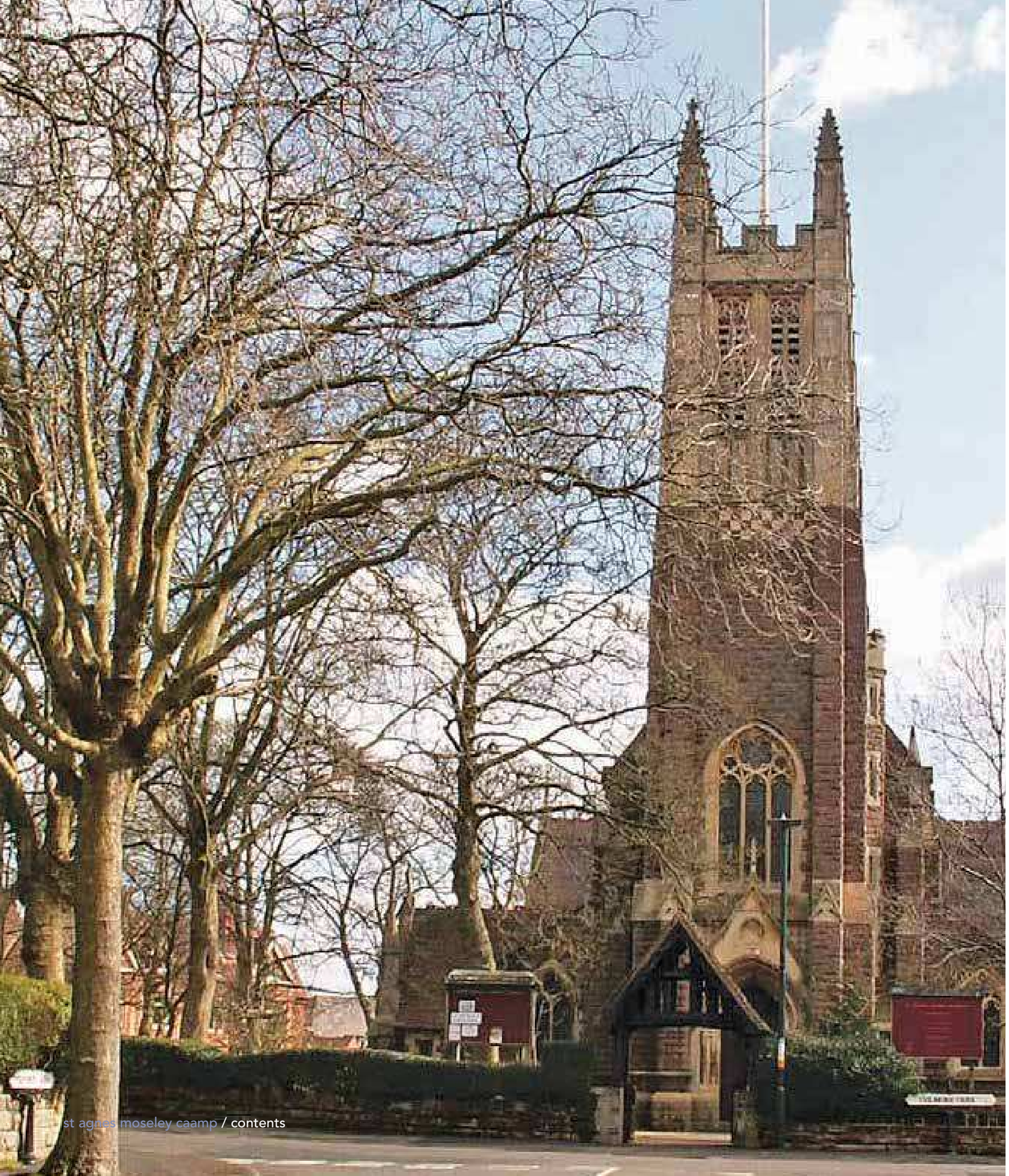
BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLANS

St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Plan

May 2022

Birmingham City Council



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Foreword

The St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area is a unique place and a valued asset through its special architectural and historic interest. It hosts a number of statutory listed buildings in the four principal character areas in the Conservation Area, including the landmark church of St Agnes itself. It is an essential part of Moseley's identity and heritage, and is special to Birmingham as a whole.

This Character Appraisal and Management Plan provides policies to ensure that the Conservation Area will be protected and enhanced and will continue to contribute fully to Moseley as a successful suburb of architectural, historic and environmental merit.

The Management Plan sets out the policies for future development in the area and highlights opportunities for improvement. This is informed by the Character Appraisal which identifies what makes the area special and defines its character.

I am committed to ensuring that this asset endures for the enjoyment of future generations of Moseley. This can be achieved by continuing to work together with local people, community organisations, landowners and other public/private sector partners.

I wish to express special thanks to Dr Terry Slater (Hon Senior Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham) and Bob Edmonds who provided the draft text and photographs (which are their copyright), and to the St Agnes Residents' Association and the Moseley Society for their role in helping to prepare and deliver this document.

Councillor Ian Ward
Leader,
Birmingham City Council.

Introduction

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local authorities to designate conservation areas and from time to time review the designation. It also requires them to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these areas.

The St Agnes, Moseley Conservation Area (CAAMP) was designated on 25th June 1987 in recognition of its status as a well-preserved Edwardian suburban housing area containing examples of the work of almost all Birmingham's most prominent Arts and Crafts architects of this period. It was extended on 31st July 2009 and an Article 4 direction was placed on the whole area.

Conservation Area status gives the City Council additional powers with regard to demolition, minor development and the preservation of trees. It also places a duty upon the City Council to pay special attention in the exercise of its planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Local authorities are required by national planning policy (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 186) to have a suitable evidence base for historic environment and heritage assets. For Conservation Areas this usually takes the form of a character appraisal which is then used to inform a management plan that sets out policies and proposals to aid the preservation and enhancement of the area.

The Birmingham Development Plan was adopted on 10th January 2017. The current local policy is the Moseley Supplementary Planning Document of 2014. This sets out the vision for the quality of the local environment and sense of place.

The CAAMP aims to:

- Identify the special interest of St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area and provide an evidence based definition of its character.
- Provide a sound basis for the determination of planning applications within the Conservation Area and the formulation of proposals for its preservation and enhancement.
- Identify opportunities and threats to the special character of the Conservation Area and provide proposals to address these potential issues.
- The CAAMP will be adopted as a 'material consideration' in the planning process and has been prepared in accordance with policies listed in Appendices B and C.

Designation and boundary changes

The St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area was designated on 25th June 1987 and extended on 31st July 2009. An Article 4 Direction was placed on the whole Conservation Area on the same date.

The St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area covers an area of approximately 28 hectares and is located one mile (1.6km) to the south-east of Moseley village centre in the area historically known as Moseley Wake Green. It is some 4 miles (6.4km) south of Birmingham city centre and is, from May 2018, entirely contained within Moseley Ward in Hall Green Constituency.

The boundary of the St Agnes Conservation Area was reviewed through public consultation in 2021 and amendments to the boundary proposed as follows:

The Local Authority considered the modification of the Conservation Area boundary on its western side to include the many well-maintained Arts and Crafts houses in Grove Avenue, built in a similar period to many other properties which are characteristic of the Conservation Area.

In addition, the boundary would be extended to the east to include the narrow strip of land in front of the modern houses at the extreme eastern end of St Agnes Road. This consists of part of the historic sandstone wall and a group of fine trees (pines and horse chestnuts) which would thereby be subject to conservation area tree protection.

The boundary review also proposed to exclude from the Conservation Area the two modern bungalows (Nos.25-27) in Shelsley Drive, (to the rear of 30 St Agnes Road) and the newly constructed house built on the rear garden of No.50 Cotton Lane (No 48.Cotton Lane) at its junction with Oxford Road.

Following the outcome of the public consultation, the Conservation Area boundary was re-drawn to the south west to include all the properties fronting Grove Avenue except for Nos.55 and 57. To the north east it includes all properties facing Grove Avenue on the north side as far as, and including No.2, together with properties Nos.9-25 on the south side of the road (Plan 1). A total of 48 additional houses are now included within the Conservation Area, 12 of which were constructed post-WWII (Plan 2).

The boundary was also re-drawn to include the strip of land to the east of St Agnes Road and to exclude the modern properties on Shelsley Drive and Cotton Lane.

The amended Conservation Area boundary now runs down the centre of St Agnes Road from Wake Green Road as far as the northern boundary of No.8 (Harris House) and then to the rear of the remaining properties on the east and north sides of St Agnes Road as far as Yardley Wood Road.

The boundary then runs south along the central reservation of Yardley Wood Road before turning west up St Agnes Road as far as the eastern boundary of No. 47, excluding the 1960s' terrace of small houses on the south side of St Agnes Road.

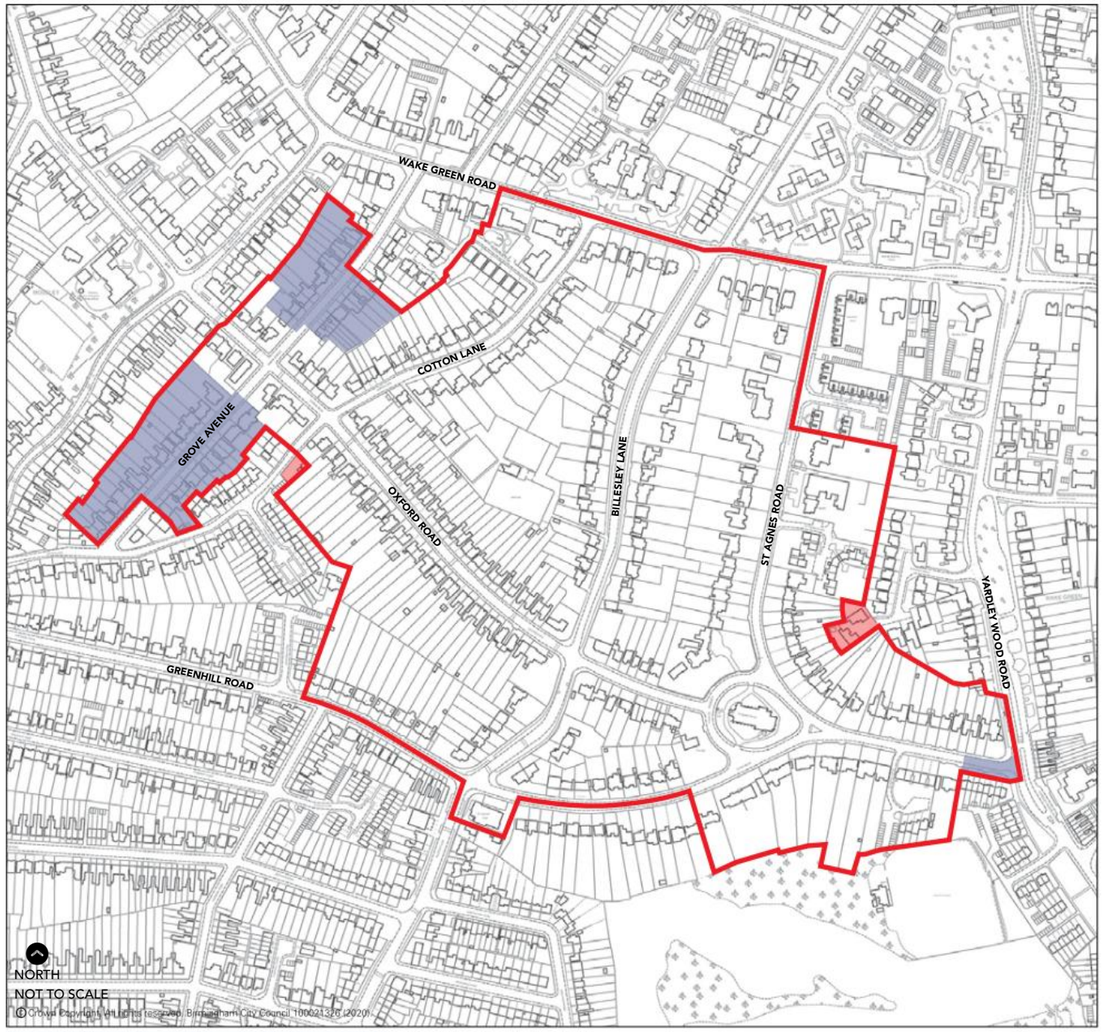
The boundary then encloses the remaining houses on the south side of St Agnes Road (including the modern cul-de-sac of Mulberry Drive) as far as the western boundary of No.35 Dyott Road.

