

SUREVEY OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA – RESULTS OF EXERCISE UNDERTAKEN IN BARLEYTHORPE VILLAGE AND PART OF OAKHAM HEIGHTS, 7/4/2018

Topography

Main Street – apart from a slight declivity caused by Barleythorpe Brook, the village was essentially flat.

Pasture Lane – land remained initially flat but rose towards Cold Overton Hill.

Street Scene

The combination of Victorian-style and modern lampstandards on the road to the hall was incongruous.

Main Street – the verges were mostly not tree-lined. It was a busy through route with bus stops and a pedestrian crossing.

Haybarn Close was a modern intrusion on to the Main Street at the north-western end of the old village.

Horseshoe Close was a small, individualistic development set back from the main road behind trees, so fitted in better than most of the recent development.

Manor Lane was an attractive minor road with old buildings visible on either side.

Wheatfield Way was the one part of the larger Oakham Heights estate explored that day; the road layout was thought to be more in the interest of the driver than the pedestrian.

Open Spaces

Mature woodland was noted near the hall.

Barleythorpe Brook provided a visual break at the centre of the old village.

Manor Lane did not include any public open space but gave an air of spaciousness because its buildings were not close together and there was a green lane between it and Pasture Lane.

Pasture Lane exhibited a rural interaction between housing and fields.

The allotments beside Main Street continued the open space provided by the brook.

A wildflower meadow provided a point of interest on the brook's bank.

The green space between Barleythorpe Road and Oakham Heights north-west of the village lacked a footpath running its length, but the saplings would eventually obscure the new housing.

Buildings

Rebuilding on the north-eastern side of Main Street north-west of the brook was sensitive, although, when examined in detail, the stone facing's being only on the front of the houses made the whole appearance seem artificial.

Houses had small front gardens on the north-eastern side of Main Street whereas much of the south-western side faced straight on to the highway.

Listed buildings were attractive in general, and “The Coach House” in Manor Lane was particularly admired.

Clock House Close - substantial new redbrick houses were not too obtrusive but might have been better with at least stone facing; a smaller terrace next to Clock House Court was more in keeping. Clock House Court was deemed to have been a successful conversion from stables.

Pelham Court – this again was a successful conversion that fitted in with the neighbouring part of Oakham Heights.

Wheatfield Way had boxy, unimaginative houses.

Landmarks

Barleythorpe Hall was a recently renovated 1820s mansion with a 1960s extension which was in keeping. Clock House Court and “The Coach House” added distinction to their immediate surroundings.

Views and Vistas

The hall could be seen from Manor Lane.

Barleythorpe Brook's presence softened the hardness of the new estate through which it flowed.

Improvement Ideas

Developers should try to make the rear views of houses more attractive.

Building-materials needed to be sympathetic.

Wheatfield Way typified that part of Oakham Heights by having a proper pavement on one side of the road but either a very narrow one or none at all on the other.

There was a general need in Oakham Heights for more off-street parking, but that should be combined in any future development with a general layout that allowed pedestrians more access routes between streets which would make the street scape less monotonous.