

2/ The character of Ilminster

2.1

The general characteristics of Ilminster are summarised below. These have been identified through workshops with the local community (Spring and Autumn 2019) and a review of the existing evidence base, namely, The Ilminster Conservation Area Appraisal (2016) and The Ilminster: By Design (2001).

1. Tight urban grain in the centre with a more spacious character in the twentieth century housing estates on the periphery.
2. Development generally follows a north/south and east/west four-point star, which enables easy access to the open countryside from wherever one lives.
3. Sloping topography of the core town and views out to adjacent hills and open countryside are an essential part of the towns character. Flat topography and lack of views in the western side of town only.
4. Distinctive widespread use of local Mochnan Marstone.
5. High quality historic town centre architecture and Market Place, although the quality of the public realm is being eroded by the needs of the car.
6. The church tower rising over the town providing a sense of place.
7. Predominantly small-medium scale buildings, with irregular footprints and two

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storey with some three storey buildings.

8. Fine door cases and shop fronts.
9. Varied roof-scapes, with predominantly pitched roofed buildings.
10. A variety of treatments to building frontages, from edge of pavement development and enclosed front gardens.
11. Harsh urban environment sometimes provides a harsh contrast with the green setting and edge of Ilminster.
12. Open Spaces and recreation facilities of exceptional visual appearance.
13. Poor quality appearance to key road junctions into town.

2.2.

One of the unique characteristics of Ilminster is its historic core which represents a cohesive architectural form, although built over a four hundred year period. Beyond this housing and commercial development is inter-dispersed randomly and organically across the town from different architectural periods.

2.3.

In the design guide workshops in October and November, 6 different types of built form character areas were identified as good examples which should be referenced in

The Ilminster Design Guide

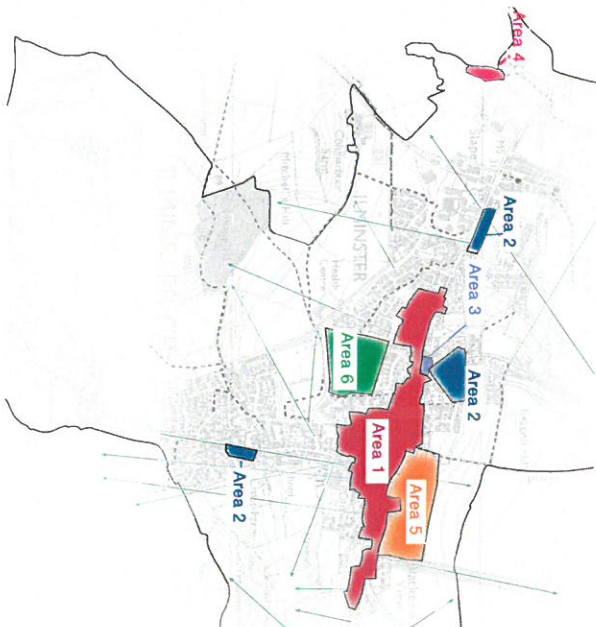
development proposals in Ilminster.

2.4.

These character areas are as follows:

1. **Historic pre-19th Century centre:** Dating from the 15th Century with mixed use buildings, including the Minster and Market House, laid out on a north-south, east-west axis with medieval street patterns.
2. **Terraces:** Victorian and Edwardian residential terraces are inter-dispersed across the town outside the historic core (located to the north, south and west).
3. **Villas:** Of varying ages, mainly in the northern part of the town, set within spacious plots with a larger scale.
4. **19th Century Industrial:** In the western side of Ilminster, including historic former train station and mills.
5. **Late Twentieth Century - Blackdown:** A complete housing estate with generous plots to the north.
6. **Late Twentieth century - Summerlands:** To the west of the town centre has small good family housing.

More analysis of the character of Ilminster has been carried out and is included in the appendices



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