

Appendix 1

Draft Agard Street: Characterisation and Design Guidance

This appendix should be read in conjunction with the Friar Gate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2012 – via the following link - <https://www.derby.gov.uk/media/derbycitycouncil/contentassets/documents/conservationareas/DerbyCityCouncil-conservation-area-friar-gate.pdf>

Characterisation

In summary the Friar Gate Conservation Area Appraisal states the following with regard to Agard Street: -

- ‘...With regards to the service lanes to the rear Mill St has maintained the character of gardens with low brick mews style buildings. Unfortunately, due to its closer proximity to the city centre Agard St has a very mixed character with infill development and gap sites within the gardens to the rear which has disrupted the original character.’(p25 Friar gate Conservation Area Appraisal)
- ‘This urban conservation area contains few public open spaces. ... To the rear of the town houses the gardens has led to undeveloped private space. However, this relationship of house to garden has been eroded by the intrusion of modern rear infill development and conversion of garden to car parking in particular to Agard St. (P27 Friar Gate Conservation Area Appraisal).’
- ‘In Friar Gate west of Ford Street there remains significantly more open space to the rear of the main thoroughfare on the north side than on the south side but much of this is tarmacked and used for car parking. Former gardens on the south side have been redeveloped more intensively than on the north side and development is more tightly knit. Front gardens can be found throughout the conservation area in different shapes and sizes except in East Friar Gate where properties have all been built to the building line.’ (P26 Friar gate Conservation Area)
- Of the building materials represented within the Conservation Area, ‘brick, stone and stucco under roofs of clay tiles or slate’ are most common. • ‘Brick was much favoured in the 18th century and is therefore commonplace in much of Friar Gate. • Stucco is traditionally a lime-based render applied to the exterior of buildings. It was popular in the early 19th century and became is a characteristic feature of the Regency style. Stucco is a particular feature of Vernon Street and St John’s Terrace, both developments of the 1820s. • Ashlar stonework is the name given to smooth cut or dressed blocks of stone laid in regular courses, separated by very thin joints. Nos. 47-51 Friar Gate is a fine ashlar faced terrace of five houses built on the site of the old gaol in Friar Gate...Taken overall, stone is not a characteristic of the conservation area but a significant feature that adds to the special interest of the area by providing a strong contrast to the prevailing use of red brick and stucco. Friar gate Conservation Area Appraisal P39 and 40
- ‘Georgian architecture is characterised by its proportion and balance; simple mathematical ratios were used to determine the height of a window in relation to its width... Regularity of house fronts along a street was a desirable feature of Georgian

town planning but this was not achieved in Friar Gate despite an occasional uniformity of plot width.' Friar gate Conservation Area Appraisal P41

- The majority of town houses date to the Georgian period, and 'the most common Georgian town-house designs in Friar Gate are of three storeys... Square or rectangular in plan, the houses invariably have a central entrance hall and the ground floor is raised above the pavement to admit more light into the basement... Entrance doors are typically approached by a flight of stone steps. The doorway is usually arched, with a fanlight to let more light into the inside hallway, and is usually the only part of the exterior with any elaboration... The basement was used to house the kitchen, servant's rooms and the cellars; the ground floor usually contained the dining room and a sitting room; the first floor accommodated a drawing room at the front, whilst the rest of the house was taken up with bedrooms; the attic was reserved for servants. The windows of the first floor, where the main living rooms were placed, are generally taller than the upper windows, invariably twice as high as they are wide. As the eighteenth century progressed; the sash window bars became progressively more slender and the window reveals were set back and plastered and painted white, to emphasise the regularity of the design.' Friar gate Conservation Area Appraisal P41

In addition to the list above I suggest considering adding the following: -

- Of particular note on Agard Street is the large incongruous modern 1960's former building Tax office which is attached to number 46 Friar Gate. Looking at old maps it looks to have been constructed between 1967 and 1972. It is 'alien' and at odds with the special architectural and historic interest of the area and the character and appearance due to its height (in relation to Friar Gate and Agard Street), it's scale, mass, detailed design and materials. It is important to identify that although this building is part of the character of this conservation area in this location it is a very poor quality building (in terms of height, scale, massing, detailed design and materials) and therefore has a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The conservation area was designated in 1969.
- Historic maps and photographs show that there were the Georgian properties fronting Friar Gate and Agard Street. To Agard Street frontage these consisted of four pairs of three storey semi-detached properties (formerly 28-42 Agard Street - now demolished) which looked to be Georgian but less grand in size and scale than those fronting Friar Gate.
- Historic maps show the surviving three Victorian two-storey terraced properties at 8-12 Agard Street and a nineteenth century building (called the cottage) in between number 12 and 20 Agard Street. There is also a number of surviving important boundary walls.
- In between Friar Gate and Agard Street, according to historic maps during the nineteenth century, there were malt houses to the east running S-W from Agard Street, a possible silk mill during part of the nineteenth century and outbuildings to both the Friar Gate properties and those on Agard Street. There are also a number of large formal grand garden areas and smaller garden areas. These can clearly be seen on many historic maps and there are some gardens today that do survive

(including rear and side of 41 Friar Gate, rear of 51 Friar Gate and rear gardens to Bridge Street properties).

- There are some surviving linear historic plots running NE-SW between Friar Gate and Agard Street which are part of the character of this area.
- There are a number of garden areas that still survive and are important areas of private space.
- The glimpsed views from Friar Gate of the areas behind are an important part of the Friar Gate Conservation Area.
- Part of the character of the rear of the buildings along Friar Gate is that they are different to the front elevations and this difference should be retained.
- Agard Street development to the southern end has created the gateway feature (Agard Court and the Law school).

