



NORWICH  
City Council



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THORPE HAMLET  
**CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL**

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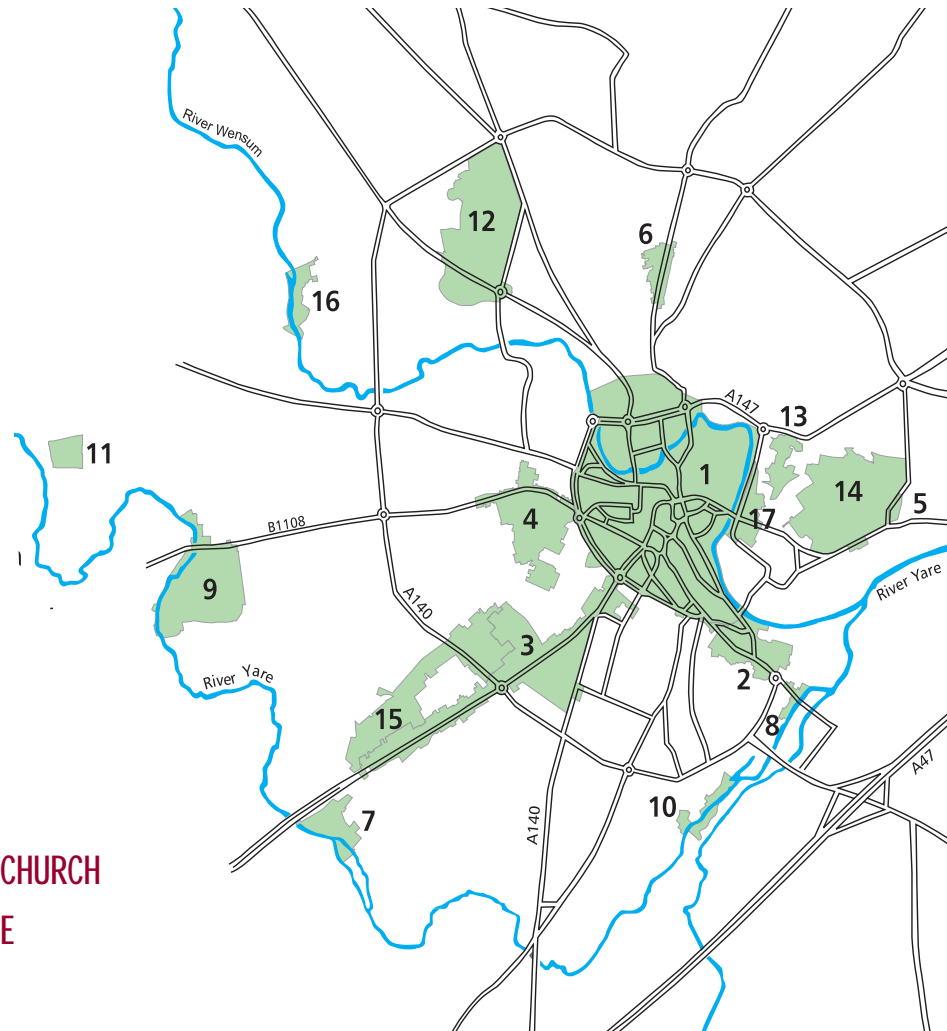
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DRAFT FOR  
CONSULTATION

## CONSERVATION AREAS IN NORWICH:

1. CITY CENTRE
2. BRACONDALE
3. NEWMARKET ROAD
4. HEIGHAM GROVE
5. THORPE
6. SEWELL
7. EATON
8. TROWSE MILLGATE
9. EARLHAM
10. OLD LAKENHAM
11. BOWTHORPE
12. MILE CROSS
13. THORPE HAMLET
14. THORPE RIDGE
15. UNTHANK & CHRISTCHURCH
16. HELLESDON VILLAGE
17. ST MATTHEW'S



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## CONTENTS:

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INTRODUCTION

04

---

HISTORIC  
DEVELOPMENT

06

---

URBAN DESIGN &  
STREETSCAPE

11

---

ARCHITECTURE

14

---

NATURAL CHARACTER

18

MANAGEMENT &  
ENHANCEMENT

20

---

FURTHER READING

23

---

LISTED BUILDINGS  
REGISTER

23

---

LOCAL LIST REGISTER

23

---

# INTRODUCTION

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*Gateway to Kett's Castle Villa  
113 St Leonard's Road*

Thorpe Hamlet was designated a conservation area on 8 January 1991 and extended on 18 September 2003 to include the Tayler and Green housing scheme to the north. The conservation area lies to the east of the city and covers an area of 8.7 ha (21.6 acres.)

