

WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
CIVIC AMENITIES ACT, 1967

The report which follows explains the "Conservation Area" for Coleshill. A plan showing a preliminary Conservation Area has been produced and consultations with the Meriden Rural District Council and other interested organisations have been carried out, the views and comments received have been taken into account.

ON 14TH MAY, 1969, THE WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FORMALLY DESIGNATED THE AREA WITHIN THE TOWN OF COLESHILL AS SHOWN ON MAP NO. M/DSS/2/1A, AS A "CONSERVATION AREA" IN ACCORDANCE WITH SEC.I OF THE CIVIC AMENITIES ACT, 1967.

As part of the new approach to Town Planning, the Minister is not required to approve the Map; the intention being to speed up the planning process and to allow greater local participation.

The map showing the designated area is not a Development Plan or a complete policy on conservation the requirement of the Act is just to define the area. The plan at the end of this report is merely a small scale diagrammatic representation of the actual conservation map. In addition to showing the area, some of the general control policies set out in the report are also illustrated. Further policies will follow to give guidance on more detailed matters, all with the object of enhancing the Conservation Area.

THIS REPORT AND A COPY OF THE 1/2500 SCALE MAP DEFINING THE DESIGNATED
CONSERVATION AREA 7/6

THE 1/2500 SCALE MAP DEFINING THE DESIGNATED CONSERVATION AREA CAN BE
OBTAINED SEPARATELY 5/-

May, 1969.

CONSERVATION AREAS - INTRODUCTION

The Civic Amenities Act, 1967, as its heading implies, is concerned with improving the appearance of our towns and the countryside. The Act deals specifically with historic buildings and areas, tree preservation and the disposal of abandoned vehicles and other refuse. Section 1 of Part 1 of the Act requires every local planning authority to determine which parts of its area should be designated as "Conservation Areas".

Previously a local planning authority's preservation powers were limited to individual buildings or groups of buildings of particular merit, but now it is possible to secure the planned retention of historic areas as part of a general policy. There are some areas without buildings of outstanding distinction, which, taken as a whole, provide the distinctive character of a place. Furthermore, with some deterioration, and the consequential effects of the rapid population growth on demands for space, leading to pressures for redevelopment, the Government now recognises the need to keep the 'best parts' of our towns and villages:- those areas containing the good architecture, good civic manners and traditional buildings of the past.

It is unlikely that everyone will agree which are the best parts of a town or village, and one danger could be a loss of effectiveness of the opportunities now provided if an overwhelming sense of conservation is applied.

A conservation area is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve

or enhance'. It may be large or small, from a whole town centre to a small group of buildings. Open spaces or trees may also be significant and might contribute to the special character of an area. In order to define the Conservation Areas, it is necessary firstly to analyse the character of the town or village being examined.

Designation is just a first step, but it enables the Planning Authority and the Minister of Housing and Local Government to acknowledge immediately the particular value of the area by paying special attention to the character and appearance of it when exercising any planning functions. Conservation is not necessarily preservation maintaining everything exactly as it is. The emphasis being on CONTROL RATHER THAN PREVENTION, to allow the area to remain alive and prosperous.

The aim will be to ensure that before planning permission is granted within Conservation Areas satisfactory detailed drawings are prepared. When an "outline" application is received, if there are not likely to be any objections to the principle of the development the applicant will be asked to discuss the preparation of adequate details supporting the application. The local planning authority will look for a very high standard of design. The design of a building should be handled in a sensitive manner, it must have regard to its site, surroundings and neighbouring buildings including the colour and textures of materials. It is therefore important that schemes within conservation areas should be prepared by competent designers with extensive experience. Any design which does not measure up to an acceptable standard will be refused planning permission.

After definition of the Conservation Area the machinery is set in motion to preserve the character, the next stage being to take positive steps on enhancement.

ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTER - COLESHILL

Built on a ridge, the town drops over 100 feet from the church down to the river Cole. One long street, High Street, running north/south, rises from the river bridge to the middle of the town and here, a turning to the east, Church Hill, leads up to the church which crowns the hill and forms a landmark for a considerable area. The heavily trafficked A.47 Birmingham - Muneaton trunk road crosses the High Street at right angles on the slope about 100 yards north of Church Hill.

The settlement straddles the High Street and was once a stopping place for coaches on route from London to Liverpool. Many houses and shops that were once inns still retain the wide covered gateways which give access to courts behind.

Most of the buildings are of 18th century or later date, of red brick with tiled roofs. Some have 17th century indications hidden behind later fronts but only a very few show original timber framing. None of the buildings are of exceptional interest, but the grouping formed by the continuous frontages, variations between two and three storey buildings and the winding High Street, is very marked. New development that has taken place along the High Street has preserved the building lines and fits in with the existing pattern. The tall church spire rises prominently over the roof tops, the church only being glimpsed as a whole through the few breaks in the building line.

The focal point of the town is Church Hill which was, and will again be an enclosure formed by red brick buildings. This, combined with a gentle slope, was no doubt once an imposing approach up to the church, which is offset at the eastern end.

A number of buildings have fallen into a state of disrepair and some have been demolished in the Church Hill area. This impression of dereliction and decay permeating the scene in such an important central location is unfortunate, but it is only a temporary state of affairs while awaiting redevelopment.

Further north as the road falls away towards the river, the continuous frontages characterised nearer the centre begin to break up where old terraces have given way to new development and a disruption of the pattern. Across the river Cole, the 16th century bridge and the open riverside area around, stretches more modern development. This joins the northern end of the A.446 by-pass from where a fine view of the church is obtained with the red brick buildings falling away in confusion down the hill giving little indication of the sorry state of many of them.

The giant industrial complex of Hams Hall power station suddenly dominates the view from the top of the hill in High Street and serves as a reminder of the vast conurbation that lies to the west across a short stretch of open country. The huge cooling towers also intrude into the views from the church yard where the Blythe valley is seen sweeping upwards to the town linking with the attractive "open enclosure" adjoining the church. The view of the power station is obstructed though in the southern part of the town centre by the curving continuous frontages of the buildings in High Street. This particular feature provides much of the interest in Colehill, for it produces continuously changing enclosures when moving along High Street.

THE CONSERVATION AREA - POLICIES

The Conservation Area for Coleshill includes the major part of the High Street, Church Hill area and the open space at the Croft, small sections of Coventry Road, Birmingham Road and Parkfield Road and the open space alongside the River Cole to the north of High Street.

Within the area, the need to conserve the unbroken building lines along the High Street and Church Hill from High Street to the church is imperative. This has been successfully achieved in a few places but there are gaps where old buildings have been demolished and as yet not replaced. It is here that any weaknesses lie. Individual design of buildings must be treated on the merits of each, but the present variations of elevational treatment enhance the streets interest and no doubt the pattern will continue.

The street is marred by the heavy congestion caused by street parking particularly of service vehicles for the numerous shops along the frontage. The existence of Parkfield Road to the west of High Street could, if used to give rear access to many of these properties, help greatly to alleviate the problem.

Church Hill area offers the greatest problem, with buildings of special architectural value on the north side it is clearly desirable and necessary to retain the actual buildings. On the south side, the buildings have been demolished. Apart from the building at the eastern end, there were no individual buildings of particular merit, but together they indicated the importance of the building line in the formation of the enclosure and this building line will be retained in the redevelopment scheme of the Meriden Rural District Council.