Design Guidance

The following items are highlighted within the Friar Gate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as Design Guidance for future development: -

- 'It is essential that any proposed works fully consider the special historic environment of the conservation area as identified in the appraisal. Ensuring that the new buildings enhance the Conservation Area in terms of the siting and alignment of the buildings, the materials used and the mass, scale and design of buildings. In the conservation area, where the quality of the general environment is already acknowledged by designation, the Council should insist on good quality schemes which respond positively to their historic setting. Development should conform to the criteria set out in the City of Derby Local Plan Review and other relevant national or regional guidance or policies.' Friar gate Conservation Area Appraisal and management plan P60
- It is recommended that all future developments within the Conservation Area should adopt the following general principles.
 - Urban grain: The "urban grain" is the pattern of the arrangement and size of buildings and their plots. It is an important part of the character of the Conservation Area and should be protected. Proposals for new development must include a detailed analysis of the locality and demonstrate that there is a full appreciation of the local townscape and how it has developed, including prevailing building forms, materials and plot ratios and plot sizes.
 - Scale and density: Scale is the combination of a building's height and bulk when related to its surroundings. The scale of any development should respect surrounding development. The applicant must provide accurate outlines of the surrounding buildings, showing how the new development will relate to them.
- Density is the amount of development (measured in terms of floor space or number of housing units) related to the site area it occupies. In practice, it is the combination of density with layout, landscaping and other factors which

determines the quality and “feel” of new developments. Within the Conservation Area, a careful balance must be sought between the sensitivity of the environment and the requirements of the developer. In taking account of existing densities within the conservation area, care must be taken to ensure sites are not overdeveloped. Developments which have a detrimental effect on the character of the conservation area should be resisted. It is especially important to consider how the conservation area has developed over time and to recognise the differences in building form which can be attributed to different periods.

- Height: Generally, the height of new development should match adjoining buildings, allowing for the inevitable variations in height and bulk which are present. Building height in the Friar Gate Conservation Area range from two to four storeys. The Friar Gate Conservation Area Appraisal has noted that key landmark buildings with tall embellishments are a feature of the conservation area. New development should not exceed the height of these or block significant views.
- Massing: Massing is the combination of the scale of the development, its layout and its site coverage. For larger schemes, poor massing and over-intensive development leads to the creation of over-shadowed areas, with poor quality spaces between the buildings. These create a threatening environment for pedestrians and reduce the opportunities for good quality landscaping.
- Appearance, materials and detailing: The emphasis in any new development or proposed alteration must always be on the need to provide a high quality of design. Consideration of scale, density, height and massing may be used to set out the basic form of the new building(s), including roof shape, roof pitch, height, depth of plan and, most importantly, the relationship of the new buildings to existing surrounding buildings and to the street. Once this basic framework has been established and the general form and siting of the building agreed, the actual appearance of any new building may be either traditional or modern, providing some opportunities for a good designer to experiment with new materials and details. However, in view of the special historic interest of the conservation area it should be noted that a traditional approach is more likely to be in harmony with its surroundings. In all cases, a design statement should be submitted.’ P61 and 62.
- The management plan also includes a number of key design principles that new developments should seek to adhere to:
 - ‘Achieve continuity in street frontage building lines set on the back edge of the pavement where appropriate.
 - Maintain the historic pattern of development by respecting the historic grain associated with historic plots and the historic morphology of development in the immediate area;

- Complement the human scale, height and massing of historic development in the immediate streetscape and the wider conservation area;
- Reflect the proportion of solid to void found in the elevations of traditional buildings and employ robust detailing, avoiding fussy or gimmicky use of applied features or detailing;
- Respect the historic hierarchy of development and detailing between principal and secondary street frontages and within plots between frontage and rear elevations;
- Conceal any parking or servicing areas behind built frontages of appropriate scale;
- Reinforce local identity by the use of the traditional materials used in the conservation area;
- Re-use traditional buildings which contribute to townscape quality.
- Retain and enhance green spaces including gardens.’ Plan P62 and 63
- ‘Generally, the height of new development should match adjoining buildings’

In addition to the list above we suggest adding:

- There is an opportunity to develop the townscape acknowledging the significance of the area with appropriate development along Agard Street.
- With new development proposals opportunities to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and remove inappropriate poor quality development that is at odds with, and has a negative impact on, the character or appearance of the conservation area should be taken. The NPPF (para 137) states that proposals that reveal the significance of conservation areas or setting of heritage assets should be treated favourably.
- It is important that new development does not replicate elements that have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. For example Northgate House, the former Tax Office, is now considered incongruous and has a negative impact on the conservation area due to its height, scale, massing, detailed design and materials.
- Recent development on Agard Street to the eastern end near Ford Street has created a tall gateway feature (Agard Court and the Law School). The Derby City Centre Regeneration Masterplan (2012) highlighted gateways would be appropriate at locations along the ring road. I suggest with the Law school and Agard Court creates this ‘gateway’ on the ring road and development westwards along Agard Street could be secondary to these.
- The views within Friar Gate and glimpsed views from Friar Gate of the areas behind are an important part of the significance of Friar Gate Conservation Area.
- The historic walls will be retained where appropriate, alongside comprehensive guidance on boundary treatments which reflect the urban grain but also unify the street.
- Many of the former garden areas have been lost or severed to provide surface car parking. These are opportunity sites that should be seen and addressed

comprehensively. Existing retained gardens are important areas of private space and part of the character of the area and should be retained within the area.

- It is important that the street does not become a canyon (tall buildings on each side) and variety within a comprehensive layout is recommended
- The Council (2008) and Cityscape prepared a tall buildings strategy for Derby City Centre that expands on CABI and English Heritage tall building guidance and identifies within Derby City Centre areas of 'restraint' and areas of 'potential' for tall buildings. This document is currently being reviewed to develop a Tall building policy for the City.

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