The appraisal provides an assessment of the character and appearance of Thorpe Hamlet Conservation Area, and includes proposals for management and enhancement. This fulfils section 69 & 71 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

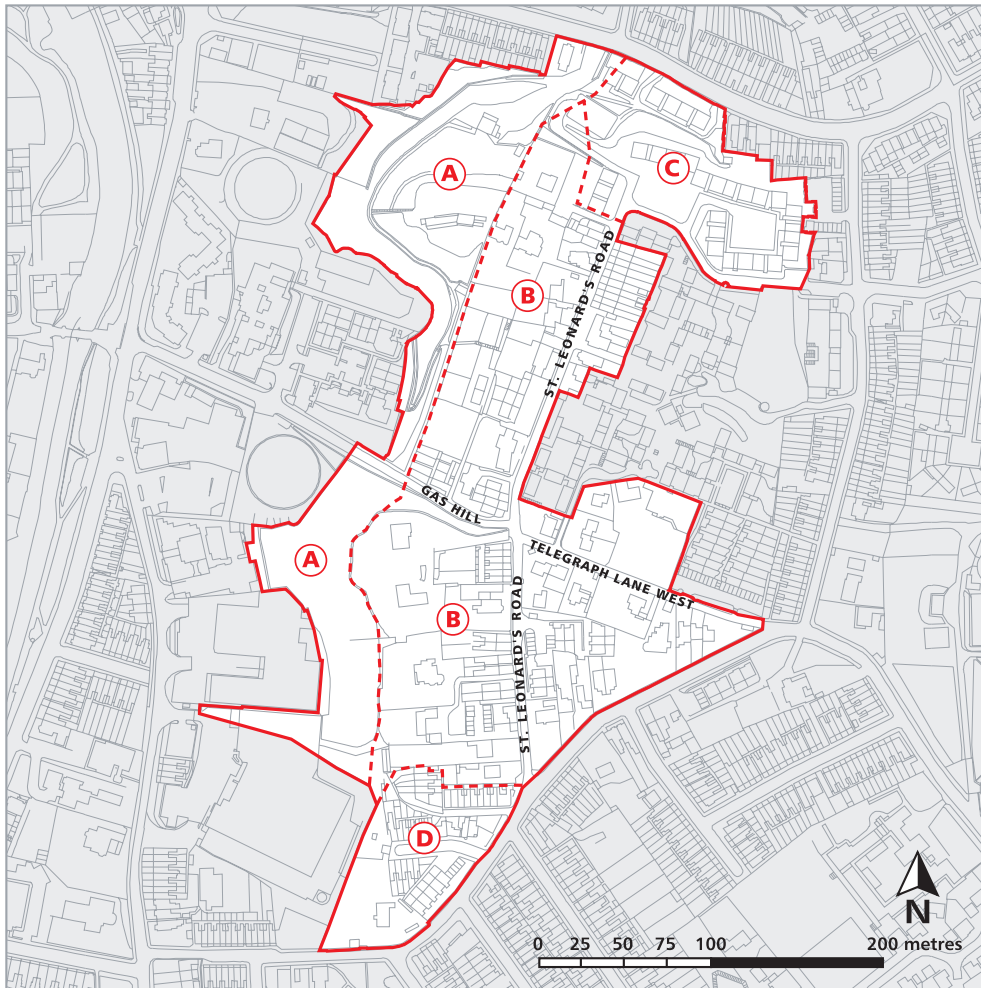
The appraisal has been subject to public consultation and was approved by the Council's Executive on 21 March 2007. It should be read in conjunction with the City of Norwich Local Plan 2004 (in particular Chapter 3 'Heritage and the Built Environment'), detailed guidance and site specific development briefs.

**The settlement is located on a plateau above a steep wooded escarpment to the east of the city centre, and has the characteristics of an unplanned fringe settlement, with a variety of building styles and materials dating from the 19th century. In the northern part of the Conservation Area lies the development by architects Tayler and Green, constructed during the 1970s.**

The Conservation Area can be divided into four sub-areas, as indicated on the map opposite. The character of each area is described in more detail in the following sections, which is followed by a programme of management and enhancement proposals on p20-21.

The appraisal will be used by the City Council to help determine planning applications affecting the conservation area, and will be taken into account by the Planning Inspectorate when considering planning appeals.

# CONSERVATION AREA MAP



## Thorpe Hamlet CONSERVATION AREA

- Key
- |          |                         |          |                       |
|----------|-------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| <b>A</b> | Wooded escarpment       | <b>C</b> | Modern housing estate |
| <b>B</b> | Settlement village core | <b>D</b> | Urban terraces        |

## HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

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Although today Thorpe Hamlet appears as a sedate and secluded suburb of Norwich, the area has been settled for many centuries and has a surprisingly rich history.

The area was formerly part of the Manor of Thorpe, granted in 1101 by Henry I to Bishop Herbert de Losinga (who commissioned the cathedral). In 1556 the 'city liberty' was established to the east of the City, confirming its enlargement and separation from Norfolk in 1404. Subsequently it became known as 'that part of Thorpe within the city liberty' and then Thorpe next to Norwich, and fell within the Parish of Thorpe St. Andrew or Thorpe-next-Norwich forming part of the Blofield Hundred. It was not until 1852 that the separate Parish of St Matthew's was formed.

Until the 19th century various tracks leading to Mousehold Heath and Thorpe Woods crossed through the area. Archaeological evidence indicates that an old Roman track, which later became known as the Pilgrim's Way, passed through Thorpe Hamlet, crossing the River at the site of Bishop Bridge, up Gas Hill and through the Mousehold Estate. Later, horseback and coaches went along a track called the 'Ranworth Way' that went up

Stowte Hill (Stowte or straight, meaning hard or difficult) which later became Kett's Hill. In the 18th century the main route through the area was the Yarmouth turnpike, which ran to the south of the conservation area along Rosary Road.

**In 1101 it was recorded that Bishop Herbert de Losinga acquired for the church the Manor of Thorpe and Thorpe Woods from Henry I. He established two ecclesiastical sites within Thorpe Hamlet, St Michael's Church and St Leonard's Priory.**

St Michael's was built to replace the Saxon church of St Michael's near Tombland, demolished during the construction of the cathedral, and was serviced by monks from the Priory. The Priory became an important pilgrimage site, second only to the Cathedral in the Norwich area.