The boundary then moves to the centre of Dyott Road, excluding the houses on its south side as far as the parish hall of St Agnes church, which is included in the Conservation Area. The boundary then crosses Billesley Lane and proceeds up the centre of Greenhill Road enclosing the houses on its north side as far as No.47. It then follows the western boundary of No.47 along the rear of the garage court of Poulton Close, and then north-westwards along the back-property line dividing Poulton Close from Oxford Road as far as Cotton Lane.

The boundary then runs south west along the rear gardens of the south eastern side of Grove Avenue, enclosing the houses as far as No.53, and then travels south west to the junction with Cotton Lane. From here it travels north west enclosing the boundary of No.60 Grove Avenue. It then runs north east along the rear gardens of the west side of Grove Avenue, enclosing the properties on both sides of Oxford Road as far as Nos.46 and 49, continuing up to and including No.2 Grove Avenue. The boundary follows the north eastern boundary of No.2 and then travels south west then south east along the north eastern boundary of No.9. It then turns north-east to follow the rear boundary of the properties on the north-west side of Cotton Lane as far as Wake Green Road, where it follows the centre line of the road back to St Agnes Road.

The roads enclosed by the Conservation Area boundary are the eastern and western sides of Grove Avenue; the eastern portion of Oxford Road; the northern portions of Cotton Lane and Billesley Lane; St Agnes Road; Colmore Crescent; the north sides of Dyott Road and Greenhill Road, and the south side of Wake Green Road. There are some 280 historic houses and three small estates of modern houses (St Agnes Close, Mulberry Drive and Manor Park) within the Conservation Area, together with St Agnes Church, St Agnes Church Hall, and Moseley Tennis Club.

The west side of Grove Avenue, north of Oxford Road. It is suggested these houses be included in the Conservation Area.



Plan 1
St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area boundary.

Key

- Conservation Area boundary
- New additions to the conservation area following 2022 adoption
- Removals from the conservation area following 2022 adoption

Summary of significance

The St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area is valued for its special architectural and historic interest for the following reasons:

- It has a remarkably unified character and is one of the most representative Edwardian suburbs in Birmingham. The houses were first occupied by professionals, commercial business owners, and industrialists of some note in the economic development of Birmingham. The group of houses in Oxford Road/Dyott Road occupied by members of the Lanchester family are an important link with the early history of the motor car industry in the west midlands. The Conservation Area remains a primarily professional suburb today.

- It is almost entirely characterised by Arts and Crafts style houses built in the Edwardian building boom of 1900-1910. Most of these houses were architect designed by prominent Birmingham architects, now with a national reputation for their houses.

- Further development took place in the mid-1920s, but the houses from that period followed the Arts and Crafts tradition of their predecessors.

- The houses are set in large gardens and are generally set well back from the plot frontage. The larger houses often have sweep drives and double entrance gates. Front gardens are characterised by large mature trees, evergreen shrubberies and dense planting; Street trees add gravitas to some streets.

- The late Victorian (1884) St Agnes Church forms the architectural focus of the Conservation Area. As the area developed through the twentieth century four distinct character areas have emerged

- The earliest very large detached houses in St Agnes Road with extensive gardens and the slightly smaller houses in Wake Green Road.

- The smaller, mostly semi-detached, houses of Oxford Road between Grove Avenue and Billesley Lane with their profusion of Arts and Crafts detailing and the later, interwar semi-detached houses in Greenhill Road.

- The larger houses of Oxford Road north west of Cotton Lane, and the varied houses of Grove Avenue. These include both late Victorian houses, three-storey semi-detached Arts and Crafts houses of the Edwardian period and numerous post-WWII houses. The plots on the south-east side of Grove Avenue have all been sub-divided to allow development in their back gardens facing Cotton Lane.

- The more architecturally mixed housing along Billesley Lane and Cotton Lane. Much of this character area was built in the mid-1920s and there are numerous post-WWII houses here too.

These character areas are analysed in more detail in the 'Townscape Character' section.

Cotton Lane from Oxford Road. All trees are in private front gardens.

St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area

PART 1

CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Conservation Area setting

The Conservation Area is surrounded by other residential areas, mostly developed later in the 1930s and 1960s building booms. The open space of Moseley Golf Course bounds the properties on the south side of St Agnes Road and Dyott Road.

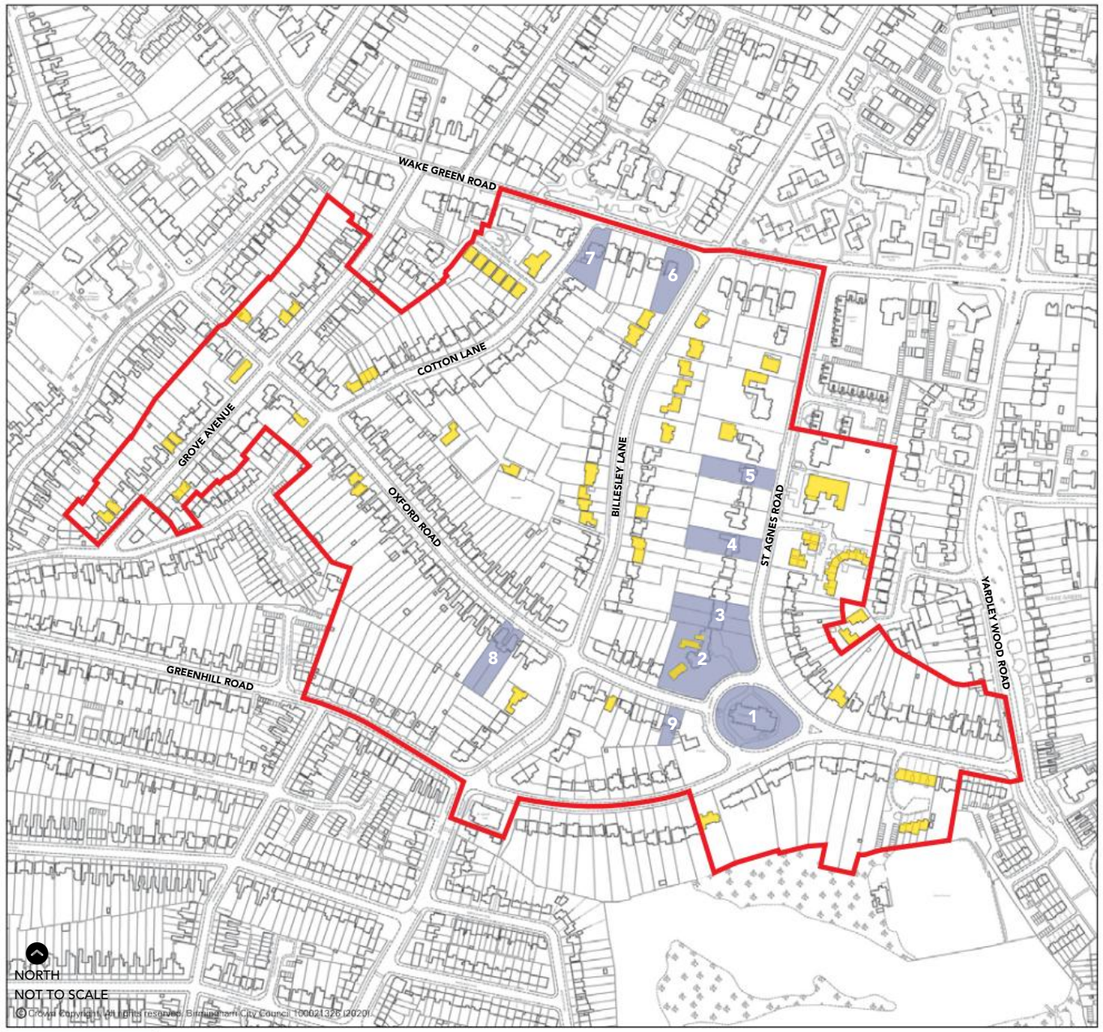
Yardley Wood Road, which bounds the east side of the Conservation Area, leads southwards to the further open space of Joys Wood and Moseley Bog, and Swanshurst Park beyond. Wake Green Road, which forms the northern boundary, is a bus route and major traffic artery but is softened by many mature trees in the front gardens of houses on both sides of the road.

The junction of Yardley Wood and Wake Green Roads is marked by large-scale 1960s' developments of private flats and their garage courts, including the tower block of Moseley Court. Wake Green Court, the largest of these developments, has again preserved large numbers of mature trees from the former gardens of older houses which preceded the redevelopment.

There are culs-de-sac of small 1960s' houses to the west of the Conservation Area (Poulton Close and Ashdown Close) and a small estate of council homes south of St Agnes Church Hall (Northlands Road). The boundaries are less distinct at the western end of Oxford Road where it intersects with Grove Avenue because development took place over a long period and housing styles are much more mixed.

Beyond the south-west end of Grove Avenue the Conservation Area adjoins the late-Victorian development of Greenhill, Prospect, and Cambridge Roads. The eastern boundary of Moseley Village Conservation Area is 400-500 metres further to the west of the Oxford Road boundary.

50 St Agnes Road.



Plan 2
Listed buildings.

Key

- Conservation area boundary
- Listed buildings
- **1** Church of St Agnes
- **2** 1 (Tudor Lodge) Colmore Crescent
- **3** 25 and 27 St Agnes Road
- **4** 15 St Agnes Road
- **5** 9 St Agnes Road
- **6** 50 Wake Green Road
- **7** 40 Wake Green Road
- **8** 110 and 112 Oxford Road
- **9** 130 Oxford Road
- Post WWII buildings

Topography, geology and archaeology

The almost flat Birmingham plateau is some 150 metres above sea level at this point and the Conservation Area lies on the eastern side of the ridge between the valleys of the Rivers Rea and Cole.

St Agnes Church stands on the highest point and the view from the top of the tower extends for many miles in all directions. Greenhill Road, Dyott Road and the southern part of Billesley Lane slope downwards into the valley of a small stream that flows eastwards from the Billesley Lane allotments through Moseley golf course.

