

Lower Stoke Character Area

HLC Area 3

Location and Context

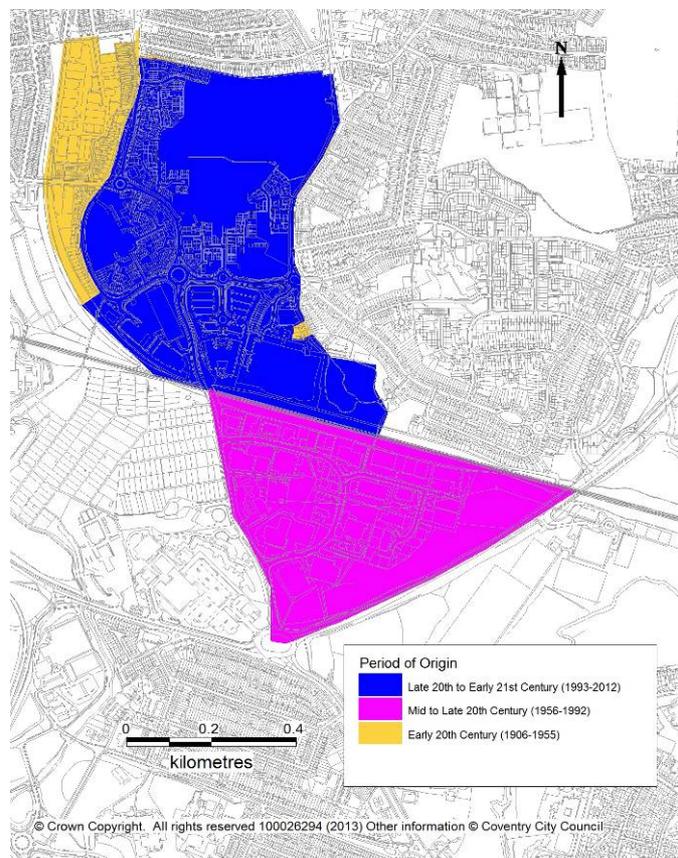
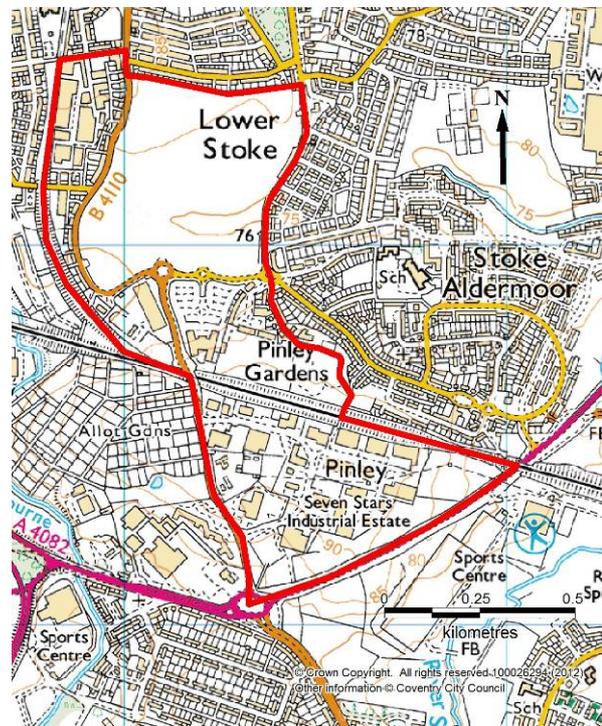
An area of light industry located to the south east of the city centre with housing currently being developed on the northern part. The character area is traversed by the Coventry-Rugby railway line and is predominantly surrounded by areas of settlement.

Heritage Designations in the Area

Scheduled Ancient Monuments: 0
Archaeological Constraint Areas: 4
Listed Buildings: 0
Locally Listed Buildings: 0
Conservation Areas: 0
Registered Parks and Gardens: 0