**Following the dissolution of the monasteries in 1538, St Leonard's Priory was granted to Thomas, 3rd**

**Duke of Norfolk (1474-1554) and in 1544 his son, Henry Howard, the Earl of Surrey (1517-1547), built a 'sumptuous' house on the site called Mount Surrey.**

The historian Nott described the house as being "purely Greek, and that it was the first specimen of a building formed correctly on ancient models seen in the kingdom".

However, in 1547 the Earl was executed for treason. In 1549 the house and the remains of St Leonard's and St Micheal's were used by Kett as the headquarters of the 'Kings Great Camp', and following his defeat it is said that the house was ransacked.

The destruction could only have been partial since the house was granted by Elizabeth I to Thomas Howard (1536-1572), the 4th Duke of Norfolk. The Duke was also executed for treason in 1572. His son, Phillip Howard, subsequently occupied the house and entertained the Queen there during her visit to

## HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

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*Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey by Holbein 1542*

Norwich in 1578. He was also found guilty of treason, and was imprisoned in the Tower of London until his death in 1595.

During the 17th century the Howards abandoned Mount Surrey and moved to Howard House on King Street. The house subsequently fell into disrepair, and by the 18th century a farmhouse occupied the site. By the 19th century another farmhouse, known as St Leonard's Priory, had been built, occupied by the Norwich historian Walter Rye at the turn of the century. This house was also later demolished in the 1970s to make way for two modern houses. The ruins of St Michael's Chapel remained extensive until the 19th century and became a City landmark, known as 'Kett's



*Ruins of St Leonard's Priory in 1809 (drawn by R. Dixon)*

Castle' and 'Old Father Tyme', since from a distance to the north and west the wall resembled the face of an old man. Only partial ruins of both historic sites now remain.

By the beginning of the 19th century the plateau surrounding St Leonard's Road, then known as Green Lane, was characterised by uncultivated wasteland and market gardens with the occasional isolated cottage or windmill. In 1830 a Gas Works was established at the foot of St Leonard's Hill (later Gas Hill) and within a few years a closely built up area of small cottages and houses had been built on the plateau.

Growth of the settlement continued throughout the 19th century, encouraged by the granting of parish status in 1852 and the building of a local school in 1853 on St Matthew's Road just outside the Conservation Area (since demolished). The gas manager's gardens, now turned into Kett's Heights, and the Gasholders, were not built until the turn of the century.

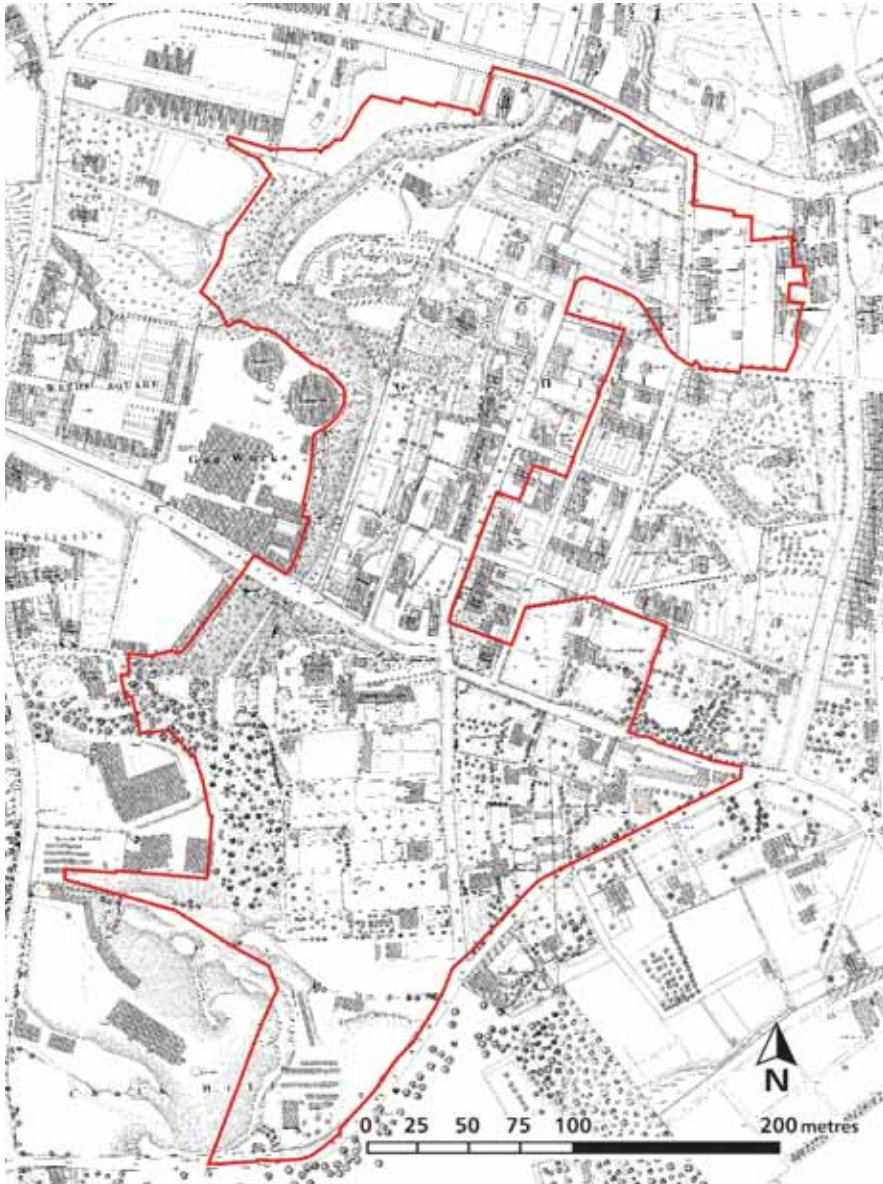
During the mid 19th century the painter and drawing master John Berney Ladbrooke (1803-79), a member of the Norwich School of Painters, purchased a plot of land overlooking Norwich from Kett's Heights and built the gothic house known as Kett's Castle Villa in 1857. A flint entrance archway facing onto St Leonard's Road bears the family crest, now much weathered. Of particular interest were the gardens he created which contain several follies including genuine medieval arches which may have originated from St Michael's Church. Ladbrooke is buried in the nearby Rosary Cemetery.