The underlying geology is Mercian Mudstones sandstones and shales (formerly known as Keuper Marl), but the plateau summit in this area is covered with a substantial depth of glacially-deposited sands, gravels and pebble beds. The soils are therefore free-draining and infertile. The houses on the south side of Dyott Road have all required under-pinning since their construction and St Agnes' Hall sits in what was formerly a commercial sand pit.

There has been no archaeological exploration within the Conservation Area and cartographic evidence suggests that until housing development took place the whole area was farmland. The nearby Moseley Bog nature reserve contains a burnt mound which has been excavated.

Development history

Development history
Moseley Wake Green spanned the historical boundary between the parishes of Kings Norton and Yardley.

The boundary followed Billesley (Bully) Lane. Both parishes were very large and there were many smaller settlements within their bounds. Moseley is recorded in Domesday Book (1086) as one such settlement. Moseley became an independent parish in 1852.

Wake Green was a large square shaped common at the parish boundary until it was enclosed in 1830. The construction of the Birmingham and Gloucester railway through Moseley in mid century began its suburban development, which was further enhanced by tram services to Birmingham along the Alcester Road. A number of large mansions were constructed on Wake Green Road four of which were in the bounds of the later Conservation Area. Only one ('The Dingle') survives, since it was later converted to institutional use by the University of Aston (Gracie Hall). It has subsequently been converted to apartments.

The land between Cotton Lane and Billesley Lane was owned by the Kings Norton Charities trustees and there were two houses here, Charlton Lodge and The Laurels, both of which were subsequently to be demolished. Wake Green House, the largest of the four early houses, stood in extensive grounds between Billesley Lane and St Agnes Road (see Plan 3).

It was owned by Francis Willmot, a surveyor, whose family was responsible for its development as a building estate.

Designing a suburb
By the early 1880s, more densely built suburban development was taking place in Moseley and Kings Heath between the railway and Billesley Lane. The owners of the large houses on Wake Green Road therefore took the opportunity to develop their land in a similar way.

The first edition Ordnance Survey maps were surveyed in 1882-83 and catch this moment just as the new roads were being laid out. St Agnes Road and Dyott Road are shown, as is Grove Avenue, though it was not constructed until 1889. Oxford Road had not advanced beyond its junction with School Road (Plan 3).

These were also the years in which Francis Willmot persuaded the Vicar and Parochial Church Council of St Mary's, Moseley that their plans for a new church 'for the poorer people' of the community might be advanced if he donated the site at the junction of the newly constructed St Agnes and Dyott Roads. This was not, of course, entirely altruistic on his part as any new upper middle-class suburban estate was enhanced by an Anglican church in the later nineteenth century. The first phase of the church was built in 1883-84 and Colmore Crescent completed its distinctive island site.

The Crescent was respectfully named after the Vicar of Moseley, Canon William Colmore, and the church dedicated in his wife's name. The church was to remain standing in the fields of Wake Green House for another 15 years or more before house building began in earnest on the estate at the turn of the century. The Willmot family was later to donate more land for the site of the Vicarage in Colmore Crescent in 1905, and to sell the plot in Dyott Road for the church hall in 1921.

The first new houses on these two estates were built in the late 1880s and 1890s in Cotton Lane, Grove Avenue, the south side of St Agnes Road near Coldbath Farm, and the north end of the same road, near Wake Green Road. Some of these houses survive, but others have been demolished. Development was also ongoing along Oxford Road but this road was not extended beyond School Road until 1902.

Almost immediately architectural fashion changed and these large, high-roomed houses were succeeded by the Arts and Crafts styles which dominate the Conservation Area and which were mostly constructed in the Edwardian building boom of 1895-1910.

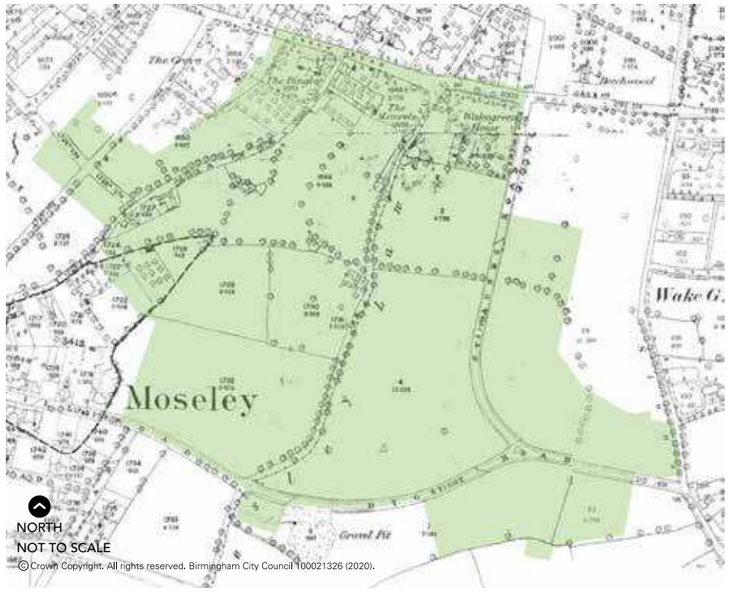
The two architects whose houses are most numerous are W De Lacy Aherne with houses of all sizes in St Agnes Road, Oxford Road, Wake Green Road and Cotton Lane, and J Brewin Holmes, who built two pairs of large semi-detached houses in St Agnes Road and designed many of the smaller houses on the north side of Oxford Road, all in 1904-06. Most of these smaller houses were built speculatively, for rent or purchase, and often landowner, architect and builder worked cooperatively with each taking a share of the profits.

The inter-war period
The identical pairs of semi-detached houses in Greenhill Road and the west side of Billesley Lane were built in 1923-26 to designs by George Payton. Other houses were built in this period in Cotton Lane, Billesley Lane and the eastern part of Oxford Road, all in the Arts and Crafts style, and infilling undeveloped plots.

The most prominent group in the Conservation Area are on the west side of Billesley Lane, built in 1925 and designed by Lloyd Ward. This road was widened by the city council to improve traffic flow, and grass verges and lime trees were planted in 1928.

Post World War II
There were still a surprising number of empty plots or very large gardens backing on to Billesley Lane which remained undeveloped after 1946. With the next building boom of the 1960s, housing fashions had changed. The large houses of the Conservation Area were going to institutional use, or were being sub-divided for flats. Consequently new houses were much smaller and mostly in Anglo-Scandinavian styles. A number of houses were demolished and small estates of flats or maisonettes built, whilst other plots were divided so that additional housing could be built in the back gardens, or beside the original house in the front garden.

By the 1980s this part of Moseley was increasingly the abode of the professional classes - doctors, lawyers, lecturers, teachers - who appreciated the quality of the houses and the size of the gardens (as well as the excellent local schools). It was this group who were instrumental in founding both The Moseley Society, and local residents' associations for St Agnes Road and Oxford Road.



Plan 3
Moseley circa 1880s.

Townscape character

The built character of the Conservation Area reflects Moseley's growth as a local centre and is defined by a period of rapid development between the 1890s and the 1930s. The majority of its buildings belong to this period.

Building types
With the exception of St Agnes church and its parish hall and two large care homes, the Conservation Area is characterised entirely by residential buildings in a variety of domestic styles of the period between 1890 and 1990.

Architectural character
The first houses in the Conservation Area were built in the late 1890s. These houses were in what was called the 'Old English' style favoured by architects such as Norman Shaw. They are in red brick, of three storeys, with steep-pitched clay tile roofs, impressive chimney stacks and large windows on the principal storeys. A good example is 'Hilver' (5, St Agnes Road). The two pairs of semi-detached houses on the north side of St Agnes Road, facing the church, are a variant characterised by exuberant terracotta decoration on their facades.

The Arts and Crafts style houses of the Edwardian building boom are of two types. In the northern part of St Agnes Road, they are of a similar size to their 'Old English' predecessors but are characterised by substantial structural timbers, part roughcast or plastered walls, highly decorative chimney stacks, bay windows and smaller leaded light windows (often with stained glass), wrought iron fixtures and fittings and a plethora of decorative detail.

The second type use a similar palette of materials but the houses are smaller, often semi-detached and of only two storeys (though there are often rooms in the attic roof spaces). They often lack garages and stand closer to the street frontage, on narrower but lengthy plots. These houses are typically found in Dyott Road, Cotton Lane and especially in Oxford Road.

The 1920s' semi-detached houses in Greenhill Road and Billesley Lane are a single development and are simpler in style, two storeys, with roughcast fronts and less decorative detail.

'Hilver' 5 St Agnes Road.

Building materials
High quality red brickwork is the principal building material in the Conservation Area. Architectural details are rendered in limestone or sandstone. Structural timbers are found in gables and porches. There is also use of roughcast or smooth plaster to cover parts of the elevation or to define an architectural element.

Traditional roofing materials are clay tiles. There are only a few slate roofs, most notable are the Westmoreland slate roofs on four pairs of semi-detached houses in Oxford Road. Chimneys are brick with clay pots. Window frames were originally of wood, though some casements were in wrought iron. Bay or dormer windows are covered in clay tiles or decorative leadwork.

Boundary and retaining walls are constructed in sandstone blocks or limestone 'bricks'. Gates are of wood or wrought iron. Holly was the main hedging plant in the early part of the twentieth century and the sandstone walls and holly hedge which surround St Agnes churchyard is an important townscape feature.

Stained glass
Stained glass is characteristic of both the Art Nouveau and Art Deco periods and there are good examples of both in the Conservation Area. There are fine examples of the earlier style in Oxford Road houses and Art Deco makes an appearance in Billesley Lane and in some of the less exuberant glazing bar patterns elsewhere.

Height and scale
Buildings are characteristically domestic in scale, almost uniformly of two or three storeys, with steep-pitched roofs. The majority of the houses in St Agnes Road and the west side of Cotton Lane have taller floor to ceiling heights than their neighbours but conform to the overall domestic scale.

Street pattern
The street pattern in the area forms a largely coherent and legible framework. Wake Green Road and Yardley Wood Road, which bound the Conservation Area to the north and east are main traffic arteries and bus routes. Billesley Lane marked the boundary between the two historic parishes of Moseley and Yardley. It was widened and straightened in 1928. Other roads in the area were provided by developers as suburban house building got under way and almost all curve gently.