The open space around the church commanding the views across the Blythe Valley, emphasises the fact that there has been no eastward spread of development. It is essential that the approach to the town from this direction, along A.47 and Maxstoke Lane, remain open.

Included in the conservation area, is the approach to the town over the river Cole, this occupies a prominent position and provides a foreground setting for the town. The narrow 16th century red sandstone bridge is flanked on either side by an area of open land alongside the river. Because of its important visual and physical position, and because it has considerable potential, this area should be laid out in accordance with a good landscaping scheme to provide an attractive open space and riverside walks.

The skills required in designing new buildings must not be minimised as the problem of integrating old with new is a difficult one and hence the need to engage competent designers with extensive experience in this field. Additional time and cost involved in achieving a scheme of outstanding merit in any important location is little to ask when it is for the benefit of the community at large and is evidence to future generations that responsible citizens of today have understood and acknowledged a valuable area. If the principle of development on a particular site is acceptable, developers will be asked for detailed plans and drawings of proposed development including elevations which show the new development in its setting in order to ensure that the proposals accord with the existing special architectural and visual qualities.

Anything else that can be done to raise the environmental quality of the Conservation Area will be encouraged. For example, the prohibition of some street parking, the selection of street furniture such as street lighting, litter bins, seats etc., of good design and the continued control over unsightly advertisements and miscellaneous clutter.

The definition of the designated area is only a preliminary action to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the town. With the agreement of the Rural District Council it is suggested that a positive scheme of action be adopted. For this purpose a more detailed examination of the Conservation Area will be made later.



COLESHILL CONSERVATION AREA

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Coventry Road, Coleshill Conservation Area

On the 17th October 1995, the North Warwickshire Borough Council, by Minute No 69 of the Planning and Development Committee, formally designated the area of Coleshill shown on the map appended to the Designation Report as a 'Conservation Area' in accordance with Section 69(2) of The Planning(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

In accordance with the Act, the Secretary of State for the Environment has been informed and a Notice of the Decision placed in the London Gazette and in the Coleshill Herald (being a local newspaper circulating in the area) on the (date).

The Coventry Road, Coleshill, Conservation Area

INTRODUCTION

1. The statutory purpose of a Conservation Area is to preserve and enhance its special architectural character or historic interest. It is however the character of an area rather than individual buildings which should be the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas. That character is derived from a range of interrelated factors in particular the geography, history and townscape character of the particular place.
2. The proposed Conservation Area at Coventry Road, Coleshill extends southwards along Coventry Road from No. 82 to its junction with Packington Lane and embraces the Father Hudson's Homes.

BACKGROUND

3. The new Coleshill Road Conservation Area has been designated following the first stage of a review of Coleshill. The area contains a number of buildings and open spaces at the southern approach to the town which are important to the identity and character of the town and is considered worthy of conservation. A review of the existing Coleshill Conservation Area which was designated in 1969 and covers the central area of the town will follow.

GEOGRAPHY

4. Coleshill is located on a pronounced ridge which extends from Coleshill Heath northwards between the valleys of the Rivers Cole and Blyth and continues north

to the River Tame. The Coventry Road runs southwards along this ridge to Coleshill Heath.

HISTORY

5. Coleshill with its river crossing location, developed from being a market town in medieval times to an important stopping place on the coaching route from London to Chester and Holyhead. Olgilby in the C17th noted that this was "one of the most frequented in the country". In the late C18th and early C19th this resulted in the expansion of the Town and many of the important buildings in the centre of the town relate to the resulting prosperity. This is evident in the large number of public houses and coaching inns along the High Street and by the Georgian Buildings constructed in this period, many of which are now listed buildings.
6. By the mid C19th with the growth of the railways, this prosperity declined and the town remained relatively unchanged with few buildings of the Victorian period and Coleshill reverted to being a small market town.
7. The social structure changed and by the late C19th the town with its relatively close proximity to Birmingham became a centre for the professional classes. Development in the early C20th comprised mainly town houses particularly along the Coventry Road. The Father Hudson's Homes were an exception to this with construction of the major complex starting around 1884 and continuing into the 1920's.

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8. The growing prosperity of the town after the second world war has resulted in considerable redevelopment and expansion of the town. As a result it's character has changed particularly along the southern approach where demolition and rebuilding has been prolific.

PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

9. The Coventry Road Conservation Area is characterised by C19th ribbon development along the ancient coaching route, linking Coleshill with the hamlet on the northern edge of Coleshill Heath. The street frontage on the east side comprises the Father Hudson's Homes and on the west side a mixture of villa and terraced houses.

SPACES

7. The Coventry Road area is attractive with mature trees and interesting buildings abutting the road and a series of spaces, with mature gardens particularly to the rear of Father Hudson's Houses.
8. To the west of the Coventry Road, the houses are either set behind mature hedges and trees or set directly on the road frontage. Recent developments such as Ferndale Court are set back from the road with the boundary defined by walls or railings. The frontage to the road reflects a diversity of development and spaces.
9. To the east, the Father Hudson's Homes complex incorporates a number of important open spaces which include; the area around the Church of the Sacred Head & St. Teresa; the Avenue to the rear; and the ornamental gardens to the east of the Warwickshire Orthopaedic Hospital.
10. The larger buildings of Father Hudson's Homes are set against the more domestic buildings on the east side of the Coventry

Road and this presents an interesting and rich array of spaces which contrast the modern development which bound the area to the south, east and west.

11. At the junction of Packington Lane and Coventry Road is a space formerly occupied by the livestock pound for Coleshill Heath, defined and enclosed by Pound Cottage and Petworth House.

TREES

12. The mature trees which border the road are significant in the street scene. Within the Father Hudson's Homes complex the mature trees are important not only in defining the spaces but in the setting of the building, particularly when viewed from the east and from the open countryside on the far side of the Blyth Valley.
13. Important trees of significant size are located in the area to the east of St. Edward's Home; around the Church of the Sacred Head & St. Teresa; the avenue to the west of Father Hudson's Homes; and between Nos 1 and 2 Packington Lane.

BUILDINGS

Pattern

14. On the eastern frontage to Coventry Road are the substantial buildings of Father Hudson's Homes, mostly two stories and built as a series of blocks forming courtyards, set well back from the road and with open spaces to the rear.
15. No. 69 to the south of the area is a late C18th house of two storeys and built close to the roadway. Beyond that are modern detached houses on medium sized plots set back from the road.

16. At the junction of Packington Lane and Coventry Road are a small group of bungalows on large plots and set back from the road.

17. Facing north and closing the view down Coventry Road is Pound Cottage and the adjacent Petworth House.

18. On the west side of Coventry Road the frontage comprises a mixture of detached two storey houses and terraced houses and modern three storey flats. The frontage reflects the varied dates of the respective buildings.

Density

19. The density of the building to the east side of the Coventry Road is high with the complex of large buildings that makes up Father Hudson's Homes.

20. To the west, the density is lower with most residential properties having large gardens to the rear. The modern development is of higher density, particularly that of Ferndale Court and the office development between Nos. 54 and 62.

Type

21. The Father Hudson's Homes are substantial two storey dormitory blocks. Within the complex is the Church of the Sacred Heart & St. Teresa; the Warwickshire Orthopaedic Hospital (single storey pavilions and formerly the Hospital to the Homes); and St. Edward's Primary School (single storey).

