



east corner of Bassett Street has an open car park surrounded by concrete bollards serving a single storey block of late-1920s shops on Dunton Street.

- 6.45 Only the south east side of Dunton Street has a domestic character with a block of seven C19 terraced houses on the back of the footpath. The railings and trees around the Bassett Centre are an attractive feature, whilst the vista north crosses Blaby Road and runs on up Fairfield Street before finally being blocked by the 1920s terraces on Kirkdale Road. The shorter view south is blocked by the 1930s semis on Timber Street.

Blaby Road

- 6.46 Blaby Road is the main commercial street in South Wigston and contains some fine individual buildings and terraces of good quality. The latter in particular have been robbed of character, particularly where later shop fronts have been formed in what were houses. The road runs east - west and there are long views down the numerous streets to the north and south.
- 6.47 Along Blaby Road, the view west is the most appealing with the repetitive bays of the terraces, gables of the Hotel and the end feature of St Thomas' Church tower contributing to the strong townscape. Unlike the streets of terraced housing, there are several street trees which have been heavily pollarded, seemingly for many years.

SOUTH SIDE

- 6.48 The eastern boundary of the Conservation Area is formed by the park which was established in 1929. An avenue of mature trees helps to screen the rear of the industrial buildings on Canal Street which effectively demarcate the line of the old railway line. Some C19 iron



fencing lines the footpath on the west boundary of the park.

- 6.49 The row of shops between the old railway crossing and Canal Street are thought to be the first properties to be constructed in South Wigston. From the turn of the century until the 1960s the premises were Huddleston's Garage. Sadly these are in poor condition and the blank gable end, together with the derelict 1960s office building which is very visible across an area of derelict land, is a poor introduction to the town.
- 6.50 On the corner of Canal Street stood Warwick House, originally one of the most imposing of the town's stores. Although it has lost much of its architectural detailing, it has the potential to be restored. This building has been extended west to virtually adjoin the Methodist Church. This was built 1886 and part of the early building survived as schoolrooms to the rear when the church was largely rebuilt in 1902. The frontage is imposing with a central gable with a large window with Perpendicular tracery flanked by shorter castellated wings. The frontage was slightly altered again in 1971.
- 6.51 Next to the Methodist Church is a modern red brick working men's club and then a very unusual row of shops and houses with Gothic arched window heads and very unusual deep eaves detailing. Originally these were all houses and were built in 1884 as part of the first phase of building in the town. Whilst the first floor retains considerable character, the insertion of shopfronts at ground floor level has been rather clumsy and the heavy fascia signs and Dutch blinds are especially jarring.
- 6.52 The Co-op store has occupied the site since before 1900. The original building, which is evident in the central first floor range, was given a facelift in the Edwardian era when the flanking bays were added and the shopfront remodelled. Whilst the first floor is still of great character, any character at ground floor level has been



The former Ritz Cinema, Blaby Road



The vicarage, Blaby Road



St Thomas' Church, Blaby Road

obliterated by the clumsy fascia which runs unbroken into the extension to the west.

- 6.53 Beyond Dunton Street are a small block of terraced shops on the footpath edge and then the taller 1938 façade of the former Ritz Cinema. This is of red brick and render and in the 'Moderne' style so popular for cinemas of the time. It replaced a more modest 'Picture House'. Beyond this, the terrace which runs to the corner of Countesthorpe Road was again part of the first phase of building and was built as houses. The upper floors have windows with mullions and the eaves of 'special' bricks are quite pronounced. By 1914, the houses on the west end had been converted to shops and now all of them are in retail use.
- 6.54 West of Countesthorpe Road is a modern development of flats and then the Vicarage built c 1899 to the designs of Stockdale Harrison. The Grade II Listed Building has an attractive entrance front with a shaped gable above the arched entrance door. Typically of the town it is of red brick with a slate roof. The finials on the gable, chimney stacks and hipped roof all contribute to an interesting silhouette.

NORTH SIDE

- 6.55 Opposite the vicarage is St Thomas' Church. The first church was built in 1886 and was constructed of corrugated iron. The current St Thomas' Church opened in 1893 and was built without its tower which followed in 1901. Like the vicarage, the church was designed by Stockdale Harrison. It is of brick with a Westmorland Slate roof. The entrance is at the south west end through the base of the tower which is topped by a lead fleche. At the east end of the church on the road boundary is the war memorial and next to it the schoolrooms of 1928. These are in a Georgian Revival style and replaced the tin church. Between the two is the Portland stone War Memorial, set into the churchyard wall, which was erected after the First World War.



