

School Hall Lane

Called Darby's Lane originally, this is another of the small streets which link the grand houses in Northgate Street to Garland Street. It is, very unusually for the Town Centre Conservation Area, a street with no listed buildings in it. It also has few buildings of any real interest but does have, in common with the streets leading off Northgate Street to both east and west, tall walls which would have, in the 18th C protected the lands behind the grand houses. These are the elements which provide the character of the street and here, unlike Pump Lane, not protected by statutory listing. They are, notwithstanding that, a very significant element in the conservation area and make a strong contribution to it.



Other than, a terrace of 19th C cottages at the western end of the street, most of the buildings here are late 20th C and generally of limited architectural ambition. None seems to be likely in the future to be considered to make any positive contribution to the conservation area, but only Darby's Court with its profusion of plastic joinery actually detracts.



The street has a winding character to the east where it narrows from its less than commodious proportions at the west end. The winding nature is rather charming, especially where the brick and flint walls survive. The road is paved with asphalt as are the footpaths, where they exist, at the western end. Here there was a terrace in the 18th C, and shown on Mayhew's map of 1776. None of those buildings seem to survive, superseded by others in the early 19th C.

Smart modern street lighting columns and some folksy telephone poles and overhead cables.

13 School Hall Lane

This was a 19th C cottage which now is partially at least in commercial use. It is so altered that it currently detracts from the conservation area especially the plastic windows.

12 School Hall Lane

A smart two storey white brick early 19th C house with a shop front surviving from its original use. It has a double pitched roof and may have modern tiles, but these are not really visible. There is a brick stack.

Two multipane sash windows at first floor and a single similar at ground floor, along with a modern entrance door to the east and the original shop front with multipaned window and modern panelled entrance door. All openings have arched brick lintols.

Plastic rainwater goods.

A handsome building which has added interest with its early shop front, which helps narrate the story of the changing nature of the use of the building and its location. It makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.



8-11 School Hall Lane

A terrace of four early 19th C cottages in two storeys of white brick with double pitched roofs which, like their neighbour, are not really visible although the red brick stacks can be seen.

Each cottage has a single window on each floor and a door opening at ground level. The openings generally have arched brick lintols. None of the joinery is original, although No 11 has two over two sashes and a four panelled door which appear later. All the other cottages have plastic windows and No 8 has not only plastic windows but has altered openings with all the original arches destroyed, it does have a half glazed wooden door but this is little compensation. Nos 9 and 10 have plastic doors too.

Plastic rainwater goods

All the alterations to the properties now detract from the conservation area and from what originally would have been a simple but handsome terrace. It is now is little more than neutral in the conservation area but is included here as with sensitive restoration this could make a positive contribution, and presumably did so when the conservation area was designated.