22. The buildings to the south are two storey detached houses and a small group of detached bungalows.

23. On the west side of Coventry Road the buildings are predominantly residential the exception being a small two storey office block between Nos 54 and 62 and the

'George & Dragon' public house between Nos 152 and 160. The residential properties are predominantly two storey and a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached. The modern flats at Ferndale Court are three storey.

Age

24. The Father Hudson's Homes complex dates from 1910 with the Church of the Sacred Heart & St. Teresa being completed in 1942.

25. To the south on the east side of Coventry Road, No 69 is late C18th. and the adjacent houses are 1980/90s and bungalows beyond are 1920s or 30s.

26. Pound Cottage is C17th and Petworth House is recent (1990s).

27. On the west side of Coventry Road the age of the property is predominantly C19th with some more recent (1960s to 1990s).

Style

28. The predominant style of the area is that of the Edwardian Period. The buildings reflect different styles and details. The developments of recent decades are in comparison bland in their appearance.

Listed Buildings

29. The area contains three listed buildings:-

- The Church of the Sacred Heart & St. Teresa constructed between 1938-42 by G.B. Cox of Birmingham. This is a large brick building with concrete dressings and a plain tile roof. It is of a cruciform plan with a tower on the crossing with Byzantine-Romanesque detailing: Grade II.

- No. 69 Coventry Road, a late C18th house constructed in red brick with a plain tile roof. In the C19th the building was extended to the south with a rendered single storey wing with an attic: Grade II.
- Pound Cottage, Pound Lane off Packington Lane, a C17th single storey timber framed, thatched cottage: Grade II.

Materials & Techniques

30. The predominant building materials are red stock brick with plain tiled roofs. The buildings to Father Hudson's Homes have a variety of details including rendered surrounds to the windows, brick quoins, coped gables and dormer windows.
31. A variety of brick colours are evident with the modern development reflecting a range of detail. Some of the buildings are rendered and pebble-dashed.
32. There is some use of tiles hanging to the 1950s houses to the west side of the Coventry Road but this is not typical.
33. On the east side of Coventry Road the window types are predominantly of Georgian style and proportion. To the west the windows are varied, reflecting the date of the building.

Roofs

34. The roofs of Father Hudson's Homes are predominantly pitched with hipped ends. St. Edward's Home has coped gables fronting the Coventry Road.
35. To the west side the roofs are again predominantly hipped but inter-mixed with gables.

SPECIAL FEATURES

36. The area is a significant and important part of Coleshill. Apart from the listed buildings, the buildings of Father Hudson's Homes are important and good examples of Edwardian architecture. Of particular note is the St Edward's Home by Henry Sandy (1905-06). To the west side Nos. 32 and 64 are important buildings both historically and in the context of the area. The terrace houses Nos. 86 to 100 are significant in the street scene.
37. The ornamental gardens at the rear of the Warwickshire Orthopaedic Hospital were designed by Miss Evelyn Powell in the early part of the century and are worthy of note.

FLOORSCAPE

37. In general the buildings are set within landscaped areas, the roads and paths are generally tarmacadam. To the west of the Coventry Road the houses have a mixture of types of driveways.

ACTIVITY

38. With the exception of the office block at between Nos 54 and 62, the area is residential to the west side of the Coventry Road. To the east side the area is dominated by the Father Hudson's Homes with its range of institutional uses.
39. The main traffic movements are those along the Coventry Road with traffic entering and leaving the town.
40. The main traffic and pedestrian generated within the area are from the Fathers Hudson's Society Offices, the Warwickshire Orthopaedic Hospital, the 'Teddy 'n Daisy' Day Nursery, the Primary School and the Church of the Sacred Heart and St Teresa.

VIEWS

41. Views within, into and out of the area contribute to its character. The views along the Coventry Road both from the north and south are important in the approach to the town. They are not however long views, being closed by the gentle bends in the road. Within the area the variety of views within the Father Hudson's Homes complex are significant, in particular those to the Church; along the avenue to the rear; and within the landscaped gardens. All of these contribute to the character of the area.

42. Views from the open countryside across the Blyth Valley to the east are also important.

DISCORDANT FEATURES

43. Some buildings and other features are inconsistent with the character and history of the area described above. Examples include:-

- The flat roofed extension to the St. Edward's Primary School.
- The office building between Nos. 54 and 62 which is of a poor quality and design.
- The timber fencing to a number of the properties to the west side.

CONCLUSIONS

44. The Coventry Road area, forming the southern approach to Coleshill, is important to the town's character and the range of mainly C20th buildings illustrate a particular phase in its history and development.

45. The distinctive character of the area is the product of development and change during

the present century. With the boundaries of Coleshill, now firmly constrained by the Green Belt, pressure for redevelopment and infill will inevitably increase and there is the possibility that this will result in a more radical change. The description and analysis of the character of the area contained in this Designation Report is intended to assist developers and their architects as well as the local planning authority in maintaining the essence of that distinctive character.

PROPOSED BOUNDARY

46. The proposed boundary of the designated Conservation Area embraces all the properties on each side of Coventry Road from the new development of The Colesleys to Pound Lane and encompasses the whole of the Father Hudson's Homes complex.

47. The area contains a number of properties developed in recent years. Whilst some of these are not entirely consistent with general character of the area, their inclusion does not invalidate the purpose of designation.

PRESERVATION & ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

48. In deciding to designate a Conservation Area, a Local Planning Authority must formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement.

49. The Borough Council intends that the primary mean of protecting the Coventry Road, Coleshill Conservation Area is the application of Local Plan Policy ENV14 (Appendix A).

50. The future of the Father Hudson's Homes will be critical to the future of the area. At the time of designation none of the buildings on the site are used for their original purpose as residential accommodation for children. The Trustees of the Father Hudsons Society have found alternative uses for some of the buildings. In accordance with its charitable status the Society is obliged to make the best possible use of its asset. It therefore wishes to redevelop parts of the site to provide new accommodation appropriate to its future needs. The maximum market potential of the remainder must then be realised.

Proposed Development Brief for Father Hudson's Homes Site

51. The designation of the Coventry Road, Coleshill Conservation Area is not intended to frustrate the wishes or obligations of the Father Hudson's Society. The Borough Council recognises that the way the site of the Father Hudson's Homes complex is used must change. In order to help guide the future of the site the Council will prepare and Adopt as Supplementary Planning Guidance, a Planning Brief for the Site of Father Hudson's Homes.

52. This brief will cover:

Development Plan Context

Conservation Area Context

Planning Commitments

Buildings Appraisal - architectural
- appearance
- structural condition
- scale
- current use
- potential for alternative use

Townscape and Landscape Appraisal

Appropriate Land Use

Design Guidance including density

Traffic - access to site
- internal circulation

Townscape and Landscape Appraisal

Appropriate Land Use

Design Guidance including density

Traffic - access to site
- internal circulation.