Another important figure in the history of the settlement was General Richard J. Harvey, a member of the Harvey family who were prominent in Norwich throughout the 18th and



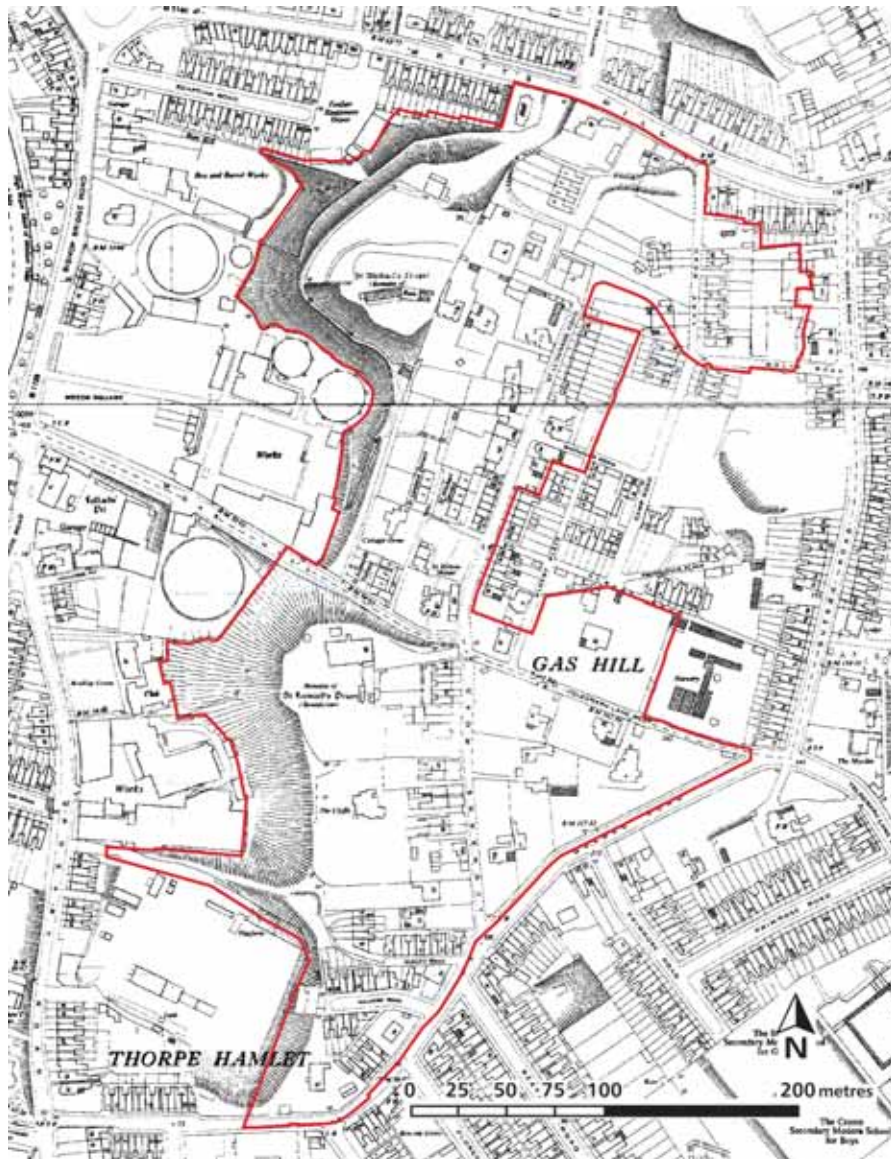
## O.S. MAP 1885 THORPE HAMLET HISTORIC MAP

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## O.S. MAP 1958 THORPE HAMLET HISTORIC MAP



## HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

19th century. Harvey lived at Mousehold House, and according to the tithe map of 1842 he owned several parcels of land in Thorpe Hamlet including the triangle of land enclosed by Telegraph Lane West, St Leonard's Road and Quebec Road where he built several large houses.

A number of well constructed flint boundary walls remain with stone tablets bearing his name.

Throughout the 20th century the settlement remained relatively unchanged until the slum clearances of the 1960s and 70s.

The redevelopment of the Camp Road area to the north and east of the conservation area included the demolition of several small terraces, Firland Dale (a large late 19th century house set within spacious grounds) and the loss of several roads laid out in the 19th century. The only buildings of significant interest built during this period are those designed by the architects Tayler & Green and the new St Matthew's Church on Telegraph Lane West.