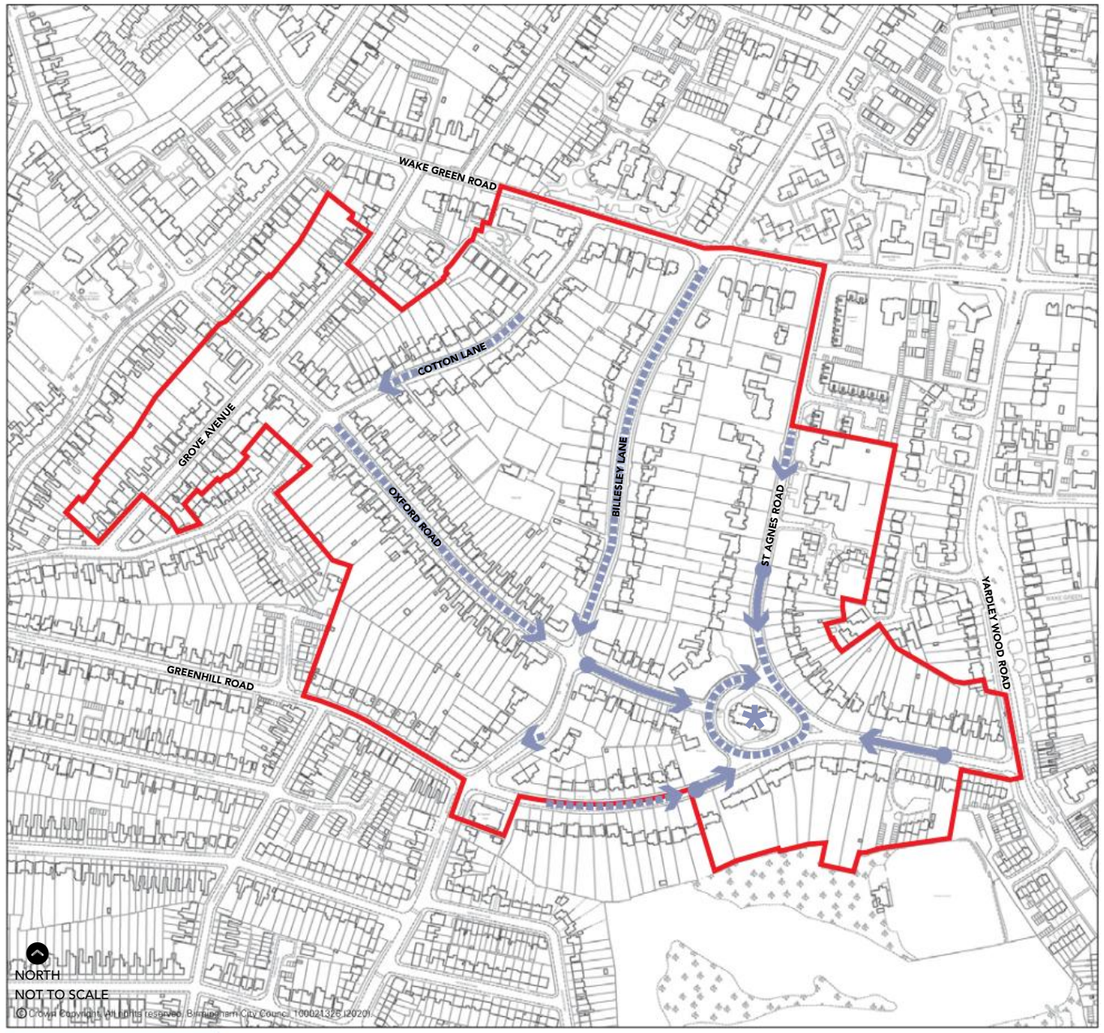
Views
St Agnes church provides the dominant townscape feature in the Conservation Area. Centrally located on a roundabout there are good close-up views of the building from all sides, the south front seen from across Dyott Road is probably the finest.

There are longer sequential views of the east end of the church along the length of the east-west part of St Agnes Road and of the west tower along that part of Oxford Road east of Billesley Lane. The gentle curves of Billesley Lane, with its grass verges and lime trees, provide good sequential views in both directions.

Intimate views through gateways into the large front gardens of houses in St Agnes Road are an important part of the character of that street. St Agnes church hall acts as the southern gateway to the Conservation Area at a crossroads junction but, since it stands at the lowest point topographically, it is not a significant view focus.

The only significant view out from the Conservation Area is from the eastern end of St Agnes Road at its junction with Yardley Wood Road. The view southwards into the valley of Moseley Bog and beyond is both extensive and attractive.

133 Oxford Road - decorative brickwork and ornate chimney stack.



Plan 4
Conservation Area views.

Key

- Conservation area boundary
- Landmarks
- Key views
- Sequential views

Open space
The churchyard of St Agnes church is the principal open space in the Conservation Area. It is of considerable townscape significance because of its location at the junction of four of the roads in the area and its distinctive oval form bounded by sandstone wall and holly hedge. Its grass, spring bulbs and many trees provides a pleasant space for contemplation. Moseley Tennis Club's courts, between Billesley Lane and Cotton Lane, provide a second, private, open space which is significant for those whose properties bound it but which can hardly be seen from the street. There is a small 'pocket park' open space/play area off Manor Park Close.

Gardens
Private gardens are an important feature throughout the Conservation Area but, of particular significance, are the front gardens of 130 Oxford Road, 25-27 St Agnes Road, and 42 Billesley Lane, which retain their original design and landscaping from their first building. Every effort should be made to encourage their owners to preserve the layout and materials of these gardens.

Paving, street furniture and information
Street surfaces throughout the area are uniformly of asphalt and provide an appropriate neutral foreground to the houses. Pavements are likewise uniformly of asphalt with granite kerbs. St Agnes Road has very distinctive kerbs, gutters (smooth concrete slabs with white stone edgings) and dropped entrance kerbs (white limestone blocks) which had been partially hidden by inappropriate road maintenance.

Street furniture in the area consists almost entirely of standard designs. Lighting columns are functional and unobtrusive, in the standard LED format. Some could have been placed with better regard for adjacent buildings. The two almost adjacent columns on the island to the east of St Agnes church are particularly obtrusive. Street name signs are a mix of standard aluminium plates and the historic cast iron plates used by the Council at the beginning of the last century. These are an important feature of the area.

The St Agnes Residents' Association has provided a timber information board facing the street on the south side of St Agnes churchyard. The board includes a map of the Conservation Area and is in good order. The Residents' Association have also provided a replacement timber bench on the island to the east of St Agnes facing the church together with two planters which they maintain.

Trees
Front gardens are characterised by mature trees, evergreen shrubberies and dense planting; even the smaller gardens of Oxford Road usually have at least one smaller tree (such as a birch or a maple). The street plane trees in St Agnes Road (north end) and Oxford Road (east end) add gravitas to the views of St Agnes, whilst the lime trees in Billesley Lane and their associated grass verges emphasise the curves in the road and are fine mature specimens. St Agnes churchyard is ringed by mature sycamore trees together with more recently planted exotic species.

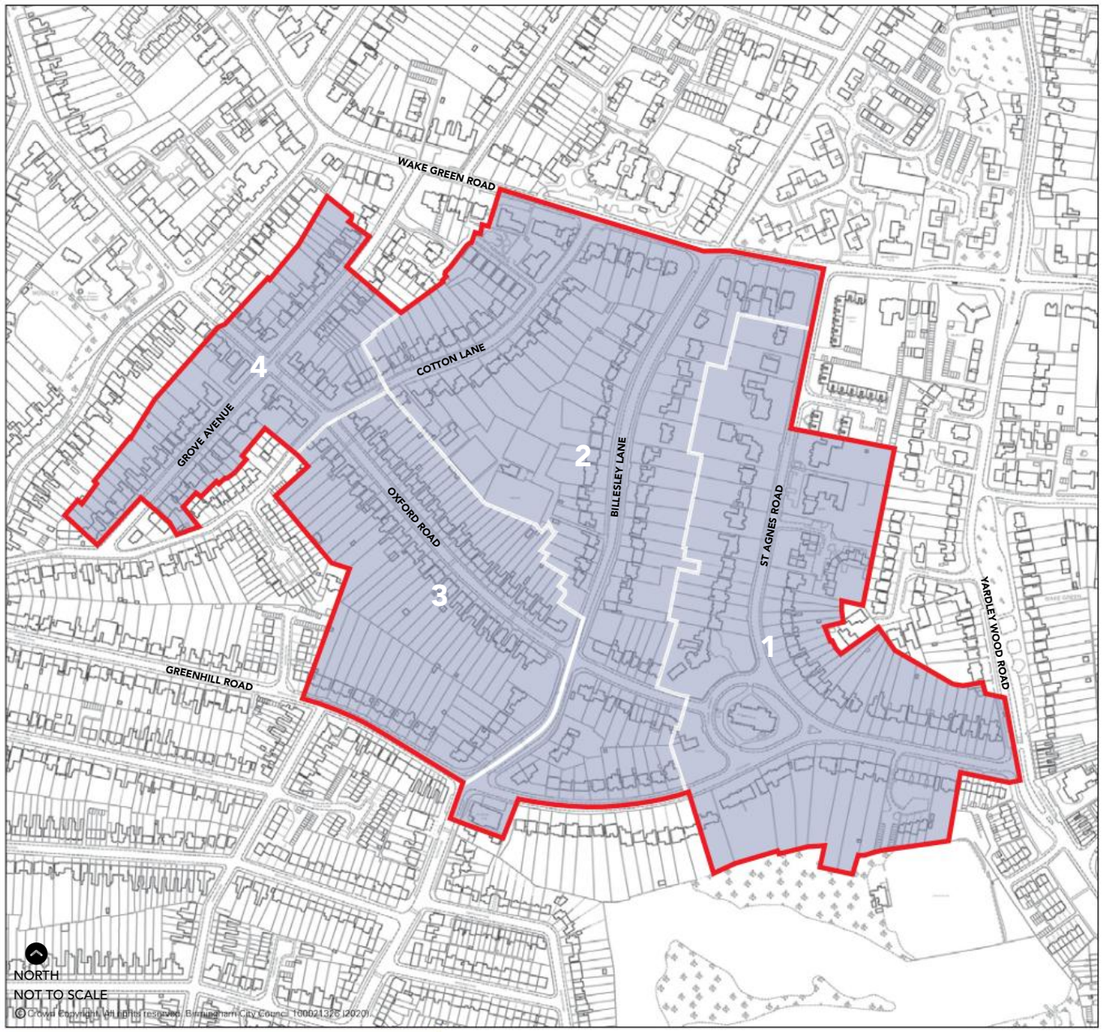
There are exceptional mature large trees in a number of private gardens (front and rear) though regrettably they have been reduced over the past decade despite the protection inherent in Conservation Area designation. Holly hedges are an important part of the streetscape; the original hedge and sandstone wall fronting the Avon Drive estate, just outside the Conservation Area, provides a link to former properties here; that in front of Mulberry Drive could do the same if pruned.

Traffic and pedestrian movement
Despite their origin as characteristically quiet, suburban residential streets there has, in recent times, been an increased flow of traffic through the Conservation Area. Traffic levels have been exacerbated in parts of the conservation area through the introduction of a Low-Traffic Neighbourhood scheme (LTN) in the area from 2020 which has increased traffic flow through some of the traditionally quiet streets and had a negative impact on the character of the area. This has been particularly notable on Billesley Lane and Oxford Road, both of which have been subject to previous positive traffic calming measures such as speed humps, mini-roundabouts and to the recent introduction of 20mph speed limits. On-street parking is most problematic in Oxford Road since few of the houses originally had garages and front drives are not long enough to accommodate more than one car. At present there are no special provisions for cyclists.

Pedestrian flows are heaviest along Oxford Road and Billesley Lane. During the week Moseley Church of England School generates both pedestrian and car movement along Oxford Road, whilst a popular small store just beyond the Conservation Area does the same in Billesley Lane. The tennis club and St Agnes Hall also generate flows at particular times. However, pedestrians do not make major impacts on the area.

Character areas

There are four broad character areas that can be distinguished within the Conservation Area and its recommended extension, though each could be further sub-divided given the diversity of house types.



Plan 5
St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area Character Areas.