APPENDIX

North Warwickshire Local Plan, adopted on the 26th May 1995 contains the following policy:

Policy ENV14 : Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas will be protected and enhanced by the following means:

- (1) The demolition of un-listed buildings will not normally be permitted, except where they detract from the character of the Conservation Area, and the demolition is necessary to the implementation of development for which permission has been granted, and which will enhance its character.
- (2) The felling of trees within Conservation Areas will normally only be permitted where they are dead, dangerous or dying.
- (3) Development will not normally be permitted which would have a harmful effect upon the character, appearance or setting of a Conservation Area.
- (4) New buildings will be required to harmonise with their setting, by following the historic street line: reflecting the scale form, fenestration and roof line of traditional buildings: and using the materials characteristic of the area.
- (5) Alterations and extensions to buildings will be required to harmonise with their character and that of the Conservation Area: by retaining and where necessary restoring traditional features such as shop fronts, boundary walls, paved surfaces and street furniture: reflecting the scale, form and character of the building: and using materials traditionally characteristic of the area.
- (6) New shop fronts and fascias will be required to be in proportion with the building and in character with the architecture of the building and its setting.
- (7) Advertisements should normally be of traditional painted or engraved finish, with spotlighting as opposed to internal illumination.
- (8) Encouragement will be given to the removal of eyesores, the replacement of inharmonious features by more fitting installations, and the proper maintenance of buildings and public areas.
- (9) As resources permit, measures will be carried out to enhance the street scene.

Existing Conservation Areas are shown on the proposals map.

Father Hudsons Homes
Coventry Road, Coleshill

DRAFT DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

August 1997



**NORTH WARWICKSHIRE
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

1. DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

- 1.1 The Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to consider the designation of Conservation Areas and to keep the matter under review. In October 1995 the Council designated the Coventry Road, Coleshill Conservation Area, as part of that review. The Act also requires the Authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. This Draft Brief fulfils that requirement, in respect of the Coventry Road Conservation Area.
- 1.2 In May 1995 the North Warwickshire Local Plan was adopted. Policy ENV14 of that Plan refers to Conservation Areas. It provides a comprehensive policy outlining how these Areas in North Warwickshire will be protected and enhanced. It was fully taken account of in the preparation of this Draft Brief.
- 1.3 The site, the subject of this Brief is wholly within the development boundary for Coleshill as defined by Policy ENV1 of the Local Plan. New development is thus acceptable in principle. However, all proposals should respect the setting of the location and meet a number of design and amenity criteria which are outlined in Policy ENV24.
- 1.4 The development boundary for Coleshill on the eastern side of the Brief site is also coincidental with the Green Belt boundary. None of the Brief site is within the Green Belt.
- 1.5 Plan A is a copy of the extent of the Conservation Area, Plan B is a plan which illustrates the development boundary referred to above. The policies referred to are all contained within Appendix 'A'.

2. BACKGROUND

a) Conservation Area Context

- 2.1 The Coventry Road, Coleshill Conservation Area was designated by the Borough Council in October 1995. Development in the south of Coleshill is marked by the distinctive character of the Father Hudson's Homes complex which makes up a dominant proportion of the designated Area. It was largely for this reason that the Conservation Area was designated.
- 2.2 Construction of the buildings within this complex commenced around the turn of the Century, after Father Hudson came to Coleshill in 1898, and continued into the 1940s. They are substantial, individual buildings set well back from the road frontage, and together they frame a number of open spaces and courtyards. Within the complex as a whole there are a significant number of mature and important trees which enhance the setting of the buildings, the spaces between them and character of the street frontage.
- 2.3 The origins of the Father Hudson's Society in Coleshill date back to the end of the last Century. Father Hudson, Parish Priest of Coleshill was appointed as the first Secretary and Administrator on the formation of the Birmingham Diocesan Rescue Society in 1902.

- 2.4 The Society was concerned with the care and protection of children and young persons and in response to these needs a number of residential homes were developed with the Coleshill campus forming the nucleus. An holistic approach to care was adopted with the development of a number of residential units, schools, hospital and Church; all of the buildings of which exist on the campus today.
- 2.5 The complex therefore has not only architecture and historic significance in Coleshill, but it is now part and parcel of the social and community fabric of the town. It is considered important to protect and to enhance the very large contribution that the complex makes to the town.
- 2.6 After many years, and following changes within society, generally in social policy and child care legislation, there has been a considerable decline in the need for this type of service provision. This had dramatic implications for the Father Hudson's Society, to the extent that in the mid 1980s the last of the Children's Homes was closed leaving many empty and unused buildings on the site.
- 2.7 In response to these changes, the Father Hudson's Charity decided to develop into a broader based Social Care Agency. Whilst most of the child care and family services are now provided through Adoption and Foster Care placements throughout the Archdiocese of Birmingham, a range of adult care services were developed, particularly at Coleshill. Consequently a number of the buildings have been adapted to accommodate adults with learning and multiple disabilities, and for the care of the elderly.
- 2.8 St Gerard's Hospital provides Orthopaedic services through NHS contracts for people from the locality. More recently other developments have occurred such as the sale of St Joan's Convent and transfer of the Church of the Sacred Heart and St Theresa to the Archdiocese. Plans have been agreed to adapt St Philomena's Convent as a Residential Care Home for the elderly, but further examination has revealed that this is not suitable, and the Society now wishes to have a new building. The aim has been to optimise the use of vacant buildings and land and preserve their use where possible.
- 2.9 Currently, the Society is trying to develop its services to meet the requirements of the present day. Under Care in the Community and contracting-out arrangements by Local Authorities there is a requirement to provide services that are neighbourhood-based and integrated within the local community. This provides a considerable challenge to the Society whose responsibility is to the Archdiocese of Birmingham covering Staffordshire, Birmingham, West Midlands, Worcestershire and Oxfordshire.
- 2.10 Whilst the Father Hudson's Society has expressed its wishes to retain, if at all possible, the majority of the buildings and appropriate uses on the campus, the adaptation of some of the buildings has only been partially successful. It has now become necessary to make a radical reassessment of the site as a whole, rather than concentrating on the individual units within it, to form a coherent planning brief for its future development, and to consider new buildings to meet modern registration standards.
- 2.11 In designating the Conservation Area in this part of Coleshill, the Council clearly has an interest in protecting and enhancing the character of the Conservation Area. In so doing it must have regard to the assessment that the Society has to make in respect of how it achieves its objectives in fulfilling its mission as a charitable organisation. It is thus appropriate that the parties have come together to draw up this Draft Brief in partnership so that a coherent framework can be recognised for future development in the locality.

3. SITE APPRAISAL

a) Buildings

- 3.1 The site covered by this Draft Brief is shown on Plan C. This identifies a number of buildings.
- 3.2 The site has been appraised by examining all of the buildings to assess the importance of each in architectural terms, its contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, its structural condition, and its potential for alternative use.
- 3.3 The main findings from this are:
- ◆ The most important buildings on the site are the Church of the Sacred Heart and St Theresa (Grade II Listed); St Edward's Boys Home, St Edward's Primary School and the Society's Headquarters office building. All of these should be retained, wherever possible.
 - ◆ The buildings on the site are substantial and individual in character, mainly three storey, set back from the road frontage with important and individual facades, enclosing, and separated from each other, by a series of open spaces. There is a common appearance through the use of red brick and tile construction.
 - ◆ There are a number of smaller and insubstantial buildings that could be removed.

