

Westgate PLACE Assessment – 1 July 2021

Area covered in response: Westgate, Henty Gardens, Mount Lane, St Bartholomew's Close, Tannery Close. Numbers in brackets correspond to numbers indicated on attached 2 maps. Individual house numbers can be seen on the maps.

PLANNING

'Historic Westgate' - the Eastern end within the Conservation Area (1)

We generally endorse the comments in the *Chichester Conservation Area Character Appraisal* prepared by Chichester District Council in 2016 with regard to its assessment of the character and historical significance of this area. We would wish to see the positive features which are noted maintained and enhanced and the negative features and issues addressed.

Old Tannery Site (12)

Currently this area is unused and unsightly and subject to anti-social behaviour. Having been occupied by squatters at Nos. 63-65 Westgate, the buildings are now boarded up and present a very negative image. An appropriate redevelopment of this site for residential (and possibly community use) using good design and high-quality materials would be a significant improvement.

65 Westgate, an Italian- style villa at the entrance to The Tannery appears from historic photographs to be part of the old Tannery complex and we would wish to see it restored and retained in any development together with all external features of the locally listed adjoining properties fronting Westgate.

We would ask that design and materials of any redevelopment respect and enhance the character of the Conservation Area. For example, we would welcome the use of local tile/brick/flint materials, and proportions reflecting the nearby Georgian architecture with its variety in roof elevations.

Central Section of Westgate (2)

This section of Westgate comprises mainly 20th century family houses in a variety of forms. Particularly on the north side, they sit back from the road in generous sized plots. This diversity of family dwellings with their well-established gardens adds significantly to the character of our residential area and the green and leafy street scene. Density, building heights and massing of any extensions/redevelopment should be in keeping with the character of this environment and should not materially impact on the harmony of the street scene or the leafy appearance of the area.

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LANDSCAPE

One of the major attractions of Westgate is the leafy character of the neighbourhood. We hope that the existing trees be retained as far as possible and would ask that this principle be followed in any future development

Brewery Fields (6)

Although not accessed directly from Westgate, this is a welcome open green space for residents and is an important amenity area for recreation and community events. The field contains a number of mature specimen trees as well as dense hedgerows providing a wealth of biodiversity. There is also a fine view of the cathedral spire. There is potential for improving community use and environmental benefits by, for example, creating an orchard on part of the space as well as replacing any trees lost to disease.

Tree belt between Westgate and Cathedral Way (7)

This is an important local amenity. As well as sign-posting the change from the trunk road system to our residential area, it provides a very valuable visual screen and sound buffer against the increasing traffic levels of Cathedral Way and College Roundabout. Any disturbance /reduction of this area in the context of any necessary highways improvements should be kept to an absolute minimum.

St. Bartholomew's Churchyard (11)

This contains several mature trees that provide a welcome amount of greenery close to the Narrows and these must be retained.

Green spaces at junction of Westgate and Parklands (8)

This is a welcome green space halfway along Westgate. There is an opportunity to improve it with enhanced planting and better maintenance of the bench. No alternative use has been found for the BT phone box which is now falling into disrepair and could be removed.

Old Tannery site (12)

The existing trees, hedgerows and green spaces of this site are an important amenity and we would wish to see the majority of this landscaping retained in any redevelopment. The site borders the River Lavant and is a haven for birds and possibly other wildlife and this habitat should be protected under any redevelopment.

Green spaces around Sherbourne Road/Westgate mini-roundabout (4)

The grass verges around mini-roundabout offer potential for wildflower planting to enhance the feeling of moving from College Roundabout into a residential area.

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LANDSCAPE (Continued)

College Roundabout (5)

The impact of this major roundabout is softened by the central area of trees and grass and surrounding grass verges

Centurion Way (9)

A disused section of the old Chichester/Midhurst railway which is now a shared pedestrian /cycle route. As well as being much-used local amenity and recreational facility, it provides a scrub and tree-lined link between the city and the Downs and is an important wildlife corridor. This needs to be preserved and appropriately managed for the benefit of all these uses.

The playing fields (10) of the adjacent Bishop Luffa school at the entrance to Centurion Way provide a valuable green gateway to the west of the city but is, like all green spaces, at risk of redevelopment. Noting the residential area/low rise nature of the housing along Westgate, opposite the school and behind the school in Parklands, this green space should be protected and any future development/change of use of this land should be restricted to single or low height (2 storey) and as much green space preserved as possible.

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ARCHITECTURE

'Historic Westgate' (1)

Full of character and attractive architectural features such as red brick and painted stucco for the front elevations with flint and brick boundary walls, clay tiles and pitched roofs of varying heights.