Key

Conservation area boundary

1. St Agnes Road, Colmore Crescent and Dyott Road (south side)
2. Cotton Lane and parts of Billesley Road and Wake Green Road together with the eastern part of Oxford Road and the north side of Dyott Road
3. The western part of Oxford Road and Greenhill Road
4. Grove Avenue and the western end of Oxford Road

1. St Agnes Road, Colmore Crescent and Dyott Road (south side)

This area is distinguished by the largest houses standing in very large plots with St Agnes Church acting as the main focus of the townscape. It includes two small estates of modern houses (Mulberry Drive and St Agnes Close) built on amalgamations of two or more of these plots in the 1960s and 1980s respectively. This part of the road is lined with large plane trees. The area contains the most architecturally distinguished houses, including five of the listed buildings in the Conservation Area.

St Agnes Road is 'L'-shaped. The north-south section contains the most important group of houses in the Conservation Area. Garden walls are mostly rusticated sandstone or limestone blocks and the plots have double entrances with sweeping drives and numerous mature trees, evergreen shrubs, and hedges.

The Arts and Crafts houses on the west side of the road (odd numbers) are interrupted only by the large modern dormer bungalow at No.3. Nos.5-9 have been sympathetically restored to domestic use after 40 years as the Lucas Training Centre. No.13 has had a new porch and replacement garage constructed to very high specifications. Although some of the large trees have been removed from front gardens, all the properties on this side of the road are in exceptionally good order.

The eastern side of the road has fared less well over the past fifty years. No 8, 'Harris House', is atypical in that it was Victorian Jacobean in its architectural details but it has recently been restored and converted to an apartment.

Nos.10-12 are now Mapledene Nursing Home which consists of a purpose-built accommodation block linked to the conserved Mapledene house (originally No.12) built in 1915 to designs by Marcus Type. The whole provides a satisfactory ensemble of new and old with well-maintained shrubberies and lawn. The adjoining cul-de-sac development of sheltered apartments forms St Agnes Close and dates from the 1980s.

Where the road curves past the church, Nos.32-38 consist of two pairs of remarkable three-storey, double-fronted, semi-detached houses which are very different from the other properties in the Conservation Area. They are dominated by terracotta detailing (one pair reddish, the other orange). The front garden walls are also in terracotta and are an important part of the ensemble. Nos 46 and 48 are a semi-detached pair with dark red terracotta detailing further along the road by the same architect.

The section of St Agnes Road running eastwards from the church to Yardley Wood Road has a somewhat different character. There are no roadside trees, but there are mature forest trees in many of the front gardens beside the pavements, which are an important part of the streetscape.

With three exceptions the north side of the road consists of semi-detached houses, eight of which are matching pairs. There is much stained glass in the ground floor windows of these properties. The detached houses include No.44, 'Llanherne', which is one of George Pepper's extraordinary houses consisting of a three-storey tower beside a two-storey block with brick and stone ground floor, and ornate timber-framed first floor. Another is No.50, an attractive large double-fronted 'Queen Anne'-style house whose only comparator is St Agnes Vicarage.

The south side of the road is different again. The houses are mostly larger, two-storey with high rooms and attics and are more Victorian in character in 'Old English' style. No.45 was demolished in the 1960s and Mulberry Drive cul-de-sac constructed with a flat block on the street front with garage court and four houses to the rear. The retention of the sandstone front wall and holly hedge means that it does not intrude untowardly.

On the south side of Dyott Road Nos.35-41 are Edwardian Arts and Crafts in character. No.41 has a particularly fine studio window on the first floor since it was built for an artist. The house and its gardens have been immaculately restored by its former owners, including the replacement of a concrete-tile roof by clay tiles.

Nos.37 and 39 have broad frontages signifying their important position opposite St Agnes Church.

Colmore Crescent, to the west of the church, has only two houses. Ashley Lodge is described in

Appendix A since it is a Listed building; the other is the Vicarage of St Agnes Church (No.5). It was built in 1922-23 to designs by Charles Edward Bateman, another of Birmingham's leading Arts and Crafts architects. The house is roughcast, with a hipped tiled roof, in a symmetrical Queen Anne style.

The Vicarage stands in a very large plot (there was originally a full-sized tennis court in the rear garden) with sandstone walls and impressive gate piers with large ball finials.

St Agnes Church forms the centrepiece of this character area. Architectural and historical details are provided in Appendix A, on Listed Buildings.

2. Cotton Lane and parts of Billesley Lane and Wake Green Road together with the eastern part of Oxford Road and the north side of Dyott Road

This character area contains a greater mix of house types, generally slightly smaller than in St Agnes Road but with large gardens and mostly detached.

Wake Green Road is a major traffic artery and bus route. It is comparatively narrow for these functions and is often congested, especially in morning and evening rush hours. The mature trees and shrubberies of the adjoining gardens and grounds help to ameliorate the traffic fumes and noise.

Mapledene nursing home - Marcus Type 1915.

The eleven houses and the former 'Gracie Hall/The Dingle' on Wake Green Road between St Agnes Road and Cotton Lane might easily have been assigned to character area 1 in that they are large detached houses on substantial plots, but the plots are smaller than most in area 1 and the houses were built later (1907-11) all but three were designed by W. De Lacy Aherne. The exceptions are Nos.48 and 50 (on the corner of Billesley Lane) which are by George Pepper. The former lacks the characteristic Horton sandstone details of most of his houses. No.40, on the corner of Cotton Lane, was designed by Owen Parsons. Nos.40 and 50 are both Grade 2 listed (see Appendix A for details of these houses).

Cotton Lane was developed in several phases although much of the road was built in the Edwardian Period. The north-western side (odd numbers) contains very large, high-roomed, Arts and Crafts houses, nine of which were designed by W De Lacy Aherne. On the south-eastern side, Nos.76-86 are smaller detached houses, including three by George Pepper.

The remainder of this side of the road (Nos.60-72) was developed in the 1920s with detached houses in the Arts and Crafts style. There are good examples of leadwork, brick patterning and timber-framing in these houses. The former grounds of Gracie Hall were developed in 2002-3 as Manor Park Close, a cul-de-sac of three-storey modern Arts and Crafts style houses and apartments with a communal garden and play area at the centre.

Billesley Lane has, over the last thirty years, become a major traffic artery between Kings Heath and Wake Green Road. There have been a number of serious accidents in the road and traffic calming in its central section (outside the Conservation Area) has failed to slow the speed of cars. It is an attractive road, curving gently (befitting its antiquity) and with broad grass verges and very fine mature lime trees planted in c.1928.

It is the most varied road in the Conservation Area in terms of the architecture of its houses, since plots were developed over a very long time period. Many were derived from the initial very large gardens of properties on Cotton Lane and St Agnes Road.

Much of the east side of Billesley Lane from Wake Green Road southwards was, until recently, undeveloped since it was the car park for the Lucas Training Centre. Subsequently, five large detached houses have been constructed here in modern Arts and Crafts related styles. Nos.32-36 are accessed from a cul-de-sac so as to preserve the conifers along the street boundary.

Nos.40-42 date from the mid-1920s and are fine examples of houses of this period. No.42, in particular retains its original front door and diamond pane glazing and has a front garden whose layout and planting dates from the time of its construction. Further southwards there is a mixture of 1920s, 1960s and recently built houses. No.52 is an unusual 1960s' stone-built bungalow with a prominent central door. A majority of the houses in this part of Billesley Lane now have uPVC double-glazed windows, new porches and doors, and brickpaved drives, often extending to 100 per cent of the front gardens.

On the western side of the road, between Oxford Road and the entrance to Moseley Tennis Club (which occupies back land in the triangle of Billesley Lane, Oxford Road and Cotton Lane) there are four detached Arts and Crafts houses built in 1905 to designs by Daniell & Berrill.

The western side of Billesley Lane then has a group of large, mostly double-fronted detached houses on very large plots, which were built in the 1920s' building boom. They are in speculative builders' Arts and Crafts style, attractively varied with good features including some fine Art Deco glass in doors and windows. The northernmost houses on the west side of the road are large modern replacements.

The triangular street block formed by the eastern part of Oxford Road, Dyott Road and the southern part of Billesley Lane has mainly detached houses, but on slightly smaller plots than the rest of the character area. Oxford Road, between Billesley Lane and Colmore Crescent, consists of detached, two-storey with attics, Arts and Crafts houses of varied design. The houses have gardens which are broader but shorter than the houses in the central section of Oxford Road. No.128a-d is a decidedly odd-looking brick house built for car manufacturer Frederick Lanchester (green plaque), partly to his own designs.

The plaster and timber-framed house on the corner of Billesley Lane (No.122), built in the 1920s, is particularly distinctive and its front garden has been redesigned to better reflect the character of the area. The four houses on the eastern side of Billesley Lane (Nos.68- 76) were also built in the 1920s in Arts and Crafts style with timber gables and attractive detailing.

On the north side of Dyott Road within the Conservation Area there are six (two-storey plus attics) detached houses and three smaller houses of later date which were included when the Conservation Area was extended. Three of these houses (Nos.26-30) are attractive dwellings with timbered gables and compare with many of the houses in the eastern part of Oxford Road. No.30, which was built for George Lanchester in 1910 (green plaque) is a little different, with a large two-storey bay window on one corner. All these dwellings face houses on the south side of the road constructed in the 1950s in a debased Arts and Crafts style.

There are no roadside trees in Dyott Road but the mature trees in the gardens of the post-war houses on the south side, together with their sandstone walls are an important part of the streetscape. St Agnes Church Hall stands on the corner with Billesley Lane. This is a large building in the Arts and Crafts style, designed by Edwin F. Reynolds and opened in 1925-26. It is much used by the wider community.

South east side of Cotton Road - 1920 Tudor style houses.

3. The western part of Oxford Road, and Greenhill Road

Most of the houses in this character area are smaller, built on much narrower plots and often in semi-detached pairs. The central part of Oxford Road (from Billesley Lane to Cotton Lane) is characterised by mainly semi-detached houses, almost all built in the first decade of the twentieth century and designed by only three or four of Birmingham's Arts and Crafts architects. The houses in Greenhill Road are similar, but built in the 1920s and designed by a single architect.

The semi-detached houses in Oxford Road have 'U' plans, on narrow plots without garages. They are two-storey but most have attic bedrooms. The front gardens are small but most are attractively planted with small trees, shrubs and flowers. Most front gardens were originally bounded with sandstone block walls, though there are a few limestone block walls, especially on the north side of the road. Most of these houses were built in 1905-10. The work of two architects dominate: W. De Lacy Aherne at the Billesley Lane end and J Brewin Holmes at the western end. Red clay-tiled roofs; timber-framed gables; squared, five-sided bay windows, and Art Nouveau stained glass are characteristic features (at least 19 houses have surviving stained glass windows). The street scene is marred only by the occasional poorly designed 1960s' dormer window, by the loss of a small number of leaded lights as windows have been replaced, and by the loss of front-garden walls and front-garden planting as new drives have been constructed for car parking (especially true of the north side of the road).