b) Townscape

- 3.4 The site is characterised by views into and out of the site as well as there being important vistas within the site. The trees on the site have been the subject of a professional arboricultural survey. The main characteristics are:
- ◆ Views into the site from Coventry Road are substantially screened by mature trees, hedgerows and raised banks. There are a series of glimpses which reveal a number of imposing facades set back from the road. This general characteristic should be preserved, wherever possible.
 - ◆ Views into the site from the east are open and unscreened. Any new development on this boundary will need to be carefully considered, and preferably low in height so as not to dominate or impinge on the existing skyline.
 - ◆ Views from the site to the east are panoramic and should be retained.
 - ◆ Views within the site are largely defined by the buildings and trees as part of the layout. It is important to retain these, particularly the avenue on the eastern side, and a number of the gaps between the buildings, which are largely on a west-east axis.
 - ◆ The trees on the site are vital to the character of the area both as individual specimens and as visually important groups. In addition, the frontage hedgerow and raised bank are significant features.
 - ◆ The trees on the site have not been the subject of a full maintenance programme and some will need replacing.
 - ◆ There is scope within the site to expand the amount of planting so as to enhance the spaces in and around the buildings. A comprehensive landscaping plan for the whole site is essential.

c) Traffic

- 3.5 The existing flow of traffic within the site is confusing, and conflicts with pedestrian use. In addition there are a number of different access points to the site from the Coventry Road which are substandard, and these do lead to difficult situations at times. The current traffic generation is generally low, and any significant increase as a result of new developments would lead to major new engineering works that would have a substantial detrimental impact on the street scene.
- 3.6 Bearing these matters in mind, the Highway Authority has been involved in an analysis of the situation by looking comprehensively at the site. It is agreed that the site should follow these guidelines:
- ◆ It is proposed that a new access point be made for any future redevelopment proposals at the site at a point between the former St Mary's Nurses Home and the St Edward's Boys Home. This will be required to have vision splays of 90 by 4.5 metres.
 - ◆ This new access should serve the great majority of the site through a new internal layout. The exceptions should be to retain the two access points at the Church, the existing access at the north to give ingress and egress to the Hospital and the office building, and a new access to serve the former school building. The internal layout should allow for emergency access routes via these retained access points but be designed such that there should be no circulation between them. All other points would be closed.
 - ◆ Car parking on the site should be related to the need resulting from the use proposed, and should be well located to that source. The location of car parks is particularly important in respect of their visual impact and this matter needs to be closely examined.

4. APPROPRIATE LAND USES

- 4.1 The Society will remain the dominant user of the land and buildings on the site. As land owner it will also control the use of the other parts of the site where it would not have a presence, so that new occupiers and uses that are found, are compatible with its overall social care objectives.
- 4.2 In examining its own requirements it is clear to the Society that because of a number of changed circumstances and the unsuitability of buildings to modern standards, it has a surplus of buildings that will not readily be capable of reuse for its own uses. New developments to meet the Society's objectives will be needed, and these will have to be individually designed.
- 4.3 Due to the nature of these facilities and uses it is convenient from an operational, management and security point of view to have these focused together, thus consolidating the Society's activities. This approach provides an opportunity for other parts of the site to become available either for conversion through refurbishment, or for redevelopment.

- 4.4 Research undertaken by the Society shows that it is highly unlikely that the existing buildings on the site would readily convert to new uses, or be marketable as such, as they were all purpose built for a specific form of institutional use at the beginning of the Century. The Society thus see some form of redevelopment potential as central to its objectives of continuing to provide social care services within its Archdiocese. It therefore would wish to see some form of 'enabling development' in order to do so. Because of the significance of the retention of St Edward's Home and the former school in the importance of the Conservation Area, it sees itself as occupying St Edward's Home as its headquarters and thus re-focusing all of its social care facilities and activities between these buildings and the Church. Occupation of St Edward's Home is unlikely to be a viable proposition in itself, and thus the argument for enabling development elsewhere on the site is strengthened.
- 4.5 Given these circumstances, and the overall conclusions of the site appraisal it is concluded that appropriate alternative land uses should be compatible with the Society's overall social care objectives.

5. OUTLINE PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The following proposals have been prepared as a result of the appraisal undertaken above, and an assessment of the needs and requirements of the Father Hudson's Society. The proposals are shown on Plan D. The site conveniently divides into four areas.

a) Father Hudson's Society Activities

- 5.2 Father Hudson's Society would occupy and consolidate its social care operations on that part of the site between St Edward's Home and the Church. These operations would focus on the retention of the following buildings:

- ◆ St Edward's Boys Home to be used by the Society as its Headquarters for the whole Archdiocese.
- ◆ St Edward's Primary School to be converted to a Day Centre for the physically handicapped run by the Society, with its own access to Coventry Road.
- ◆ St George's Building to be continued in use as offices for organisations connected with the Society, using the access for St Edward's School.
- ◆ St James' Building to continue its use as a Day Nursery using the access for St Edward's School.
- ◆ The Church and Parish Centre to remain.

- 5.3 In addition the following new developments are proposed:

- ◆ A single storey dementia unit run by the Society.
- ◆ A new residential home (two storey) for the elderly to be managed and run by the Society.
- ◆ New single storey residential units for adults with physical disabilities and learning difficulties to be managed by the Society.

- 5.4 All of these proposals would be accessed via new accesses, apart from the Church which would retain its separate access points.

b) Development Site

- 5.5 A redevelopment site is proposed on the site of the existing St Philomena's, St Joseph's and St Mary's buildings to be disposed of by the Society. It is likely that this would be for a private retirement homes development. Any new development on this site should generally be designed so as to have a three storey frontage set back from the road, to align with existing St Mary's elevation, and taper down to two or single storey at the rear. All access must be from the new access point, and it should be self contained in terms of car parking provision.

c) Hospital Entrance

- 5.6 The building which now houses the offices of the Father Hudson's Society would be vacated in the move to the St Edward's Home. This would release the former for rent or lease for commercial offices. It would retain its existing access, and be a self contained unit with new car parking at the rear and to the side.