- 6.56 The terraces on the north side were again mostly built as housing and more survive than on the opposite side of the road. The terrace between Leopold and Fairfield Streets is quite ornate with full-height canted bays and at the east end is the Marquis Of Queensbury (originally the Duke of Clarence). This is a fine late C19 building with ornate brick gables facing the street. Although only two storeys, its scale is grander than the domestic buildings beside it. Another terrace with bay windows links to the Congregational Chapel, gable end on to the street, which opened in 1897. Next to it was The Limes, a large house with a sizeable greenhouse. It was originally the home of Mr Gamble the boot manufacturer. It is now part of the Conservative Club and has been much altered.
- 6.57 At the east end of the next block stood Ashbourne, the home of Orson Wright the founder of South Wigston. This was demolished in 1962 and is now a row of bland yellow brick shops. Between Glen Gate and Station Street were more C19 nicely-detailed purpose-built shops, whilst east of Station Street, and on a very odd plot is the Helping Hands Community Trust. This has an attic storey formed in a prominent central squared gable. It was originally a pair of shops and has been robbed of character by the modern shop windows and painting of the façade. If restored it would complement the former Warwick House building on the south side of the road.

Saffron Road

- 6.58 Despite the presence of Orson Wright's burgeoning brick works on the west side of the road, Saffron Road was the home of the new township's businessmen and professionals and substantial houses were built a few years after the main part of the town.
- 6.59 The houses are mostly arranged in pairs. The nearest pair to the church is the plainest and the rather stark gable end of the southernmost house is quite visible to the rear of the church. Like the

No 14 Saffron Road



Sheltered housing scheme, Saffron Road



View east along Kirkdale Road



grander houses, these have two storey bay windows, though the houses further north have prominent gables facing the street.

- 6.60 Nos. 10 & 12 are of 2.5, the rest two storeys. No. 14 was the grandest house with tile hanging and a first floor oriel window. This has been linked to the final pair of houses which have lost their chimneys and, in the case of no 16, its front wall. Most of the properties retain brick front boundaries, some with hedges.
- 6.61 Beyond these villas, up to the corner of Kirkdale Road, stood Toon and Black's Shoe factory. This was a very ornate range of buildings of eclectic design with oriental and Eastern European influences. On the site today is a modern two storey sheltered housing scheme of brick with a rendered first floor and with prominent gables to the street. The modern houses up to railway line are outside the Conservation Area.
- 6.62 The west side of the road is also outside the Conservation Area and has various C20 commercial buildings and several 1930s houses towards the railway line. The only older building was probably the caretaker's house for the brickworks which appears on the 1886 Ordnance Survey Map.

Kirkdale Road

- 6.63 Kirkdale Road is a long road running east-west which bends gently near the lane to the railway footbridge. The road is blocked by bollards at the west end to prevent 'rat running' through the residential streets.
- 6.64 To the south is the modern block of Jasmine Court, the sheltered housing scheme, whilst to the north is an open car park with views of the rear of the modern houses next to the railway line on Saffron Road. This site was originally occupied by another eight houses at the end of the long late C19 terrace on the north side of the road.



- 6.65 The remaining part of this terrace stands east of the closure point, and runs along the north side all the way to the path over the railway line. The houses stand on the back of the footpath and are arranged in pairs with snickets through to the rear in-between. Each house has just a single window on each floor and originally a panelled front door with fanlight. The door and window heads are rather mannered though the brick eaves cornice is attractive. Parking bays for the houses have been incorporated in front of the houses on the north side.
- 6.66 The house at the east end is larger and substantially altered though the two storey outbuilding to the rear is probably contemporary with the house. From the painted brick railway bridge are views up and down the railway line and of the rear of the properties on the north side of Kirkdale Road.
- 6.67 Beyond the path over the railway line are 22 1930s houses all sat on the back of the footpath and with rendered walls and slate roofs which step down in blocks. Beyond are a small group of C19 houses and at the end a modern factory with a very domestic façade to the street. The large area of factory units beyond this building to the east of Station Road is allocated in the Local Plan for redevelopment.
- 6.68 The south side is much more fragmented and mostly comprises the gable ends of properties on the streets which lead down to Blaby Road. There is an attractive former shop with a corner entrance on the east corner of Clifford Street. The 1930s houses at the top of Leopold Street generally have poor quality fences lining Kirkdale Road. Two pairs of 1920s houses of render with slate roofs face the road between Leopold and Fairfield Streets, The next block to Albion Street has mostly commercial buildings though a two storey element of this with a weatherboarded first floor is of some interest.