Historic Development

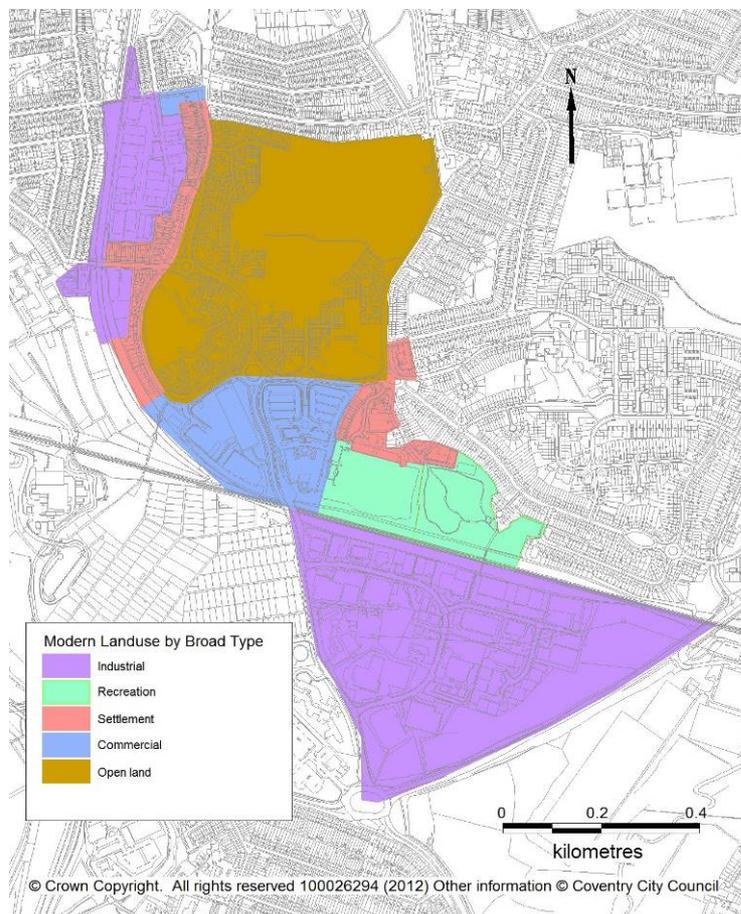
The name Pinley suggests Saxon origins (Pinna's clearing or wood) but the earliest reference to activity is from a document of the early 13th century. This referred to Walter de Langley holding land there and in 1238 Walter's son Geoffrey is recorded as having obtained timber to build a house at Pinley. Geoffrey enclosed Wood Moor and other land in Pinley. He had a chapel there from at least 1222 when he obtained a licence to found a chantry. In the hundred rolls (1280) Pinley manor (the territory) is recorded as containing about 360 acres of demesne. This directly managed land must have had a home farm so during this period the manorial complex consisted of the main house, the home farm and perhaps the chapel. Excavations prior to re-development of the site in the area of Wheeler Road discovered the remains of a medieval high-status building that may have been the manor house and/or chapel. A possible moat can be seen to the south of Wheeler Road in an aerial photograph of 1946.



The landscape had changed little by the mid-19th Century. Pinley House, which stood at the centre of the Character Area, had been built by the early 1700s, and Pinley Hill Farm was recorded on the tithe map of 1849. The London and Birmingham Railway line, which opened in 1838, was built through the middle of the Character Area bisecting a field known as Castle Hill. Other than these two settlements and the railway line the landscape was dominated by agricultural enclosures.

The 20th Century saw significant changes to the landscape with the establishment of two car factories, Humber to the north and Hillman to the south. Between 1905 and 1913 Humber Cars moved from nearby Gosford Green and developed a new factory producing cars and cycles to the east of Folly Lane (present day Humber Road), while around the same time Mr Hillman who resided at Pinley House began developing a factory in his grounds. The Humber and Hillman companies would later merge creating a single large car plant operated by the Rootes Group and latterly by Peugeot Citroen. By 1925 an area either side of the railway line had been converted from agricultural fields to an area of allotments known as Pinley Gardens. Part of this area was developed for houses by 1936 and the Humber Factory expanded southwards. To the south of Pinley Gardens the land remained in allotment use until the period 1982-1992 when the Seven Stars Industrial Estate was built. The Humber Works closed and was demolished after 2006 and replaced by a housing estate over much of the site with a new office complex for Peugeot to the south. Pinley Gardens is now a public open space.

Modern Character



The northwest boundary of the character area, which is a very strong division between settlement and industry, was created by the former course of the Coventry Loop railway line which was closed and abandoned in the 1970's. The north of the character area is currently under redevelopment following the closure of the Peugeot factory (Humber Works), in c2005. The loss of such a significant factory freed up an extensive part of the Character Area for redevelopment. Consequently, it comprises two phases of development divided by the Coventry-Rugby railway line, with older light industrial estates and offices to the south and a new, residential area to the

north. Until the 20th Century most of the Character Area was agricultural, but probably due to its proximity to the city centre, most of the Character Area has been under constant development resulting in former features and boundaries being replaced. One of the few remaining features is the northern half of Humber Road whose alignment seems to follow that of Colepit Lane recorded in 1798 and 1726. The majority of buildings comprise small, square shaped, tightly packed factories and warehouses. With the exception of a large, spacious car park associated with an office built after 2005, car parking facilities are small and intermittent. In the south of the character area the streets have grass verges, but other areas are very cramped. The area is characterised by a mix of building styles representing the several large scale re-developments.

Geology and Topography

This area overlies sandstone to the east and a mix of sandstone and mudstone to the west. To the south of the Character Area is a drift geology of sand and gravel. The land slopes down to the north and to the south from the railway line which crosses the highest point of the area.



New development at Sunbeam Way on the site of the former Humber Works