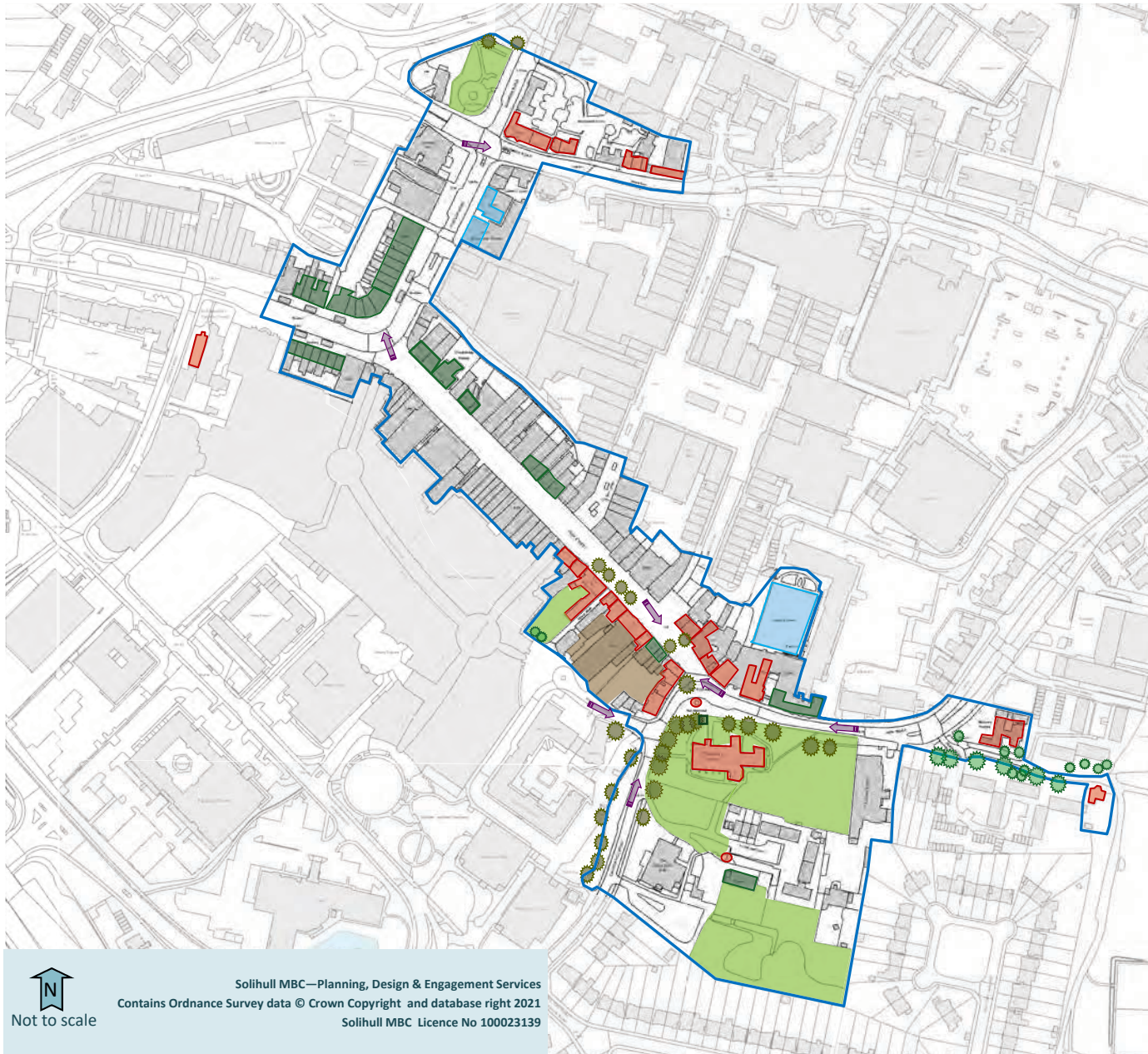
8.2 Development management

Future development proposals:


- In 2015 plans for an extension to Touchwood were granted planning permission. The approved development proposals included properties fronting the south side of High Street from 130 to 158 (evens) High Street and 2 to 6 (evens) The Square within the conservation area, many of which are statutory listed. The scheme did not proceed and in 2020 the Council unveiled the Solihull Town Centre Masterplan, which provides a framework for future investment and development in the town centre. The Masterplan includes proposals for Eastgate, a major mixed use development on the site of the Council House and Civic Buildings. The northern section of the site between Manor Square and High Street includes the properties fronting High Street and The Square. The Council is currently seeking interest from potential development partners to deliver its vision to create a new quarter within the town centre. The potential investment presents an opportunity to enhance the area of land to the rear of the historic buildings that front High Street and The Square, which has been identified as having a negative impact on the special interest of the conservation area.
- The Masterplan also includes proposals to redevelop the Job Centre site on New Road for residential use. Although not within the designated boundary, the redevelopment of the site presents an opportunity to enhance the setting of the conservation area.
- Development proposals for both sites should clearly demonstrate that they have been informed by a thorough analysis of the historic context and an understanding of the special interest of the conservation area and the significance and settings of listed buildings.

09 Solihull Conservation Area

Townscape Appraisal Plan



-  Proposed boundary
-  Statutory list building
-  Solihull local list heritage asset
-  Positive building/structure
-  Negative building/area
-  Tree
-  Tree (Tree Preservation Order)
-  Important open space
-  Key view

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10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Solihull Conservation Area boundary review 2023



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- Boundary
- Addition
- Deletion



a. The original conservation area boundary designated in 1968 included Malvern House on Park Road. In 1977 the boundary was revised to exclude the building, possibly as a result of its condition at that time. The building has since been the subject of major conservation works. Malvern House is a grade II* statutory listed building. It has mid-18th century brickwork with surviving elements of an earlier mid-17th century timber frame structure within its fabric. The building has a long association with the town and was the grammar school until 1882. **Malvern House has the necessary historic and architectural special interest to justify inclusion within the conservation area designation.**

b. 22 Park Road is a statutory grade II listed building. The former lodge, built early to mid 19th century, is located alongside the former carriage drive to Malvern Hall. **The listed building has the necessary historic and architectural special interest to justify inclusion within the conservation area.**

c. Church Hill Road stands on the alignment of the historic Salter Road¹, an ancient trading route connecting Worcester, Droitwich and Coventry. The name ‘Solihull’ is thought to be derived from a description of the hill, the popular interpretation of which is the ‘muddy’ or ‘miry hill’.² The proximity to the ancient trading route and the high ground above the Alder Brook are generally considered to be the principal factors in the choice of location for the medieval planted borough. **Church Hill Road has the necessary historic special interest to justify inclusion within the conservation area designation.**

d. The area of land previously occupied by the rear curtilages of 2 to 124 (evens) High Street was developed as part of Touchwood shopping centre, which opened in 2001. The area has been removed from the conservation area as evidence of the historic burgage plots to the rear of the frontage buildings has been lost. **The land no longer has the necessary historic special interest to justify inclusion within the conservation area.**

¹ Solihull Historic Environment Record ref: MSI 1376.

² Bates S., Solihull A Pictorial History, 1991.

10 Appendices

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Conservation of the Historic Environment, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design and Ecology

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