Construction of gas holder. Photograph ©Norfolk County Council



Photo of JB Ladbrook



The initial 'J.B.L.' and '1862' above the gateway to Ketts Castle Villa



Picture of Lieut. Gen. Sir R. J. Harvey



Plaque dated 1858 on the garden wall of 28 Telegraph Lane West

## URBAN DESIGN AND STREETScape

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The area has few of the unifying townscape characteristics that typify a planned urban area. Instead, the limited access, the narrow and enclosed feel of St Leonard's Road and Telegraph Lane West, the irregular layout of buildings, and boundary treatments such as flint walls and hedges, all contribute to lending the area a more rural feel.

The isolated and secluded nature of the settlement is partly the result of the narrow access along Gas Hill, St Leonard's Road and Telegraph Lane West. Because there are no through routes, traffic has been virtually eliminated, creating a very quiet atmosphere, unusual considering the close proximity of the area to the city centre.

Although located on top of a plateau overlooking the city, panoramic views across to the city from St Leonard's Road are limited from public areas. Where glimpses can be found, (such as near the footpath leading from St Leonard's Road to Gas Hill), the views of the city and local landmarks are impressive.

Unfortunately much of the development during the 1960s and 1970s on the fringes of the conservation area has weakened the cohesive character of the settlement as a whole, failing to recreate the same level of intimacy.

Referring back to the map of sub areas, sub area A provides a wooded undeveloped escarpment, which acts as an edge and buffer to the Conservation Area to the west, separating it from the city below and the neighbouring landmark gasholders. The natural character of this area is described in more detail in the later section.

The bulk of the conservation area, characterised predominantly by mid 19th century to early 20th century development, forms sub area B. It has several unusual urban design characteristics. Many houses have their principal elevation facing south or west rather than towards the road, and are also set back behind other buildings so that they are only accessible along driveways and hidden within general street views. Some of the terraces are also 'doubled up', so that the rear terrace is only linked to the street via an alleyway. There is a very strong feeling of enclosure provided along the street, which is lost in front of St Michael's Terrace where the space has been opened up, leading to 'space leakage'. The only remaining historic

# URBAN DESIGN AND STREETScape

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*View from St Leonard's Road*



*Narrow lanes, flint walls and hedgerows*



*Loss of sense of enclosure in front of St Michael's Terrace*

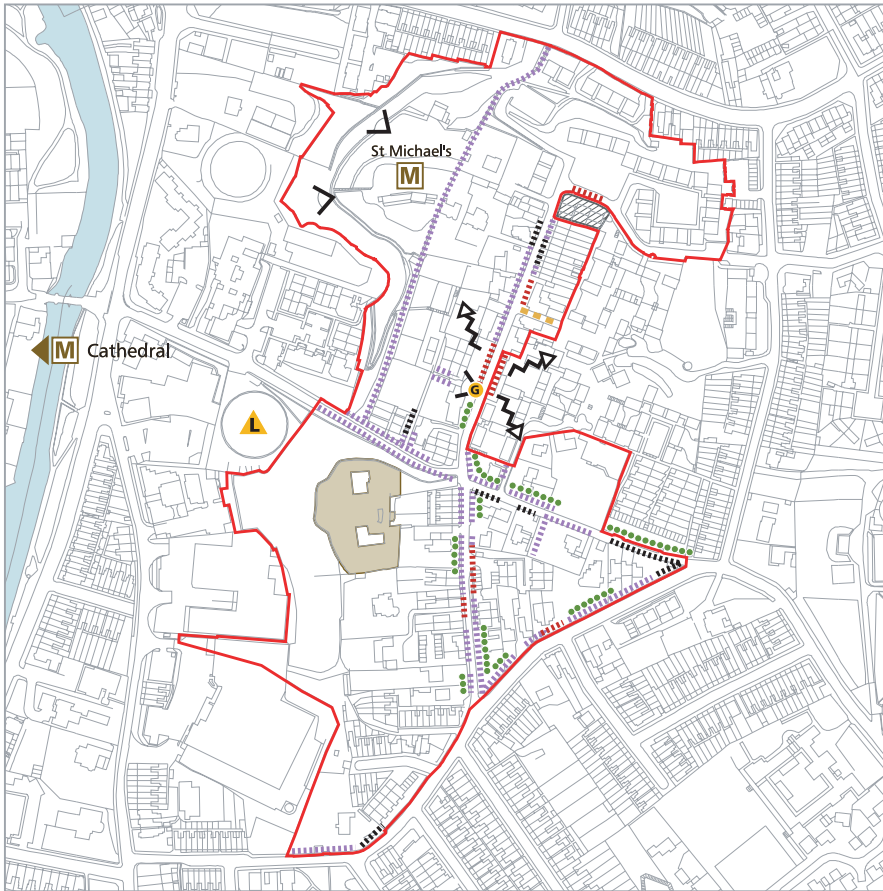
street materials in the area are the granite setts in the lane alongside the Bakers Arms.

Sub area C to the north of the Conservation Area is formed by the Tayler and Green flats developed during the 1970s, planned around two open spaces and built in a contemporary design but using traditional materials. It is unfortunate that the slightly later building to the south of the green is poorly designed with garages at ground floor level. The south side of the square should be redeveloped more sympathetically if the opportunity arises.

Sub area D to the south of the Conservation Area is characterised by two streets of more dense and compact terraces built to the back of the pavement and more urban in appearance and character than the more loosely defined development to the north.