Buildings of particular architectural merit

3 Westgate (The Georgian Priory)

15 Westgate (former Surgery) recently extensively restored.

21 Westgate

44 Westgate

St Bartholomew's Church – mentioned in CULTURE

Numbers 31-35 Westgate – mentioned in CULTURE

Westgate House (no 52) – mentioned in CULTURE

63-65 Westgate (part of the Tannery buildings)

Good examples of modern development

There are 3 developments on Westgate which have received Heritage Awards:

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| 1-3 The Courtyard, Westgate – City Council Heritage Award 1989 | (13) |
| | West Sussex County Council Building Design Award 1988-89 |
| 1-4 Mount Lane – City Council Heritage Award 2013 | (14) |
| 1-5 St. Bartholomew's – City Council Heritage Award 1988 | (15) |

These developments have made good use of local materials, are in keeping with surrounding architecture and have included attractive green spaces. We hope these design principles will be followed in any future development within our area.

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CULTURE

Westgate has a number of buildings and sites of historical, cultural and social significance.

'Historic Westgate' (1)

Much of this streetscape comprises listed terraces of Victorian and Georgian houses, some concealing earlier timber- framed buildings. The latter are some of the earliest surviving houses outside the city walls

St Bartholomew's Church (11)

This now redundant church and its churchyard is an important historic feature with potential for reuse for cultural/community purposes. We would welcome the proposed reuse of this building as a dance school or other cultural/community uses provided that any parking issues are satisfactorily dealt with.

Numbers 31-35 Westgate

These houses are the site of the original Shippam business set up here in 1750 by butcher Shipston Shippam.

Westgate house and site of former brewery to rear

No. 52 Westgate (Westgate House), a large Georgian property (now offices) at one time formed part of the Westgate Brewery. Founded in the late 18th century, this business occupied the house and adjoining areas and was Chichester's largest brewery. The malthouse style offices behind the house on Henty Gardens echo the past use.

Old Tannery site with surviving tannery building (12)

Surviving structures include the Tannery building dating from 1910 and associated buildings fronting on Westgate including the former tannery office to the west of the pedestrian entrance from Westgate. The Tannery building is the last of Westgate's industrial structures still standing on the street.

Crate & Apple (16)

As well as being a very popular local pub and restaurant, this is an important venue for community social events and for local groups to meet. We would wish to see this hospitality use retained.

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ENGINEERING

The volume and speed of traffic along Westgate has been an ongoing concern for residents in the area with much of the traffic appearing to be using the road as 'rat run' for access in and out of Chichester. The likely increase in traffic arising from the Whitehouse Farm development is an additional major threat to the residential character of Westgate as a whole. Increasing car dominance is particularly an issue in the 'Historic Westgate' where houses front onto the pavement and suffer significant vibration when heavy vehicles pass by.

Westgate/Orchard Street roundabout (4)

This roundabout and the inner ring road create a barrier between the eastern end of Westgate and the city. At present this division is ameliorated by the large area of greenery and planting on and around the roundabout and the large London plane tree at its centre.

As part of the highways works associated with Phase 1 of Whitehouse Farm, the existing roundabout is to be replaced by a dutch-style roundabout. Whilst we welcome the cycle and pedestrian improvements which this will bring, it will result in a significant increase in hard infrastructure and commensurate reduction of the green space here. Thought needs to be given as to how the new landscaping of both the roundabout and surrounding planted areas on Westgate, East Street and West Walls can be used to soften the impact of this. The central tree should be retained if at all possible.

There is also the need for improved signage/gateway features coming off the roundabout into Westgate to enhance the feel of entering a residential area.

'Historic Westgate (1)

The road surface is in poor condition. The paving needs to be restored and maintained in a manner in keeping with character of the Conservation Area.

Central Section of Westgate (2)

The existing traffic-calming measures are inadequate to prevent the use of Westgate for rat-running and, outside peak periods, do not prevent speeding.

Westgate/Sherborne Road mini-roundabout and western end of Westgate (5)

This roundabout is already unable to deal with peak hour demand and the situation will be exacerbated by the additional traffic from Phase 1 Whitehouse Farm. A significant increase in traffic is predicted along Sherborne Road and into the mini-roundabout.

An urgent solution needs to be found for the routing of the Southern Access Road as part of Phase 2 of the Whitehouse Farm development such that this does not run along the western section of Westgate and/or into this mini roundabout. This would give rise to significant increase in traffic volume along all of Westgate and raise safety issues from the increased air and noise pollution in this residential area.