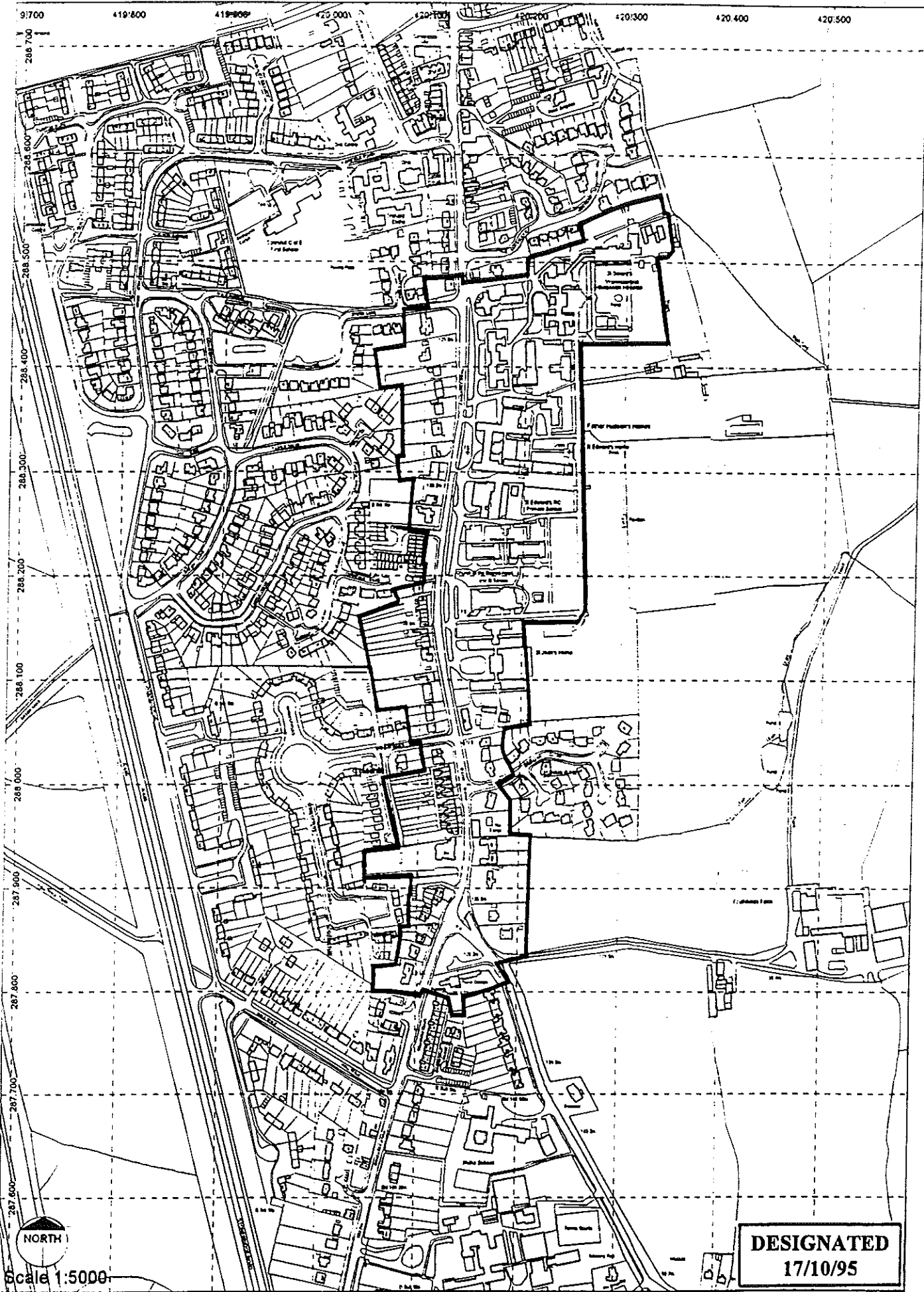
d) The Hospital

- 5.7 No change is proposed for the St Gerard's Orthopaedic Hospital which would remain on site with its existing access arrangements, as a self contained unit.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 In order to enable the Father Hudson's Society to retain its architectural heritage on the Coleshill site, it will be necessary to enable redevelopment along the lines discussed. The Brief provides the Council's view on how that can be achieved. The exact type of development will depend upon market requirements and in attracting interest from development companies. It is important that the area be redeveloped within a masterplan so that landscaping and traffic be co-ordinated, rather than that the site be developed piecemeal. In this way, the best of the important and interesting buildings in the complex can acquire new functions and continue to play their important role in the heritage of the site and the care of the Coventry Road, Coleshill Conservation Area.

PLAN A



DESIGNATED
17/10/95

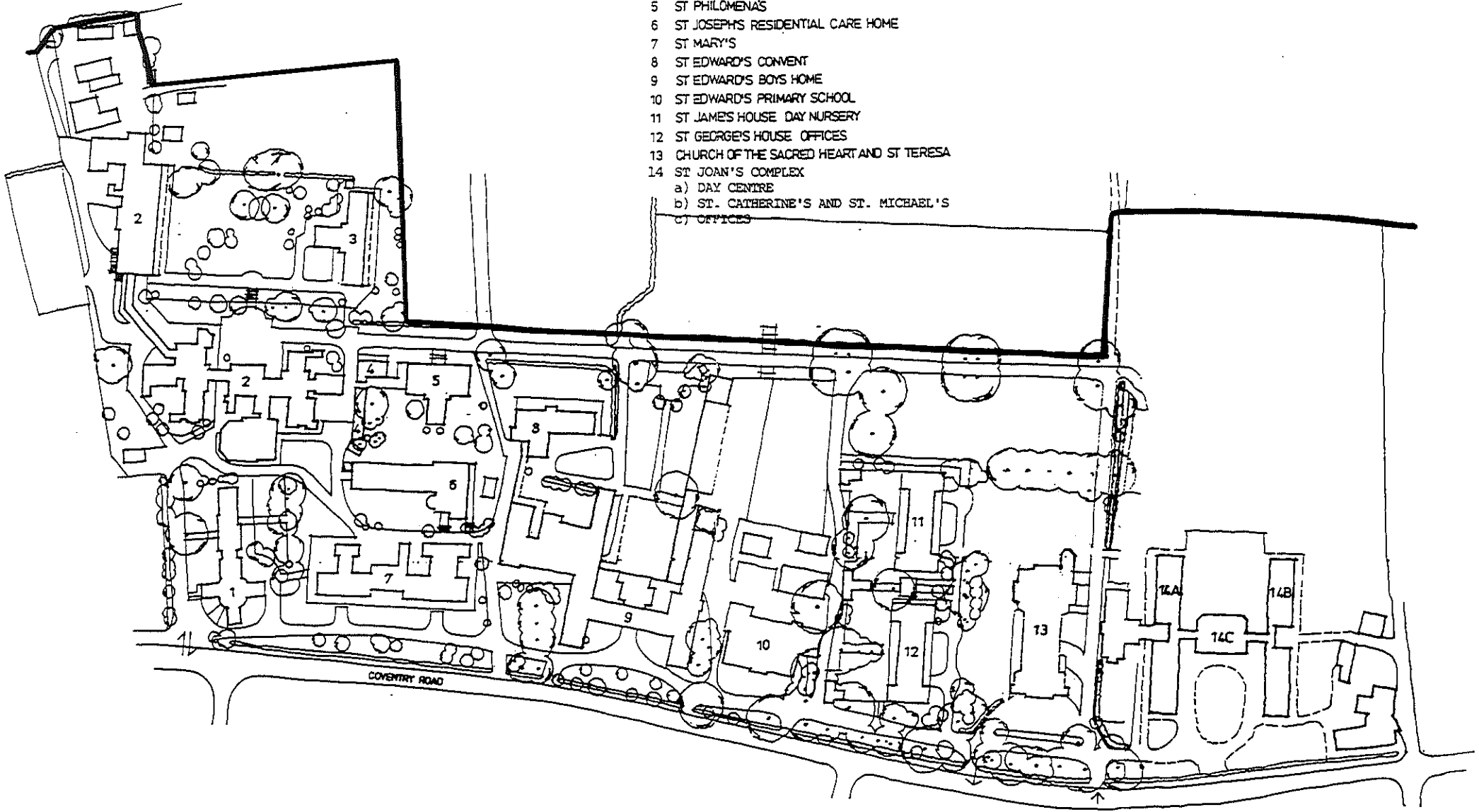
COVENTRY ROAD, COLESHILL C.A.