Several houses at the western end were destroyed by WWII bombing and rebuilt in more modern styles in the 1950s. The semi-detached pairs on the western side of Billesley Lane (Nos.71-81) and the six pairs of houses on the north side of Greenhill Road, included in the Conservation Area when it was extended in 2009, were all built in the period 1923-26 as a single development to designs by local architect George Payton. Their builder subsequently occupied the corner house (No.81). They are attractive and well-maintained houses in a style that mixes Arts and Crafts with 'Bournville garden suburb' characteristics with similar plan form but slightly varied facades. The survey shows that they remain remarkably unaltered, apart from modern brick-paved drives and some window replacements which nonetheless maintain historic leaded light patterns. The solar panels shown in the adjacent image are an uncommon addition in the Conservation Area.

Houses north side of Oxford Road - J Brewin Homes.

Houses in Greenhill Road - George Payton 1923-26.

4. Grove Avenue and the western end of Oxford Road

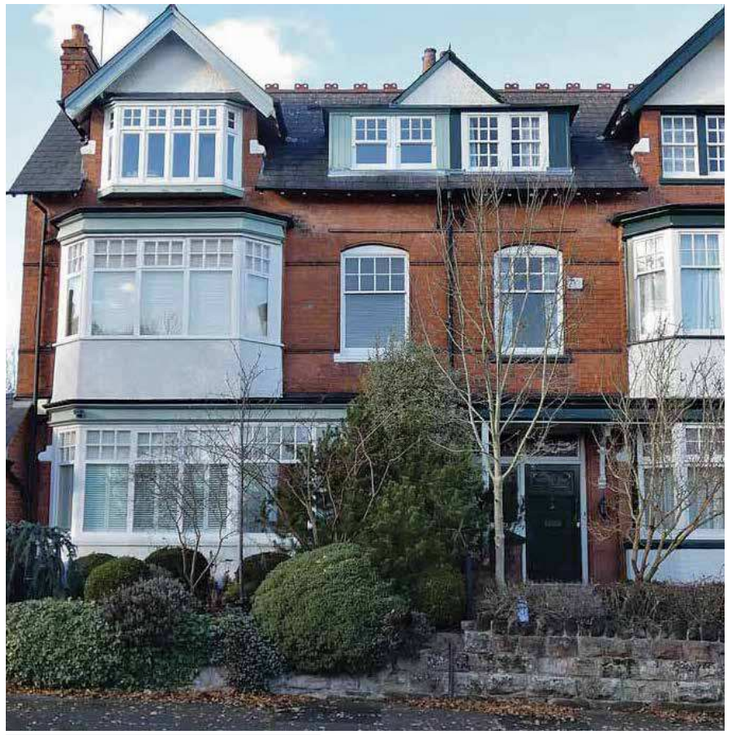
The western end of Oxford Road, between Cotton Lane and School Road, has an eclectic mix of generally larger houses, most of which are detached. Six of them were designed by E and JA Harper. Those on the north side of Oxford Road are three-storey plus attics, in the earlier 'Queen Anne' style, all of which are in multiple occupation, but generally in good order. The houses west of Grove Avenue, on the north side of Oxford Road (Nos.49-53) consist of an interesting 1930s' (or early 1950s') house with 'Moderne' Art Deco windows; and a 1930s' Arts and Crafts style house on the corner of Grove Avenue, formerly used as the local headquarters of Toc H. On the south side of Oxford Road and west of Grove Avenue are large late-Victorian houses in multiple occupation.

This mix of late-Victorian houses (often double-fronted) and 'Queen Anne' style three-storey semi-detached pairs, together with one or two Arts and Crafts detached houses characterise Grove Avenue to both the north and south of Oxford Road. There are examples of work by the Harpers and by De Lacy Aherne, but the most prolific architect in this road was Stephen Holliday designing houses in the late 1890s for builder WE Gough.

Some of these larger houses have attractive brickwork, distinctive glazing bar patterns in the windows and Jacobean/Dutch style gables.

There are also a number of modern replacement post WWII houses. Rear gardens are substantial in Grove Avenue but on the southeast side almost all gardens have been divided transversely to provide plots for small modern houses fronting Cotton Lane (which are outside the Conservation Area).

Grove Avenue - Dutch style brick gables.



Grove Avenue - Arts and Crafts houses.

Pressures on the Conservation Area

The St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area is not subject to the commercial pressures of its neighbouring Moseley Conservation Area since there are no shops or businesses in the designated area.

However, as property prices have risen over the past forty years and people's expectations of housing in the middle-class suburbs of the city have risen, there is constant pressure for houses to be upgraded and extended, sometimes to the detriment of their architectural character.

The extensive gardens of many of the houses in the Conservation Area also provide a temptation for developers and owners to divide the plot and build new houses, a process characterised as 'densification', which often leads to the loss of trees and other vegetation.

There has been some loss of characteristic buildings within the Conservation Area, but some of these losses occurred before its designation. They are balanced by the well-designed properties of Manor Park Close (2002-03), which replaced 1960s' student housing, and the new houses constructed on the former car park of the Lucas Training Centre in Billesley Lane.

Derelict wilderness rear of 129 Oxford Road.

Large corner plots remain susceptible to demolition and replacement with denser development. However, since designation, such development has largely been prevented. One example is the derelict wilderness to the rear of No.129 Oxford Road. New houses have been permitted to the rear of No.50 Cotton Lane and in the former garage court to the rear of No.65 Oxford Road.

Large houses are attractive to institutional users and there are five properties in this category in the Conservation Area. Care homes occupy the Grade II Listed 'Ashley Lodge' in Colmore Crescent and 'Mapledene' in St Agnes Road. A number of houses formerly in institutional use have been successfully converted back to private use, notably the former Lucas Engineering training establishment which occupied Nos.5, 7 and 9 St Agnes Road.

No.8 St Agnes Road (Harris House) was owned by Barnardo's. Much of the 'Jacobean' decorative detail of the façade was removed and a modern entrance inserted. It has recently been partly restored and converted to apartments.

A small number of houses in Oxford Road are in multiple-occupation. There were more such properties before Designation, but changes in the local economy have seen most converted back to single occupancy. Some of the few houses in multiple-occupation are in poor repair. Two of the large houses on Wake Green Road have been unoccupied for some years, including the Grade II Listed No.50, though both are currently being slowly restored.

The land in the centre of the street block framed by Billesley Lane, Oxford Road and Cotton Lane occupied by Billesley Tennis Club is susceptible to development pressure, particularly given the 'ransom strip' attached to the property bounding the entrance drive to the tennis club.

Trees and garden shrubberies form an important part of the character of the Conservation Area and there are many large trees at least 100 years old. There have been losses of such trees, especially from back gardens, due to both natural forces (the Birmingham tornado of 1st August 2005 passed across the western part of the Conservation Area) and removal. Gardens in the Conservation Area make an important contribution to biodiversity.

The alteration of houses by owners can lead to loss of the essential decorative details that make Arts and Crafts houses so special. The intervention of many modern 'improvements' to the fabric of such houses can harm the architectural integrity of the building. Most notable is the insertion of uPVC double-glazing, early examples of which often altered the characteristic verticality of the main window frames and introduced horizontality instead.

Later replacements have been of higher quality but most products are unable to truly replicate the pattern of glazing bars or the leaded lights that are so important a part of the character of the area. Window replacement also leads to the loss of stained glass panels and wrought iron fixtures and fittings.

A full survey of house facades was undertaken in August 2017 and shows that window replacement is a particular feature of Billesley Lane houses. However, it also shows that a very high proportion of houses in other streets retain timber windows. Replacement front doors seem to be less of a problem in the Conservation Area, except on Wake Green Road.

There are a few inappropriate loft conversions but most houses were built with habitable attics in the loft space and improvement rather than new build has been more usual. Increasing the size of the street frontage attic windows is not appropriate.

Some houses have had rear extensions and the addition of conservatories, but few are visible from the road and therefore have minimal impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. A recent variant of the densification process is the building of living accommodation in separate buildings in the back garden. Again these are mostly invisible from the road.

Manor Park Close.

The survey showed that there are comparatively few roof replacements in evidence, and only five or six are in inappropriate concrete tiles, but the loss of one of the Westmoreland slate roofs in Oxford Road was unfortunate to say the least.

A recent and accelerating trend consequent on the increase in car ownership, is the removal of some or all of the characteristic front garden walls to provide off-street car parking, this is partcularly noticable in Oxford Road where the majority of the houses lack garages.

This is accompanied by the replacement of all, or part, of the front garden vegetation with blockpaved driveways. The property survey shows that this is a particular feature of Billesley Lane properties. Excessively high party boundary fences, or using inappropriate materials are also sometimes in evidence.

Traffic and its speed have become an increasing recent issue and the noise, visual intrusion and air pollution caused by increased traffic volumes considerably detracts from the quiet, suburban character of the Conservation Area; Billesley Lane, Oxford Road and Dyott Road are most affected. In addition, the traffic signs which are a necessary corollary of mitigation efforts to reduce speed and improve safety have created an increased degree of street clutter in the conservation area.

The east-west section of St Agnes Road. All the mature large trees in this view are in private gardens.

St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area

PART 2

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Guidance

Policy guidance
This guidance has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and Planning Practice Guidance: conserving and enhancing the historic environment (Revised 2021).

It follows the advice set out in Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition 2019).

These policies should also be read in conjunction with the Birmingham Development Plan (2017) especially 'Policy TP12 Historic Environment'; the Moseley SPD (2014), the Mature Suburbs Guidelines SPD (2008) and the Moseley and Sparkhill Area of Restraint (1992) (see Appendix B). In forming their proposals applicants must have regard to the information contained in these documents.

Additions and alterations
There will be a presumption against additions and alterations to buildings which adversely affect their character and appearance, particularly their front elevations, or that of the Conservation Area. Proposals should ensure that additions or alterations to existing buildings have a positive effect on their character and that of the Conservation Area. The Council will ensure that all additions and alterations are sympathetic to the existing building in scale, proportion, materials and detailing.

The removal or masking of historic architectural details and/ or architectural elements will not be permitted. Where appropriate the Council will expect hidden, damaged or missing architectural details and/or elements to be accurately reinstated. Where signifi cant alterations and/ or additions are proposed the Council will require designs to be submitted in detail.

It should include an analysis of the contribution made by the existing building to the character of the immediate streetscape and the wider Conservation Area and of the preservation or enhancement of that character by the proposed additions and/or alterations.

Planning permission
There will be a presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. This will include buildings of contextual or group value.

Where the demolition of a building which makes little or no contribution to the character of the Conservation Area is proposed, the Council will expect the developer to justify demolition in terms of the character of the Conservation Area and submit detailed plans for redevelopment. These should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. In the absence of satisfactory proposals consent for demolition will not be granted.

122 Oxford Road.

Recording
Where consent is granted for significant demolition the Council will expect an accurate archive record to be made prior to the commencement of any works. This will include photographs and/ or where appropriate, measured survey drawings and will be provided at the expense of the applicant. The outcome of this work will be provided to the Council and will form part of the public record.

Change of use
The Council will not permit changes of use to buildings where the new use would adversely affect their character and appearance or that of the Conservation Area. Applications in respect of residential care and nursing homes (use class C1 and C2) and non-family dwelling houses are subject to the policies laid out in the Moseley and Sparkhill Area of Restraint SPD.

Change of use can, however, lead to the enhancement of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. An example is the return to residential use of the Lucas Engineering Training Centre which occupied Nos.5-9 St Agnes Road. The superb restoration of both the house and gardens of 'Hilver' (No.5) has greatly improved that part of St Agnes Road.