# URBAN DESIGN & STREETSCAPE MAP



## Thorpe Hamlet URBAN DESIGN & STREETSCAPE

### Key



St Leonards  
Scheduled  
Ancient Monument



Monument



Detrimental  
buildings  
(see text)

..... Hedgerow

..... Historic walls  
and railings

..... Important  
boundary walls

..... Loss of boundary  
treatment street  
frontage

▷ Views

▷ G Glimpsed views

..... Historic  
street surface

▲ Landmark

⚡ Space leakage

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# ARCHITECTURE

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The area contains a variety of housing types, architectural styles and materials reflecting the wide range of tastes and styles fashionable during the main period of development between the mid 19th and early 20th century.

The Tithe Map of 1842 (available in the Record Office) shows dispersed development along St Leonard's Road.

These houses are likely to have been modest buildings with little architectural detail; many have since been demolished or extensively altered. St Bentos (62 St Leonard's Road) (1) has a date stone of 1833, although its appearance suggests a later date. The Bakers Arms (2), 109 and 111 (3) St Leonard's Road could also originally date from this period.

The OS map of 1885 shows extensive development of terrace houses, only a few of which now remain.

The earliest surviving terrace appears to be St Leonard's Terrace on Gas Hill (4), which has typical features of the early to mid 19th century period, including flat stone lintels, and elaborate reeded door surrounds and patera. Unfortunately a recent refurbishment replaced the original 6 pane sash windows and timber panelled doors with inappropriate PVC-u substitutes.

During the 1850s a number of large detached houses were built in the southern part of the area, many by the landowner Robert Harvey.



*18-24 Telegraph Lane West*

Common features include red brick double fronted elevations, hipped tiled and slate roofs, gauged brickwork, and sash windows, for example 18-24 Telegraph Lane West. Some houses incorporate unique features, for example the central parapet tower with string course of gargoyle heads at Kett's Castle Villa (1857) (5).

Throughout the late 19th century the use of decorative features on both small and larger houses increased as manufacturing processes improved. This was especially the case with brickwork, such as dentilled eaves courses, which is evident at Priory House (71 St Leonard's Road) (6). Costessey white bricks, an important local material produced from gault



# ARCHITECTURE

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*St Leonard's Road (68-86 (even))*



*St Michael's Terrace*



*St Leonard's Road Tayler and Green housing*

clays and characteristic of the Norwich area, became fashionable for front elevations, as demonstrated along Guelph Road (7) and St Leonard's Road Terrace (dating from 1886) (8). Lower quality red bricks were often used for side and rear elevations. Victorian four pane sash windows with window horns replaced smaller six pane windows as manufacturing of glass improved. The former Mount Zion church (9) also dates from this period

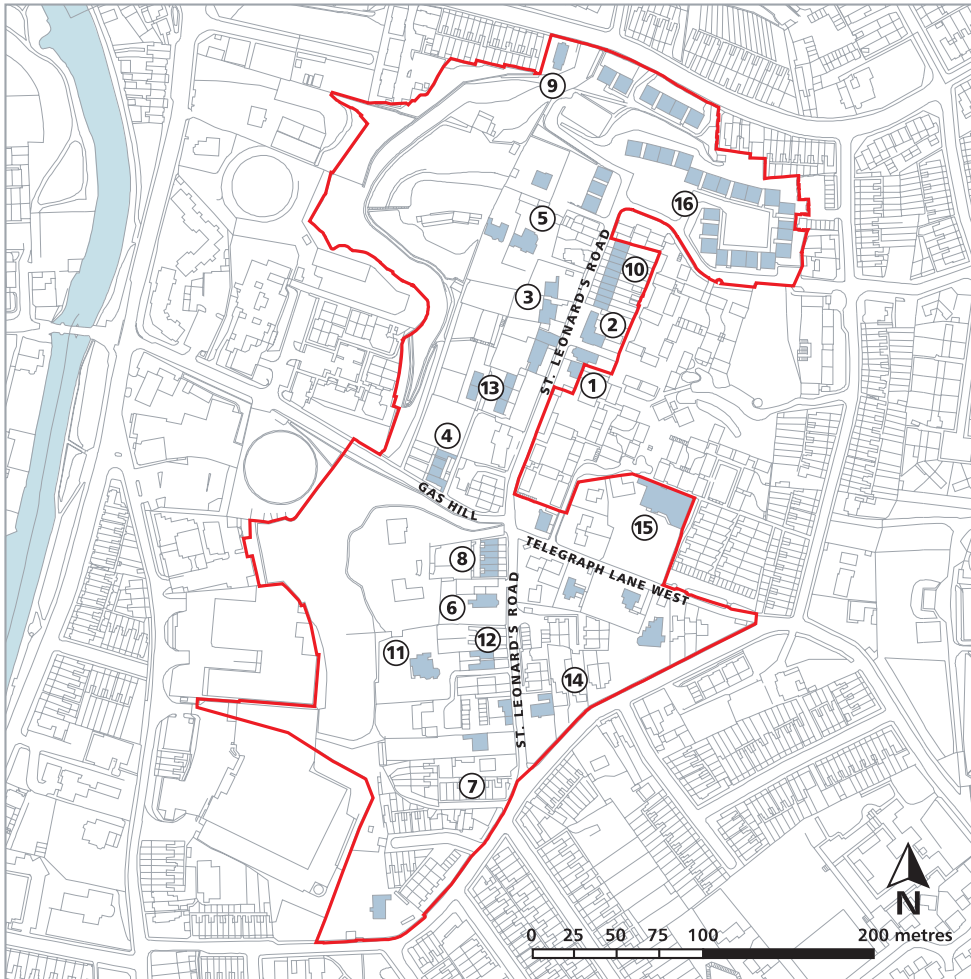
Towards the end of the 19th century and throughout the Edwardian period 'vernacular revival' detailing originating from the arts and crafts movement became more commonplace.