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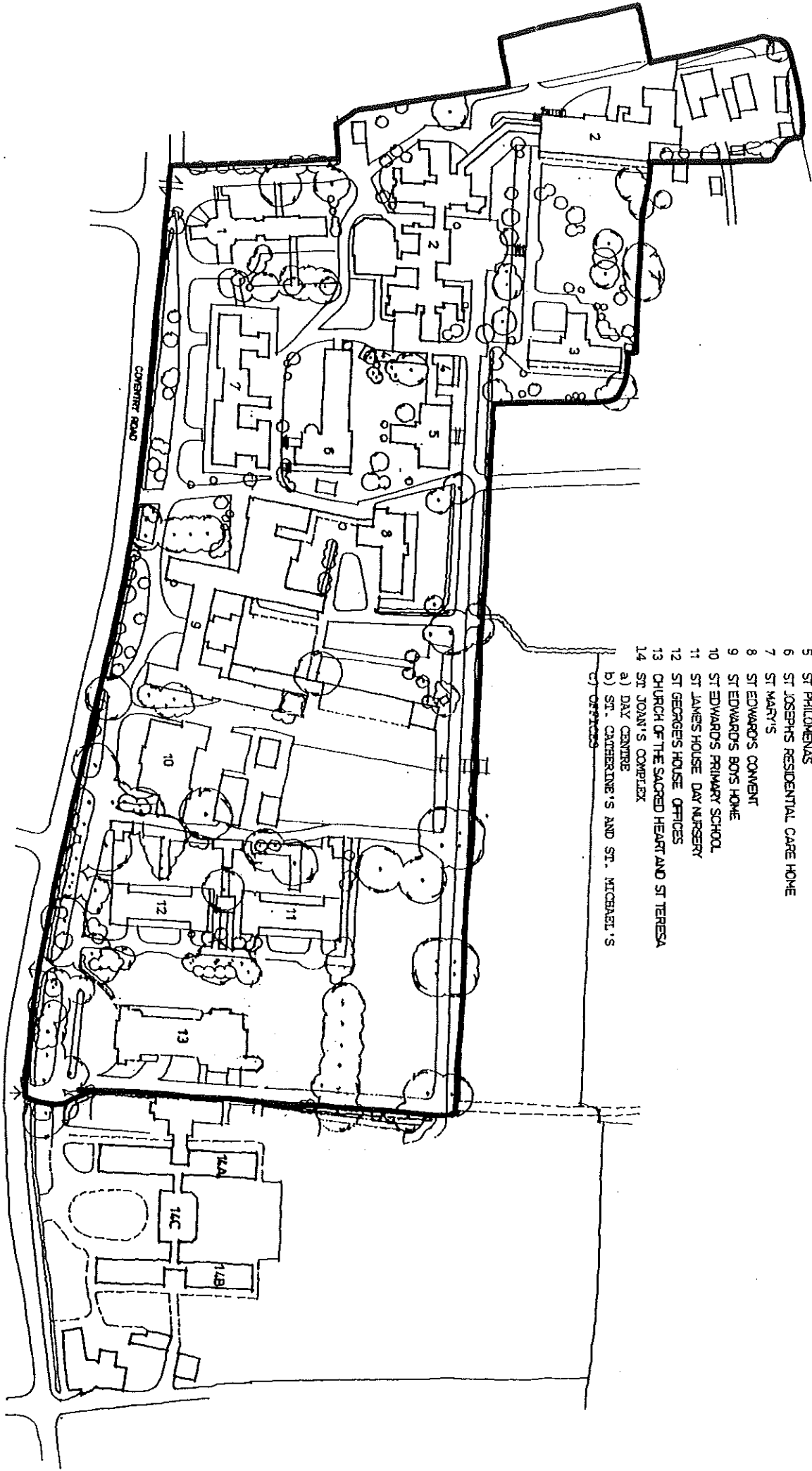
North Warwickshire Borough Council

PLAN B

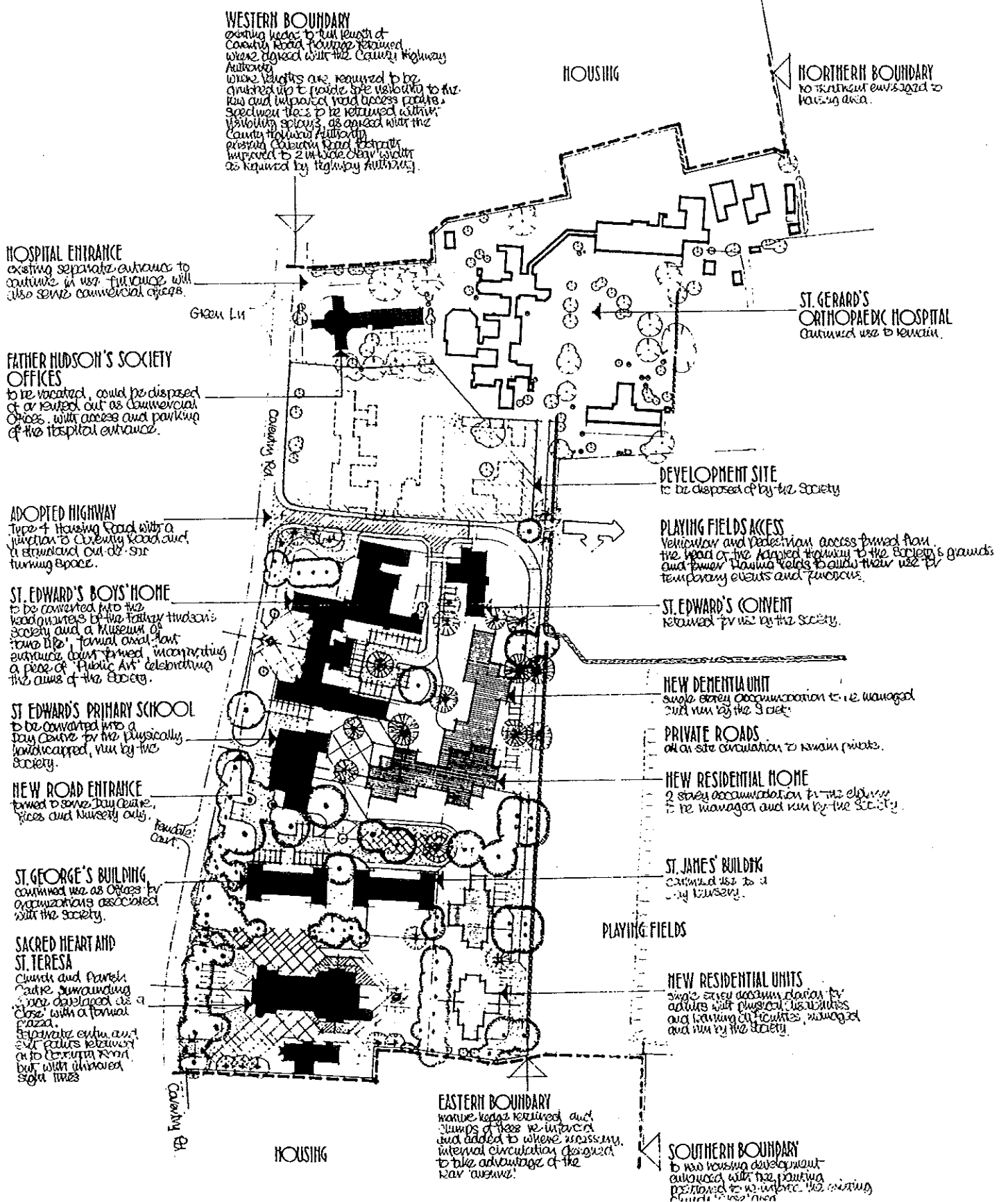
- 1 HEADQUARTERS OFFICE BUILDING
- 2 ST GERARD'S HOSPITAL
- 3 OLD HOSPITAL WARDS
- 4 WOODEN PREFABS
- 5 ST PHILOMENA'S
- 6 ST JOSEPH'S RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME
- 7 ST MARY'S
- 8 ST EDWARD'S CONVENT
- 9 ST EDWARD'S BOYS HOME
- 10 ST EDWARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
- 11 ST JAMES'S HOUSE DAY NURSERY
- 12 ST GEORGE'S HOUSE OFFICES
- 13 CHURCH OF THE SACRED HEART AND ST TERESA
- 14 ST JOAN'S COMPLEX
 - a) DAY CENTRE
 - b) ST. CATHERINE'S AND ST. MICHAEL'S
 - c) OFFICES