Maintenance of historic plot boundaries
The historic pattern of plot boundaries should be respected. The Council will resist the removal of boundaries and the amalgamation or sub-division of plots.

Boundary treatments
There will be a presumption in favour of retaining traditional boundary treatments such as sandstone or limestone walls, iron railings and iron or wooden gates. The Council will always encourage appropriate repair and reinstatement of historic boundary treatments however where no historic precedent or evidence exists for gates and railings modern versions will be resisted. The Moseley Society has published an advice leaflet on front garden boundaries (see Appendix B).

The design of new development
The Council will expect all new development to achieve a satisfactory relationship with its surroundings, demonstrating a regard for the character of the immediate and/or surrounding townscape and the wider Conservation Area. Permission for new development will only be granted where it preserves and enhances the character of the Conservation Area as a whole. Existing buildings which are unsympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area will not be regarded as valid precedents for further uncharacteristic development.

The Council will require the Design and Access Statement for all significant new development to be submitted in detail. It should include an analysis of the contribution which will be made by the proposed new building to the character of the immediate and or surrounding townscape and the wider Conservation Area as defined in the Conservation Area appraisal.

The Mature Suburbs Guidelines SPD provides detailed guidance on 'design criteria' (section 4.12) and 'determining character' (section 4.5).

32 Billesley Lane.

Development in the Conservation Area setting
New development in the setting of the Conservation Area should, in height, scale and massing, respect and preserve characteristic views within, from and into the Area. The Council will not permit new buildings or additions to existing buildings beyond the Conservation Area boundary to intrude on, or block, views or sightlines.

Key design principles
The principles below should be applied as appropriate to all new development, including extensions, additions and other works to:

- New buildings should follow the building line characteristic of the locality or character area. Dominant architectural elements or features which project beyond the street frontage line will not be permitted.
- New buildings should not be signifiantly higher or lower than their neighbours and should reflect the building heights characteristic of the locality or character area. This will normally limit new frontage buildings to a maximum of three storeys.
- The plan form and architectural treatment of new buildings should complement the historic and architectural character of the Conservation Area. In particular, principal elevations must always front the principal street. Buildings behind the principal street frontage should be subordinate in height, scale, massing and elevational detail.
- New buildings should respond appropriately to actual ground level.

Semi-detached hoses designed by W. de Lacy Aherne.

- The roof forms and rooflines of new buildings must complement the roof forms and rooflines of the surrounding and/or adjoining buildings. Roof-lights should be kept to a minimum, be of a conservation specification and be located on the rear slope of the roof.
- New buildings should respect the elevational hierarchy found in traditional buildings, in particular the proportion of solid to void. Windows should be set within reveals of sufficient depth to add definition and interest to the façade. Main entrances should be set in the principal elevation.
- Local identity should be reinforced through the use of natural materials traditionally employed in the area. Every care should be taken to match materials in colour, texture and weight. All building materials should be of high quality. The use of man-made materials such as uPVC will be resisted.
- Architectural detail of high quality and which contributes to scale, proportion and legibility will be encouraged. Indiscriminate, fussy and arbitrary use of applied features or detail will be resisted.
- New buildings must preserve views and vistas characteristic of the Conservation Area and respect the setting of key historic buildings.
- New buildings should be accessible to all users, including people with disabilities. Where specialised access is required it must be treated as integral to the design.
- Proposals for improvements in energy efficiency and for sustainable methods of energy supply will be supported where they do not detract from the historic and architectural character of the Conservation Area. Solar panels should normally be located on the rear slope of the roof.

Enhancement schemes

There has already been considerable enhancement of the Conservation Area thanks to the efforts of the St Agnes Residents' Association and the initiative of new residents in all of the streets within its boundary.

Groundscape
The existing public groundscape within the Conservation Area provides an appropriate neutral setting for its buildings and structures. Street surfaces are generally in good repair. The pavements are uniformly tarmac throughout the Conservation Area.

Where historic materials such as granite kerbstones and granite setts survive great care should be taken to ensure that these are retained and accurately repaired. St Agnes Road has very distinctive curbs, gutters (smooth concrete slabs with white stone edgings) and dropped entrance curbs (white limestone blocks) which have been partially hidden by inappropriate road maintenance. Efforts should be made to restore this where possible. Recent re-surfacing has improved the visibility of some of the concrete gutters by removing poorly laid ashphalt.

If new paving schemes are proposed the design and materials should relate well to the surrounding buildings.

Street furniture
New street furniture should be carefully designed or selected to reflect the suburban character of the Conservation Area. Care should be taken to avoid spurious 'heritage'. Any additions must be justified and restricted to essential items. Damaged or lost cast-iron street name-plates should be replaced by modern replicas since they are an important part of the character of the Conservation Area.

Clutter
A co-ordinated effort should be made to avoid street clutter through good design and careful siting. Where possible, signs and equipment should be fixed to lighting columns, buildings, or other existing structures. Larger items such as cable TV/phone control boxes should be sited at the back of the footway. The design and siting of essential new equipment must be co-ordinated by the Council.

Street trees
Street trees are characteristic only of the northern section of St Agnes Road (London planes) with a short continuation round Colmore Crescent into Oxford Road, and of Billesley Lane (Limes). The latter are set in grass verges along the kerbside. Both contribute substantially to the character and biodiversity of the Conservation Area. The holly hedge and sandstone block wall boundaries of Cleveland Court, though not in the Conservation Area, add considerably to the character of the northern part of St Agnes Road, as do the trees and sandstone block wall in front of the modern houses on the south side of the eastern end of St Agnes Road.

Views
Key views and street views should be protected and new features within the public realm carefully sited to avoid intrusion on the setting of buildings. The most important views are those along the length of St Agnes Road to the east front of St Agnes Church, along the eastern part of Oxford Road towards the tower of St Agnes, and across the eastern end of Dyott Road taking in the whole of the south elevation of the church. The gentle curve of Billesley Lane, with its mature lime trees is another important view.

Replica traditional street sign.

Street clutter Billesley Lane/Dyott Road.

Ongoing management

Street and Traffic Management

Alterations to streets and roads
Any alterations to the streets and roads within the Conservation Area, including changes in the width of footways or carriageways should respect the historic street pattern which has remained unchanged since the area was first built up. 20mph speed limits are now in force throughout the Conservation Area except for Wake Green Road. Speed bumps are in place in Oxford Road and Billesley Lane and help to slow traffic, as do the mini-roundabouts at crossroads in Oxford Road.

The LTN measures that were implemented in 2020 currently remain in place, however proposals for a modal filter at the junction of Oxford Road and Billesley Lane, in order to reduce through traffic on Oxford Road, and for the introduction of a gyratory at Dyott/St Agnes/Colmore Crescent to make that route less attractive to through traffic, form part of a phased approach by the transport planning team at the city council to address increased traffic volumes through the area.

The management of street parking related to Moseley Church of England School in Oxford Road (though outside the Conservation Area) requires ongoing consideration in conjunction with the staff and governors of the school.

Trees and Open Spaces

Trees
Existing trees within the Conservation Area should be retained. When felling or cutting back any tree within the Conservation Area it is necessary to give the Council six weeks written notice. In giving notice it is necessary to specify precisely what works need to be carried out and why.

Street trees
The plane trees in St Agnes Road are now substantial specimens. In the past their branches have been periodically pollarded and this is acceptable management in the future. The lime trees in Billesley Lane date from 1928 and are in excellent health.

Enforcement and Remediation Strategy

Enforcement
The Council has a duty to consider taking enforcement action where they believe there to have been a breach of planning control. Given the particular threat to the special character of the Conservation Area that unauthorised development entails, the City Council will carry out an annual review of the Conservation Area and will take appropriate action when it is in the public interest to do so.

Repair and maintenance
The Council will use its statutory powers to secure the preservation of threatened buildings in the Conservation Area. In the case of statutorily listed buildings these powers include Urgent Works and Repairs Notices and, as a last resort, compulsory acquisition. The Council also has the power to secure the preservation of unlisted buildings where it is important for maintaining the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

The Council will provide guidance on the repair and maintenance of traditional buildings in the Conservation Area.

Article 4(2) Direction
At present all properties within the Conservation Area are subject to an Article 4(2) direction. This controls small-scale change through the removal of some permitted development rights.

For example, any enlargement or alteration where the property fronts a highway requires planning permission within this area. Should any extension to the conservation area be approved the Article 4(2) Direction might need to be extended to include properties in the new extensions in order to consistently manage the Conservation Area. A guide for owners and occupiers is contained in Appendix C.

Opportuities for positive future change

Institutional uses
Institutional use of houses built for residential purposes very frequently leads to the removal of original architectural details, to improve ventilation for example, and the addition of inappropriate modern features, especially connected to front door disability access. Institutions also usually require additional parking and delivery areas in former front gardens leading to the loss of vegetation. A number of former institutions have been successfully returned to residential use in the Conservation Area including Harris House, recently converted to apartments. Given the overwhelmingly residential character of the Conservation Area, conversion of former institutional buildings is to be encouraged.

Multiple occupation
Houses in multiple occupation are often in poor decorative repair externally. Porches have often been converted to open access vestibules with post boxes and apartment door bells, and front gardens usually lack vegetation in order to provide parking space for residents.

Similar opportunities for enhancement therefore come when houses formerly in multioccupation are returned to single occupation. This process has been a particular feature of houses in Oxford Road and there are now comparatively few houses not back in single occupation. Applications for conversion of dwellings to multioccupation should be resisted and conversion back to single ownership encouraged.

Replacement houses
The replacement of the out of-character 1960s' houses permitted in Billesley Lane before designation would enhance that street considerably. This process is already well underway. However, replacement houses within the Conservation Area are not always of good design, use inappropriate materials and sometimes lack any links with the character of the other houses in the street. Developers and architects should be encouraged positively to provide schemes that are contextualised to their particular location.

St Agnes Hall
St Agnes Church Hall marks the southern boundary of the Conservation Area. It is heavily used by the community. It dates from 1925-26 and was designed by well-known Birmingham Arts & Crafts architect, Edwin Reynolds. Though there has been some interior renovation in recent years the outside is in poor condition. Grant aid would almost certainly be necessary to replace the roof and repair and paint the windows.

Unoccupied properties
There are several houses in the conservation area which have been unoccupied for some years. Recently, some of these properties have been subject to the start of restoration and upgrading but the work is proceeding at slow pace.

Appendix A
Statutory Listed Buildings

St Agnes Church Grade II
The church was built in 1883-4 to the designs of William Davis after an architectural competition. Davis was a Birmingham architect with offices in Colmore Row. It was built in three phases: the east end, transepts and two bays of the nave first; the rest of the nave and base of the tower in 1892-93; and the upper stages of the tower in 1931-32 to the designs of C.E. Bateman.

