

WATER ORTON CONSERVATION AREA
Designation Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 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". There can be no uniform standard against which the character of an area can be measured, so it is necessary to evaluate separately the particular merits of potential conservation areas to establish whether they are worthy of designation.
- 1.2 Department of the Environment circular 12/81 encourages local planning authorities to keep the designation of conservation areas under review and to consider whether more areas should be designated, especially when local plans are being prepared.
- 1.3 A local plan for the Coleshill and Kingsbury areas has already been prepared by the Council, and there has been extensive public consultation on its proposals. Amongst them is a proposal (paragraph 9.17 of the Plan) which states that :

"It is proposed to designate an area around Old Church Road in Water Orton a Conservation Area."

The Council has therefore already identified the need to designate a conservation area in Water Orton.

2. The Case for Designation

- 2.1 The western end of Old Church Road is the oldest remaining part of the village of Water Orton. It marks the original site of the medieval settlement of Oveerton. Pottery remains have been found in this area which date back to the 12th Century, indicating their historical significance of the settlement. This location overlooks a river crossing, which remains in the form of the Bishop Vesey bridge, built in 1520. The original Water Orton church was sited here too. Although this building has now gone, a stone cross - which is dated 1347 - remains in the old churchyard. The manor house of the medieval village also used to stand in this area, close to the junction of Old Church Road and Mimworth Road. This is reflected in the street name 'Manor House Lane'.
- 2.2 There are several large detached houses, the most important of which are The Chestnuts - a 15th Century house, and Wakefield House - a 17th Century timber-framed house. Both are Listed buildings. In addition, there are several other later detached dwellings in the area - notably a 17th Century house opposite Wakefield House, Orton Cottages on Mimworth Road, and Orton Lodge.