This is demonstrated in the 'cottage style' roughcast rendering used for the row of terraces at the top end of St Leonard's Road (68-86 (even)), which date from 1908 (10), and the half timbering and herringbone brickwork used as decoration for Cliffe House (1905) (11). Window fashion also changed with a return to smaller panes of glass, particular for the upper sashes, as can be seen on the semi-detached houses 63-65 St Leonard's Road (12). Also from this period is the very unusual terrace built of clinker from the gas works dating from the early 20th century, known as St Michael's Terrace (13).

**The majority of late 20th century development is characterised by its utilitarian appearance, with a few exceptions.**

Of some interest is 2A Quebec Road (14) designed as interlocking cubes, its style typical of the 1960s and 70s. Also of interest is the neo vernacular design of St Matthew's Church (15), which has traditional flint facing, and the development of Ladbroke Place and St Leonard's Road (16), a good example of 1970s social housing designed by Tayler and Green, incorporating local materials and with interesting decorative brickwork patterns to the gable ends.

# HISTORIC BUILDINGS MAP



## Thorpe Hamlet HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Key

 Locally listed buildings

- Pics over leaf:  
From left to right*
1. Gable end –  
26 Telegraph Lane West
  2. Chimney stack –  
63-65 St Leonard's Road
  3. Chimney stack –  
St Leonard's Road Terrace
  4. Clinker construction –  
St Michael's Terrace,  
St Leonard's Road
  5. C19th decorative lintel –  
St Bento's Cottage, St Leonard's Road
  6. Decorative rendering –  
68-86 (even) St Leonard's Road
  7. Door pediment –  
117 St Leonard's Road
  8. Flint wall –  
111 St Leonard's Road
  9. Door pediment –  
65 St Leonard's Road

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.





## NATURAL CHARACTER

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*Entry to Kett's Heights*



*Kett's Heights Park*



*Well defined boundaries with hedges  
St Leonard's Road Terrace*

The steepness of the chalk escarpment to the west has prevented any major development, resulting in a 'green wedge' of trees and greenery and an important refuge for wildlife. The area provides an important backdrop to views within the City Centre and is of strategic importance to the city as a whole, not just the Conservation Area.

The only part of the escarpment open to the public is Kett's Heights public park (formerly known as Jubilee Gardens). During 1985 to 1986 the park was restored by Norwich Wildlife Group, local residents and the City Council. Mature and overgrown sycamores were replaced with a more varied selection of trees including oak, ash, hawthorn and broom. To the north of St Michael's Church are the remains of a former orchard of apple and pear trees, a stables and drinking trough, dating from the time the gardens were an allotment during the early part of the century. The unusual boundary walls of the park were constructed of waste clinker from the gas works during the late 19th century when the terraced gardens were laid out by the Gas Manager.

The central part of the Conservation Area is also characterised by the many front gardens and hedgerows, and these make a significant contribution to the informal village feel of the area.

# NATURAL CHARACTER MAP



## Thorpe Hamlet NATURAL CHARACTER

### Key



Park



Trees



TPO sites -  
Areas

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | 4 |
| 2 | 5 |
| 3 | 6 |

--- Wooded escarpment

# MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS



The City Council is committed to enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area over the next five years, and has set out a programme of planned enhancement. This list will be reassessed five years after the adoption of the appraisal.

The success of the Conservation Area also depends upon the care that individual owners take with the maintenance and repair of their

properties and in any alterations they make. The list therefore also contains details on how private owners can also seek to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The programme sets goals for enhancement under the following categories:

- (S) Short Term**  
Straightforward enhancement proposals, which should be relatively easy to achieve or are included in existing work programmes
- (M) Medium Term**  
Involves some expenditure and/or complexity
- (L) Long Term**  
Complex proposals involving larger financial commitments

