

TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS: SPA LANE

> Overview of the area

The Spa Lane area of Wigston is part of the original Anglo-Saxon core of Wigston Magna Village and contains St Wistan's Church which is central to Wigston's history. St Wistan's is the other of the 'Two Steeples' of the Wigston Magna District of Two Steeples' as the settlement came to be known by 1529.

Spa Lane retains elements of the village street that it once was, with the sole remaining farmhouse in the area. The nineteenth century weaving industry introduced light-industrial buildings into the street scene and this has been supplemented by later twentieth century industrial and commercial development.

Today the area contains a mixture of residential and industrial uses reflecting a later period of the village's development and is a valuable record of Wigston's working past. There are, however, a number of vacant and/or unsightly areas within the Conservation Area, but these offer scope for appropriate and well-designed development in the future.

> Key characteristics

Scale

Most domestic properties are of a modest two storeys, except the grander properties, which are of, or have the scale of, three storeys. The industrial buildings are generally also of two storeys, but appear larger because of their greater floor to ceiling heights.

Materials

Generally a local red brick is used for both industrial and domestic buildings; this has, in some cases, been rendered over at a later date. Roofs were probably originally all of Swithland or Welsh slate, but some have now been replaced with concrete tiles.

Detailing

The industrial buildings are characterised by their large windows, with the long windows denoting framework knitting, a particular feature of the earliest 'industrial' buildings which are usually adapted residential properties. Chimneys add interest to the roofscape of the residential properties, most of which have unfortunately lost their original windows, although the window heads often remain.

Trees and open space

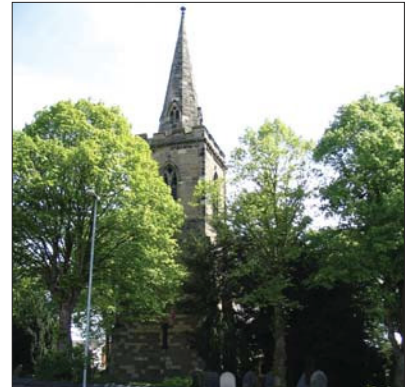
The key tree group is around St Wistan's Church, although this is actually slightly overgrown. Outside the Conservation Area, but important to views from within, is the row of trees at the rear of the site of the former Queens' Head Public House. The garden of Nos. 7 & 9 Spa Lane adds welcome greenery to the streetscene.

Boundaries

There is no distinct style of boundary treatment, and more often than not, the buildings sit on the back of the footpath. Only the Church and St Wolstan's House have significant boundary walls.

Views

The relatively confined nature of the streets means that views within the Conservation Area are short. The key long view is over the rooftops of the Kings Centre and towards the trees of Peace Memorial Park in the centre of Wigston.



St Wistan's Church



Spa Lane - view west



2, 2a and 4 Spa Lane



The Chestnuts - 7 Spa Lane