Jasmine Court

- 6.69 Jasmine Court is a modern two storey development of sheltered housing. The main block faces Saffron Road. Two blocks face Kirkdale Road either side of the access road which is faced by another block. Although the building forms and brick and slate building materials are suitable, there is rather excessive use of render and the convoluted road layout is at odds with the simple grid of streets in the area.

Clifford Street

- 6.70 Clifford Street runs north-south between Kirkdale Road and Blaby Road and is the only street in the township which is entirely lined by late C19 terraced houses. The majority of the houses are virtually identical with a bay window and door at ground floor with a window above. The first floor windows were originally sashes with margin panes, but virtually all have been replaced. Some of the canted bays with their original lead roofs survive with the original fenestration pattern (multi-paned upper sashes with two-light lower sashes in the big central window). Many houses retain their low brick garden walls, though originally they were topped with low ornamental railings. Roughly in the middle of the west side are a pair of grander houses, whilst nearer Blaby Road, also on the west side, is a detached house with a former workshop behind. At the ends of the street are shops, facing either Blaby Road or Kirkdale Road.
- 6.71 Despite the various alterations, the street retains considerable character though it is instantly evident how much altering the shapes of the bay windows damages the rhythm of the street. There is no greenery along the street despite the widening of the footpaths. This has been rather poorly done in 'black top' although the granite kerbs have been reused. Despite the footpath widening, the street can easily accommodate parked cars on both sides.



- 6.72 Vistas north are stopped by the terraced houses on Kirkdale Road, and south by the shops on the south side of Blaby Road.

Leopold Street

- 6.73 The southern half of Leopold Street has a similar character to Clifford Street with rows of bay windowed terraced houses of similar character to those on the street to the west. The northern half is different however. These areas were left undeveloped in the new township and were not built on until the late 1920s when pairs of semis were constructed. These have rendered walls and slate roofs; those on the east side are more generously spaced and the larger front gardens allow hedges and even the occasional tree to add greenery to the street. A block of three 1960s houses stand towards the north of the west side of the street.
- 6.74 At the south end, the view west to the backs of the Blaby Road shops, which have rather industrial galvanised fences, is not particularly attractive, whilst the view east is potentially attractive, though the stables visible behind the Marquis of Queensbury are in need of repair and reuse. An attractive brick wall lines the southern part of the road behind No.2 however.

Fairfield Street

- 6.75 Fairfield Street has a similar character to Leopold and Clifford Streets, though the view north is now blocked by the rendered 1920s houses on Kirkdale Road whilst the view south continues across Blaby Road and down Dunton Street to be finally enclosed by the 1920s houses on Timber Street.

Northeast end of Fairfield Street



East side of Albion Street



West side of Albion Street



- 6.76 At the bottom of the street, the extensive range of stables and rear wing of the Marquis of Queensbury are a striking feature of the west side of Fairfield Street visible behind the high well-detailed boundary wall. Beyond, the street is a mirror image of the east side of Leopold Street with bay-windowed terraced houses and 1930s houses at the north end. The east side has a continuous run of terraced houses of the same type as the west side (and several of the other streets north of Blaby Road).
- 6.77 At the north east end of the street, is a larger house with an arched brick entrance porch and originally a side access through to a workshop behind. This is now a garage though the old company sign survives painted on the gable end of the first house in the terrace.