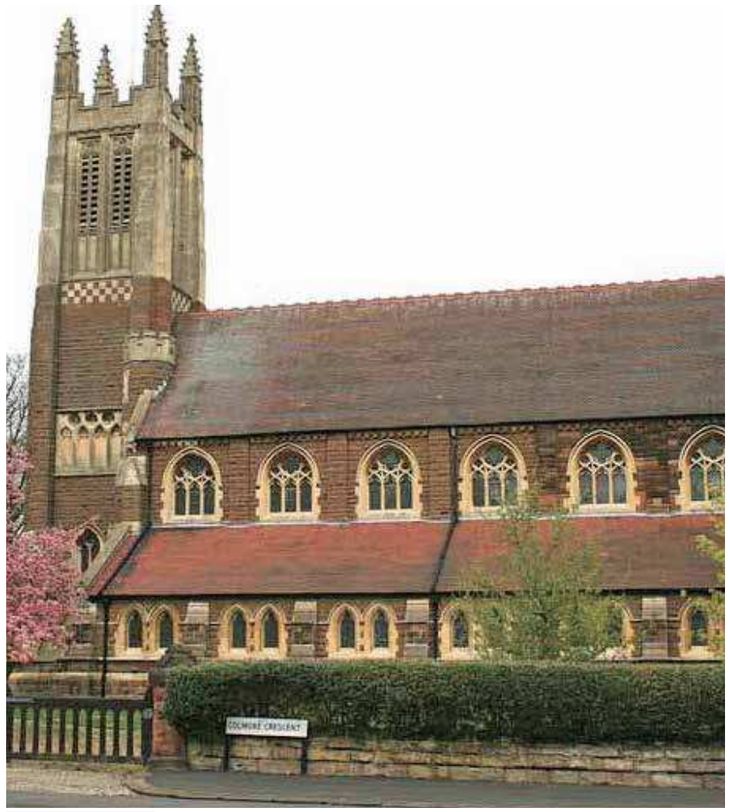
The church is Gothic in style with Decorated tracery in the larger windows. The low aisles have pairs of lancet windows. The capitals and decorative detail are also Decorated in style. The church is built of rock-faced Hampstead sandstone with Bath limestone detailing; the upper part of the tower is in ashlar limestone. It is surrounded by an oval lawned churchyard enclosed by a rusticated sandstone wall and holly hedge (both part of the Listing). There is a circle of mature Sycamore trees and other trees in the churchyard.

There are modern oak gates provided in 2000 to north and south, and a lych gate built in 1938 to the west (also part of the Listing). The west door, facing Oxford Road, is the principal entrance. The church is illuminated at night with modern architectural lighting installed in 2001.

There is a good Arts and Crafts stained-glass window by Birmingham artist Henry Payne at the west end of the north aisle. The small aisle windows have glass by the John Hardman studio and by Claude Price, all provided after World War II in 1949-55. The east window is by Ballantyne & Gardner, an Edinburgh firm, and was provided to celebrate Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee by the people of Moseley.

The William Hill organ has fine cases and stands on a modern west gallery (by APEC). It was moved from the redundant St Mark's, Leicester in the 1990s. The superb interior oak furnishings (pulpit, choir stalls, lectern, baptistery screens, west door screens, north door, front and rear pews) are in late Perpendicular Gothic style, designed by James Swan, and hand-carved by Pancheri & Hack of the Bromsgrove Guild in 1937-39 and 1950-56.

Interior alterations are subject to the Ecclesiastical Exemption and are managed by the Birmingham Diocesan Advisory Committee.



St Agnes Church.

Tudor (now Ashley) Lodge (1 Colmore Crescent) Grade II
This house is to designs by Owen P. Parsons and was built in 1916-20. It has been in institutional use since the early 1950s when an additional wing was added and is now used as a nursing home. It has high-quality building materials including stone slate hanging on the main front. The garden front has a verandah and large polygonal oriel window. Internally the house retains many original features including fine plaster ceilings.

130 Oxford Road (The Gateway; originally called Maxstoke) Grade II
This small detached house of 1907 is also by Owen P. Parsons in red brick and stucco, with tiled roofs and leaded light windows. Very heavy timbers are characteristic of Parsons' designs. Its Arts and Crafts features are beautifully preserved, as is the original front garden layout of crazy paving, clipped yews and a post and lintel timber gateway.

Tudor (now Ashley) Lodge.

130 Oxford Road.

110 and 112 Oxford Road
Grade II
This unusual pair of two-storey semi-detached houses of 1907 are by W De Lacy Aherne. They are identical in plan but have slightly different exteriors which are of white-painted brick. The Westmoreland slate roofs are a distinctive feature. The houses are separated by entrance drives to the linking garage block which may not have been built until a few years later. The builders were Messrs Unwin and Fisher who occupied the houses themselves.

The inner gates, wrought iron overthrows with their house number plaques, and the painted brick front garden walls with stone copings and ball finials are separately Listed Grade II as they are an integral part of the design. There were originally outer front gates (the hanging pins survive) and the walls once had wrought-iron railings which were removed during the Second World War.

40 Wake Green Road
(Kingsthorpe) Grade II
This large detached house on the corner of Cotton Lane is to the designs of Owen P. Parsons and was built originally for FS Banks, a Birmingham jeweller, in 1911. For much of the mid-20th century the house was occupied by the England family, who were shoe manufacturers. They lived in some style with butler, chauffeur and servants. Gables and the leaded-light casement windows are prominent in the façade and also on the side elevation to Cotton Lane. There is a very large ground floor reception room at the front, and an interior first-floor balcony which is supported on Tuscan columns. The garage has a timber-hung gable with a room over and a lead-covered ventilation dome. Brick and pebble patterns decorate the house façade.

110-112 Oxford Road.

40 Wake Green Road.

50 Wake Green Road.

9 St Agnes Road.

50 Wake Green Road
(Broxtowe) Grade II
A smaller detached house designed by George Edward Pepper stands on the corner of Billesley Lane. It was built by HJ Pitts for AN Gosling, a butcher, in 1907. Pepper's houses are very distinctive with extensive use of Horton stone dressing to the brick façade and with leaded-light windows. There is a polygonal bay window on the ground floor and a columned porch. The interior woodwork is apparently unaltered. The 'motor house' is an integral feature and also has a cupola for ventilation of exhaust fumes. The house has recently been restored after a period of semi-dereliction.

9 St Agnes Road (Whitecroft)
Grade II
This is a large detached house of two storeys and attics and was designed by W De Lacy Aherne in 1906. The northern half has roughcast plaster walls, the southern half is timber-framed; there is chequer work in tiles on the façade and a steeply-pitched Westmoreland slate roof with deep overhanging eaves. Shallow battered buttresses to the porch and corner of the façade are distinctive features. It was in institutional use for the last thirty years of the 20th century but is now a private dwelling once more.

15 St Agnes Road (West Hooe) Grade II
This is another large detached house of two storeys and attics which was designed by Antony Rowse for his brother Thomas in 1904. The southern end is a three-storey gable and there is a large stone mullioned window (lighting the staircase) between it and the two-storey northern half of the house. The interior is apparently unaltered and there is an original internal ventilation system.

25 (The Moorings) and 27 (The Homestead) St Agnes Road Grade II
This symmetrical pair of semi-detached Arts and Crafts houses was designed by W. Alexander Harvey (the architect of many of the early houses in Bournville village) in 1905. There are distinctive oriel windows on the first floor with pargetted decoration. No.25 was badly damaged by a World War II bomb but was repaired and rebuilt by Harvey in 1945-47. The original York stone crazy paving driveways and open-plan space between the houses remain in situ, as do the splendid Irish yews which line both front drives and which were planted when the houses were built.

15 St Agnes Road.

25 and 27 St Agnes Road.

Appendix B
Wider planning policy framework

National legislation and guidance

- Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- Town and Country Planning act 1990 (part viii).
- Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999.
- Planning and Compensation Act 1991 (Section 23).
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
- National Heritage Act 1983.
- Birmingham and Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
The National Planning Policy Framework, revised on 20th July 2021, sets out national policy on planning around a variety of issues and supersedes the majority of Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Planning Policy Statements. Of particular relevance to the CAAMP is Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'.

Planning practice guidance
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (2014).
The guidance provides advice on enhancing and conserving the historic environment and follows the advice set out in Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition 2019).

City Council policy context
The CAAMP has been prepared in accordance with and as a supplement to the following planning policies:

The Birmingham Development Plan January 2017
The Plan is the city's statutory planning framework guiding decisions on development and regeneration activity over the period until 2031. The Plan recognises Birmingham's historic development and its rich and varied environment which contributes to the unique essence of the city. Policies in the Plan seek to value, protect and enhance the historic environment; see especially 'Policy TP12 Historic Environment'.

Moseley Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2014
The Moseley SPD provides planning and development guidance to maximise the potential of Moseley as a local suburban 'village' centre. In particular it aims to build upon the heritage of the village centre (Moseley Village Conservation Area) and its residential heritage (St Agnes, Moseley Conservation Area).
The CAAMP has been prepared in accordance with and as a supplement to the policies that it sets out.

Mature Suburbs Guidelines Supplementary Planning Guidance (2008)
This sets out the City Council's strategy for dealing with the particular development pressures on suburban housing areas of the late Victorian, Edwardian and interwar suburbs for intensification and 'building in the back gardens'.

Regeneration through Conservation Supplementary Planning Guidance (1999)
Adopted in March 1999, 'Regeneration through Conservation' sets out the City Council's strategy for conservation of the built environment with a particular focus on the opportunities for regeneration that conservation can create. Of particular relevance is the stated aim of producing character appraisals of Conservation Areas.

The Moseley and Sparkhill Area of Restraint Supplementary Planning Guidance (1992)
This provided restraints on the further development of retirement and nursing homes in the designated area. Almost the whole of the Conservation Area is within the Area of Restraint.

Moseley Society: Great Walls of Moseley (2001)
Legal and design advice on the treatment of front garden boundaries in the Conservation Area was provided by The Moseley Society in September 2001.

Appendix C
Article 4(2) Direction

An Article 4(2) Direction applies to residential properties only and removes Permitted Development rights from front and significant elevations. This means that any minor alteration which would normally not require planning permission will need consent.

Alterations such as installation of replacement doors, windows and porches, the creation of hard standings and the removal of original boundary treatment, perhaps insignificant as individual alterations, have taken place in St Agnes Conservation Area under Permitted Development before the application of the Article 4(2) Direction on 31st July 2009 to the detriment of the character of the Conservation Area.

The Article 4(2) Direction means that minor alterations will require planning permission if they front a highway or open space.

These include:

- Any enlargement, improvement or alteration to a dwelling house.
- Any alteration to the roof of a dwelling house.
- Construction of an external porch.
- Creation or replacement or enlargement of a hard standing for off-street parking.
- The installation, alteration or replacement of a chimney of a dwelling house.
- Installation or alteration of a satellite antenna on any part of the front of the dwelling house.
- Erection, demolition or alteration of a gate, fence or other means of enclosure at the front of a dwelling house.
- Exterior painting of the front of a dwelling house.

Appendix D
Equality analysis

The CAAMP has been prepared with due consideration to the City Council's responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

As such an equality analysis has been undertaken; this indicates on the basis of the currently available information that the proposals outlined in this document will not have an adverse impact upon persons within the protected categories.

This equality analysis will continue to be updated as part of the CAAMP monitoring process.

With regards to the three individual elements of the Public Sector Equality Duty for the City Council, the main impact of the CAAMP is to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Specifically, the policies within this CAAMP seek to ensure that new developments are accessible to all users, including people with disabilities.

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BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLANS

The St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan produced by
Birmingham City Council, Planning and Development, Inclusive Growth Directorate.

BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLANS

St Agnes Moseley Conservation Area

Character Appraisal and Management Plan

May 2022

Birmingham City Council