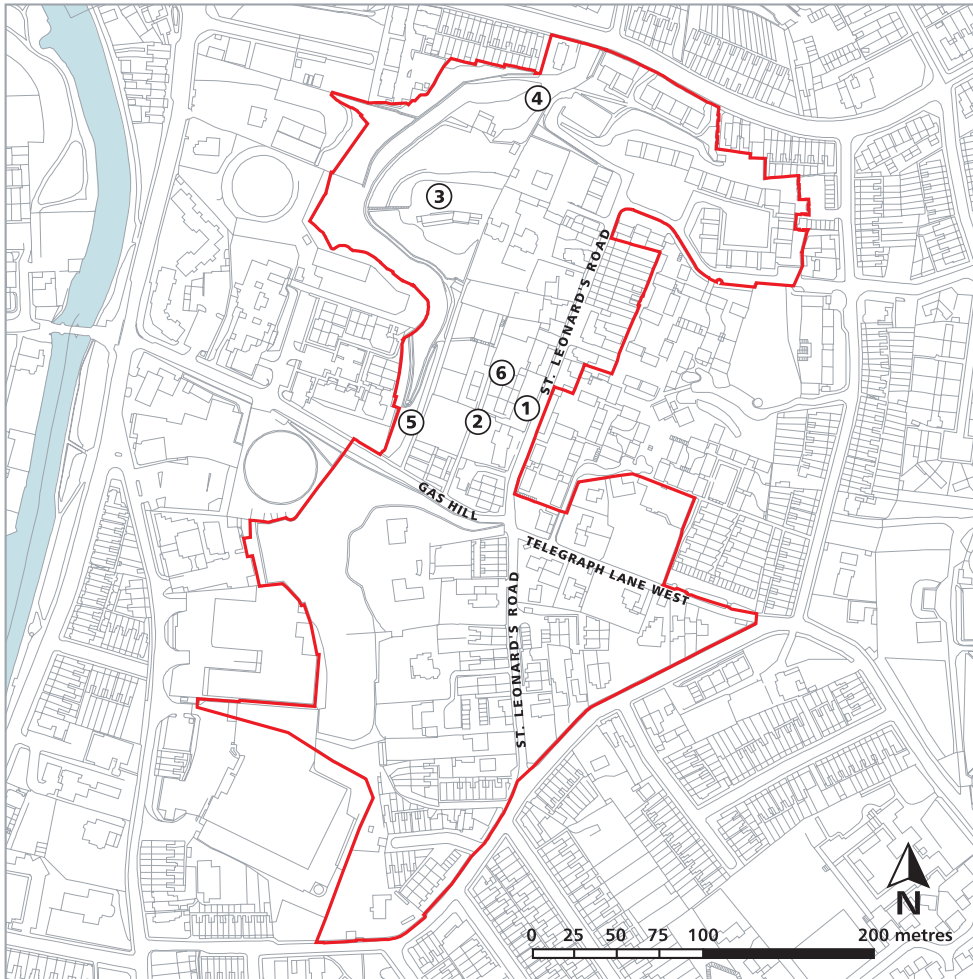
No.		Location	Issue	Action	Term	Responsibility
1		St Leonard's Road	Loss of sense of enclosure	Reinstatement of boundary walls, railings and hedges will be encouraged.	L	Highways & Property Owners
2		Footpath between St Leonard's Road and Gas Hill	Footpath in poor condition, partly due to subsidence	Repair and resurface footpath	S	Highways



## MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

No.		Location	Issue	Action	Term	Responsibility
3		Ruins of St Michael's Church	Ruins are in a poor state of repair with overgrown vegetation	Remove vegetation and carry out consolidation work. Explore schemes to assist community management.	M	Community & Neighbourhoods
4		Kett's Heights	Footpaths in a poor state of repair	Repair footpaths	M	Community & Neighbourhoods
5		Kett's Heights	Closure of footpath from Gas Hill to Kett's Heights.	Reinstate footpath between Kett's Heights and Gas Hill to improve access to public space.	L	Community & Neighbourhoods
6		Various	Unsympathetic alterations to historic buildings, such as installing uPVC top opening windows.	Reinstatement of original features, such as traditional styles of window, will be encouraged.	S - L	All Property owners

# MANAGEMENT & ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS MAP



## Thorpe Hamlet MANAGEMENT & ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

### Key

- ① to ⑥ Management and Enhancement sites (see text)

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## FURTHER READING

Barringer, Christopher (1984)  
**Norwich in the nineteenth century**

Goreham, Geoffrey (1964)  
**A History of the Residential and Industrial Development of Thorpe Hamlet in the City of Norwich**

## LOCAL LIST

There are no statutory listed buildings in the conservation area, however a number of buildings are included in the local list for their architectural and/or historical importance. These buildings are valued for their contribution to the local scene, or for local historical associations, but do not merit full statutory protection. The list is due to be updated.

**Gas Hill**  
1, 1-3 'St Leonard's Terrace',  
4 & 5 'St Leonard's Terrace'

**St Leonard's Road**  
27, 57, 57a, 'The Clyffe',  
71 'Priory House',  
73-88 'St Leonard's Road Terrace',  
1-3 St Michael's Terrace  
107 Cliffe House, 107a, 109, 111,  
113, 113a, 117, 66 'Bakers Arms PH',  
64, 62, 36, 30a

**Telegraph Lane West**  
18-24 (formerly 4 Quebec Road),  
26, 28

The following buildings are proposed for inclusion on the Local List:

**63 & 65 St Leonard's Road**  
Good example of turn of the century semi-detached houses, still retaining many original features.

**68-86 (even) St Leonard's Road**  
Although some houses have lost their original features, the terrace still forms a cohesive group of early 20th century housing, with roughcast rendering (including the date on No. 74) an important feature.

**119 – 255 (odd) St Leonard's Road**  
A housing estate by the architects Tayler and Green, nationally recognised for their contribution to the revival of the locally responsive 'neo-vernacular' architectural style of the 1970s

**St Matthew's Church, Telegraph Lane West**  
Built in 1982 as a replacement for the 19th century St Matthew's Church on St Matthew's Road. Designed in a neo-vernacular style using traditional materials for the area including flint and pantiles.



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## CONTACT DETAILS

PLANNING SERVICES

CITY HALL

NORWICH NR2 1NH

TEL: 01603 212212

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PLEASE PHONE 01603 212212, FAX 01603 213000 OR EMAIL [INFO@NORWICH.GOV.UK](mailto:INFO@NORWICH.GOV.UK)