Albion Street

- 6.78 Albion Street has a much more fragmented character than the previous streets with a more diverse range of buildings erected over a longer period than particularly Clifford Street.
- 6.79 At the north west end is a single storey garage followed by 1920s housing of similar character to that on Kirkdale Road. This appears to have been brick built though several properties have now been rendered. Much of the rest of the east side comprises terraced houses but the character of those at the north end is different to those at the south end and the terraces on the other streets. The northern houses have two storey bays and rendered panels at first floor, though the window types in the bays are the same as in the older terraces. This block was built in more than one phase, as only the northern six properties appear on the 1914 Ordnance Survey. The 'infill' can be seen by the step in the roof level. The southern part of the terrace is more conventional with the usual pattern of single storey bays and walls of local brick with continuous stone bands forming the first floor window sills and heads.

1960s surgery, Albion Street



View along Glen Gate



- 6.80 At the south west end of the street was 'The Limes', a large house on Blaby Road with a walled garden behind. This has now become part of the Conservative Club and the garden is a car park and a bland flat roofed extension has replaced the attractive panelled brick wall which lined the footpath. The concrete bollards to prevent people parking on the pavement are equally unattractive.
- 6.81 The east side is probably the only street in South Wigston which contains no late C19 buildings. It appears to have remained the garden to Orson Wright's Ashbourne House until at least 1914. By 1930, four pairs of semi-detached houses had been built together with the angular red brick needle factory which retains its frontage wall and railings. Further south are 1960s houses, a rather incongruous bungalow and an equally incongruous unashamedly 1960s surgery in gault brick with flat roofs, full height glazing and oversailing canopies.
- 6.82 The consequence of these different building forms is that the south end of the street is not very well defined meaning that the gable ends of houses and the blocky needle factory are very prominent. Once more, the view north is stopped by the 1920s rendered houses on Kirkdale Street, whilst the view south is of the Gothic former houses on Blaby Road.

Glen Gate

- 6.83 The houses on the west side of Glen Gate were some of the earliest built in the new township and when built the terrace of 37 houses was probably the longest in South Wigston. The houses have no front gardens and had paired sash windows with a central mullion on each floor. The eaves had corbelled brickwork to the eaves. Several of the properties have been rendered and painted in recent years and few original windows and doors survive. The majority of the houses on the east side, a continuous terrace of 28 houses also on the back of

East side of Glen Gate



C19 shopfront on east side of Glen Gate



West side of Station Street



the footpath were built later in the century. The ground floor windows and door are set within arched rendered panels; the first floor windows are in rectangular panels. The shop on the south end of the east terrace retains a very fine C19 shopfront.

- 6.84 The north east end of the street has a late 1920s terrace of six houses with rendered walls again without front gardens. At the south end of the street, the west side is formed by the bland flank wall of the supermarket which is red brick with render above. Opposite is an open car park protected by stumpy concrete bollards with taller concrete bollards to prevent parking on the pavement.
- 6.85 The car parking lay-bys in the street are demarcated by trees. The view north is blocked by the terraced houses on Kirkdale Road, whilst that to the south is stopped by the Wesleyan Methodist Church on Blaby Road.

Station Street

- 6.86 Station Street has different characters on each of its sides. To the west is a block of 1920s terraced houses (corresponding to those on Glen Gate behind). To the south is a block of 28 C19 terraced houses also on the footpath edge with patterned brick arched window and door heads and decorative eaves. Once again these were some of the first houses built in the new township. The building on the west corner of Blaby Road has an attractive gable and fine brick wall behind, though both sides of the road have unattractive concrete bollards arranged to prevent vehicles parking on the pavement.
- 6.87 The west side of the street has a much more industrial character. At the north end is the bus depot. The earliest part of the low two storey building is of red brown brick and in 'Modern Movement style with typical metal windows, Further south is a modern brick and sheet



metal shed which, like the view over the car park to the south of it, does little to enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area. 8a Station Street was used/built as the fire station.

- 6.88 Beyond is a converted gault and red brick former clothing factory with lower former houses now small scale commercial premises and shops. Several have been rendered and painted.
- 6.89 The northern eastern end of the street lacks the enclosure of space found in the majority of streets in the town as the buildings are set back from the street frontage behind a low wall with open car parking behind. The vista up the street to the north is of the modern commercial premises on Kirkdale Road which ape the terraced houses in the area, whilst looking south the view is blocked by the derelict shops turning the corner from Canal Street onto Blaby Road.
- 6.90 A summary townscape appraisal is shown on Map 2.