PLAN C



- 1 HEADQUARTERS OFFICE BUILDING
 - 2 ST GERARD'S HOSPITAL
 - 3 OLD HOSPITAL WARDOS
 - 4 WOODEN PREFABS
 - 5 ST PHILOMENAS
 - 6 ST JOSEPH'S RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME
 - 7 ST MARY'S
 - 8 ST EDWARD'S CONVENT
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- a) DAY CENTRE
b) ST. CATHERINE'S AND ST. MICHAEL'S
c) OFFICES



Environment
Policy ENV1 : The Green Belt

ENV1 : The Green Belt

5.13 The boundaries of the Green Belt will be as shown on the proposals map. Within the Green Belt, Structure Plan Policy G3 will apply.

The areas within the development boundaries defined on the proposals map for the following settlements are excluded from the Green Belt:

Arley
Coleshill
Curdworth
Fillongley
Hurley
Kingsbury
New Arley
Piccadilly/Kingsbury Colliery
Shustoke
Water Orton
Whitacre Heath

Land at the site of the former Hams Hall power station is also excluded from the Green Belt, consequent on the grant of planning permission by the Secretary of State for a Channel Tunnel freight terminal and manufacturing and distribution park the subject of Policy BEM1 of this Plan. For the avoidance of doubt, no other development will be permitted unless very special circumstances are shown to exist to justify that development

ENV14 : Conservation Areas

5.114 Conservation Areas will be protected and enhanced by the following means:

- (1) The demolition of un-listed buildings will not normally be permitted, except where they detract from the character of the Conservation Area, and the demolition is necessary to the implementation of development for which permission has been granted, and which will enhance its character.**
- (2) The felling of trees within Conservation Areas will normally only be permitted where they are dead, dangerous or dying.**
- (3) Development will not normally be permitted which would have a harmful effect upon the character, appearance or setting of a Conservation Area.**
- (4) New buildings will be required to harmonise with their setting, by following the historic street line; reflecting the scale, form, fenestration and roof line of traditional buildings; and using materials characteristic of the area.**
- (5) Alterations and extensions to buildings will be required to harmonise with their character and that of the Conservation Area, by retaining and where necessary restoring traditional features such as shop fronts, boundary walls, paved surfaces and street furniture; reflecting the scale, form and character of the building; and using materials traditionally characteristic of the area.**
- (6) New shop fronts and fascias will be required to be in proportion with the building and in character with the architecture of the building and its setting.**
- (7) Advertisements should normally be of traditional painted or engraved finish, with spotlighting as opposed to internal illumination.**
- (8) Encouragement will be given to the removal of eyesores, the replacement of inharmonious features by more fitting installations, and the proper maintenance of buildings and public areas.**
- (9) As resources permit, measures will be carried out to enhance the street scene.**

Existing Conservation Areas are shown on the proposals map.

ENV24 : Amenity and Design Considerations

5.159 Notwithstanding the other policies of the Development Plan, development proposals will not normally be permitted unless the following requirements are met:

- (1) occupiers of adjoining and nearby properties should not suffer loss of amenity due to the development, including overlooking, loss of privacy, or disturbance due to traffic, offensive smells, noise, dust or fumes, and the occupiers of the development itself should enjoy satisfactory standards of amenity;**
- (2) vehicular access to the site should be safe, and the local road network should be able to accommodate the traffic to and from the development without problems of congestion, danger or intimidation caused by the size or number of vehicles;**
- (3) the design of new buildings, extensions, conversions or works should harmonise with both the immediate setting and the wider surroundings to present a visually pleasing environment;**
- (4) open space within and around new development should be treated as an integral part of the proposal, and landscaping and planting features should serve to enhance the landscape and conservation interests;**
- (5) adequate provision should be made for visitors on foot, particularly and for the disabled; and**
- (6) development should be designed and laid out so as to reduce the opportunities for crime.**

Agenda Item No 5

**Planning and Development
Committee**

19 August 1997

**Report of the Borough
Planning Officer**

**The Coventry Road, Coleshill
Conservation Area - Father
Hudson's Homes Society
Development Brief**

Introduction

- 1 In October 1995, the Council designated a Conservation Area in Coleshill covering part of the southern half of the town containing land on either side of the Coventry Road. The Designation Report indicated that the future of the complex operated by Father Hudson's Homes Society within the Area would be critical to the continued status of the Conservation Area. Accordingly the Report concluded that there was a need for a Development Brief for the Father Hudson's Homes site so as to provide guidance to both the Council and the Society in examining future proposals. That Development Brief is now reported in draft form for approval so that public consultation can be commenced.

Background

- 2 The distinctiveness of the southern part of Coleshill rests principally on the presence of the Father Hudson's Homes complex on the eastern side of Coventry Road. That distinctive character is marked by large buildings set back from the road frontage with a significant number of trees and open space. The Council in designating this part of the town recognised that this character should be retained and enhanced. In so doing it was aware that the Father Hudson's Homes Society had a vital part to play in that retention and enhancement. It was known that the Society had its own objectives and aims as a charitable organisation in coming to terms with the changing character of care provision. In essence these required consolidation and focusing on particular aspects, trying to reconcile these with the problems of using outdated and unsuitable buildings. It was also known that the Society had been disposing of land in the Brendan Close area so as to release equity to enable these objectives to be met.
- 3 In designating the area as a Conservation Area, the Council did not wish to frustrate the charitable objectives of the Society. It also recognised that the way that the Society used the complex had to change. In order to guide the future of the site the Council agreed to prepare a Development Brief as Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 4 During the past few months there has been a considerable degree of co-operation in the negotiations held between the Officers of the Council and the Society and its representatives in drawing up an agreed Brief. It is timely to state that the Draft Brief
... attached to this report has the agreement of the Society. It has also been supported by the Officers of the County Council in respect of the highway matters that it contains.

Further Consultation

- 5 If the recommendation below is agreed it is expected to undertake a consultation exercise within the next few weeks. This should elicit a number of observations, which will then be the subject of a future report. At this stage the Committee is asked to agree the Draft Brief for public consultation.

Financial Implications

- 6 Public consultation will involve staff time which is already included in the Conservation budget.

Recommendation:

That the Draft Brief for the Father Hudson's Homes site in Coventry Road, Coleshill is approved for the purposes of public consultation.

Resolution required

The Contact Officer for this report is J G Brown (Ext 2310).